

HFS

Directions:

In the course of our lives negative things may occur because of our own actions, the actions of others, or circumstances beyond our control. For some time after these events, we may have negative thoughts or feelings about ourselves, others, or the situation. Think about how you **typically** respond to such negative events. Next to each of the following items write the number (from the 7-point scale below) that best describes how you **typically** respond to the type of negative situation described. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be as open as possible in your answers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Almost Always False of Me		More Often False of Me		More Often True of Me		Almost Always True of Me

- ___ 1. Although I feel badly at first when I mess up, over time I can give myself some slack.
- ___ 2. I hold grudges against myself for negative things I've done.
- ___ 3. Learning from bad things that I've done helps me get over them.
- ___ 4. It is really hard for me to accept myself once I've messed up.
- ___ 5. With time I am understanding of myself for mistakes I've made.
- ___ 6. I don't stop criticizing myself for negative things I've felt, thought, said, or done.
- ___ 7. I continue to punish a person who has done something that I think is wrong.
- ___ 8. With time I am understanding of others for the mistakes they've made.
- ___ 9. I continue to be hard on others who have hurt me.
- ___ 10. Although others have hurt me in the past, I have eventually been able to see them as good people.
- ___ 11. If others mistreat me, I continue to think badly of them.
- ___ 12. When someone disappoints me, I can eventually move past it.
- ___ 13. When things go wrong for reasons that can't be controlled, I get stuck in negative thoughts about it.
- ___ 14. With time I can be understanding of bad circumstances in my life.
- ___ 15. If I am disappointed by uncontrollable circumstances in my life, I continue to think negatively about them.
- ___ 16. I eventually make peace with bad situations in my life.
- ___ 17. It's really hard for me to accept negative situations that aren't anybody's fault.
- ___ 18. Eventually I let go of negative thoughts about bad circumstances that are beyond anyone's control.

HFS Scoring Instructions

Four scores are calculated for the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS):

Total HFS (items 1-18)

HFS Forgiveness of Self subscale (items 1-6)

HFS Forgiveness of Others subscale (items 7-12)

HFS Forgiveness of Situations subscale (items 13-18)

To score the HFS:

1. Scores for items 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, & 18 are the same as the answer written by the person taking the HFS. Scores for items 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 are reversed. For example, an answer of 1 is given a score of 7 and an answer of 7 is given a score of 1. Refer to the tables below for more information about scoring individual items.
2. To calculate the Total HFS, HFS Forgiveness of Self, HFS Forgiveness of Others, and HFS Forgiveness of Situations, sum the values for the items that compose each scale or subscale (with appropriate items being reverse scored). Scores for the Total HFS can range from 18 to 126. Scores for each of the three HFS subscales can range from 6 to 42.

Scoring

Items 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, & 18

Person's Answer	Item Score
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7

Reverse-Scoring

Items 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, & 17

Person's Answer	Item Score
1	7
2	6
3	5
4	4
5	3
6	2
7	1

Interpreting HFS Scores

The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) is an 18-item, self-report questionnaire designed to assess a person's dispositional forgiveness (i.e., one's general tendency to be forgiving), rather than forgiveness of a particular event or person. The HFS consists of items that reflect a person's tendency to forgive him or herself, other people, and situations that are beyond anyone's control (e.g., a natural disaster).

Four scores are calculated for the HFS. There is a score for the Total HFS and a score for each of the three HFS subscales (HFS Forgiveness of Self subscale, HFS Forgiveness of Others subscale, and HFS Forgiveness of Situations). Scores for the Total HFS can range from 18 to 126. Scores for the three HFS subscales can range from 6 to 42.

Total HFS

One's score on the Total HFS indicates how forgiving a person tends to be of oneself, other people, and uncontrollable situations. Higher scores indicate higher levels of forgiveness, and lower scores indicate lower levels of forgiveness.

- **A score of 18 to 54** on the **Total HFS** indicates that one is usually unforgiving of oneself, others, and uncontrollable situations.
- **A score of 55 to 89** on the **Total HFS** indicates that one is about as likely to forgive, as one is not to forgive oneself, others, and uncontrollable situations.
- **A score of 90 to 126** on the **Total HFS** indicates that one is usually forgiving of oneself, others, and uncontrollable situations.

HFS Subscales

One's score on the three HFS subscales indicate how forgiving a person tends to be of oneself (HFS Forgiveness of Self), other people (HFS Forgiveness of Others), or situations beyond anyone's control (HFS Forgiveness of Situations). Higher scores indicate higher levels of forgiveness, and lower scores indicating lower levels of forgiveness.

- **A score of 6 to 18** on **HFS Forgiveness of Self, HFS Forgiveness of Others, or HFS Forgiveness of Situations** indicates that one is usually unforgiving of oneself, other people, or uncontrollable situations, respectively.
- **A score of 19 to 29** indicates that one is about as likely to forgive as to not forgive oneself, other people, or uncontrollable situations, respectively.
- **A score of 30 to 42** indicates that one is usually forgiving of oneself, other people, or uncontrollable situations, respectively.

Citing the HFS

The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) was first developed in 1998, and the current version was finalized in 1999. In 2003, the HFS was published in *Positive Psychological Assessment: A Handbook of Models and Measures* in a chapter by Laura Y. Thompson and C. R. Snyder. In 2005, Thompson et al. published an article in the *Journal of Personality*. The 2005 article included the HFS and a series of six studies regarding the psychometric properties of the HFS. Either source can be cited for the HFS. The article contains the psychometric data.

HFS Citations and Abstracts

Thompson, L. Y., & Snyder, C. R. (2003). Measuring forgiveness. In Shane J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.), *Positive psychological assessment: A handbook of models and measures* (pp. 301-312). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.

In this chapter, we explore the differences and similarities among seven self-report measures of the granting of forgiveness and the conceptualizations of forgiveness on which those measures are based. Although all of these measures assess a person's propensity to grant forgiveness, there are substantial differences among the measures and among the conceptualizations of forgiveness that these measures were designed to assess. The authors' Heartland Forgiveness scale is appended.

Thompson, L. Y., Snyder, C. R., Hoffman, L., Michael, S. T., Rasmussen, H. N., Billings, L. S., Heinze, L., Neufeld, J. E., Shorey, H. S., Roberts, J. C., & Roberts, D. E. (2005). Dispositional forgiveness of self, others, and situations. *Journal of Personality*, *73*, 313-359.

Six studies regarding forgiveness are presented. The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS), a self-report measure of dispositional forgiveness (with subscales to assess forgiveness of self, others, and situations) was developed and demonstrated good psychometric properties. Forgiveness correlated positively with cognitive flexibility, positive affect, and distraction; it correlated negatively with rumination, vengeance, and hostility. Forgiveness predicted four components of psychological well-being (anger, anxiety, depression, and satisfaction with life); forgiveness of situations accounted for unique variance in these components of psychological well-being. Forgiveness and hostility demonstrated equivalent, inverse associations with relationship duration, and forgiveness accounted for unique variance in relationship satisfaction, even when controlling for trust. Forgiveness level correlated positively with decreased negativity in statements written about transgressions in the present versus the past tense.