PROMOTING CONSCIOUS AND ACTIVE LEARNING AND AGING

HOW TO FACE CURRENT AND FUTURE CHALLENGES?

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DISPOSITIONAL FORGIVENESS AND GRATITUDE
AMONG OLDER PEOPLE

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Abstract
This work analysed whether the three factors of forgivingness observed in adults – lasting resentment, sensitivity to circumstances, and unconditional forgiveness – were also present in older people. In addition, it examined whether gratitude accounted for a significant portion of the variance of dispositional forgiveness beyond that of socio-demographic variables. The sample comprised one hundred and nine old people (65 women and 44 men, mean age = 70.3 years). The same three-factor structure that emerged in adults was also evidenced in older people. The expectation of (a) a negative correlation between lasting resentment, and gratitude, and (b) a positive correlation between unconditional forgiveness and gratitude was supported. Furthermore, results showed that gratitude explained a significant amount of variance of lasting resentment, and unconditional forgiveness.

Keywords: Forgiveness; Gratitude; Older people; Resentment.

A quick look at the handbook edited by Worthington (2005) is enough to demonstrate that, if much research has been performed among adults, by contrast the literature on older people is very scarce. Forgiveness is important to people of all ages; however, it seems that until recently researchers of forgiveness had prioritized college student participants

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