

The First International Conference on Forgiveness and Forgiving within an Inter/Intra Cultural  
Perspective  
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**Lifetime abuse, old age and forgiveness from an intercultural lens.**

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**Abstract**

The study of lifetime abuse is emerging as an important theoretical and practical perspective in which knowledge from various areas of research such as child abuse, domestic violence and elder abuse intersect. In addition, the long-term outcomes of victimization reiterate the need for a life course perspective for better understanding the web of violence. Evidence shows that some victimized population groups who underwent forgiveness processes, reported salutary effects in dealing with harsh experiences. Old age is characterized by reflection and retrospective examination of the multiple meanings of various life experiences in general and life-time abuse in particular. This involves questions about the place and role of forgiveness in the reflective process. The aim of the presentation is to examine the interplay between lifetime abuse, forgiveness, and old age among Israeli Jews and Arabs.

A brief review of literature about forgiveness in old age was performed. This critical analysis of the available evidence was supported by secondary analysis of qualitative data from previous studies performed by the authors.

The findings included three major themes: (1) The dimensions of the forgiveness process: The victim as subject (2) Between lost forgiveness and hope: Being a victim and /or victimizer (3) The road to self-forgiveness and the aging self.

The theoretical advantages of including the dimension of forgiveness to self and others were discussed. It was argued that from a practice perspective, forgiveness may have the salutary effect of enhancing resilience and as such improve psychosocial wellbeing in late life.