

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Forgiveness is essential in trauma healing because it allows people to go forward with their lives and recover. Forgiveness therapy, which focuses on treating the anger and bitterness associated with trauma, can help to reduce post-traumatic stress and promote post-traumatic growth. This entails comprehending the trauma, expressing feelings, and making a conscious decision to forgive, finally liberating the individual from the grip of the past and allowing them to concentrate on the future. Healing process from the pain can be done by forgiving ourselves or others from the mistakes. Healing from the trauma is a process of recovering emotionally, mentally, or sometimes physically after experiencing a deeply distressing or disturbing events. Healing is used to regain a sense of safety, stability, and self-worth. Forgiveness is rooted in an internal perception of an “injustice gap”, which is a subjective perception of the degree of injustice or offense one experiences. It is adjusted after subsequent actions within the interpersonal dynamic. Thus, if an offender takes ownership of the harm, expresses remorse, apologizes or seeks to make amends, the victim often narrows the injustice gap, making it easier to deal with the injustice.

This research focuses on the Colleen Hoover’s novel *Reminders of Him*. It is primarily known for its themes of trauma, healing and forgiveness through the emotional journey of the protagonist, Kenna Rowan, a young mother who tries to rebuild her life after serving five years in prison for a tragic mistake that cost her everything. The novel is written by an American author Colleen Hoover that known for her emotionally intense and character-driven novels that span genres such as

romance, contemporary fiction, and psychological drama. One of her best selling novel is *Reminders of Him* published in 2022.

Kenna's trauma derives from the car accident that killed her boyfriend, Scotty, and the subsequent imprisonment that tore her away from her newborn daughter. After releasing from the prison, she returns to her hometown. It reopens all old wounds from the accident five years ago both for her and Scotty's grieving family who are now raising her daughter. The emotional scars are obvious, affecting all the relationship she tries to rebuild. Healing in the novel is portrayed as a painful process. Kenna's journey is not only about getting back the custody of her daughter but also to confronting the consequences of her past actions, rebuilding trust, and learning self-forgiveness. Healing also take place within the people around her, especially Ledger Ward, Scotty's best friend and the girl's guardian, who struggles between protecting the child and acknowledging Kenna's right to be in her life. Meanwhile forgiveness in the novel is a reluctant process. It is not only about others forgiving Kenna, it is also about Kenna forgiving herself. The novel shows that holding onto anger can perpetuate pain, but letting go the difficulties can open the door to healing. Through honesty, vulnerability, and emotional growth, the characters eventually reach a place where forgiveness becomes possible, allowing them to move forward rather than remain stuck in the pain.

From the previous studies about forgiveness in trauma healing, the researcher has two reasons for choosing the title forgiveness in trauma healing in this research. First, the previous studies have consistently shown that forgiveness is associated with reduced symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression, and anger. Research by Worthington and Enright has demonstrated that forgiveness can promote emotional regulation and facilitate the reconstruction of meaning following trauma. Second, because forgiveness in trauma healing highlights the emotional journey of the novel.

Forgiveness is the main theme in the novel *Reminders of Him*. The protagonist seeks forgiveness from her boyfriend's grieving family and from herself for the accident that killed her boyfriend, Scotty. Kenna lives with the guilt of causing Scotty's death and being separated from her daughter. Also Scotty's parents live with unresolved grief and resentment. Those are so traumatic for both of them. Healing through forgiveness in the novel is letting go of judgment and resentment. Forgiveness is necessary for true emotional healing and peace. It is very interesting to be analyzed because it can be related to some people nowadays that going through trauma and try to forgive themselves or others to be healed from the trauma.

## **1.2 Problem Identifications**

From the discussion above, the writer will identify two problems as follows:

1. How does trauma and its manifestation save the main characters' psychology at emotional state in Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*?
2. How are decisional and emotional forgiveness portrayed in Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*?
3. What are the roles of forgiveness in facilitating the trauma healing process in Colleen Hoover's Novel *Reminders of Him*?

## **1.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To analyze the trauma and its manifestation to save the main characters' psychology in Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*.
2. To describe the decisional and emotional forgiveness portrayed in Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*.

3. To explain the roles of forgiveness in facilitating the trauma healing process in Colleen Hoover's Novel *Reminders of Him*.

#### **1.4 Scope**

Drawing from the context provided in the preceding paragraphs above, the scope of this research will focus on how trauma and its manifestation save the main character's psychology at emotional state in Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*. It also describes about decisional and emotional forgiveness portrayed in the novel and explain the role of forgiveness in facilitating the trauma healing process in Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*. It examines both psychological and emotional dimensions of the characters' experiences with grief, guilt, and redemption. This research will not discuss other things not related to those aspects of other researchers, especially those who are interested in discussing Colleen Hoover's novel *Reminders of Him*, have broad opportunities to carry out their researches on various other topics within the novel.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study is formulated into two kinds, namely theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research lies in its potential to contribute to the existing body of knowledge within the field. By analyzing the themes of forgiveness in trauma healing experienced by the protagonist, Kenna Rowan, and her boyfriend's family within the novel *Reminders of Him* by Colleen Hoover. This study offers a deeper understanding of trauma, forgiveness, and healing. The insights gained from this analysis could enhance literary theories related to character development, narrative structures, and the portrayal of societal themes in literature.

Practically, the findings of this research hold relevance for individuals navigating their own journeys of forgiving and trauma healing. The characters' experiences can be served as a source of inspiration and guidance for readers facing similar challenges in their lives. Furthermore, this research may foster a deeper appreciation for literature's capacity to reflect and illuminate various facets of the human experience. Literary works also impart moral lessons by depicting scenarios that hold relevance to human existence and serve as reflective snapshots of societal truth.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Psychology of Literature**

Literary psychology is an approach that analyzes a literary work using psychological knowledge, both from the psychological side of the writer, character, or reader. Literature, which encompasses history, philosophy, sociology, and psychology, uses language to interpret human existence, culture, personality, and individual differences. Writers, philosophers, artists, psychologists, and psychiatrists have all studied and discussed this field.

Literature and psychology share a focus on human reactions, perceptions, emotions, conflicts, and social issues through various concepts, methods, and approaches. An author's representation of life is influenced by their intentions, views, beliefs, and value judgments. They inspire readers to explore the unknown and uncover the meaning of life. Literature promotes self-awareness and allows individuals to explore their identities. Most scientific research, fine arts, and literature place a strong emphasis on humanity and existence.

Literature is a product of human thought. It can be influenced by the environment of the author; even it may contain the author's way of life. Whilst, most people consider that literary works are mirror of human life. In other words, literary works are used by authors for telling what they feel and see and what they face in the social life involving human activities. Literary works are known by people in the written form, those are novel, poetry, and also play (Sangidu, 2004:2).

Psychology and literature has deep connection in human life. Both deals with the human behaviors, expression, thought, and motivation. Kartono describes

psychology as the science of human behavior (Kartono, 1980:94). Kartono defines psychology as the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. He stressed both observable behavior and the interior workings of the mind, including ideas, emotions, and motivations. Kartono emphasized that psychology is an empirically grounded science that focuses on observation, experimentation, and analysis. This distinguishes psychology from pseudoscience and genuine philosophical contemplation. Kartono's writing is renowned for its emphasis on the practical applications of psychology, particularly in education, counseling, and social development. He believed that psychology could help solve real-world problems.

Psychological principles can be applied in literature to study and explain human life occurrences. Psychology can enhance an artist's sense of reality, strengthen observation skills, and reveal previously unknown patterns. However, in itself, psychology is only preparatory to the act of creation, and in the work itself, psychological truth is an artistic value only if it enhances coherence complexity, in short; it is art (Wellek & Warren, 1977:92-93).

Understanding a writer's psychological background might help define their literary manifestation as art. The writer's expression is influenced by their feelings while writing. The writer's feelings are influenced by both their surroundings and personal experiences. Psychology is deeply rooted in human experience. People are unable to separate psychology from their lives. Psychology focuses on motivation, which is the driving force behind our lives. Motivation is the most important thing in achieving and continuing the life that people expected. All things that people already achieve and will achieve are derived from motivation (Guerin, 1979:12).

Literature, particularly novels, has an impact on human life, similar to psychology. Novels are works of art that have meaning in life. The author expresses a

sense of encouragement. Novels have real-life connections. Authors often use real-life situations to describe their sentiments in novels. If the fiction reflects life, there is a strong link between psychology and it. Psychology can be used to understand more deeply about message, characterization and other elements of the novel. Psychology can help reveal the reasons for character behavior. It reveals the basis of human behavior and motivation (Guerin, 1979:1).

There is a close relationship between literature and psychology. Cohen (1971:348) thought that psychology helps to clarify some literary problems, and literature presents insights to psychology. To gain deeper understanding, literature can be studied by various approach includes psychological approach. Conversely, Cohen (1971:351) assumes that the psychologist's manner of conceiving and representing the personality is supported by the intuitive representations made by novelists, dramatists, and other creative writers. It can be seen that there is mutual relationship between literature and psychology.

## **2.2 The Approaches of Psychology of Literature**

Psychological approach reflects the effect that modern psychology has had upon both literature and literary criticism. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories challenged our understanding of human behavior by delving into topics such as wish-fulfillment, sexuality, the unconscious, and repression. They also expanded the understanding of how language and symbols can reflect unconscious fears or desires.

Psychological criticism has a number of approaches, but in general, it usually employs one (or more) of three approaches:

1. An investigation of the creative process of the artist: what is the nature of literary genius and how does it relate to normal mental functions.

2. The psychological study of a particular artist, usually noting how an author's biographical circumstances affect or influence their motivations and/or behavior (Everett L. Worthington, 2022)
3. The analysis of fictional characters using the language and methods of psychology.

The goal of psychological research has three aspects. The primary goal is to understand behavior by identifying elements that contribute to its development and expression. Second, the psychologist aims to create a procedure for accurately predicting behavior. Psychology tries to discover ways for controlling behavior and shaping psychological development by manipulating basic elements that influence conduct.

The psychological approach leads most directly to the substantial amplification of the meaning of literary works. Discussing psychology and its role in literary works involves investigating the author's imagination. Because all literary works are based on personal experiences, writers must deal with a variety of emotional issues that arise as a result. Psychological approaches to analyzing literary works may not always lead to a complete comprehension.

Literature encompasses a number of phenomena relating to the human psyche. The author depicts the phenomenon through characters in literary works. Literature can be evaluated using psychological ideas to explore the human soul in actual life. Literary psychology is defined as a discipline that views literary works that contain some events of human life played by imaginary characters or even factual characters (as quoted in Sangidu, 2004:30). Wellek and Warren (1977:81), in *Theory of Literature*, explain that there are several definitions of literary psychology based on the subject of research, they are:

1. The psychology of literature focuses on the author's personal psychology. A writer is a human being with natural desires and emotions. With his passion and emotional basis, he may make literary works.
2. Literary psychology is the study of the creative process. This study examines how a work's process can lead to a complete literary work.
3. Literature psychology is the study of psychological concepts and their application to literary works. This study examines how psychological subjects and instances are incorporated into literary works. Literary psychology examines the impact of literature on readers. This study examines how literary works impact readers' thoughts and behavior.

In psychology, forgiveness is a complex concept that involves cognitive, affective, behavioral, motivational, decisional, and interpersonal aspects. Researchers define forgiveness as a human strength that leads to replacing negative emotions with positive emotions toward the offender. According to psychology, forgiveness is a voluntary internal process that can profoundly impact our well-being. There are some benefits of forgiveness. First, reducing stress and anxiety. Forgiveness can lower cortisol and adrenaline levels, leading to improve mental health. Second, improving relationship. Forgiveness can repair and strengthen relationship by promoting empathy and understanding. Third, enhancing emotional well-being. Forgiveness can lead to increase happiness, hopefulness, and optimism. Fourth, boosting self-esteem. Forgiveness can help individuals develop a more positive self-image. Finally, improving physical health. Forgiveness has been linked to lower blood pressure, improve heart health, and reduce chronic pain.

Forgiveness is a complex psychological process that can bring significant benefits to mental and physical health. By understanding the forgiveness process and its associated challenges, individuals can develop strategies to promote forgiveness and enhance their well-being. Forgiveness therapy and other approaches can help individuals overcome emotional barriers and develop empathy and understanding towards themselves and others. Thus, forgiveness can be effective tool for improving quality of life and promoting mental and physical health.

### **2.3 Forgiveness**

Forgiveness is the balm that heals wounds and commitment to relationships. Practically everything important psychological relationships, people get hurt. Without healing the wounds, relationships will fall apart quickly. However, a lot relationships last. We argue that such patience is possible because people can forgive the pain they suffer, ask for forgiveness for the injuries they cause and receive any forgiveness that is offered to them.

Enright (1996) defined forgiveness as “a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, negative judgment, and indifferent behavior toward one who unjustly injured us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity, and even love toward him or her”.

For many people, the concept of forgiveness is associated with religion and faith. The foundation of this term is the notion of "turning the other cheek," or forgiving someone who have wronged us in the hopes of mending the relationship. Although this definition is not the one applied in this study, it is crucial to recognize given the emotional toll that interpersonal trauma has on a person. Holding a definition of forgiveness that includes the common theological definition may prevent

individuals from being willing to engage in forgiveness. More importantly, they may feel guilt and shame due to not upholding their values in being unable or unwilling to engage in forgiveness (Orcutt et al., 2008). Being unable to engage in forgiveness can result in the individual having an increasingly negative self-perception which will increase the experience of trauma symptoms (Orcutt et al., 2008).

Forgiveness is defined more in terms of the victim's needs than the rights or wants of the offender. According to Lawler-Row et al. (2007), this definition of forgiveness also considers the release of rage and the desire for vengeance against the offender. The distinction is that, rather than attempting to mend a relationship with the offender or improve their lot in life, this definition calls on the victim to let go of their anger and desire for vengeance in order to free them from the control that the offender's harmful act had over them.

The idea is that holding anger and resentment toward the perpetrator maintains mental and emotional connections to the individual and the act that continues to impact the victim's life (Bae et al., 2015). Releasing these emotional ties and letting go of the need for a specific outcome allows the victim freedom to move forward in life without the connection to the trauma perpetrated on them (Porterfield & Lindhout, 2014).

Worthington's REACH Forgiveness model is an acrostic or acronym that cues each of three key steps to forgiving others. The model begins by asking people to identify the most difficult thing they ever successfully forgave. It helps people see that there are physical, health, psychological, relational, and spiritual benefits to forgiving but that forgiving is but one alternative for dealing successfully with injustices. Thus, the forgiveness intervention is for people who wish to forgive. No one should ever be forced or coerced to forgive. People are shown that forgiveness involves both a

decision to forgive and an emotional transformation. First people are led through the

**REACH** Forgiveness five steps:

**R = Recall the hurt.** To heal, you have to face the fact that you've been hurt. Decide not to be snarky (i.e., nasty and hurtful), not to treat yourself like a victim, and not to treat the other person as a jerk.

**E = Empathize with your offender.** Empathy is putting yourself in the other person's chair. Pretend that the other person is in an empty chair across from you. Talk to him or her. Pour your heart out. When you have had your say, sit in his or her chair. Talk back to the imaginary you in a way that helps you see why the other person might have wronged you. This builds empathy.

**A = Altruistic gift.** Forgive as an unselfish, altruistic gift. After all, an offender does not deserve to receive forgiveness. To help you want to give the gift of forgiving, try to remember when you wronged someone and that person forgave you. By forgiving altruistically, you can give that same gift to someone who hurt you.

**C = Commit.** Once you have forgiven, write a note to yourself—something as simple as, "Today, I forgave [person's name] for hurting me." This helps forgiveness last.

**H = Hold onto forgiveness.** The self-addressed notes of commitment (above) help us because we will almost surely be tempted to doubt that we really forgave. We can re-read our notes. We did forgive.

There are two kinds of forgiveness. Decisional forgiveness and Emotional forgiveness.

### **2.3.1 Decisional Forgiveness**

Decisional forgiveness is a psychological concept that refers to making a conscious, deliberate decision to forgive someone who has caused harm, even if emotional healing or feelings of hurt persist. It differs from emotional forgiveness, which entails a deeper emotional transformation. Decisional forgiveness is the intentional decision to control one's behavior toward an offender and to act in a non-retaliatory, constructive way, regardless of lingering negative emotions (Worthington et al., 2007)

Decisional forgiveness is a decision to treat the offender as a valuable and valued person. It is possible to carry out the decision faithfully for years and still feel emotional unforgiveness, resentment and even hate. Decisional Forgiveness is the intention to behave more benevolently towards the transgressor to the degree that it is safe to do so (DiBlasio, 1998; Exline et al., 2003). It can include eliminating negative behavior in non-continuous relationships (McCullough et al, 2003) and restoring positive behavior in continuing close connections (Finkel et al., 2002). Whereas Decisional Forgiveness has a behavioral purpose, Emotional Forgiveness entails effective transformation.

Additionally, Enright (2004) and the Human Development Study Group suggested that the process of forgiveness includes a cognitive decision to forgive the offender and an emotional component, which is the reduction of negative affect and the increase of positive affect. Theoretically, forgiving on a decisional level and forgiving on an emotional level are two distinct but linked processes that are easy to discern in one's own experience.

As distinct (though related) aspects of the interpersonal forgiveness process, a reasonable assumption is that decisional and emotional forgiveness would generally

not have the same effects on distress and well-being. Decisional forgiveness is associated with reduced hostility and rumination, contributing to better psychological and social well-being (Baker et al., 2017; Kurniati et al., 2017).

### **2.3.2 Emotional Forgiveness**

Emotional forgiveness is the emotional replacement of negative, unforgiving emotions (e.g., resentment, hate) with more positive (or less negative) other oriented emotions like empathy, compassion or love towards the off ender (called person-to-person forgiveness) or group of people (called intergroup forgiveness). These emotions often change slowly, irregularly, and (sometimes) unconsciously. According to Worthington (2007), Emotional forgiveness is the emotional replacement of negative unforgiving emotions (e.g., resentment, bitterness, hatred, hostility, anger, and fear) with positive, other-oriented emotions (e.g., empathy, sympathy, compassion, or love).

In Emotional Forgiveness, the forgiver's negative, unforgiving emotions are replaced with positive, other-oriented emotions such as empathy, sympathy, compassion, or love toward the offender (Exline et al., 2003). Several additional models of forgiveness also emphasize the importance of emotion. For instance, Fitzgibbons (1986) proposed that a client's decision to forgive is followed by an emotional act of forgiveness or when the offender deserves a pardon. Emotional forgiveness involves replacing negative affect with positive other-oriented emotions, and therefore may be linked to even more positive effects on distress and well-being than decisional forgiveness (Worthington et al., 2007b; Sun et al., 2014; Webb and Toussaint, 2020).

Consistent with this theorizing, existing evidence generally suggests that emotional forgiveness tends to have stronger negative associations with indicators of distress (e.g., depression symptoms, stress) and stronger positive associations with different indicators of well-being (e.g., relationship satisfaction, gratitude) compared to decisional forgiveness (e.g., Chi et al., 2019; Cowden et al., 2019a; Wu et al., 2022).

However, not all evidence is consistent with this picture, as some studies have reported stronger correlations with some indicators of distress (e.g., depression symptoms; Mróz et al., 2022) and well-being (e.g., perceived posttraumatic growth; Byra et al., 2022) for decisional forgiveness rather than emotional forgiveness. These findings suggest that emotional forgiveness may not always perform a dominant function in lowering distress and improving well-being.

## **2.4 Trauma Healing**

Trauma healing is a complex process that involves addressing the physical, emotional, and psychological impacts of traumatic experiences. According to psychology, trauma can affect an individual's thoughts, feelings, behaviors, leading to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Trauma is a physical or psychological threat or assault to one's physical integrity, sense of self, safety or survival or to the physical safety of another. The word of trauma is used to describe a stressful event or condition which is faced by someone. Harvey, in his book explains the definition of trauma as, a specific term referring to extreme psychological and psychological reactions to major losses, such as the death of close other (2002: 23). Felling that is arisen by the traumatic experience can cause an extreme reaction both one's psych and psychology. It means that trauma is an event

that can possibly happen because of losing something, such as death of family, couple, or people who have good relation.

Although trauma can be caused by psychological action, the effect is more arisen to someone's psychology. However the Psychological trauma exists. This is the real effect that will be faced by someone who has traumatic experience. That effect is known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD (Harvey, 2002:5). After experiencing a terrible experience that leaves you feeling unsafe or powerless, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) may develop. Each person experiences PTSD in a unique way. Although PTSD symptoms typically manifest in the hours or days after the traumatic experience, they can occasionally take weeks, months, or even years to manifest.

Healing can be categorized into various types, each focusing on different aspects of well-being. They are:

1. Physical healing. It focuses on restoring the body's health and functionality. It includes medical treatment, physical therapy, exercise, and nutrition.
2. Emotional healing. It involves processing and recovering from emotional trauma, grief, or distress. The techniques that used in emotional healing are therapy, counseling, mindfulness, and emotional expression.
3. Mental healing. It addresses mental health issues like anxiety, depression, or stress. It may involve therapy, meditation, cognitive-behavioral techniques, and lifestyle changes.
4. Spiritual healing. It focuses on nurturing the soul or spirit. Includes practices like meditation, prayer, energy healing, and connecting with nature or a higher power.

5. Holistic healing. It integrates physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. The approaches include alternative therapies like acupuncture, herbal medicine, and yoga.
6. Energy Healing. It is based on the idea that the body has an energy system that can be balanced and healed. The examples include Reiki, acupuncture, and crystal healing.
7. Trauma Healing. It specifically addresses the aftermath of traumatic experiences. It may involve trauma-focused therapy, support groups, and coping strategies.
8. Inner Child Healing. It focuses on healing emotional wounds from childhood. The techniques include inner child work, therapy, and self-compassion exercises.
9. Relationship Healing. It involves repairing and improving relationships with others. It may include couples therapy, communication skills, and boundary setting.
10. Self-Healing. It emphasizes personal responsibility for one's own healing. It includes practices like self-care, journaling, and self-reflection.

The researcher utilizes trauma healing as the theoretical foundation for the study, recognizing its significance in addressing the complex and multifaceted nature of traumatic experiences. By applying trauma healing principles, the research aims to explore the process of recovery, resilience, and growth in individuals who have experienced trauma. The study's findings are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on trauma healing, providing valuable insights for mental health professionals, policymakers, and individuals affected by trauma. Ultimately, the research seeks to promote a deeper understanding of trauma healing and its potential to foster positive change and well-being in individuals and communities.

The narrative and psychological process which characters face, process, and start to heal from extremely upsetting or unpleasant experiences often including

violence, bereavement, or personal betrayal by practicing forgiveness is known as trauma healing . This type of healing involves a character's deliberate choice to let go of anger or the need for vengeance, which can lead to emotional healing, reconciliation, or personal development. It does not necessarily entail endorsing the harm that was done.

Forgiveness in trauma healing often serves as a catalyst for some reasons. First, reintegration of identity, where fragmented or damaged selves are restored. Second, moral and emotional resolution, offering characters a sense of peace. Third, social and relational repair, as forgiveness may rebuild bonds or offer closure. Fourth, symbolic or spiritual transformation, particularly in works with religious or existential themes.

The Enright Process Model of Forgiveness, created by psychologist Robert D. Enright, is a well-known theory regarding forgiveness in trauma treatment. Despite having psychological roots, this model has been widely used in trauma studies and literary interpretation. It describes forgiveness as a methodical procedure that can help people recover from psychological trauma.

According to Enright (2000), there are four phases of forgiveness in trauma healing process. Firstly, uncovering phase. This is the first phase where the individual confronts and explores the pain caused by the trauma, recognizing the depth of emotional and psychological injury. Secondly, decisional phase. In this phase, the person makes a conscious choice to forgive, not to excuse or forget the harm, but to let go of resentment and the need for revenge. Thirdly, work phase. It involves developing empathy and compassion for the offender, reinterpreting the trauma in ways that reduce its emotional grip. Finally, deepening phase. In the last phase, the individual experiences emotional release, sometimes even meaning-making or personal growth, leading to reduced suffering and potential reconciliation.

## 2.5 Previous Studies

There are some previous studies about forgiveness in trauma healing: Worthington (2022), Hardman (2022), Putra (2023), Lawler (2023), and Elisha (2024). According to Worthington (2022) on his journal *Forgiveness, Reconciliation and Hope in Trauma Healing*, trauma healing is complex and individual. The internal experience of forgiveness can help heal traumas that have been experienced both individually and within a society because it signals some perception of trustworthiness, creates a desire to reconcile and is considered. Forgiveness can lead to a change in someone's or others' behavior. Forgiveness involves one person making a decision to forgive and experiencing emotional forgiveness. Reconciliation involves a society in which individuals on each conflicting side differ both within and between the groups. Trustworthiness and perceptions by the other side that both sides are trustworthy are difficult to reach. But reconciliation is possible and it is aided by individuals forgiving others. Trustworthiness can be manifested by balancing justice and mercy, and trust can grow from perceptions of mutual trustworthiness. Trust can grow into hope, which can keep people seeking reconciliation even when it seems unlikely that it will occur.

According to Hardman (2022) on her dissertation *Forgiveness Therapy and Complex Trauma: Secular Therapists' Perspectives*, Forgiveness is an intrapersonal process that involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral components in which a person releases a negative stance of unforgiveness to adopt a positive or pro social stance toward the offender or the offense. Forgiveness is a kind of treatment for such trauma. However, complex trauma impacts one's confidence in the future due to loss of hope, fears that life could end suddenly or early, limited, or low life expectations, or assume that regular life events will not occur. Forgiveness differentiates itself from the constructions of excusing, condoning, forgetting, and reconciliation (Wade &

Worthington, 2005). Forgiveness is, therefore, victim-focused, strength-based, and resilient approach to interpersonal offenses. Forgiveness also has a significant connection with both physical and mental well-being (Harris et al., 2007; Toussaint & Webb, 2005). In this dissertation, the researcher uses qualitative method. The purpose of this generic qualitative inquiry was to improve treatment interventions of secular therapists' use of forgiveness therapy, specifically, Worthington's reach forgiveness model with complex trauma clients. Data were gathered through individual phone interviews then analyzed for common themes. This data were refined into three main themes and one subtheme: forgiveness is freedom in complex trauma recovery (subtheme: posttraumatic growth will include resistance), forgiveness therapy minimizes symptoms of complex trauma, and reach forgiveness is beneficial in complex trauma recovery. According to the data, secular therapists strongly believe that forgiveness therapy is critical for trauma recovery. Furthermore, linking forgiveness therapy to complex trauma has catalytic potential for positive social change for practitioners, organizations, and an ever-increasing population of complex trauma survivors.

According to Putra (2023) on his thesis *Hubungan Antara Forgiveness Dengan Wounded Inner Child pada Remaja*, The willingness to forgive is considered an effort to make peace with the internal and external self to heal and reduce the level of tension intensity. This research was conducted to examine the relationship between forgiveness and wounded inner child in adolescents. It is related to the trauma in people's childhood. This research uses incidental sampling technique. This research hypothesis has a negative relationship between forgiveness and wounded inner child in adolescents. The result of the research shows that there is a significant negative relationship between forgiveness and wounded inner child in adolescents. The higher

the forgiveness, the lower the wounded inner child in adolescents. Vice versa, the lower the forgiveness, the higher the wounded inner child in adolescents.

According to Lawler (2023) on her dissertation *A Phenomenological Study Exploring the Experiences Adult Survivors of Interpersonal Childhood Trauma Have with Forgiveness in Their Healing Journey*, forgiveness for many individuals is a word that is tied to theology and faith. This definition is based on the idea of “turning the other cheek” and forgiving those who have harmed us with the expectation of repairing the relationship. Holding a definition of forgiveness that includes the common theological definition may prevent individuals from being willing to engage in forgiveness. More importantly, they may feel guilt and shame due to not upholding their values in being unable or unwilling to engage in forgiveness. Being unable to engage in forgiveness can result in the individual having an increasingly negative self-perception which will increase the experience of trauma symptoms. This study is an exploration of how an individual’s ability to engage in the forgiveness of the perpetrator impacts their healing process, self-compassion, and the perception of self, following interpersonal trauma in childhood. Interpersonal trauma has negative impacts on the victim including fear, decreased self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and inability to fully function in life activities. This research uses qualitative method. The purpose of this research is to explore the experiences adults have with forgiveness in healing from interpersonal childhood trauma. Forgiveness is a phenomenon often talked about in research and healing modalities. This study utilized a qualitative interview approach to explore how adult survivors of interpersonal trauma in childhood think about and integrate forgiveness into their healing journey. This study explored how the experience of forgiveness in their healing journey has impacted or changed the experience of trauma symptoms in their lives. The themes derived from

the data collected in interviews included letting go, actualized forgiveness, and self-compassion.

According to Elisha (2023) on her journal *“The Soul Recognizes Itself in Somebody Else”*: *The Healing Value of Forgiveness among Formerly Incarcerated People in the Profession Practice of Peer-Support*, forgiveness is a moral virtue that involves the individual's recognition of the damage incurred, while avoiding resentment toward those who wronged them in the past. Indeed, such individuals may even cultivate compassion, generosity, and perhaps love toward the perpetrators. Forgiveness involves showing goodwill and mercy toward the perpetrator, after revealing that one has been hurt and expressing one's painful feelings. It also includes learning to view the perpetrator as a human being worthy of respect and understanding the offender despite his hurtful actions. Additionally, forgiveness incorporates ongoing decisions and processes that do not occur instantly and therefore need to be addressed. Forgiveness of self and of others is a crucial component in recovery. It promotes the development of other virtues, such as empathy and the reduction of negative emotions. Past findings have also demonstrated that being involved in helping others encourages compassion and empathy for oneself and others. The research focuses on perceptions of forgiveness among formerly incarcerated people engaged in peer-support roles, based on their lived experience and referred to as wounded healers. The research involves 26 men and women with a history of addiction, trauma, and incarceration who are employed in formal peer-support positions and in the community. The participants reported achieving personal and social forgiveness through their peer work, expressing their social acceptance which is relevant to their recovery. The theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed from the perspective of convict therapy and Enright's forgiveness therapy.