

Handout 7.6: Quick Test: What Is Your Forgiveness IQ?

It's not easy to forgive when you feel slighted or wronged, yet we know that the inability to forgive causes us to hold on to bitterness and negativity. For some, forgiving oneself for past actions and choices proves to be the most challenging of all. It is important to keep in mind that forgiveness is a choice and reflects a conscious decision. The first step is to identify the essential elements of forgiveness, which can provide a basis for focusing on the areas that need most attention. The key to interpret your score is on the next page.

For the following 10 questions, rate each item from 1 to 10 to find your "forgiveness IQ."

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Strongly Agree

- _____ I will not forgive people if they are not sorry and admit what they've done.
- _____ Those who have wronged or slighted me but take no responsibility for hurting me do not deserve to be forgiven.
- _____ I find that my inability to forgive leaves me stuck thinking about what happened in the past.
- _____ I can't forgive because I don't want to condone bad behavior.
- _____ A difficulty in forgiving makes it hard for me to trust others.
- _____ It's hard to forgive, because forgiving means letting people off the hook and makes them no longer accountable.
- _____ Forgiveness is something that you just feel, not a trainable skill.
- _____ Since there is nothing I can do about things now, I tend to keep things in and don't share my hurt with others.
- _____ If I forgive, that means I will be vulnerable again, and I need to protect myself.
- _____ I can't forgive myself for past mistakes, choices, and failures.

Total Score: _____

The Forgiveness Solution

How did you do? The lower the score, the better your forgiveness IQ. The following is a rough guideline for interpreting your score:

15 or lower	You are a forgiveness genius! Congratulations!
16–29	Strong forgiveness competency. You have given yourself the gift of forgiveness and stay positive.
30–49	Moderate forgiveness competency. You have some work to do on becoming less negative and stuck in past resentments.
50–69	Moderate forgiveness impairment. A difficulty with forgiveness has limited your ability to stay positive and live fully in the present.
70–84	Severe forgiveness impairment. Consider seeking professional help to give yourself the gift of forgiveness.
85–100	DANGER ZONE! A lack of forgiveness impairs your mental health. Consider seeking psychological help.