Chapter 1

UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN MORAL EMOTIONS AND BEHAVIOR

David M. Cimbora
Rosemead School of Psychology, Biola University

Daniel N. McIntosh
Department of Psychology, University of Denver

ABSTRACT

Despite intensive societal efforts to address antisocial behavior through treatment and punishment, high crime rates remain a major societal problem. For interventions to be successful at the societal and individual level, an understanding of processes that influence the likelihood of individuals behaving antisocially is necessary. Specifically, research must attempt to identify factors that influence morality – the discrimination of right from wrong and behaving accordingly. To understand such behavior, psychology has recently focused on the role of emotion in the development of moral and immoral behavioral patterns. This chapter begins by reviewing the literature on affect and moral behavior, with specific attention to guilt, shame, and empathy. We posit that certain emotional responses to behavior increase the likelihood of future prosocial activity, whereas other emotional responses increase the potential for antisocial behavior. We found that guilt and empathy are typically reported to have positive associations with prosocial behavior. Moreover, lower levels of guilt and empathy are associated with higher levels of antisocial behavior. Shame does not typically result in higher levels of prosocial behavior, but rather results in unhealthy outcomes (e.g., pathological symptoms). Within the context of this literature, we review our work that has focused on the development of the Affective Morality Index (AMI), which is designed to assess affective-based morality. With the AMI, we examined emotional responses (guilt, fear, excitement, happiness, and anger) to vignettes of antisocial acts. The AMI discriminated between offender and non-offender populations, and findings suggested that it might explain significant variance in recidivism. Finally, we examine the evolution of research on affective morality, including a discussion of the relations between affective morality, quality (closeness) of relationship, and the act of seeking forgiveness. Directions for future research include 1) the moral implications of "non-moral" emotions, 2) the impact
of quality of relationship on moral emotion processes, moral behavior, and forgiveness, 3) a more thorough examination of the relation between forgiveness and moral emotions, including characteristics of transgressions and the act of seeking forgiveness, and 4) attention given to both between-person and within-person differences of moral emotion process.

"IT CAN’T BE WRONG WHEN IT FEELS SO RIGHT"

Despite the precedence Debby Boone gave to emotional bases of morality in the above song lyric (Brooks, 1976), the psychological scientists who began studying morality in the same era focused on cognitive processes. As described below, however, by the 1990’s substantial interest in affective factors in morality was evident in the research. What role do feelings have in determining what is wrong or right? In the present chapter, we review the research on moral emotions, describe some of our own work indicating the importance of affect in antisocial behaviors, and recommend some promising areas for future research. Although much of the research has focused on prosocial emotions and behaviors, we also emphasize work exploring the role of emotions in antisocial behavior. Indeed, the importance of understanding the emotional processes involved in morality is underscored, we argue, by the extent and costs of antisocial behavior.

Antisocial behavior continues to be a major problem in society (Loeber & Farrington, 2000). Law enforcement agencies in the United States made an estimated 13.7 million arrests in 2002, with over 620,000 for violent crime (Uniform Crime Reports, 2002). This problem involves not only adults but juveniles as well. There were almost 2.3 million arrests of minors in 2001 alone, constituting 17% of violent crime and 30% of property crime (Snyder, 2003). Although there has been a small decrease in overall number of arrests over the past several years, both the number and proportion of crimes committed by juveniles remains high. The scope of this problem has not gone unnoticed by mental health systems, which have attempted to address these issues through both prevention and intervention programs. The success of such programs, however, is predicated in part upon targeting the factors that influence the development of not only antisocial behavior patterns, but prosocial ones as well.

One factor that has received increasing attention in the psychological literature has been morality. We define morality as the discrimination of right from wrong and behaving accordingly, a definition which is congruent with other researchers’ conceptualizations (e.g., Pizarro, 2000; Hoffman, 2000; Tangney, 2002). Baumeister and Exline (1999) add an important interpersonal focus by proposing that morality is a significant adaptation that helps to facilitate relationships; its function is to “enable people to live together in harmony” (p.1166).

The original focus of empirical psychological research on morality was on cognitive factors. Kohlberg’s (1969) cognitive-based theory of moral development helped make this topic accessible to the social sciences (Devries, 1991), and it has been arguably the most significant influence in the psychological study of morality. Kohlberg emphasized the use of moral reasoning (cognitive-based problem solving) to determine right from wrong, with particular focus on rules, laws, and principles. Basing his moral reasoning theory in a Piagetian framework, Kohlberg (1969) conceptualized a three-tiered, six stage theory of moral reasoning (two stages per tier). Using this framework, one could assess the level at
which people understood and adhered to the guiding principles (e.g., justice, equality and reciprocity of human rights, and maintenance of the social order) that constitute Kohlberg’s understanding of morality.

Although most of the early empirical efforts examining moral behavior were based on Kohlberg’s (1969) work, some scholars have heavily criticized his theory. Kohlberg’s research initially was conducted with only male participants, and his scoring schema was also developed from male responses (Muuss, 1988). Gilligan (1982) argues that his research reflects a gender bias, and that female moral development emphasizes principles other than the ones described above. She goes on to assert that two moral "voices" may exist: the Kohlbergian voice, reflecting a stereotypical "male" process of reasoning, and the alternative voice of care, concern, sensitivity, and connectedness that is more reflective of a "female" reasoning process. Whereas Gilligan’s criticisms focus on issues of gender bias, Fraenkel (1976) argues that Kohlberg’s theory is culturally biased. He argues that the type of morality Kohlberg’s theory addresses is not universal. Furthermore, Fraenkel questions the assertion that higher-stage reasoning is morally superior to lower stage reasoning.

In part because Kohlberg (1969) framed morality as a question of reasoning using principles, critiques originally focused on types of reasoning and choices of principles. However, we believe that the most striking limitation of Kohlberg’s work is the diminished and sometimes nonexistent role of affect in his theory of moral development. This limitation is not surprising when one explores the philosophical roots that underlie Kohlberg’s theories. Kohlberg’s work was heavily influenced by Kantian philosophy, which argues for the irrational nature of emotion (Pizarro, 2000). Eventually, Kohlberg (1984) himself conceded that his theory might not adequately ascribe enough importance to emotion in the development of morality. Even with all these limitations, Kohlberg’s work remained the preeminent theory of moral development for several decades.

In response to what appears to be an over-reliance on cognition and an under-recognition of affect, more recent psychological researchers have focused significant attention on the role of emotion in morality (e.g., Blasi, 1999; Gibbs, 1991; Hoffman, 1982a). Eisenberg (2000) reports that a substantial body of research linking affect to moral behavior has been developed since the early 1990’s. In the next section, we provide a brief review of this research as the basis for our own work. We define affective morality simply as the role that emotions play in both helping individuals determine right from wrong and ultimately in behaving accordingly. Note that we do not argue that an understanding of moral thought and behavior can be achieved without reference to cognitive processes and cognitive morality; indeed such an exclusive focus would be as incomplete as an exclusively cognitive view of morality.

**AFFECT AND MORAL BEHAVIOR**

The process of affective morality results in the promotion of moral thought about a behavior, moral behavior itself, or both. We emphasize that this perspective does not require that the emotion first prompt moral cognitions that then lead to moral behavior. Although this is one possible route of influence, it is not the only one. Emotional reactions can directly influence behavior, causing a person to behave morally without need for an intervening process of moral reasoning. That is, affective morality may directly cause a person to behave
in a moral way (i.e., a way defined as moral in the person’s socio-cultural context) without any conscious decision on the person’s part to behave morally. Indeed, the most successful socialization may rely heavily on individuals behaving in socially-defined moral ways because it feels right or good to them, not because they intellectually assent to the rightness or goodness of the behavior.

When examining the role of emotion in moral processes, one quickly recognizes that the preponderance of the psychological literature focuses on what are often termed the moral emotions. Some debate exists as to which emotions are most intimately connected to moral processes, but researchers typically list three: guilt, shame, and empathy (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000; Harris, 2003; Van Stokkom, 2002). Note that whereas guilt and shame are typically recognized as emotions, the construct of empathy has previously been identified as a process, more specifically a complex combination of both cognition and affect (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000). We maintain that empathy is best understood as this complex process. Nonetheless, we agree that the empathic process can often lead to the experience of emotion (e.g., sympathy, as discussed below), and that affective processes (e.g., socially-induced affect, McIntosh, Druckman, & Zajonc, 1994) can themselves be precursors to empathy as described as a moral emotion. Due to these connections, and because recent literature labels empathy as a moral emotion, we include empathy with the moral emotions of guilt and shame in this review.

Before turning to a detailed discussion of emotions and morality, we believe it is important to note that this research, not surprisingly, has focused on social outcomes stemming from individuals’ emotional reactions to behaviors, thoughts, or situations. Implicit in this work is a positive valuing of prosocial outcomes. In some cases, there may be intrapersonal or psychological costs to emotional propensities that are not directly addressed by the literature on emotion and morality, or that are the focus of other research literatures on these same social-emotional processes. For example, high levels of moral emotions may be psychologically draining or limiting to an individual, even as this individual tends to show high levels of prosocial and low levels of antisocial behaviors. It may or may not be the case that emotional responses that lead to prosocial behaviors have concomitant psychological costs; more research on internal and external outcomes of these processes is necessary. Ultimately, it is a matter of values (and moral emotions and cognitions) as to whether it is “good” or “bad” for an emotion to lead to prosocial behavior at the cost of discomfort or dysfunction on the part of the person experiencing the emotion; such a discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter. Here, we focus on research connecting emotional processes with moral outcomes. However, any application of this knowledge should be done with a wider consideration of all the costs and benefits.

**Guilt**

Across disciplines such as philosophy and theology, guilt has a long history of being implicated as a critical influence in the development of morality. In psychology, the importance of guilt was introduced through Freud (1923/1960). In Freudian psychoanalytic theory, guilt typically follows the experience of unacceptable libidinal wishes or impulses. In this sense, guilt serves as, in the least, a prohibitive warning, or in the extreme, a form of self-punishment proffered by the super-ego. As a result of the warning or punishment, libidinal urges are repressed. From the psychoanalytic perspective, this repression is not typically
viewed as health inducing; rather such repression can result in psychological distress and adjustment problems (Eisenberg, 2000; Hoffman, 2000).

Contemporary theories, particularly from social and developmental psychology, see guilt more adaptively linked to moral process. Guilt is often viewed as an affective response to the conflict between one’s behavior, or contemplated behavior, and the internalized norms or rules that the individual, social network, or society has deemed appropriate. Ferguson, Stegge, and Damhuis (1991) argue that the antecedent of guilt is the failure to live up to "internalized standards of conduct" which have a "moral or imperative character" (p. 828). Furthermore, Hoffman (1970) describes guilt as "a conscious experience that follows the violation of an internalized norm" (p.288). The guilt experience is described by Kochanska and colleagues as being vital for the development of conscience (Kochanska, 1991; Kochanska, Padavich, & Koenig, 1996). Finally, Tangney has been one of the leading voices in the recent literature on guilt. She (Tangney, 2002) describes guilt as “tension, remorse, and regret over the bad thing done” (p.99). In this definition, she emphasizes that guilt results from a focus on a specific act or behavior, as opposed to a global focus on the self.

Taken together, the research speaks to guilt being a consequence of norm-violating behavior. However, guilt can also be experienced in regard to a behavior before it is actually committed. In other words, cognition about a potential future behavior may result in a guilt response. In addition, Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton (1994) describe guilt experience without actual transgression, citing survivor guilt, inequity-based guilt (receiving rewards that others do not), and victim guilt. An example of the latter would be child abuse victims who blame themselves following their victimization. Similarly, guilt can result from simply thinking that one has committed a transgression, even though one has not. Hoffman (2000) refers to this as “virtual guilt” and indicates that this is extremely common in interpersonal relationships. Thus, it is surprising that the area of virtual guilt has been relatively ignored in the current literature. It is all the more surprising when one considers the likely link between virtual guilt and common clinical syndromes such as depression. For example, it would not be uncommon for depressed individuals to articulate that they feel guilty “all the time,” even if they have not done anything “wrong.” We believe virtual guilt is an area worthy of more investigation.

Ferguson et al. (1991) describe the affective components of guilt. Guilt is often associated with feelings of agitation, worry, anxiety, and tension. The researchers go on to report that when people feel guilty, they often desire to confess and escape simultaneously, mimicking an approach/avoidance reaction. It may follow that people choose moral behavior in the hopes of avoiding these aversive emotional experiences. Regardless of the underlying motivations, the research is clear that guilt is commonly seen as a precursor to positive or prosocial behavior.

**Guilt and Prosocial Behavior**

Guilt has typically been associated with prosocial behavior (e.g., Estrada-Hollenbeck & Heatherton, 1998). Prosocial behavior has been defined as behavior that results in benefits for another (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). Hoffman (1994) found that guilt responses to projective story completion items were, in most cases, followed immediately by attributions of reparative actions to the main story characters. Often, characters were also described as
striving to be more altruistic after their experience of guilt. These findings suggest that people perceive guilt as motivating positive or moral actions. Hoffman also notes that the relation between guilt and altruistic behavior has been shown with adults (e.g., Freedman, Wallington, & Bless, 1967; Regan, Williams, & Sparling, 1977).

Tangney has also examined directly the relation between guilt and prosocial emotions and behaviors. She (1991; 2002) demonstrated that empathic responsiveness was related to proneness to guilt. Tangney argues that the empathic experience requires a differentiation between self and other. Because guilt comes from a focus on behavior as opposed to the self, Tangney argues that guilt also requires a differentiation between self and behavior. She posits that both guilt and empathy “hinge on a robust capacity for differentiation” (p.605, 1991).

Hoffman (1991) argues that guilt typically develops from empathy, in what he terms the “discipline encounter.” In this encounter, parents help a child recognize the distress they have caused another, thereby fostering an empathic response. Next, the parents help the child recognize his or her culpability for the distress, which in turn fosters feelings of guilt and remorse. Through the internalization of this process, the experience of guilt becomes more automatic. While the relation between guilt and empathy appears robust, testing Hoffman’s developmental theories is an area in need of further research.

Empirical findings from the child literature lend further support for the relation between guilt and prosocial behavior. Ferguson, Stegge, Miller, and Olsen (1999) found that children who experienced scenario-based guilt (guilt stemming from situations in which the children realized their culpability for a wrong act) also showed ability to take responsibility for actions and expressions of concern for the victims. This finding is consistent with other researchers’ demonstrations of the adaptive functions of guilt in children (e.g., Bybee & Quiles, 1998; Hoffman, 1982b).

One of the more promising sets of findings in the child literature can be found in Tangney and colleague’s Longitudinal Family Study of moral emotions and prosocial behaviors (Tangney & Dearing; 2002). In this study of 380 children, data were collected at three time points, from 5th grade to age 19. Guilt-proneness in the 5th grade was positively associated with applying to college and working in community service. Guilt-proneness was negatively associated with suicide attempts, drug use, likelihood of arrest, and sexual promiscuity.

The adult literature also contains examples of prosocial associations with guilt. Baumeister, Stillwell, and Heatherton (1995) found that following interpersonal transgression, the experience of guilt was related to expressions of apology, confession, and changing subsequent behavior. Furthermore, Baumeister et al. (1994) reported that guilt serves a relationship enhancing purpose (it motivates people to treat others well and to avoid transgressions). Baumeister and Exline (1999) state that “guilt drives people to act in virtuous ways” (p.1103).

Together, these data are suggestive of a consistent prosocial result from guilt. However, the research in this area is still young. Possible factors that may lead to both guilt proneness and prosocial behavior may account for an association, with guilt not being a causal factor. For example, it may be that certain parenting styles (an emphasis on or high valuing of moral behavior, for example) may cause a child both to experience more guilt and to engage in more prosocial behaviors. Further research that specifies and documents causal mechanisms is needed.

Although these results suggest an adaptive nature of guilt, there is also evidence that guilt, or some types of guilt, can be maladaptive. Eisenberg (2000) notes that measures that
Understanding the Link Between Moral Emotions and Behavior

Hat people feel relation Vallington, emotions related to identification to the self, She posits 1991). In terms the they have the child of guilt and ones more Hoffman’s on between at children the children for actions researchers’ tiles, 1998; in Tangney behaviors time associated negatively unity with guilt. Inscription, changing it serves a d to avoid in virtuous t. However, it proneness usual factor.ing of moral age in more mechanisms is evidence that ensures that focus on a guilt response for a specific behavior, as in the studies cited above, are more likely to be measuring guilt that is non-ruminative and typically resolvable. This type of guilt is typically associated with prosocial behavior and healthier outcomes for individuals. Bybee and Quiles (1998) assert that guilt that is chronic and “unattached to an immediate precipitating event” (p.272) is more likely to lead to psychological symptomatology. The psychoanalytic description of guilt that results in repression is also considered to have unhealthy outcomes. Coming from this orientation, Narramore (1984) defines guilt as a “reaction ...over the disparity between who we are (and how we act) and who (or how) we think we ought to be” (p. 27). He offers that this guilt, in contrast to a health producing “godly sorrow” or true guilt, results in “self-punishment, self rejection, and a sense of shame, disesteem, or inferiority” (p. 27). Others report that dispositional guilt, which is often referred to as shame, typically has been reported to be maladaptive and related to externalizing problems. A brief discussion of this construct of shame will follow.

Shame

Through Tangney’s work primarily, the place of shame in the discussion of moral emotions has been brought to center-stage. Tangney (1991; 1998; 2002) argues that shame and guilt have previously been used interchangeably, and although she acknowledges that both are self-relevant emotions that occur in response to transgressions, she also makes strong distinctions between the two. Other researchers have helped to substantiate these distinctions (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000; Ferguson et al., 1999; Lewis, 1971; Proeve & Howells, 2002).

In Tangney’s work, shame is typically defined as an extremely painful emotion. Furthermore, shame is “a negative evaluation of the global self” (p.99, 2002). In contrast, guilt is seen as a less intense emotional experience. Perhaps more importantly, the target of the guilt experience is a behavior as opposed to the self-focus implied in shame. To further clarify in differentiating the two, is the wrongness centered on the behavior (guilt) or the person (shame)? The distinction can be seen in the italicized emphasis in the statements, “I did something wrong” (shame – I am wrong) versus “I did something wrong” (guilt – I did wrong). This distinction has important implications for experiences of the self, concomitant emotions, and subsequent behavior. Often, shame involves an experience of worthlessness and powerlessness. Furthermore, the behavior following the emotion of shame is often to withdraw, hide, or ideally to disappear. On the other hand, guilt, while clearly a negative emotional experience, still leaves one’s self relatively undamaged. Following the experience of guilt, one is typically left with agency and motivation to engage in reparative activity.

Whereas guilt has been seen to be related to prosocial behavior, shame has often been linked to negative outcomes. Tangney and Dearing (2002) noted that shame-proneness assessed in the fifth grade was predictive of suspension from high school, substance use, and suicide attempts. Ferguson et al. (1999) report that shame, or shame when it is fused with guilt, leads to more pathological symptoms in young children. As with the data on guilt, these data on shame should motivate studies allowing consideration of reasons for the association. Here, again, culture or parenting could lead to higher propensities to experience both shame and negative outcomes.

Although the vast majority of literature supports the distinctions between shame and guilt, other views on the roles of shame and guilt do exist. Harris (2003) argues that the
“differences between guilt and shame may be overstated” (p.457). It may be that on a 
conceptual level shame and guilt differ, but on an experiential or phenomenological level, 
they are typically tied. Harris indicates that in his sample, shame and guilt were not as 
distinguishable as previous literature indicated. He argues for a complementary relation of 
shame and guilt, whereby a transgressor feels both guilt for the action and a kind of negative 
self-evaluation. It should be mentioned that Harris’ findings follow an earlier study (Wicker, 
Payne, & Morgan, 1983) in which participants were asked to describe and then rate shame 
and guilt experiences across 68 items. They report that participants’ descriptions and ratings 
of shame and guilt were consistent with emotion theorists in making important distinctions 
between the two. For example, participants described shame as more “in incapacitating or 
overpowering,” and entailing more self-consciousness. However, some commonly held 
distinctions by theorists were not supported by participants’ ratings (e.g., participants did not 
report greater alienation when ashamed). Furthermore, the authors found that of the 68 items, 
only six total distinctions between the emotions of shame and guilt were made by raters. 
Distinctions between shame and guilt, when they were made, were not large in absolute 
magnitude, raising the possibility that participants tended to see guilt and shame in fairly 
similar ways. Finally, Harder, Cutler, & Rockart (1992) assessed relations between shame, 
guilt, and pathology in a sample of college students and found that guilt and shame were 
equally associated with symptomatology.

Some of the discrepancies across findings appear to be due to methodological 
differences, in particular the way that shame and guilt are operationalized and the methods 
used to assess them. Baumeister et al. (1994), like Tangney (1991; 1998; 2002) indicate that 
guilt and shame are often used interchangeably in the literature, which likely contributes to 
some of the confusion in the research. The Wicker, Payne, & Morgan (1983) study suggests 
that participants may also see guilt and shame as similar emotional experiences, requiring 
careful specificity on the part of researchers investigating these constructs. Finally, studies of 
shame and guilt should consider the role of culture in the experience, likelihood, and function 
of shame and guilt propensities; further, researchers should examine how outcomes of shame 
and guilt may, even within the United States, differ in association with such variables as 
ethnicity, gender, religion, and age.

Empathy

Empathy has a long history in the discussion of moral processes. However, the research 
has been plagued by a lack of consistent operational definitions (Rotenberg, 1974; Miller & 
Eisenberg, 1988; Koestner, Franz, & Weinberger, 1990). However, more recently, the field 
has come to a general consensus that empathy consists of component processes. Specifically, 
affective and cognitive processes have been emphasized as important aspects, and both have 
received considerable attention in the literature (e.g., Eisenberg, 2000; Eisenberg & Miller, 
1987; Koestner, et al., 1990; Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972; Shechtman, 2003). One question to 
address is whether cognitive empathy (knowing what the other is feeling) and emotional 
empathy (feeling what the other is feeling) have different prosocial or antisocial outcomes.

Definitions of empathy that address cognitive processes place an emphasis on the 
identification of or the understanding of the feelings of another individual (Pecukonis, 1990). 
Cognitive definitions indicate that empathy does not necessarily involve the actual experience
of the emotion of another. Dymond (1949) argues that through this understanding, one can accurately predict the other's thoughts and feelings. Neutrality and detachment on the part of the empathizing person are viewed as aiding in predictive accuracy.

Kohler (1969) and Dymond (1949) both have focused on the ability to cognitively put oneself in another's position, namely the process of perspective-taking or role-taking. Many researchers have equated perspective-taking with cognitive empathy. A distinction, however, should be made between the two. The former refers to the ability to make inferences about others' capabilities, attributes, expectations, reactions, and feelings (Muuss, 1982). Cognitive empathy can be understood as a subset of perspective-taking, specifically referring to inferences made about another's emotional state. Thus, the process of cognitive empathy requires the ability to take the perspective of another.

Although the cognitive perspective attempts to explain the process of understanding another's feelings, it does not account for all aspects of the empathic process. Many theorists have argued that to experience empathy, one must not only understand the emotion of another, but experience it as well (e.g., Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Hoffman, 2000). This conceptualization of empathy marked a shift from the previously held ideals of neutrality and detachment in cognitive empathy. Mehrabian and Epstein (1972) defined empathy as a "vicarious emotional response to the perceived emotional experiences of others" (p.525). Indeed, the emotional response the observer experiences may not be mediated by cognitive or conscious processes (McIntosh et al., 1994). Researchers have typically stressed the importance of sharing the general emotional tone or valence of the other, instead of emphasizing the exact emotional match (Barnett, 1987; Hoffman, 2000; Thompson, 1987), especially as the empathizing person is necessarily in a different situation from the observed other and likely has (potentially self-relevant) emotional reactions to the other's emotions beyond an empathic one (McIntosh et al., 1994). For example, one may feel empathic sadness at another's grief from loss of a spouse, and also feel relief that one's own spouse is alive, fear from the increased salience of the possibility of loss of one's own spouse, or some combination of these emotions. Affective empathy can occur despite some slight inaccuracy in the perception of another's emotional state, and may be only part of what the empathizer feels.

Another term, sympathy, is pertinent to the discussion of empathic responding. Sympathy refers to "an emotional response stemming from the apprehension or comprehension of another's emotional state or condition, which...consists of feelings of sorrow or concern for the other" (p. 672, Eisenberg, 2000). Typically, sympathy is seen as either a more specific component of empathy or a potential consequence of empathy for one in distress. It is often associated with a desire to alleviate the other's distress (prosocial response). Wispe (1986) differentiates sympathy from empathy by defining the former as a "heightened awareness of the suffering of another person" with a desire to alleviate that suffering (p.318).

**Empathy and Prosocial Behavior**

A great deal of research has focused on the positive relation between empathy and prosocial behavior. Eisenberg-Berg (1979) states that "empathic responding plays an important role in the early development of a prosocial orientation" (p. 136). Eisenberg, Miller, Shell, McNalley, and Shea (1991) found modest evidence to suggest cognitive and affective
empathy are related to prosocial behavior in adolescence. Furthermore, Eisenberg and Miller (1987) conducted a review and meta-analysis of studies investigating prosocial behavior and empathy, finding low to moderate correlations between these variables (e.g., Meltzoff & Campos, 1972; Iannotti, 1985; Eisenberg-Berg & Mussen, 1978). These correlations held across all types of empathy measures, with the exception of picture/story measures, which are often used with young children and have questionable validity. Most measures that yielded significant results concerned affective empathy, although a few concerned both cognitive and affective empathy. Although across studies the relation is low to moderate, some studies find strong associations. For example, Pecuckonis (1990) found a strong positive relationship between empathy (defined as involving both cognitive and affective components) and ego development, which he defined in part as nonego-centric thinking, reciprocity, and interdependence in relationships. One area for future research is identification of the conditions under which the relations are strong—does strength of association depend on sample characteristics such as age or gender, on operationalizations or methods (e.g., self report, experimental, longitudinal), or some other moderating factors?

Many (e.g., Plutchik, 1987; Batson, 1990; Hoffman, 1981) have agreed that empathy has its roots in evolutionary adaptation and has been selected for over time. This theory has led to efforts (e.g., Batson, 1990; Hoffman, 1994) that highlight the correlation between empathy and altruism, typically considered a specific form of prosocial behavior. Batson (1990) defines altruism as "the view that we are capable of valuing and pursuing another person's welfare as an ultimate goal" (p.336). He goes on to argue for an empathy-altruism hypothesis, namely that the "ultimate goal of empathically aroused helpers is to increase the welfare of the person for whom they feel empathy" (p.344). Eisenberg and Miller (1987) indicate that such behavior is performed without the expectation of gaining rewards or avoiding punishment. Hoffman (1981) argues that empathy acts as a mediating mechanism of altruism, which in turn, produces motivation to help others. Buckle, Siegel, and Ness (1979) found that children aged three to eight who showed altruistic behavior also showed elevated scores on a measure of cognitive empathy.

**Other Moral Emotions**

Although the majority of research in the area of the moral emotions has focused on guilt, shame, and empathy, current research is exploring the possibility that other emotions or constructs related to emotions contribute to the moral process. In this section, we explore two of these, namely gratitude and self-control.

McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, and Larson (2001) raise the question of whether gratitude is a moral affect. They offer a variety of theorist's understandings of gratitude, all of which tend to describe gratitude as a joyful emotion following a recognition that one has received a benefit from another, and that the other has expended significant resources in the process. They then argue that gratitude serves three moral functions. The first is that gratitude serves as a "moral barometer." In this way, gratitude is sensitive to particular changes in one's social relationships, changes that result from one being benefited by another. Simply put, higher levels of gratitude are typically experienced as the benefit and sacrifice provided by the other is greater. The second moral function gratitude serves is as a "moral motive." When one experiences being benefited by another (the receiver of a prosocial act), one is more inclined to do something for others in return (the giver).
bergs and Miller's behavior and... Mehrabian & correlations hold seres, which are
es that yielded th cognitive and some studies find reationship onents) and ego reciprocity, and tion depend on methods (e.g., self
that empathy has theory has led to between empathy... Batson (1990) another person's nism hypothesis, se the welfare of 1987) indicate that ards or avoiding unism of altruism, less (1979 found ded elevated scores
s focused on guilt, other emotions or n, we explore two estion of whether of gratitude, all of notion that one has sent resources in the first is that gratitude particular changes in oy another. Simply sacrifice provided a "moral motive," antisocial act), one is more motivated to behave prosocially. The authors distinguish gratitude from indebtedness, with the former being a positive experience and the latter having an unpleasant affective quality. The third moral function is as a "moral reinforcer." An expression of gratitude is seen to be reinforcement for future prosocial actions, in that a benefactor who is thanked is more likely to be a benefactor again. The authors conclude that empirical research supports gratitude as a moral barometer and as a moral reinforcer, but few empirical studies have investigated the question of moral motive.

Although not an emotion itself, self-control, like empathy, is an emotion relevant process linking affect and moral behaviors. Baumeister and Exline (1999) posit that the foundation for virtue or morality in an individual is self-control. Their assertion is that many "problematic behaviors involve self-control failures, whereas the majority of positive virtues are based on high and effective self-control" (p.1171). The authors go on to describe self-control as the "moral muscle." In an interesting examination of the Seven Deadly Sins, such as gluttony, lust, and envy, they point out that a common characteristic is a failure to inhibit desire or impulse. They also note that self-control is typically involved in affect regulation, and that without it, damaging behavior is more likely to occur. Thus, self-control in its relation to affect regulation is connected to the emotional sphere. Furthermore, the authors connect guilt and self-control, in that guilt is seen as an emotion that motivates people to utilize self-control in the future. In this way, self-control is seen as a partner to guilt in the moral process.

These two topics are in their infancy in the moral emotion literature, and more research is needed to clarify their place. As the research on the role of moral emotions expands, we can expect to see more efforts examining previously ignored processes such as gratitude and self-control. As the scope and popularity of emotion-based approaches increase, however, there is a risk of the definition of moral emotions becoming so broad that it loses connection to the affective domain. As research progresses in this area, it is of course important to carefully and consistently operationalize terms. Moreover, delineation of the inter-relations of the concepts is needed. The questions to keep in mind are which emotions play a role in morality, and what processes cause and are influenced by these emotions.

Thus far, we have examined the moral emotions and their relations with prosocial behavior. Of particular interest to us, however, are the potential contributions of moral affect in antisocial behavior. Within the context of the discussion of moral emotions, we now turn our focus to affective factors that lead individuals to act in antisocial ways.

**AFFECT AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR**

Antisocial behavior has long been recognized as a major societal problem. Mental health professionals have grouped the most severe antisocial behavioral patterns into diagnostic categories, such as Conduct Disorder and Antisocial Personality Disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Others (e.g., Achenbach, 1993; Loeber, 1990) have articulated theories and presented evidence for the development of antisocial behavior. Earlier examinations of the relation between morality and antisocial behavior focused on cognitively-based moral reasoning theory (e.g., Blasi, 1980; Nelson, Smith, & Dodd, 1989; Smetana, 1990). Of particular relevance to this chapter are emotional factors that contribute to antisocial behavior. If guilt is, in fact, a moral emotion that leads one to act in prosocial ways,
then it is easy to speculate that the absence of guilt might lead one to act in antisocial ways. We begin with an investigation of this topic.

Guilt and Antisocial Acts

Due to an emphasis on understanding the development of antisocial behavior, a significant amount of research on guilt has focused on child and adolescent populations. In one of the earliest studies, Ruma and Mosher (1967) found that guilt was positively correlated to moral judgments in delinquent youth, but as no comparison group was measured, it is unclear whether guilt levels were higher or lower than among non-delinquent youth. Two decades later, Arbuthnot, Gordon, and Jurkovic (1987) argued that guilt scales often lacked discriminant validity for delinquents and nondelinquents.

A promising effort has been put forth by Sagi and Eissikovits (1981). Participants were given various hypothetical stories concerning dilemmas with both prosocial and antisocial solutions. They were asked how the protagonist would solve the dilemma (moral reasoning). After this, the participants were asked how the protagonist would feel if he or she had committed the antisocial act. They were given a list of emotions to choose from, including guilt. The higher the frequency of "guilt" endorsements, the more morally internalized the participant was considered. Researchers found that Israeli delinquents scored significantly lower, relative to nondelinquents, on this measure of affective morality.

More current efforts have brought further light to this issue. Our own research indicates the negative relation between guilt and antisocial behavior -- less guilt is associated with more antisocial behavior (Cimbor & McIntosh, 2003). We studied 63 adolescent males comprising three groups: childhood-onset Conduct Disorder, adolescent-onset Conduct Disorder, and a non-disordered comparison group. We created the Affective Morality Index (AMI) to assess levels of moral emotions. Based on the measure Sagi and Eissikovits (1981) used with Israeli youth, the AMI asks respondents to gauge the emotional experiences, particularly of guilt, of hypothetical people after they have committed antisocial acts. Respondents are given a brief (1-4 sentence) description, at a third grade reading level, of a same-sex protagonist engaging in an antisocial act. Then, participants are asked to indicate how the person is likely to feel following the act, given a list of six potential emotions. These include, angry, happy, excited, afraid, guilty, and "other." Participants respond on a 4-point scale (1="not at all" through 4="a lot") for each emotion. Emotion scores are calculated from the AMI in two ways. First, raw means for each emotion variable can be calculated. This enables one to interpret the level of each emotion variable in relation to the qualitative descriptions of the scale. A second way in which emotion scores are calculated involves using proportional data. Each emotion is individually summed across the ten vignettes and divided by the sum of all emotion responses. This procedure transforms the sum of an individual's responses on each emotion to a proportion of the individual's total emotional arousal (i.e., sum of guilt / sum of all emotion = proportion of guilt). This proportion score removes individual differences in amount of total reported emotional arousal.

In addition to questions about affective responses, two other questions are asked on the AMI. Participants are asked about the potential acceptance of the act by their social environment. Culture and more specifically social relationships may influence what is considered prosocial. It is possible that what one sub-culture considers antisocial, another may con-
may consider prosocial, or at least neutral. It follows then that if an act were considered more favorably by one’s immediate environment, then the likelihood of experiencing guilt following the act would be attenuated. Another question assesses the likelihood of the protagonist committing the act again, which serves as a measure of recidivism. This item also begins to address the possible inhibitory quality that certain emotions (i.e., guilt and fear) may have.

The general format of this measure has been previously described in the literature, and past support for its usefulness has been shown (Sagi & Eisikovits, 1981). In contrast to previous measures (Blair, 1997; Sagi & Eisikovits, 1981) however, respondents on the AMI can indicate that multiple emotions are felt after the same event. The contributions of using the AMI include measurements of multiple emotions, the strength of the emotional responses, the acceptance of the act by the environment, and the potential for recidivism. In addition, the AMI provides vignettes of situations relevant to a United States sample.

Results from the study showed that non-disordered comparison youth reported the highest levels of guilt following antisocial acts, followed by youth with adolescent-onset conduct disorder, while youth with childhood-onset conduct disorder reported the lowest levels of guilt. This finding was expected because childhood-onset youth account for a disproportionate share of delinquent acts, typically show more severe violations of rules and of others’ rights, and show persistent antisocial behavior into adulthood (APA, 2000; Hinshaw, Lahey, & Hart, 1993). Across groups, guilt was negatively correlated ($r=-.47$) with number of conduct disorder symptoms. Our findings regarding guilt and antisocial behavior are commensurate with other research. As mentioned previously, Ferguson et al. (1999) found that shame-free guilt was negatively correlated with a measure of behavioral symptoms. Farrington, Jolliffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, and Kalb (2001) found that low guilt was a predictor of delinquency in boys.

With the understanding that the development of guilt is linked to socialization, it is not surprising that results from the AMI showed that guilt response following antisocial acts was negatively correlated with the degree of acceptance of the act shown by the environment ($r=-.42$). However, from our work it is not clear whether an environment accepting of antisocial acts leads one to experience less guilt, or whether one with less guilt-proneness is more likely to seek out environments that are accepting of their behavior. More research would be helpful in teasing out this relation.

The AMI also attempts to assess a risk for recidivism. Guilt, in addition to discriminating between diagnostic groups, was shown to have a strong negative correlation ($r=-.64$) with recidivism risk. This finding is supported by previous findings (Born, Chevalier, & Humblet, 1997) that revealed that guilt in incarcerated youth is associated with “desistance from further delinquency” (p.679). Some cautious inference about causality may be warranted with this finding, as the question of affective response to the offense is a temporal antecedent to recommitting the offense. However, more research examining the causal pathway here is needed before strong inferences are made.

Due to interest in developing models of prevention and early intervention, a significant emphasis has been given to the study of affect in youths with antisocial behavior. Nonetheless, there is also a substantial body of work that exists regarding the study of moral emotions and antisocial adults. Perhaps most prominent in this area is the work that addresses the construct of psychopathy.
Psychopathy

Psychopathy is typically described as a specific form of personality disorder (e.g., Hemphill & Hart, 2003) characterized by features similar to Antisocial Personality disorder (ASPD; APA, 2000). Although psychopathy and ASPD are sometimes used interchangeably, it is our opinion that they should not be considered diagnostic equals. Rather, psychopathy is more accurately described as a more severe form of ASPD, with unique clusters of symptoms (see Hemphill & Hart, 2003 for review). Specifically, ASPD addresses mostly behavioral symptoms, whereas psychopathy definitions typically involve behavioral, cognitive, affective, and interpersonal dimensions. Although most psychopaths meet criteria for ASPD, most of those with ASPD are not psychopaths (Hare, 2003).

Capturing the severity and complexity of psychopathy well, Meloy (1988) conceptualizes psychopathy within a psychodynamic frame. He describes it as a variant of narcissistic personality structure, characterized by a fundamental disidentification with humanity or incapacity to bond to others. The psychopath's incapacity to bond with others or disidentification can often lead to a life of crime, and sometimes to the most horrendous criminal acts (Hare, 1993). Furthermore, psychopaths are typically at high risk for recidivism (e.g., Hart, Kropp, & Hare, 1988; see Hare, 2003, for review).

Perhaps the most commonly cited and empirically tested conceptualization of psychopathy is the one proposed by Hare (1991, 2003). His model of psychopathy has four facets: 1) interpersonal, 2) antisocial behavior, 3) lifestyle, and 4) affective. It is the fourth facet, the affective domain, which is of particular focus in this current review. Arguably one of the most marked characteristics for psychopaths is the profound lack of guilt that they show following antisocial behavior. Blair et al. (1995) found that psychopaths were less likely than controls to attribute guilt to protagonists in guilt-inducing stories, and instead were more likely to attribute a contrasting emotion such as happiness. This finding raises the important point that differences in emotional responding between psychopaths and non-psychopaths are far greater in scope than simply in guilt.

Our own research on youth with Conduct Disorder supports this hypothesis (Cimbora & McIntosh, 2003). In our findings, as stated previously, guilt attributions to story protagonists who committed antisocial acts were able to discriminate between childhood-onset, adolescent-onset, and comparison youth. However, other emotional attributions were also seen to discriminate diagnostic groups. The most severe acting-out group (childhood-onset Conduct Disorder) as compared to the non-disordered comparison group, was seen to attribute less fear, more excitement, and more happiness to protagonists who committed antisocial acts. Furthermore, excitement and happiness were positively correlated with recidivism risk, while fear (and guilt, as stated previously) was negatively correlated. These findings suggest that the emotional response to antisocial acts by the severely disordered (e.g., youth with childhood-onset conduct disorder) does not simply involve an absence or lack of moral emotion. Rather, it seems indicated that “non-moral” emotions, such as excitement and happiness, are experienced and might actually reinforce the transgression.
Lack of Empathy

Those committing antisocial acts often disregard the rights and needs of others. Researchers have explored the relation between a lack of empathy and antisocial behavior. This research will now be discussed.

Again, likely due to an emphasis on developing prevention and early intervention programs, a substantial amount of research has been done with youth. Based on several decades of significant findings (e.g., Arbuthnot et al., 1987; Chandler, 1973; Cohen & Strayer, 1996; Ellis, 1982), it is widely held that a lack of empathy is highly related to the committing of antisocial acts. More specifically, a review of the literature shows that lack of empathy is related to aggression (Miller & Eisenberg, 1988). In Hare's (1993; 2003) descriptions of psychopaths, we see that a core characteristic of psychopaths is a lack of empathy.

Although the negative relation between empathy and antisocial behavior is fairly robust, inconsistent findings surprisingly exist for the ability of empathy to discriminate between antisocial and comparison groups (e.g., Cohen & Strayer, 1996). On the one hand, Kaplan and Arbuthnot (1985) found significant differences between delinquents and nondelinquents with an unstructured measure of affective empathy. On the other hand, the same study revealed no group differences for a structured measure of affective empathy. In addition, Lee and Prentice (1988), utilizing affective empathy measures, found no differences between delinquents and nondelinquents. More recently, Sheehman (2003) found that affective empathy discriminated aggressive boys from their non-aggressive peers, whereas cognitive empathy did not.

Goldstein and Higgins-D’Alessandro (2001) failed to find differences between male and female adult offenders and their non-offending counterparts.

Finally, the first author’s own research (Cimbora, 1997) showed that measures of affective and cognitive empathy failed to discriminate conduct disorder (CD) from comparison youth. Three of the four subscales from the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980) were used, namely Perspective Taking, Empathic Concern, and Personal Distress. The former is a cognitive-based scale, while the latter two are considered more affective forms of empathy. Comparisons between youth with childhood-onset CD, adolescent-onset CD, and comparison youth yielded no significant results. However, it should be noted that trends for cognitive empathy were in the predicted direction. One potential explanation for the lack of discrimination is low power from small sample size (N=20, 14, and 15 respectively). Also, in using a self-report measure with clinical groups in treatment, a possible social desirability bias existed.

One possible explanation for the discrepancies in findings across empathy studies has to do with definitional and methodological issues. Empathy can be defined in terms of cognitive factors, affective factors, or both. Furthermore, empathy measures utilize a variety of different methodologies, including self-report questionnaires, story-telling tasks, and responses (oral, written, facial, or some combination) to written or videotaped vignettes. A third, and as important explanation, is the issue of group definition. A survey of relevant studies reflects discrepancies in the methods of categorizing individuals with antisocial behavior. Blasi (1980) reports that many studies of delinquents have been plagued by non-specific definitions of delinquency and broad inclusion criteria for delinquent subjects. Furthermore, the adult literature shows the use of different terms and definitions as well, including antisocial personality, sociopaths, and psychopaths.
In a relatively recent attempt to address the confusion around the study of empathy and antisocial behavior, Frick and colleagues have put forth a new conceptualization, namely "callous-unemotional traits" (see Frick, 1995; Frick, Bodin, & Barry, 2000; Frick & Ellis, 1999). These researchers have adapted items for use with children from the Psychopathy Checklist—Revised (Hare, 1991), an adult measure of psychopathy. One particular factor on this adapted measure, the Psychopathy Screening Device (PSD), is callous-unemotional traits. The more affective items comprising this factor are having a lack of guilt, being unconcerned about others' feelings, and not showing emotions. What seems especially promising about this area of research is the combination of moral emotion factors, namely a lack of guilt and low empathic concern, into one construct. Empirical findings have been promising thus far. Frick et al. (2003) found that callous-unemotional traits were related to behavioral inhibition in children, a finding that was robust for children with and without conduct problems. Barry et al. (2000) found that callous-unemotional traits in children were positively related to thrill and adventure seeking (i.e., fearlessness). Also, children high on callous-unemotional traits were less concerned about their conduct problems and negative outcomes (e.g., being disciplined or peer rejection) than youth low on callous-unemotional traits. Caputo, Frick, and Brodsky (1999) demonstrated that callous-unemotional traits differentiate violent sex-offenders from other violent offenders and non-violent offenders. Despite the significance of these findings, Frick, Bodin, and Barry (2000) found that callous-unemotional traits were only weakly correlated with diagnostic criteria for childhood externalizing disorders from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition (APA, 1994). This latter finding is important in that it shows that current diagnostic classifications, which typically emphasize behavioral symptomatology, do not capture this important subgroup of youth. This parallels research on psychopathy in the adult literature, in which current diagnoses (antisocial personality disorder) do not fully capture the extent of callous-unemotional-type traits (Hare, 2003). More research in this area could explore the further utility of combining moral emotions into a unified construct.

**FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The chapter concludes with an examination of two specific areas that extend from the current knowledge base of affective morality and antisocial behavior, and serve as opportunities for further research. The first concerns the issue of forgiveness. Forgiveness has received growing attention recently in the psychological literature (e.g., Enright & Human Development Study Group, 1996; Zechmeister & Romero, 2002). The vast majority of empirical and theoretical research on interpersonal forgiveness has concerned the act of granting forgiveness to those who have offended (Sandage, Worthington, Hight, & Berry 2000). A variety of definitions of granting forgiveness have been offered (e.g., Enright & Human Development Study Group, 1996; Martin & Denton, 1998; Worthington, 2001) but most include the ideas of releasing or abandoning one's right to negative or resentful feelings and cognitions, and developing a sense of good will toward the offender. Forgiving appears to be related to positive psychological outcomes. For example, being a person who tends to forgive (i.e., dispositional forgiveness) has been associated with lower levels of depression (Brown, 2003), and forgiveness of others has been associated with psychological well being.
especially if forgiveness was granted in a committed relationship (Karremans, Van Lange, Duwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003).

Various determinants of granting forgiveness have been articulated in the literature. In terms of intra-personal determinants, McCullough et al. (1998) have noted various factors that mediate the likelihood of granting forgiveness, but they stress that none appears more crucial than affective empathy toward the offender. Furthermore, they posit that victims are more likely to develop empathy for their transgressors when the relationship between the two is "close, committed, and satisfactory" (p.1599). Zecheimester & Romero (2002) examined narrative accounts of interpersonal conflict. Their findings revealed that dispositional empathy was correlated with victims having more benign interpretations of offenses, and empathy for the offender was directly related to forgiveness of the offender. It appears that a specific benefit of empathy is that it serves to help bring healing to injured and damaged relationships resulting from others’ transgressions, which has clear health benefits for both involved (Worthington, 2001).

In reviewing the relatively young forgiveness literature, we see three areas that have not yet received much attention. First, as most of the research thus far has focused on forgiveness within personal relationships, little research has addressed the determinants and consequences of forgiving strangers. Given that affective empathy and close relationships are so important in generating forgiveness, it seems likely that the process may differ relative to transgressions by strangers. Second, more work exploring the impact of the nature (e.g., was betrayal involved; was the action or the outcome intentional?) and extent (e.g., can the harm be undone; was the damage material, psychological, or physical?) of the transgressions should be done. To put it most boldly, we believe that forgiving a spouse for accidentally scratching one's automobile will differ in significant ways from forgiving a stranger for intentionally harming one's child. We believe that despite the extremity of very traumatic, person-caused events there are large individual differences in ability or willingness to forgive those who harm one's children or friends. Indeed, within a week after the attacks at Columbine High School, Columbine students and their parents reported a range of responses from not being able to consider forgiveness to having already forgiven the perpetrators (Hawkins, McIntosh, Silver, & Holman, 2005). The implications of forgiveness for extreme human caused trauma remains to be determined. The current literature is laying a foundation for understanding forgiveness, and we expect a great deal of headway will be made by exploring these more specific questions and unpacking the phenomenon of forgiveness.

The third domain that has received relatively little attention is the corresponding behavior of seeking forgiveness. Forgiveness seeking is especially germane to the discussion of moral emotions and antisocial behavior, especially in light of the recent interest in restorative justice models (e.g., Cohen, 2001; Keijzer, Leccen, & Jackson, 2002; Petrucci, 2002; Van Stokkum, 2002). Understanding the factors that lead to seeking forgiveness may provide important targets for intervention with those who commit antisocial acts.

Sandage et al. (2000) have defined seeking forgiveness as a multidimensional process that involves empathy, nondefensive moral emotions (e.g., adaptive guilt), and reparative behaviors (e.g., apology, restitution). The authors conducted a study investigating factors that lead to the seeking of forgiveness. They found that narcissism, which they argue is typically connected with tendencies like self-absorption and low empathy, was negatively correlated with seeking forgiveness. They posit that the experience of shame, but not necessarily guilt, may also impede people from seeking forgiveness. Unfortunately, this study did not directly
assess the relation of empathy and guilt with seeking forgiveness; however, their proposal fits with conceptualizations of shame and guilt, and warrants direct investigation.

An empirical connection between guilt and reparations is reported by Baumeister et al. (1995). They asked participants to provide first-person accounts of times they had transgressed against another. Accounts that contained guilt for the transgression were more likely to also show reparative actions, such as confession and making an apology or restitution to the victim. However, a limitation is that the data reflect only self-report of past incidents, and thus no way of verifying the relation is possible.

Witvliet, Ludwig, and Bauer (2002) also found empirical connections between moral emotions and forgiveness seeking. They investigated participants' emotional responses, including guilt and shame, following various imagined conditions of transgressions and seeking forgiveness. After participants imagined seeking forgiveness, as opposed to just ruminating about the transgression, ratings of guilt and shame decreased. They also found that participants experienced less guilt and shame after they imagined their victims as forgiving them or reconciling with them. The authors conclude that both seeking forgiveness and being forgiven both have subjective emotional benefits for the transgressor. Although the act of seeking forgiveness appears to reduce levels of guilt and shame, particularly if forgiveness is granted, it remains unclear what factors, including the moral emotions, may lead one to seek forgiveness. Moreover, combining this finding with the work reviewed above regarding how guilt can decrease antisocial acts suggests that seeking and receiving forgiveness may reduce guilt and thus ironically increase subsequent antisocial behavior on the part of the forgiven. Thus, the full relation between guilt and seeking forgiveness remains cloudy and is deserving of more empirical attention.

Another study draws attention to the complexity of understanding the role of moral emotion and seeking forgiveness. Meck, Albright, & McMinn (1995) examined participants' responses to reading scenarios in which they had committed a dishonest act. Their findings indicated that following a hypothetical transgression, intrinsically religious individuals were more likely to experience guilt, more likely to forgive themselves, more likely to feel forgiven by God, and more likely to confess to the one transgressed against. It should be noted that increased guilt was not directly related to increased likelihood of confession, but rather it was related to other factors that lead to confession (e.g., intrinsic religiosity). By including multiple targets one could seek forgiveness from, namely the one transgressed against, God, and even the self, questions are raised about how moral emotions influence each process. It is possible, due to differences in individuals' theologies regarding forgiveness, that guilt and empathy may have differential effects on the likelihood of seeking forgiveness from self, God, and other. For example, one may believe seeking forgiveness from God is paramount relative to seeking forgiveness from others, or vice-versa. Moral emotions may lead one to seek forgiveness for the one but not necessarily the other. Clearly more research in the area of forgiveness "target" is needed to fully understand the link with moral emotions.

From a theoretical standpoint, it appears likely that both empathy and guilt play pivotal roles in the likelihood of seeking forgiveness. This would be consistent with Tangney's (1991, 2002) conceptualization of empathy and guilt leading to reparative action. However, empirical evidence for the likely positive association between guilt and empathy with forgiveness seeking is lacking. Furthermore, much of the research in this area has been conducted on college students, and thus it is even more unclear what the relations between guilt, empathy, and seeking forgiveness are in other populations, particularly serious
offenders. More research is needed to extend our knowledge of the relations of these variables.

A second area of future research involves the quality (closeness) of the relationship between two people as a mediating factor in the experience of moral emotion. This has already been examined in regards to empathy. First, shared experience has been shown to be a factor that can foster empathic responding. In particular, preschool-aged children are more likely to empathize with other children who have experienced the same events that they have (Barnett, 1987). Second, the likeability of the empathic target also affects empathic responding. Bengtsson and Johnson (1987) examined whether school-aged children were impartial in their empathic responses to peers, or whether certain "liked" peers could elicit more empathic responding than "non-liked" peers. Their findings indicate that participants in all age groups had higher levels of cognitive empathy for peers that were liked than for peers that were disliked. McIntosh et al. (1994) have also stressed the importance of understanding the relationship between the two people involved in the empathic process.

In further exploration of this issue, the first author (Cimbora, 1997) examined empathy for those who are known and liked (termed the "in-group") and empathy for strangers (termed the "out-group"). Utilizing the Davis Interpersonal Reactivity Index (1980), two additional scales were derived from the original measure. The "out-group" empathy scale consisted of nine items chosen from the Perspective Taking (cognitive) and Empathic Concern (affective) scales. The "in-group" scale consisted of those same nine items rewritten with a different empathy target (i.e. a close friend). Across adolescent participants consisting of youth with Conduct Disorder and comparison youth, in-group empathy scores were significantly higher than out-group scores. This finding lends strong support to the idea that empathy is heightened when the target is known or liked.

The literature has shown that one tends to feel more guilty about transgressions toward those one has empathy for (e.g., Thompson & Hoffman, 1980). Thus, it would seem likely that guilt would be increased if one were to commit a transgression against an in-group member as opposed to an out-group member. However, this area has not been specifically addressed in the literature. Furthermore, the extent to which one is more likely to seek forgiveness from an in-group member is also unaddressed. In an attempt to address both of these issues, the first author has revised the Affective Morality Index (Cimbora & McIntosh, 2003) to include an assessment of seeking forgiveness following an offense. In addition, the new measure assesses the experience of guilt, excitement, happiness, fear, and anger following transgressions against both in-group and out-group members.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

In the present chapter, we have examined research on the moral emotions. In particular, guilt and empathy have been shown to have strong associations to prosocial behavior, whereas shame appears to lead to unhealthy outcomes. Next, we examined the role of the moral emotions with antisocial behavior. Not unexpectedly, the likelihood of committing antisocial acts increases with deficits in guilt experience or empathic responding. In addition to the large amount of support for these findings with child and adolescent populations, the research exploring the concept of adult psychopathy shows extensive support for this.
connection as well. In reviewing this literature, we found several areas that we believe will be important and fruitful for future investigation:

1. Additional components of forgiveness. Research to date suggests that forgiveness is an important social and psychological process, and we believe there are many opportunities to further understand this phenomenon. In particular, we noted three neglected areas in understanding forgiveness dynamics: a) determinants and consequences of forgiving strangers, b) influences of the nature and extent of the transgression, and c) determinants and consequences of seeking forgiveness.

2. In-group/out-group. The relationship between individuals has been identified as important by those studying both empathy and forgiveness. We believe that a useful direction to take research for all moral emotions is in understanding the importance of the in-group/out-group distinctions. We believe this distinction may make a difference in what emotions are experienced, what emotional processes occur, and what the behavioral outcomes are. More broadly, we believe more attention to the social and cultural context in which people are feeling and behaving will be productive.

3. The moral implications of non-moral emotions. Both our data (Cimbora & McIntosh, 2003) and those of Blair et al. (1995) indicate that extreme antisocial behaviors are associated not only with an absence of moral emotions, but also with the presence of positive emotions such as happiness. Thus, we encourage work exploring the role of these in both prosocial and antisocial behavior. In some cases, people feel schadenfreude, or happiness at another’s misery (McIntosh et al., 1994); understanding when and for whom this occurs is likely to be helpful in understanding causes of antisocial behavior.

4. Within-person versus between-person analyses. We suggest that research more carefully detail the within-person versus between-person relations between the moral emotions and antisocial and prosocial behavior. For example, it is possible that there are effects within person (e.g., people do antisocial acts that cause them shame less often than antisocial acts that do not) that are reversed when examining between-person relations (e.g., people who feel more shame in general do more antisocial acts).

5. Research on affective morality must be cognizant of basic research on emotions. In the last decade, there has been substantial research on emotions. An understanding of the role that emotions and affective processes play in morality must take into account the interplay of cognitive and physical factors that have been identified as causes, concomitants, and outcomes of emotions. In short, although we believe a focus on affective morality is important, we do not believe affective morality can be understood separately from cognitive processes.

Psychology has made substantial progress in identifying emotional factors in moral behavior, yet there is room for a great deal more work. The next steps involve both specification of processes and broadening of focus, as well as consideration of moderating and mediating factors. As work on the variety of emotions and outcomes continues, we believe that a coherent enough understanding of moral behaviors will emerge to allow the
e will be
development of interventions that will decrease the levels of antisocial behavior, and their
essociated societal and individual costs.

REFERENCES


oral judgment.

Strayer (Eds.), International Guilt: A field cognitive role clinquent and it and guilt in ment. Criminal Forgiveness: and Theology, applications for Miller (Eds.), lenum Press. ast 2002, from of Personality d.), Guilt and A.Tesser, D.A. al perspectives ess. development of meint (pp.119-

uilt in children.

e, 2004, from ses: Managing ses of guilt and th a concept, a


PSYCHOLOGY OF MOODS

ANITA V. CLARK
EDITOR

Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
New York