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The Role of Forgiveness in the Leadership Practices of Women Leaders in Higher Education
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Abstract

This study examined the use of interpersonal forgiveness in the leadership practices of women leaders in higher education. Six women, with senior level administrative positions in a large public university, were interviewed and asked a range of questions regarding their use of forgiveness in leadership practices. Responses from participants were grouped together using cross-case analysis to discover meaning and interpreting themes. The interview guide sought to elicit a common definition of forgiveness, examined the use of forgiveness, and identified steps in the process of forgiveness in leadership practices. The evidence is that the participants in the study defined forgiveness as choosing and making a decision to reduce negative thoughts, such as blame and anger. Recognizing the problem, identifying the nature of the problem, and addressing the problem were identified as key steps in the process of forgiveness. Growth producing experiences and improved relationships are cited as additional benefits. Working through conflict in a positive manner is a primary reason that the women studied utilized forgiveness in their leadership practices. Modeling the behavior and mentoring others are additional approaches used to demonstrate the purpose and meaning of forgiveness. All participants identified mentoring as an important relationship and described a mentor as one who exhibited and used some aspect of the principles of forgiveness in their leadership practices. Additionally, females were said to utilize forgiveness more often than males. The reason given for this was that females are seen as being more interested in maintaining relationships than are men. The study also provides some general insights into actions and behaviors associated with the exercise of forgiveness in leadership practices within the workplace.

The Role of Forgiveness in the Leadership Practices of Women Leaders in Higher Education

While there is an abundance of research on forgiveness and women leadership practices (Butler, 1997; Enright, Eastin, Golden, Sarinopoulos, & Freedman, 1992; Helgesen, 1990; McCullough & Worthington, 1994b), few studies have examined the specific use of forgiveness in the leadership practices of women leaders.

Recently, specific theoretical principles of forgiveness have been applied to conflict resolution and to the restoration of relationships in organizational leadership practices (Butler, 1997; Enright, Gassin,

Longinovic, Loudon, 1994; Levin, 1992; Nelson, 1992). According to Bradfield, Aquino, and Stanwyck (1997), forgiveness is another response to organizational conflict and restoration of relationships. Given the problematic nature of revenge, forgiveness may be a significant alternative to holding onto one's anger, or acting on one's anger in an organizational leadership environment (Butler, 1997). Forgiveness offers an avenue to reconcile individuals who are experiencing the bitterness of interpersonal hurts and injustices (McCullough & Worthington, 1994a). Little attention has been given to the individual characteristics of leaders who employ forgiveness in response to conflict in the workplace (Butler, 1997; McCullough & Worthington, 1994a), thus using forgiveness as a strategic leadership practice.

As leadership paradigms are re-examined, it is becoming clear that leadership is inherently complex (Burns, 1978; Gatteau, 2000). Some researchers argue that some aspects of female leadership are not only unique, but also better than traditional male-dominated models of human development (Bales, 2000; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982). In contrast to traditional leadership behaviors, some researchers assert that women leaders bring greater benefits to organizations than men in the leadership practices exhibited (Bales, 2000; Gatteau, 2000). According to Billing and Alvesson (1993), "Women look at problems in a different way. They can point to different models for solving problems. They also have intuition" (p. 130). Women also tend to focus on care and concern for others, building relationships, and communicating and resolving conflicts (Belenky, et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982). Similarly, Gilligan (1982) and McCullough and Worthington (1994b) proposed that forgiveness principles may be used as a problem solving strategy in organizational leadership practices. Therefore, it is implied that women may tend to use forgiveness as a problem solving strategy. The relationship between forgiveness and women's leadership practices remains largely unexplored. This study expands our understanding of this relationship by exploring and describing the use of forgiveness in the leadership practices of women leaders in higher education.

Methodology

This paper is based on research using a qualitative case study research design to examine and describe the relationship between forgiveness and leadership practices. The study subjects were selected from a large public university using the following criteria: (a) a minimum of 20 years of experience in higher education, (b) supervisory experience, (c) history of extensive committee work, (d) high visibility as leaders within the institution, and (e) high level of professionalism and administrative contributions to the university community. Merriam (1998) suggests that a case study methodology is appropriate when researchers are interested in "insight, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing" (p. 29). The interview questionnaire consisted of fourteen questions conducted for the first interview, lasting approximately 1 hour, and eleven questions conducted for the second interview, lasting 30 to 45 minutes (see Appendix A). Each respondent was instructed to provide answers strictly from personal experience and work-related applications to the research questions. Three interview techniques were used: retrospective, structured, and semi-structured, as outlined by Fraenkel and Wallen (1996). These techniques proved useful in collecting evidence of past actions taken by the six subjects when utilizing the principles of forgiveness in leadership practices. The subjects reflected and responded to the interview questions based on their past leadership experiences and practices.

Defining Forgiveness

Prior to 1980, there were relatively few studies of forgiveness within psychology or other social sciences. One reason for this is that forgiveness has traditionally been associated with religion and philosophy (Enright, Eastin, et al., 1992; McCullough & Worthington, 1995; Pingleton, 1997). While the concept of forgiveness is accepted and practiced in the fields of psychology and the practice of psychotherapy, there is still some confusion or inconsistencies as to the definition(s) of forgiveness (Enright, Eastin, et al., 1992). In addition, the diversity of definitions has made it difficult to arrive at a common understanding of the

practices associated with forgiveness and application of the term to leadership practices (Enright, Eastin, et al., 1992; McCullough & Worthington, 1994b; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997).

Denton & Martin (1998) identified forgiveness as an inner process which, without the request of the other, releases negative feelings and no longer seeks to return hurt. This process is said to bring physical, psychological, and emotional benefits. Ferch (1996) defined forgiveness as ceasing to feel angry or resentful toward someone.

Forgiveness has also been defined as releasing resentment toward an offender (Hargrave, 1994); an emotive change away from anger with behavioral and cognitive components (Brandsma, 1982); abandoning negative and increasing positive thoughts, feelings, and behavior toward the offender (Gassin & Enright, 1995); giving up the right to hurt the offender (Pingleton, 1997); not retaliating and wishing the offender well (Rosenak & Harnden, 1992); willingly pardoning without demanding restitution (Wahking, 1992); and, anecdotally, as a way of life (Jones-Haldeman, 1992).

Leadership and Forgiveness

Although a few general models of leadership theory (e.g. transformational, psychological, and trait theories) have been proposed and studied, no single theory fully explains the inherent complexities of the leadership framework. Two studies, using extrapolations from psychological, theological, and counseling research, suggested a direct correlation between the uses of forgiveness in leadership practices.

Nelson (2001) suggested strategies for utilizing forgiveness in leadership practices. Forgiveness results in freedom for the forgiver. "Whether or not you discuss the issue with your colleague, you become free from resentment," which is painful (p. 8). The leader provides guidance and direction for others.

When, as a leader, you forgive, you implicitly establish a climate of compassion, a place where everyone feels free to try new things, make mistakes - and relax. If others know that you utilize forgiveness in your leadership practices this reassures people that they can come to you as the leader with problems, challenges and mistakes. (Nelson, 2001, p. 8)

The leadership lesson of forgiveness simply "offers us all a way to learn from and move on" (p. 9). Huggins (2000) described six leadership strategies for cultivating forgiveness as follows:

- Acknowledge and ask forgiveness for wrongdoings as soon as they are brought to your attention. Regularly acknowledging our own failures and asking others for forgiveness are the only ways we can retain the moral authority and respect to lead others.
- Never grant yourself the privilege to withhold forgiveness or hold onto resentments toward anyone who has wronged you, no matter how private it may be.
- Use your teaching and example to build an environment among your people that makes it safe for them to talk honestly about their struggles and seek help. By our teaching and example we [leaders] create for our people either a shame-based environment or a grace-based environment.
- When offenses occur among your people show them how they can use forgiveness in tangible ways to help each other experience redemption and restoration. Every time an offense occurs in our community, it is one of the greatest avenues we have for mentoring others. It provides opportunity to deal with the psychological and theological problems in our people's hearts.
- Never turn a blind eye toward any wrongdoing going on among your people, no matter how much conflict it may create.

- Train people in your organization, who have made the forgiveness journey themselves, to be ready and available to act as guides for others who are having trouble forgiving. Every community needs a team like this in order to experience widespread forgiveness by each other. The need for forgiveness work among any group of people is too extensive for any leader to manage. Equipping others to help in this work must always be a priority. (p. 14-16)

Findings

The women, each of whom had a minimum of 20 years of experience in higher education, had been selected on the basis of their (a) supervisory experiences, (b) history of extensive committee work, (c) high visibility as leaders within the institution, and (d) high level of professionalism and contributions to the university community. Information, such as departmental unit, positional level or title, years employed at a large public university, ethnicity, or age, was not reported to protect the identity and maintain the confidentiality of the participants.

The findings are organized into five distinct categories designed to clearly define the association and application of forgiveness in leadership practices. The five categories are (a) definitions of forgiveness, (b) practical principles of forgiveness, (c) forgiveness as an enhancement of workplace environment, (d) inspiring others to utilize the principles of forgiveness, and (e) other findings.

Definitions of Forgiveness

As the participants in the study responded to the questions related to thoughts and definitions of forgiveness, common themes emerged. Four participants indicated that when they hear the term forgiveness they think of compassion, moving forward, reestablishing broken relationships, and making a decision to reduce negative thoughts, such as blame and anger. The remaining two participants said that their thoughts gravitated to the Divine when they entertained thoughts of forgiveness. One woman described her thoughts on forgiveness in terms of God "forgiving us for our sins. God would not forgive us if we are unforgiving of others" (Participant 2). The other participant viewed forgiveness as "coming from a divine place, forgiving others is a case of divine forgiveness as God forgiving us and ultimately feeling a sense of goodness" (Participant 6).

Four participants identified compassion and moving forward as the key themes associated with the term forgiveness. One stated, "When I hear the term forgiveness, I think of compassion and the ability to move on regardless of what happened in the relationship" (Participant 1). Another participant commented, "When I hear the word forgiveness, I think of having compassion for others; understanding and mutual respect, and moving forward" (Participant 3). A third participant echoed the same thoughts, "When I hear the term forgiveness, I think of compassion, letting go, being free from anger and retaliation and moving forward" (Participant 4). Finally, participant five stated, "when I think of forgiveness, I think of moving on with the situation, reestablishing a connection that may have been broken" (Participant 5).

One participant stated, "I think of God's divine intervention and love and the compassion shown for us by his forgiving us of our sins" (Participant 2). In addition, another participant reflected, "When I think about forgiveness, I think that the motivation to forgive comes from a divine place, therefore a feeling of goodness comes from the action along with relief and resolution" (Participant 6). The significance of spirituality and/or religious themes and motivations in the responses of the participants is perhaps worth studying in more detail. The religious thrust of the many of the participants' associations with forgiveness is possibly related to the religious convictions of the individual participants and would be worth testing in a comparative attitudinal study, perhaps looking at expressions of forgiveness in "sacred" and "secular" communities. However, such a study fell outside the scope of the present study.

Beyond the religious connotations reflected in many of the responses, other themes were expressed. The

ability to release or "letting go" was an important one. In this sense, forgiveness was seen as a form of cathartic release. As one participant stated, "I define forgiveness as the ability to let go of anger and hurt, even if the other person doesn't apologize" (Participant 1). Another reflected,

I define forgiveness as loving a person enough to let go [of anger]. When they hurt you, you love them enough to pray for them and be able to move on. Sometimes that means you move forward in a positive relationship, and sometimes it means you move forward without the other person because they can't get past it [anger]. (Participant 2)

Participant 3 stated, "I define forgiveness as letting go of the hurt and anger toward someone who has hurt you" (Participant 3). Finally, participant 4 stated,

I define forgiveness as letting go of the anger and moving forward. It [forgiveness] is the strengthening of relationships that would otherwise be damaged and forgiveness is the only thing that enables human beings to stay in relationships with each other for very long and work together.

In summary, analysis of the data revealed several recurrent themes among the participants. Four out of six participants had thoughts of compassion and moving forward to the reestablishment of broken relationships. The data also revealed several themes among the participants' definitions of forgiveness. Four participants defined forgiveness as choosing to make a decision to reduce negative thoughts, such as blame and anger. Table 1 outlines the emergent themes found among the six participants.

Table 1

Thoughts and Definitions of Forgiveness

Concepts	Themes	Frequency
Hearing the term forgiveness	Compassion	4
Definitions of forgiveness	Moving forward	4
	Release of negative emotions	

Practical Principles of Forgiveness

When asked how they identified forgiveness in their leadership practices, five participants described being able to move beyond anger and reestablish a relationship with the offender. Additionally, one participant cited giving the offender another chance.

Five participants identified forgiveness in their leadership practices by continuing to work with others they perceived to have offended them. Participant 1 emphasized,

I know that I am using forgiveness in my leadership practice when I am hurt by someone and I can continue working with him again without the anger. I can forgive myself and move beyond the hurt and resentment and move forward with forgiveness and a positive relationship.

Similarly, another participant stated, "I am using forgiveness in my leadership practices when I am able to work in a positive way with someone who has hurt me and I am able to move beyond the anger" (Participant 3). Participant 2 furthered commented,

I use forgiveness when I move forward by reconnecting with the other person and whatever project we are working on. I must have been successful because several people have told me that I have a positive leadership style and that I work well with others.

One participant asserted, "I am using forgiveness when there has been a conflict or an issue that has arisen that creates conflict or hard feelings, you decide that you have to move on and don't hang on to that [hurt]" (Participant 5). Another participant agreed, "I am using forgiveness when I can move on and don't hang on to the anger" (Participant 4).

When the women were asked to describe the forgiveness process and the steps that occur in this process, threads of similarity emerged. All six women agreed that the steps in the process should include recognition of the problem, identification of the nature of the problem, and addressing the problem. Participant 6 described her approach extensively:

The forgiveness process is a set of conditions existing within a unit when the leader has the respect of her/his staff, models fairness and understanding, and empowers staff through a mutual agreement of how the unit operates. Steps involved in the forgiveness process to me are:

- Recognizing there is a problem
- Assessing the nature of the problem
- Determining who is involved
- Notifying those involved in the problem
- Requesting assessment of problem from all involved
- Discussing the problem and its ramifications (not the people but the problem)
- Discussing how the problem can be avoided in the future
- Creating an environment that will allow those involved to take responsibility and make apologies for the situation
- Developing necessary mechanism(s) to decrease the likelihood of a reoccurrence of the situation (i.e. policy, staff activity, staff development project, etc.). (Participant 6)

An analysis of the data revealed several themes. Five participants identified the use of forgiveness as moving beyond the anger in order to reestablish relationships. All six participants stated that they utilized forgiveness by allowing others to make mistakes and understanding lessons learned from making mistakes. Five participants identified working through conflict in a positive manner as the reason they utilized forgiveness in their leadership practices. All six participants described situations in which they demonstrated forgiveness in their leadership practices by extending forgiveness in different contexts and situations.

Four participants stated that they forgave others when it was necessary and warranted and when the same mistake had not been repeated. Three participants identified the circumstances under which they first utilized forgiveness in their leadership practices as working through issues. Finally, all six participants described the forgiveness steps and process as recognition of a problem, identification of the nature of the problem, and addressing the problem with the other person. Table 2 outlines the practical themes found among the participants.

Table 2

Practical Principles of Forgiveness

Concepts	Themes	Frequency
Identifying forgiveness	Moving beyond anger	5
How do you utilize forgiveness	Re-establishing relationships Allowing mistakes	6
Why do you utilize forgiveness	Lessons learned Working through conflict in a positive manner	5
Demonstrated the use of forgiveness	Extended forgiveness in different contexts and situations	6
Forgiveness and under what circumstances	Necessary and warranted	4
First time using forgiveness	Mistake not repeated Extending forgiveness by working through issues	3
Steps in the forgiveness process	Recognizing problem Identifying nature of problem Addressing problem	6

Enhancement of Workplace Environment

When asked how they would describe their feelings or reactions to the subject of forgiveness, five participants described feelings of relief and an understanding that relationships could be influenced in a positive way. The final participant described being angry with herself because she let the situation get out of control. Participant 6 summed up her feelings thus:

- Relief that a problem has been resolved;
- Improved understanding of how another operates;
- Strengthening of existing bond;
- Misunderstanding of forgiver as weak or someone who can be gotten over on;
- Improved growth and development of a staff person.

When asked about the benefits of forgiveness, two principal themes emerged. These were a growth-producing experience and the improvement of relationships. Five participants expressed painful growth producing experiences and improved relationships. The remaining participant commented that holding on to anger inhibits a leader's ability to practice leadership.

The following statements are representative of the descriptions received from all five participants:

Forgiveness allows me to grow as a person, and as a professional - you learn from painful experiences and therefore, you have to let go and move forward. You cannot remain in the anger because it takes a lot of energy. I think when forgiveness comes I make a decision to move forward with an improved relationship. (Participant 1)

Participant 2 made a related comment, "Forgiveness allows me to once again have hope in the human race.

Forgiveness involves experiencing hurt and anger. In order to move forward in an improved relationship, I must use forgiveness."

Participants 3 and 4 reflected similar thoughts concerning the benefits of forgiveness. "Forgiveness allows me to learn from some pretty bad experiences and move forward to what you hope is an improved relationship with the other person. I could not be an effective leader without forgiveness because it makes me a better person" (Participant 3). Similarly, Participant 4 stated,

With forgiveness, I am a better person and a more effective leader, who is seen as human. I am also seen as a person who has learned from my experiences, I have learned from them to move forward by becoming a better person and with improved future relationships.

Participant 6 offered this insight,

The primary benefit for me is growth producing because I learn from the experiences. In addition, it [forgiveness] is growth producing for the other person because he/she leaves the experience with an understanding of what forgiveness is because you have forgiven him/her. This person learns from this process and thus, will leave with some understanding of leadership.

When asked how the utilization of forgiveness impacted their university, five women identified positive working relationships as a theme. One woman stated that the impact of utilizing forgiveness allowed her to accomplish things that would not have been accomplished before (Participant 5).

Analysis of the data revealed several themes among the participants in terms of their personal enhancement and impact on workplace environment. Five out of six participants described release from anger and development of understanding that they said impacted relationships in a positive way as a feeling associated with forgiveness. The data also revealed that growth producing experiences and improved relationships emerged as common themes among five of the participants. Five participants identified positive overall working relationships that teach others as a theme that impacted their university in a positive way. Table 3 outlines the emergent enhancement of workplace environment themes found among the six participants.

Table 3

Enhancement of Workplace Environment

Concepts	Themes	Frequency
Feelings/reactions associated with forgiveness	Relief from anger	5
	Understanding impacts relationships in positive ways	
Benefits of forgiveness	Growth producing experiences	5
	Improved working relationships	
Impact on university	Positive overall working relationships teach others	5

Inspiring Others to Utilize the Principles of Forgiveness

When asked how they demonstrated to others the purpose and meaning of forgiveness, all six participants

described leading by example. Additionally, all six participants identified modeling the behavior and mentoring others as important approaches used to demonstrate the purpose and meaning of forgiveness.

When asked what actions they had taken to set personal examples of utilizing forgiveness, modeling the behavior by demonstrating forgiveness emerged as a similar theme. All six participants demonstrated forgiveness through their actions. The following statements are representative of all six participants.

I model the appropriate behavior in situations where the staff will have the opportunity to observe me extending forgiveness to others. There have been some situations where I have been angry, but I try to control the anger and work through the situation, especially where the staff is concerned. This may mean that it may take me a day or two, and in one situation, it took me two weeks. (Participant 1)

When asked what they would say in teaching someone about forgiveness, release of hurt, anger, and resentment; moving forward; and personal growth emerged as themes for five out of six of these women. One participant offered,

Forgiveness is giving others a second chance since we are in the business of developing students. You are able to release hurt feelings and resentment. Forgiveness is a process of moving forward and learning from your mistakes, and you become a better person. (Participant 4)

Participant 6 concurred, "Forgiveness is a benefit. You learn from your mistakes through personal and professional growth and development. I think forgiveness becomes an asset to organizational efficiency when it is utilized in leadership practices."

Final analysis of the data revealed two themes among these participants when demonstrating to others the purpose and meaning of forgiveness. All participants identified modeling the behavior and mentoring others as approaches used to demonstrate the purpose and meaning of forgiveness. The data also revealed modeling the behavior as a recurrent theme among five of the participants in setting a personal examples.

Encouraging others to extend forgiveness by working through conflict emerged as a similar theme for all six participants when asked what actions they had taken to enlist the support and participation of others in utilizing forgiveness in resolving conflict. For five participants, release of hurt, anger, and resentment; moving forward; and personal growth emerged as themes that would be utilized if they were asked to teach someone about forgiveness.

Table 3

Inspiring Others to Utilize Principles of Forgiveness

Concepts	Themes	Frequency
Demonstrated and articulated to others the purpose and meaning	Modeling the behavior	6
	Mentoring others	
Setting personal example	Modeling behavior by demonstrating forgiveness	5
Actions taken to enlist support	Working through conflict by	6
	extending forgiveness	
Challenged others to test own	Similar approaches in different	3

choice to forgive	contexts	
Actions taken to help understand and establish forgiveness	Encouragement to continue working with others	3
Teaching about forgiveness	Release of hurt/anger/resentment	5
	Moving forward	
	Personal growth	

Other Findings

Analysis of the data revealed two emergent themes among these participants when asked to describe some of the disadvantages of utilizing forgiveness. All six participants believed that others may perceive the use of forgiveness as a weakness. In this context, knowing when and presumably when *not* to utilize forgiveness emerged as important themes. The data also revealed that all six participants strongly believed that the forgiveness process was applicable to other non-academic work environments.

The data also revealed that four out of six participants identified biblical and moral themes when articulating their concept of forgiveness. In other words, these participants utilized forgiveness because they believed either that it was morally right or biblically based. Further, all participants identified having a mentor as important when identifying a person who utilized forgiveness. In addition, the data revealed that five out of six participants, when asked how they learned to utilize forgiveness, identified learning from mentors as critical. Five out of six participants, when ask if females utilized forgiveness more than males, said yes. The articulation was that females utilized forgiveness more than males because women were felt to be more interested in maintaining relationships. Finally, when asked if there were other issue(s) related to forgiveness that they would like to mention, four out of six participants maintained that forgiveness should be utilized in leadership practices. Table 5 outlines the other emergent themes found among the six participants.

Table 5

Other Findings

Concepts	Themes	Frequency
Disadvantages of utilizing forgiveness	Perceived as a weakness	6
Forgiveness utilized in other environments	When to use forgiveness Applicable to all work environments	6
Biblical based or morally right	Biblical based therefore morally right	4
Identify person utilizing forgiveness	A mentor	6
Learn to utilize forgiveness	From mentors	5
Females utilize forgiveness	Females more than males because of maintaining relationships	5
Other findings	Forgiveness usage in leadership practices	4

Conclusions

The major conclusions of this study are:

- Women define forgiveness as choosing and making decisions to reduce negative thoughts such as blame and anger. This finding is congruent with previous research by Denton and Martin (1998). Although these women defined forgiveness as making a decision to reduce negative thoughts, caution should be used when generalizing about forgiveness being defined in leadership practices as cited because a consistent definition of forgiveness is not reflected in the literature (Enright, Eastin, et al., 1992).
- Recognizing the problem, identifying the nature of the problem, and addressing the problem are important steps in the process of forgiveness. This finding is congruent with other previous research (Enright and the Human Development Study Group, 1991; McCullough, & Worthington, 1995; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997).
- Growth producing experiences and improved relationships were cited most often as benefits of utilizing forgiveness. This conclusion is supported by previous research models on the stages of forgiveness (Butler, 1997; Fitzgibbons, 1986; Freedman & Enright, 1996; McCullough & Worthington, 1994a). Additionally, Christ (1994) concluded, "Personal growth comes from self-knowledge and from learning how self-knowledge affects actions and relationships" (p. 133).
- All participants identified a mentor as a person who utilized forgiveness, and observing mentors is cited as how the participants learned to utilize forgiveness. This finding mirrored the conclusions of other studies on mentoring (Chliwniak, 1997; Graumann & Moscovici, 1986; Kanter, 1977; Kram, 1985).

Participants, when asked if females utilized forgiveness in their leadership practices more than males, believed that females utilized forgiveness more because females were interested in maintaining relationships. This finding is similar to that reached in previous research (Bales, 2000; Belenky, et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982).

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Appendix A

Interview Guide #1

1. When you hear the term "forgiveness," what thoughts come to mind?
2. How do you define "forgiveness"?
3. How do you identify forgiveness in your leadership practices?
4. How do you utilize forgiveness in your leadership practices?
5. Why do you utilize forgiveness in your leadership practices?
6. Describe a situation in the past month or so in which you demonstrated the use of forgiveness in your leadership practices?

7. When do you forgive and under what circumstances do you forgive?
8. Think about the first time you utilized the process of forgiveness in your leadership practices.
 1. Briefly describe the context in which the forgiveness process occurred.
 2. How did the other person(s) respond to your forgiveness practice?
9. How would you describe the forgiveness process and the steps that occur in the process?
10. How would you describe the feelings or reactions associated with forgiveness?
11. How do you describe the benefits of forgiveness in your leadership practices?
12. In what ways do you think the utilization of forgiveness in your leadership practices impacts the university?
13. Do you think the process of forgiveness that you utilize in this environment (higher educational institution) can be used in other environments (for example in a hospital or business environment)?
14. Do you utilize forgiveness in your leadership practices because it is morally right, or is it biblical based?

Interview Guide #2

1. Identify a person whom you judge to utilize forgiveness in their leadership practices?
2. How did you learn to utilize forgiveness in your leadership practices?
3. How have you demonstrated and articulated to others the purpose and meaning of forgiveness in your leadership practices?
4. As a leader, what actions have you taken to set personal examples for utilizing forgiveness for those you are leading?
5. What actions have you taken to enlist the support and participation of others in utilizing forgiveness in resolving conflict?
6. Describe a time when you challenged others to test their own choice to forgive in their leadership practices.
7. What actions have you taken to help others to understand and establish the practice of forgiveness?
8. If you were going to teach someone about the forgiveness process, what would you share?
9. How would describe some of the disadvantages of utilizing forgiveness in your leadership practices?
10. In your opinion, do you think females use forgiveness in their leadership more than males?
11. Is there any other issue related to forgiveness that you would like to address at this time?

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