

УДК 159.922.6

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DOI <https://doi.org/10.35619/prapr.v1i18.293>

### FORGIVENESS AS A PROSOCIAL PHENOMENON

**The present study was finished before the beginning of Russia's invasion into Ukraine. The obtained results showed the high-level tolerance and peacefulness of participants, that revealed the essentiality of Ukrainian ethnos and corresponded with its mental identity. Regrettably, we may predict, that the military offence, made by Russian troops on the territory of Ukraine, will cause the significant changes of human attitudes in foreseeable future not only among Ukrainians, but worldwide. The most peaceful nations will be forced to reconsider their attitudes towards forgiveness on behalf of their future and justice.**

***Abstract.** Our research aimed to clarify the prosocial nature of forgiveness by examining its relationship with other prosocial values, and explore the intercorrelations between an individual's proneness to forgive and the dispositional factors such as emotional closeness to the target of forgiveness and the interpersonal strategy of behavior. In our study, we considered forgiveness a part of individual's prosociality as, despite the motives underlying the process of making a decision to forgive, it resulted in prosocial activity and had psychologically positive outcomes for both partners.*

*The participants ( $N = 70$ ) were 41 females and 29 males in their middle adulthood (the mean age = 41.3). To achieve the aim of the present research, we used the questionnaire "Diagnostics of Moral Orientations", the Tendency to Forgive Scale and the "Diagnostics of interpersonal relationship" (an adapted and modified variant of Leary's 128-item Interpersonal Check List). One-way ANOVA confirmed the absence of significant differences between the age subgroups  $F(1,68) = 1.72, p > .05$ . Results have shown that people in their middle adulthood have proneness to based decisions about forgiving on their prosocial attitudes. The greatest unanimity was found in relation to the closest targets. The majority of respondents (80%) chose the highest rates of the scale ( $M = 4.3, SD = 0.87$ ) to demonstrate prosocial tendencies towards relatives and friends. 58.6% of respondents pointed out that "it is very important to express it to this group of people",*

*Altogether, the results show that readiness to forgive does not depend on the subject's age-related features, whereas emotional closeness is an important factor, which affects the proneness to forgive. More vivid tendency to forgive is demonstrated in the close social circle. However, people tend to express prosocial attitudes and readiness to forgive even towards their enemies. It was found that the general strategy of dominance did not demonstrate a strong connection with an individual's proneness to forgive, whereas the general strategy of friendliness seemed to have a significant correlation with all dimensions of people's tendency to forgive explored in the present research.*

**Key words:** forgiveness, prosociality, prosocial attitudes, strategy of interpersonal behavior.

**Introduction.** Establishing the interaction with the social environment is a vital component of human life. This objective reality of social communication contains both substantial positive prospects and potential threats to the individual's emotional well-being and implementation of the life goals. Criticism and aggression, jealousy and non-acceptance, hindrance and humiliation, give rise to a significant psycho-traumatic impact, causing both interpersonal relationships disharmony and a wide variety of negative emotional experiences. The willingness to restore justice against the backdrop of insult, anger, frustration, desire for revenge can guarantee a person neither the restoration of relationships nor the peace of mind. Therefore, the issue of forgiveness – the uniquely human ability to rise above suffering for the sake of one's future and the well-being of other people, communities, or even entire societies – becomes increasingly important in terms of human life and as a scientific area. This issue is particularly acute in the realities of controversy, psychological and military confrontation in different parts of the world. Forgiveness is considered one of the necessary steps in resolving all types of confrontation: from interpersonal and family ones to the most complicated international conflicts.

**Analysis of sources.** The problem of forgiveness emerged in psychological science at the end of the 20th century, and it has been intensively developed for the past 30-35 years worldwide. Numerous international studies had considerable achievements in exploring this phenomenon. The American scientists were pioneers in this field. Over the years, they have created a general theory of forgiveness and identified the ways of its actual use in psychotherapeutic practice. It was not a coincidence that one of the founders of the field and the co-founder of the International Forgiveness Institute (established in 1994) Robert Enright received international awards and recognition for his innovative studies. The education programs with his “20-step model of forgiveness” are used in more than twenty countries around the world.

Admittedly, the issue of forgiveness is not sufficiently covered in the Ukrainian psychological area. In these circumstances, several meta-analytic studies, which present the results of previous research, seem especially important. Thus, a brief overview of the previous studies in American psychological science can be found in the research by Ukrainian scientists Harkavets & Yakovenko (2018). They raised the issue of forgiveness in the context of studying offence. Unlike many other studies, in which the exploring of forgiveness began with an analysis of Christian or Jewish religious traditions (Gassin, 1999, 2003), the authors turned to the investigation of its philosophical backgrounds - the coverage of the thoughts of Renaissance thinkers (e.g. Michel de Montaigne), 19th-century German philosophers (Schopenhauer; Nietzsche, etc.) and nowadays methodologists (Lazarev). The psychological view of their research is based on Berne's ideas about an individual's autonomy and its ability to take responsibility for own feelings and behavior; Frankl's theory of individual search for the personal meaning of suffering; Erich Fromm's positions regarding the love of forgiveness and Orlov's theory of sanogenic thinking as a means of overcoming offence. It is also worth mentioning Elizabeth Gassin's significant contribution to the development of philosophical and psychological research on forgiveness (1999; 2003). It was emphasized the necessity and the lack of current studies dealing with the problem of forgiveness.

Conceptualisation of this phenomenon as an individual's resource of stress management and the process of forgiveness as a complex of different multifunctional coping strategies were given in the research by Nosenko & Sokur (2016). Comparison of individuals with different proneness to forgiveness allowed the author to conclude that a high level of such proneness had a significant impact on the individuals' psychological well-being as well as on the nature of their relationships with the social environment. People with a high level of proneness to forgiveness tended less to feel guilty in a case of inability to cope with the situation, and they are not prone to excessive self-blaming. At the same time, they can assess the situation and their resources more rationally. They are more independent from their fears and ready for personal growth. It leads to a more intensive and active creation of their world.

During a long time, forgiveness has been analyzed within a broader context of establishing and maintaining interpersonal relations. The role of forgiveness in the system of the most emotional and intimate relationships between the family members has been paid particular attention.

Gradually, the research refocused to examine the therapeutic impact of forgiveness on maintaining an individual's emotional well-being and even human health. Another area of psychological interests is represented by the studies dealing with the age-related features of the phenomenon. Certain research explored the emergence of primary strategies of forgiveness among young children (Oostenbroek & Vaish, 2019; Vaish, 2018). It is worth mentioning that attention mostly focused on the mature forms of forgiveness.

Due to the complexity of the phenomenon and its sensitivity to dispositional and situational factors, several approaches to its conceptualization can be found in domestic and foreign psychology (Sokur, 2016). It was noted that numerous studies defined forgiveness in a variety of terms such as a process of neutralizing the stressor associated with the perception of interpersonal pain (Strelan, 2007); coping strategy (Worthington, Scherer, 2004; Strelan, Covic, 2006); prosocial transformation of interpersonal motivation towards the abuser (McCullough, Witvliet, 2002); the active overcoming of negative orientation towards the offender and development of positive orientation (Enright 2012; Gassin, 1999); as stable individual traits Peterson, M. Seligman, 2004).

Theoretical analysis of previous studies shows that researchers mostly focused on the emotional states of the offended person or the consequences of the process and only a few studies looked into the prosocial context of forgiveness. This idea can be found in research by McCullough, Worthington & Rachal (1997). They treated forgiveness as a complex of motivational transformations that result in a decrease of an individual's proneness to revenge and focus on reconciliation, despite the traumatic actions of the partner. According to the authors, the basis of this process is empathy. Considering it a framework of collaboration, altruism, and the ability to suppress aggression, McCullough and his colleagues suggested that it is the empathic concern that likens forgiveness to other prosocial phenomena. The scholars based their theoretical reasoning on the Batson's empathy-altruism theory (1991) and Rusbult's (1991) and Gottman's (1994) ideas about the role of close relationships and their transformation under the influence of an offence. According to Gottman (1999) and his colleagues, in the situation of unjust accusations, the victim can have two types of experiences - indignation and humiliation. Both of them cause an increase in offence and motivation to revenge or alienate. However, observation the signs of the aggressor's repentance and desire to apologize can cause the attenuation of these destructive emotions and the emergence of empathic experiences of the victim. Concern about the emotional states of the partner, taking into account his distress is considered as a mechanism of forgiveness. According to Vaish, Carpenter, & Tomasello (2011), this prosocial ability arises in early childhood. Even 4-year-old children are not only able to understand the idea of a direct apology, but also demonstrate more generous behavior towards remorseful partner in a resource-sharing situation. 5-year-old children tend to be more positive about their peers, even with indirect signs of remorse. More obvious evidences of children's readiness to forgive appeared in the study conducted by Oostenbroek and Vaish (2018). Exploring the impact of presence or absence of apology on the children's readiness to forgive, the scientists concluded that, at the age 5, children acquire the ability to understand the essence of apology-forgiveness as a means of repairing damaged relationships. One of the signs of such forgiveness is an increase in their prosocial displays towards the transgressor (more positive evaluation, more generous behavior, etc).

Developing a theory of prosocial basis of forgiveness McCullough (2002), emphasized that the interpersonal context of forgiveness was far more complex than the typical situations in which altruistic motivation occurred. In the context of damage to close relationships, the empathic concern can cause the following interpersonal phenomena: the offended person worries about the partner's feelings (guilt, isolation, loneliness) or suffers from being the reason of the pain (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994). Alternatively, empathic experience can inspire an individual to find ways to reconcile and rebuild relationships.

It is worth mentioning that forgiveness, as an active process, implies value attitudes towards others, respect for them, readiness for dialogue, understanding and self-understanding. As a socio-psychological phenomenon, forgiveness is characterized by a degree of forgiveness, selectivity and partiality. The idea of existence of some moral prerequisites, which can influence the victim's

behavior, is of particular importance to our study. It is noted that such prerequisites provide the ability to consider the partner's interests and influence the willingness to forgive the transgressor based on empathy, altruistic and communicative attitudes. It proves that lower individual's proneness to selfishness is an important prerequisite for forgiveness.

Comparing the indicators of the individual's selfish tendencies and their willingness to apologize and forgive, Exline (2016) notes that hypo-egoic and hyper-egoic attitudes have a different impact on the behavior of participants in problem situations. Hyper-egoic personality tendencies complicate both the transgressor's willingness to apologize and the victim's ability to act prosocially towards the abuser, whereas the hypo-egoic tendencies can underlie the forgiveness-related prosocial reactions.

According to the Enright (1992), prosocial motivation is involved in the process of forgiveness. The highest stage of his developmental model is called "Forgiveness as love". Describing it, Gassin (2003) notes that in this case forgiveness is offered without any conditions. It is based on sincere recognition, acceptance and love to other people.

Motivational basis of forgiveness, as a reaction on unfairness, was the issue of Root's research (2008). It is noted that the difference in underlying motives of forgiveness (goodwill, moral obligation and egoistic) does not have a considerable impact on the level of forgiveness or feelings towards transgressor. However, male participants reported a higher level of forgiveness under a prosocial altruistic condition.

In our opinion, the gender specificity of forgiveness can be transmitted more accurately, taking into account its varieties and level characteristics. For example, Chinese scholars used the idea of separating two levels of forgiveness in the study dealing with the issue of age-related features of forgiveness in adolescence. (Zhou Yan-Gen et al., 2017). The surface forgiveness occurs mainly under the influence of external impulses: request from parents, friends, and teachers whereas the in-depth forgiveness unfolds being based on inner experiences, especially empathy. Discussing the positive dynamics of forgiveness in adolescents, the authors associate it with changes in the quality of emotions, enhancing the social experience and the age-related development of social cognitive abilities. Along with learning period, adolescents become more mature and able to think about others. Thus, their abilities to forgive increase. The results of the study show that the boys have higher level of total and surface forgiveness, whereas girls are more likely to demonstrate deep forgiveness. The reason for these differences is the higher level of empathic tendencies (especially emotional empathy) of female participants. Therefore, according to scholars, girls are more likely to think about others and make decisions about forgiveness.

Within the studies mentioned above, prosocial issues related to the clarification of the essential characteristics of forgiveness as a psychological phenomenon. However, several research works examine the prosocial features of forgiveness outcomes. Scientific interest focused not only on the consequences in the system of "transgressor-victim" interaction but also beyond it. In particular, Karremans et al. (2005) studied the impact of forgiveness on the general level of individual's prosociality, examining the idea of spreading such influence beyond the relationship between the forgiver and the offender. The authors distinguished a few indicators, which confirmed the influence of forgiveness on the development of general prosocial orientation: more frequent use of the pronoun "we" in verbal tasks; experiencing greater unity with others; a higher likelihood of donations to charity and the willingness to participate in volunteering activities. In line with the idea that motives arising in the specific interactions are not limited to these relationships, the authors claimed that the level of forgiveness could affect the individual's prosocial knowledge, his humanistic feelings and behavior, which are not related to the specific relationship.

In some research, forgiveness is considered one of personal traits. This approach allows scholars to relate it to other personal features and behavior (Peterson, Seligman, 2004). In particular, a recent study examined the two-way relationship between forgiveness and gratitude, as traits of adolescents' character, and between the observer's happiness and prosocial behavior in situations of bullying (García-Vázquez, Valdés-Cuervo, Martínez-Ferrer & Parra-Pérez, 2019). Studying a broad sample of 1000 adolescents across the broad age range (from 12 to 18 years), the

researchers found that there was a positive correlation between the proneness to forgive and the choice of prosocial assistance to the victim of bullying. The same relationship was found between the observer's prosocial behavior and his or her ability to forgive. Comparing the influence of general dispositional and situational factors on the forgiveness, the authors concluded that empathy, as a dispositional determinant, is weaker than the situational factors such as the level of violence and the features of apology.

**Purpose of the study.** In our study, we considered forgiveness a part of an individual's prosociality as, despite the motives underlying the process of making a decision to forgive, it resulted in prosocial activity and had psychologically positive outcomes for both partners. The present research aimed to clarify the prosocial nature of forgiveness by examining its relationship with other prosocial values, and explore the intercorrelation between an individual's proneness to forgive and dispositional factors such as emotional closeness to the target of forgiveness, the features of interpersonal strategy of behavior.

**Participants** The participants (N = 70) were 41 females and 29 males in their middle adulthood (the mean age =41.3). They were divided into two age-subgroups (30-39 years old) and (40-49 years old). They represented different professional groups (workers, lecturers, members of power structures, teachers) and had different level of education.

To achieve the aim of the present research, we used the questionnaire "Diagnostics of Moral Orientations" (edited by Slavinskaya, Nasledov & Dvoretzkaya, 2015). This personal questionnaire is designed to identify the features of an individual's general prosocial orientation. It provides an assessment of 13 moral values derived from the basic value - "goodness". It includes further values: Forgiveness, Help, Charity, Compassion, Empathy, Sympathy, Love, Thoughtfulness, Attentiveness, Sacrifice, Generosity and Mercy. The integrative "Moral Orientation Scale"(F 4) presents the personal importance of moral values manifestation towards other people based on emotional and territorial closeness. All the values are included into three subscales (F 1; F 2; F 3): "Empathy" (empathy, sympathy, benevolence, generosity, mercy); "Care" (attentiveness, thoughtfulness, love, sacrifice); and "Help" (compassion, charity, help, forgiveness). The "Empathy" factor, in accordance with methodological requirements, was considered the emotional component of moral orientation. The "Care" factor presents sacrificial, caring attitudes towards other people. Finally, the "Help" factor highlights the activity component – an individual's readiness for prosocial behavior. The respondents related each value to people of 7 different categories, according to their emotional closeness (relatives and close friends, acquaintances, people of the same nationality, residents of the same city, fellow citizens, strangers, enemies).

The proneness to forgiveness as a personal strategy and attitudes towards forgiveness were studied applying the Tendency to Forgive Scale adapted by Kononova & Pugovkina (2018). It contains 10 items divided into two scales: Tendency to Forgive (TTF) and Attitudes Towards Forgiveness (ATF). The questionnaire statements are relatively independent of the definition of forgiveness within any particular approach, and thus give the subjects the freedom to interpret the concept of forgiveness according to their experience. In our opinion, implementation of prosocial attitudes into real acts depends significantly on the dispositional phenomena such as empathy or the structure of interpersonal traits. To explore the features of correlation between forgiveness and dominant individual's strategy of interpersonal behavior, we used the "Diagnostics of interpersonal relationship", an adapted and modified variant of Leary's 128-item Interpersonal Check List (Sobchik, 2010). This approach allows to organize and assess the interpersonal behavior, traits, and motives.

**Results.** The analysis of the obtained results showed that people in their middle adulthood have proneness to based decisions about forgiving on their prosocial attitudes. The greatest unanimity was found in relation to the closest targets. The majority of respondents (80%) chose the highest rates of the scale (M = 4.3, SD = 0.87) to demonstrate prosocial tendencies towards relatives and friends. 58.6% of respondents pointed out that "it is very important to express it to this group of people" and 21.4% chose "it is important to express it to this group of people".

Table 1.

**Means and Standard Deviation for Targets Variable and Respondent's Attitudes Towards Forgiveness for Different Age Subgroups**

Groups of targets														
	Relatives and close friends		Acquaintances		People of the same nationality		Residents of the same city		Fellow citizens		Strangers		Enemies	
		<i>D</i>		<i>D</i>		<i>D</i>		<i>D</i>		<i>D</i>		<i>D</i>		<i>D</i>
30-39 y.o.	4.14	0.9	3.61	0.9	3.17	0.8	3.28	0.9	2.89	1.2	2.22	1.4	1.56	1.5
40-49 y.o.	4.39	0.8	3.58	1.1	3.19	1.2	3.47	1.0	3.17	0.9	2.58	1.6	1.97	2.1
Total	4.31	0.87	3.62	0.96	3.18	1.00	3.37	0.96	3	1.06	2.35	1.49	1.69	1.80

As we can see in Table 1 this unanimity decreases regarding other groups of targets. Forgiving the enemies was the most arguable decision. Higher standard deviation in this group demonstrates the existence of different and, sometimes opposite, respondents' attitudes towards this issue. Such difference in standard deviations among targeted groups led us to the applying the nonparametric tests to estimate the difference in people's attitudes regarding forgiveness towards these groups. Friedman one-way repeated measure analysis of variance by ranks revealed significant variation among targeted groups  $F_r = 246.7, p < .01$ .

Table 2.

**Between-Groups Differences in Respondents' Attitudes Regarding Forgiveness (via Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test)**

Groups of targets	Relatives and close friends	Acquaintances	People of the same nationality	Residents of the same city	Fellow citizens	Strangers	Enemies
Relatives and close friends	-						
Acquaintances	-4.674 <sup>a</sup>	-					
People of the same nationality	-5.761 <sup>a</sup>	-3.858 <sup>a</sup>	-				
Residents of the same city	-5.273 <sup>a</sup>	-2.789 <sup>a</sup>	-2.500 <sup>b</sup>	-			
Fellow citizens	-5.908 <sup>a</sup>	-5.312 <sup>a</sup>	-1.932 <sup>a*</sup>	-3.641 <sup>a</sup>	-		
Strangers	-6.780 <sup>a</sup>	-6.393 <sup>a</sup>	-5.368 <sup>a</sup>	-6.087 <sup>a</sup>	-4.897 <sup>a</sup>	-	
Enemies	-6.804 <sup>a</sup>	-6.651 <sup>a</sup>	-6.040 <sup>a</sup>	-6.307 <sup>a</sup>	-5.628 <sup>a</sup>	-3.836 <sup>a</sup>	-

a. Based on negative ranks.

b. Based on positive ranks.

Note: All rates are statically significant ( $p \leq .05$ ), except \*-  $p > .05$

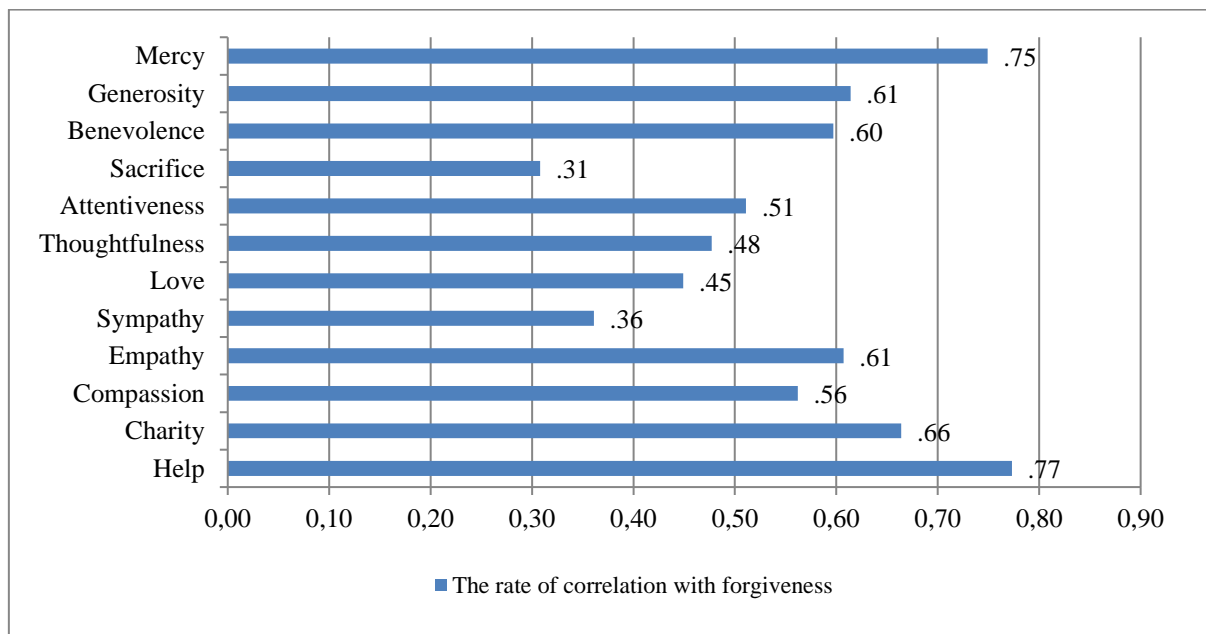
Post hoc analysis (via the Wilcoxon signed rank test) confirmed that attitudes towards all groups significantly differed except the groups representing the people of the same nationality and fellow citizens ( $T = 1.93, p = .053$ ). Mostly, all the respondents demonstrated prosocial tendencies in expressing importance of forgiveness towards those groups of people. Only 5.7 % of them chose the lowest option "we should not express forgiveness to them". Relatively high levels of the

appropriateness of prosocial types of behavior towards locals and people of the same nationality confirm the idea about the identity merger and considering people of these categories "psychological" relatives (Whitehouse H. et al., 2017). It was predictable that the groups named "strangers" and "enemies" would have low ranks of forgiveness. The percentage of people who are not ready to forgive them, increased significantly for both group of targets (20 and 44.3 % respectively). Similar tendencies were found among all social values included into the measurement. The factor of emotional closeness had a significant impact on the individuals' attitudes towards different groups of people.

The further issue was the influence of the age on the attitudes regarding forgiveness. One-way ANOVA confirmed the absence of significant differences between the age subgroups  $F(1,68) = 1.72$   $p > .05$ . Altogether, the results show that readiness to forgive does not depend on the subject's age-related features. However, the factor of emotional closeness to the target has a stronger impact on making a decision to forgive. The higher rates of the first group of targets express the existing moral obligation of prosocial treatment towards relatives and friends. It confirms the wide-known axiom of the decisive influence family and emotional relationships have on the nature of human social behavior.

Another important issue was whether attitudes regarding forgiveness correlate with other prosocial values and the features of interrelationship between them. Surprisingly, forgiveness was not treated as the most important prosocial value by the participants. It was ranked the seventh ( $M = 20.7$ ) by the first age-subgroup members and the eighth ( $M = 22.5$ ) by the second subgroup. As most important values the participants of both subgroups ranked Benevolence ( $M = 27.4$ ), Mercy ( $M = 26.3$ ) and Empathy ( $M = 25.4$ ).

This tendency highlights the normative basis of mature prosociality and the importance of empathy as dispositional determinant of interaction. Analyzing the relationship between forgiveness and other moral values, the high positive correlations were found between Forgiveness and Help ( $r = .773$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ) and the values which represented Empathy-subscale such as Mercy ( $r = .749$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). Moderate positive correlations were found with Charity ( $r = .664$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), Empathy ( $r = .607$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), Generosity ( $r = .614$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), Benevolence ( $r = .597$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). Low but significant correlations were found with Sympathy ( $r = .361$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ) and Sacrifice values ( $r = .308$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ).



**Figure 1. The rate of correlations between forgiveness and other prosocial values**

Further, we examined the impact of emotional closeness not only on forgiving but also on evaluating other prosocial values. That impact was found significant regarding all the values.  $F_r = 381.9$  ( $p \leq .01$ ).

According to previous research (Korchakova, 2018), adulthood is associated with the personally achieved stage of prosociality, which can vary from impulsive or inert forms to mature or even altruistic levels. At the mature level people value prosocial norms and tend to apply them to the wide social environment, regardless of the nature of the relationship, personal preferences and family closeness. In the present study the participants demonstrated acceptance and followed the rules of prosocial support and sympathy despite the ideological differences and confrontational positions with potential targets of assistance. Even towards enemies the mean rate of prosocial values did not go lower than 1.0 points.

Table 3.

*Means for Targets Variable and Prosocial Values*

Group of targets	Prosocial values												
	Forgiveness	Help	Charity	Compassion	Empathy	Sympathy	Love	Thoughtfulness	Attentiveness	Sacrifice	Benevolence	Generosity	Mercy
Relatives and close friends	4.1	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.6	4.7	5.0	4.8	4.9
Acquaintances	3.4	4.0	3.6	4.1	3.7	3.9	3.3	3.4	3.9	3.3	4.3	3.9	4.2
People of the same nationality	3.1	3.2	2.9	3.3	3.1	3.1	2.5	2.4	3.1	2.1	3.7	3.2	3.8
Residents of the same city	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.4	3.1	3.2	2.4	2.5	3.0	2.1	3.8	3.2	3.5
Fellow citizens	2.7	2.9	2.3	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.1	2.0	2.4	1.7	3.6	2.8	3.4
Strangers	2.1	2.6	2.3	2.8	2.3	2.6	1.6	1.5	2.0	1.4	3.3	2.5	3.2
Enemies	1.3	2.0	1.7	2.4	1.5	2.0	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.0	3.0	2.1	2.6

Considering the relationships between the different dimensions of forgiveness we found that the results obtained by the DMA questionnaire have a high level of congruence with the results of TTF and ATF scales ( $r = .66$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). However, this link is not equal for different scales if we consider them separately. It is important to understand that the individual's proneness to forgive, act prosocially towards other social objects, is not the simple equivalent of attitudes regarding forgiveness as a phenomenon.

Therefore, the results of the TTF scale represented the previous individual's experience of forgiving whereas the DMA scale actualized forgiveness as a general social value in an individual's system of moral attitudes. In this regard, the connection between the DMA and ATF scale is much stronger ( $r = .63$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ) than to the TTF scale ( $r = .41$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ). No gender- and age-related differences in proneness to forgive were found ( $F_{\text{gender}(1,68)} = 2.38, p > .05$ );  $F_{\text{age}(1,68)} = 1.35, p > .05$ ).

The interrelationship between an individual's proneness to forgive and the dominant strategy of interpersonal behavior was an important issue of the present research. The results showed that features of interpersonal attitudes could be considered significant dispositional determinants of people's tendency to forgive. Table 4 presents the variety of correlations between an individual's interpersonal traits and different aspects of proneness to forgive.

Table 4

**The Rates of Correlations Between Different Aspects of Forgiveness  
and Interpersonal Strategies**

Aspects of Forgiveness		Interpersonal strategy									
		Managerial – Autocratic	Competitive – Narcissistic	Aggressive – Sadistic	Rebellious – Distrustful	Self - Effacing – Masochistic	Docile – Dependent	Cooperative – Overconventional	Responsible – Hypernormal	General Dominance	General friendliness
<b>MA</b>	Forgiveness as a prosocial value	.421	.536	.372	.237	.274	.241	.248	.263	.328	.574
<b>TF</b>	Tendency to forgive	.150	.302	.434	.554	.229	.380	.382	.104	.299	.476
<b>TF</b>	Attitudes towards forgiveness	.301	.192	.007	.419	.373	.378	.405	.384	.167	.551
<b>Total score of proneness to forgive</b>		.400	.468	.333	.418	.246	.192	.381	.319	.193	.655

It was found that an individual's concept of forgiveness as a prosocial value had a moderate negative correlation with tendencies to compete, reject ( $r = -.53, p \leq .01$ ) and dominate ( $r = -.42, p \leq .01$ ). In spite of the expectations, the negative connection with open aggressive attitudes was rather weak and ( $r = -.37, p \leq .01$ ). General people's attitudes regarding forgiveness as a social phenomenon seemed to have moderate negative correlation ( $r = -.42, p \leq .01$ ) with rebellious, hurt, distrustful interpersonal tendencies and positive connection with cooperative attitudes towards other people ( $r = .40, p \leq .01$ ).

The most noticeable correlations between real experience of forgiveness represented by TTF scale and interpersonal strategies were found in rebellious ( $r = -.55, p \leq .01$ ) and aggressive ( $r = -.43, p \leq .01$ ) types of behavior. The weaker but also negative link was unexpectedly found regarding docile and even dependent mean of interpersonal behavior ( $r = -.38, p \leq .01$ ). The cooperative attitudes have moderate positive connection with the tendency to forgive. Altogether, only general friendliness strategy demonstrated noticeable correlation with different aspects of proneness to forgive, whereas the general dominance did not demonstrate significant link with tendencies to forgive.

Further, the participants were divided into four groups in accordance with the Leary's interpersonal circle: Dominant – Hate, Submissive – Hate, Dominant – Love, Submissive – Love to compare their tendencies to forgive. Due to the fact, that no participants were included into the Submissive – Hate group, only three groups were involved in comparison (Dominant – Hate group - 17.1 % of participants, Dominant – Love - 38.6% and Submissive – Love - 44.3%). We used ANNOVA to examine the influence of dominant interpersonal strategy on the proneness to forgive. It was found that those groups differed significantly only in their active aspect of forgiveness ( $F_{TTF}(2,67) = 9.22 (p \leq .05)$ ), whereas no differences were found in their prosocial attitudes towards forgiveness ( $F_{DMA}(2,67) = 1.97 (p > .05)$  and  $F_{ATF}(2,67) = 3.05 (p > .05)$ ).

**Discussion and conclusion.** Prosociality as a psychological phenomenon may occur in various forms and forgiveness, in terms of maintaining positive cooperative relationships, is one of them. An individual's orientation on the acceptance of an offender, reducing negative feelings

towards him, sympathy, taking into account the reasons of his behavior are the prosocial acts designed to sustain the important interpersonal relationship and give a relief to a partner. People in their adulthood are supposed to have mature strategies of interpersonal behavior which involves implementing the attitudes, based on the universal human values, and giving them transcendent meaning. Our results have shown that during this period of ontogeny, there are no age-related differences in prosocial attitudes regarding forgiveness, whereas emotional closeness is an important factor, which affects the proneness to forgive. More vivid tendency to forgive is demonstrated in the close social circle but people tend to express prosocial attitudes and readiness to forgive even towards their enemies.

Another dispositional determinant of the tendency to forgive is the dominant strategy of interpersonal behavior. It was found that different interpersonal strategies have connection with different aspects of an individual's proneness to forgive. Autocratic and competitive strategies correlate negatively with an individual's attitudes regarding forgiveness as a social value, whereas aggressive and rebellious tendencies have similar correlations with an individual's real experience of forgiveness. However, the general strategy of dominance, which included all strategies mentioned above, does not demonstrate a strong connection with an individual's proneness to forgive. At the same time, the general strategy of friendliness seems to have a significant correlation with all aspects of people's tendency to forgive explored in the present research. Nevertheless, the complicated nature of prosociality and forgiveness as phenomena, involved in establishing and maintaining the positive and meaningful human relationships and the features of intercorrelation between them, require the further study.

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## ПРОЩЕННЯ ЯК ПРОСОЦІАЛЬНИЙ ФЕНОМЕН

*Наукові матеріали готувалися до початку широкомасштабного вторгнення Російської Федерації в Україну. Результати дослідження вказують на високий рівень толерантності та миролюбності учасників опитування, що висвітлює сутність українського етносу та співпадає з його ментальною ідентичністю. На превеликий жаль, можна прогнозувати, що злочини, які вчиняють російські військові на теренах України, у найближчому майбутньому спровокують значні зміни в системі ціннісних установок не лише українців, а й інших народів світу. Представники навіть найбільш миролюбивих націй будуть змушені переглянути своє ставлення до ідеї прощення заради свого майбутнього та торжества справедливості.*

*Анотація.* В статті аналізується проблема взаємозв'язку прощення з просоціальною особистістю, системою її цінностей та домінуючою міжособистісною стратегією. На нашу думку, прощення є складовою просоціальної людини та значною мірою опосередковується рівнем емпатії, оскільки здатність пробачати передбачає врахування емоційних станів партнера, його переживань, демонструє повагу та ціннісне ставлення до Іншого. Крім того прощення зумовлює просоціальну активність особистості та має позитивні наслідки для обох партнерів.

*В дослідженні приймали участь 70 осіб (середній вік = 41,3, розподілені на 2 вікові підгрупи). Отримані результати показали, що готовність прощати не залежить від вікових*

*особливостей суб'єкта, тоді як емоційна близькість є важливим фактором, який впливає на схильність до прощення. Більш яскраво схильність прощати проявляється в близькому колі спілкування. Однак люди схильні виявляти просоціальне ставлення і готовність пробачити навіть щодо своїх ворогів. Крім того, було встановлено, що схильність особистості до прощення має тісний зв'язок із дружлюбністю як доміантною стратегією міжособистісних стосунків. Стратегії, пов'язані з домінуванням у міжособистісних стосунках, не продемонстрували статистично достовірного зв'язку зі схильністю до прощення.*

**Ключові слова:** прощення, просоціальність, просоціальні установки, стратегія міжособистісної взаємодії

*Стаття надійшла до редакції 28.04.2022 р.*