

## SLOVAK VALIDATION OF THE ENRIGHT FORGIVENESS INVENTORY-30

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### ABSTRACT

**Objectives.** In recent years, interpersonal forgiveness has become a focus in psychology research. The Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30 (EFI-30) was developed to assess situational forgiveness toward someone who has hurt us deeply and unjustly. The goal of this study is to validate the Slovak version of the EFI-30, which was translated by the authors, on a representative sample of the Slovak population (in terms of gender and age).

**Sample and settings.** Data were collected on a representative Slovak sample ( $n=1209$  participants: 50.4% women and 49.6% men) in the productive age from 18 to 65 years ( $M=41.22$ ,  $SD=12.78$ ).

**Statistical analyses.** The data obtained from the 30-item scale were subjected to a factor analysis using the Maximum Likelihood method. The internal consistency of the subscales and the EFI-30 was measured. Criterion validity was assessed by correlations with the Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory-18-Item Version and the Forgiveness of Others subscale from the Heartland Forgiveness Scale. Construct validity was assessed by correlations with well-being, happiness, depression, anxiety, and anger.

**Results.** Items relating to the affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions of forgiveness were saturated with a single common factor. The short pseudo-forgiveness subscale formed a specific factor that correlated negatively with forgiveness. The EFI-30 results obtained by persons scoring high on the pseudo-forgiveness scale were therefore excluded from the analysis. The questionnaire had high internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha>0.9$ ), good criterion validity (high correlations with other forgiveness scales) and good construct validity (positive relationships with well-being and happiness, negative ones with anxiety, depression, and anger).

**key words:**

forgiveness,  
Enright Forgiveness Inventory,  
forgiveness assessment,  
validation

**klúčové slová:**

odpustenie,  
Enrightov dotazník odpustenia,  
hodnotenie odpustenia,  
validizácia

### INTRODUCTION

We all face injustices and transgressions in interpersonal relationships. For interpersonal relations to continue and for our inner wounds to be healed, we often need forgiveness. However, forgiveness is often misunderstood by lay people (Kanz, 2000; Lawler-Row et al., 2007), and even helping professionals (Konstam et al., 2000). It is therefore important to discuss science-based definitions of the concept. There are various definitions of forgiveness in the scientific literature. For example, Worthington (2005) defines two types of forgiveness that need to be distinguished: decisional and emotional forgiveness. Decisional forgiveness occurs when the victim decides to control their negative behavior toward the offender and to return the relationship to the condition it was in before the injury. Enright et al. (1998, pp. 46-47) see forgiveness as “a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, negative judgment, and

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indifferent behavior toward one who unjustly injured us while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity, and even love toward him or her". It is important to stress that in this definition the hurt was unjust and the offender does not deserve forgiveness, but despite that we choose to forgive, changing our emotions, cognitions, and behaviors toward the offender. McCullough et al. (2000), on the other hand, understand forgiveness as a motivational construct in a relational context, during which motivations are transformed in order to avoid taking revenge on the offender. The motivation to act benevolently toward the offender increases.

Although the existing definitions of forgiveness differ, in all of them forgiveness is seen as a process in which there is a decrease in negative emotions (e.g. anger, sadness, feelings of disappointment, hatred), negative thoughts toward the offender (e.g. he/she is horrible, a bad person) and negative behaviors toward the offender (e.g. trying to take revenge on the offender). These are then replaced with neutral-to-positive emotions (e.g. compassion, empathy, even agape love), positive thoughts (e.g. he/she is a person worthy of respect despite what they did), and positive behaviors toward them (e.g. helping the person, showing them kindness) (e.g. Enright, 1996; Worthington, 2005). Moreover, scholars agree on the terms that need to be distinguished from forgiveness (McCullough et al., 2000; Worthington, 2005). Firstly, forgiving does not mean condoning or excusing the offender. When being forgiven, the person admits that what was done was unfair and should not be repeated. Secondly, forgiveness does not mean forgetting. When forgiving, we still remember what has happened but choose to see it differently; in other words, the memory of the hurt is not as painful anymore. Lastly, forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation; although they are connected. Reconciliation means that the two people come together after the transgression so their relationship may continue. One can forgive and not become reconciled, for example when the person cannot trust the other person anymore (Enright, 2001).

Previous research has repeatedly showed the importance of forgiveness for our mental and physical health, as well as for our interpersonal relationships. Experimental studies with various populations, such as incest survivors (Freedman & Enright, 1996), female victims of abuse (Reed & Enright, 2006), patients with fibromyalgia (Lee & Enright, 2014), or patients with ischemic heart disease (Waltman et al., 2009) have shown that forgiveness therapy leads to a decrease in symptoms of depression, anger and anxiety, as well as an increase in self-esteem, hope, and finding meaning in suffering. Forgiveness has been shown to have positive outcomes for our physical health as well (Lee & Enright, 2019). For example, forgiveness is related to lower blood pressure (Lawler-Row et al., 2007), a better quality of sleep (Toussaint et al., 2019), and even lower mortality rates (Toussaint et al., 2012). In an interpersonal context, forgiveness is positively related to effective communication (Fincham & Beach, 2002; Sheldon & Antony, 2018) and satisfaction in dating and married relationships (Allemand et al., 2007).

These positive effects of forgiveness point to the need for a reliable and valid assessment. The first scholars to study forgiveness were Enright and his colleagues in the Human Development Study Group (1991). In order to study situational forgiveness toward another person, they created a reliable and valid measure known as the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI). The inventory has 60 items and is informed by the theoretical conception of forgiveness as a means of decreasing negative emotions, thoughts, and behaviors, and increasing positive emotions, thoughts, and behaviors toward the offender (Enright, 1996). Hence, it is designed to measure the six states that represent the person's attitude toward the offender, namely negative affect, negative cognition, negative behavior, positive affect, positive cognition, and positive be-

havior. The first study to use the EFI was by Subkoviak et al. (1995) and investigated a sample of American students and their parents. The authors designed the questionnaire so it contained 60 items focused on six areas, each consisting of 10 items: positive and negative emotions, positive and negative cognitions, and positive and negative behavior. Although they found significant differences in the scores obtained in the six areas, they did not carry out a factor analysis. The items were classified into three subscales (affective, cognitive, and behavioral). The items represent one construct, forgiveness, as the questionnaire had high internal consistency ( $\alpha=0.98$ ). The user manual (Enright & Rique, 2004) states that the one-factor solution for the questionnaire was verified on the basis of the confirmatory factor analysis. Norms were also calculated for one score – total forgiveness. The authors found that forgiveness toward another person is significantly negatively related to anxiety. The results of the original study (Subkoviak et al., 1995) were promising and inspired other studies in this area. Since then, many American and European studies have used the EFI to assess forgiveness (e.g. Akhtar & Barlow, 2018; Wade et al., 2014).

Feedback from researchers across the world on the length of the EFI and the related respondent fatigue inspired the authors to create a shorter version of the original EFI – the EFI-30. The EFI-30 was constructed by an international team of authors (Enright et al., 2022). An item analysis based on item-response theory was conducted in order to select the five psychometrically most appropriate items from each of the six areas of the original EFI. The questionnaire was tested on the US population and showed good psychometric properties. Subsequently, it was translated and validated on participants from Austria, Brazil, Israel, Norway, Pakistan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The results of several fit-tests indicate good correspondence between the data and the six-factor model in all eight countries where the research was carried out (Enright et al., 2022). The reliability indexes assessed by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the six EFI-30 areas were high across all the cultures tested ( $\alpha=0.80-0.95$ ). The results of the Pearson's correlation showed a positive correlation between the EFI-30 six areas and the 1-Item Forgiveness scale (Subkoviak et al., 1995) and no correlation with Crowne-Marlowe's (1960) Social Desirability scale across the cultures.

In Slovakia, the Enright Forgiveness Inventory has been used in different studies with bereaved individuals (Martinčeková & Klatt, 2017; Záhorcová et al., 2020) and in undergraduate and postgraduate (Master's) research. Given that these studies used the unstandardized version of the questionnaire, and the growing interest in studying forgiveness, it is important to have a standardized version of the questionnaire for use with the Slovak population as well. Therefore, the purpose of our study is to validate the short version of the Enright Forgiveness Inventory and obtain its psychometric properties, including its factor structure.

For the purpose of measuring construct validity, we hypothesize that the total forgiveness score, as measured by EFI-30, will be positively related to subjective well-being and happiness (as shown in previous forgiveness studies, e.g. Bono et al., 2008; Maltby et al., 2005) and negatively related to depression, anxiety, and anger (as shown in previous studies, e.g. Akhtar & Barlow, 2018; Reed & Enright, 2006; Wade et al., 2014).

## METHOD

### Participants

The research sample, representative of the demographic composition (in terms of gender and age) of the productive Slovak population (18-65 years), was recruited via an

external marketing agency. Potential participants had to be 18-65 years old and be able to remember an event where someone had hurt them deeply and unjustly (so they would be able to fill out the EFI-30). The external marketing agency was asked to obtain a sample of 1,200 participants. The agency recruited participants for their panel through several channels – online, telephone recruitment, face to face, online advertising, and through partners. All the participants were verified via a telephone call and were subsequently given scores for two levels – the uniqueness and reality of the participant; and the quality and consistency of their answers. People who did not meet the criteria were excluded from the panel and were not included in the survey. The agency performed data cleaning after the data collection. Data analysts checked the data for the following – unfinished questionnaires, extreme values, time of completion, quality of answers to open questions (e.g. “I do not know” and nonsense answers), grid questions. The questionnaire consisted of two attention checks (e.g. “Please mark number 3 on the scale from 1 to 6). People who incorrectly marked these items were excluded from the data analysis.

The final sample consisted of 1,209 participants, of which 600 (49.6%) were men and 609 (50.4%) were women. Men and women were represented in approximately equal proportions in all age subgroups. Mean participant age was 41.22 ( $SD=12.78$ ); the age composition of the sample is reported in detail in Table 1.

The highest education level obtained was: elementary (18; 1.5%); high school without a leaving certificate (123; 10.2%); high school with a leaving certificate (545; 45.1%); Bachelor’s degree (85; 7%); Master’s degree (403; 33.3%) and doctoral degree (35; 2.9%). Marital status was: married (586; 48.5%), single (270; 22.3%), in a romantic relationship (211; 17.5%), divorced (118; 9.8%) and widowed (24; 2%). The majority were religious believers (78.2%), and 21.8% were without religion or atheists. The following denominations were represented: Catholic (802; 66.3%), Evangelical and other Protestant (111; 9.2%), other Christian (24; 2%) and non-Christian, e.g. Buddhism (8; 0.7%).

Table 1 Age composition of the sample

Age Group	N	%
18 – 25 years	121	10.0
26 – 35 years	373	30.9
36 – 45 years	249	20.6
46 – 55 years	250	20.7
56 – 65 years	216	17.9
Total	1209	100.0

## Measures

At the beginning of the questionnaire, participants completed a consent form and demographic information (gender, age, education level, marital status, religion).

*EFI-30.* When administering the EFI-30, the word “forgiveness” should not be used. The recommendation is to name the scale “Attitude Test” so participants are unaware the questionnaire measures forgiveness (Enright et al., 2022).

At the beginning of the questionnaire, there are instructions that are adapted for use with the particular study. The general instruction, for measuring situational forgiveness in a non-specific context, is: “*We are sometimes hurt by people, whether in family, friendship, school, work, or other situations. We ask you to think of the most recent experience of someone hurting you unfairly and deeply. For a few moments,*

visualize in your mind the events of that interaction. Try to see the person and try to experience what happened.” This non-specific instruction was used in this study to validate the EFI-30.

Researchers wanting to measure situational forgiveness in a particular context, for example in a romantic relationship, can change the instruction to: “*We are sometimes hurt by our partners in our romantic relationships. We ask you to think of the most recent experience of your partner hurting you unfairly and deeply. For a few moments, visualize in your mind the events of that interaction. Try to see your partner and try to experience what happened.*”

After reading the initial instruction, participants have to answer a question on how much they were hurt (“*How deeply were you hurt when the incident occurred?*”) on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = no hurt to 5 = a great deal of hurt) and who the agent of hurt was (in non-specific settings one can choose from the following options: child; spouse; relative; friend of same gender; friend of the opposite gender; employer; other – specify). Then participants are asked whether the person is still living and how long ago the incident occurred. Participants are then asked to briefly describe what happened when the person hurt them.

After reading the initial instructions, participants are asked to answer a series of 30 questions about their current attitude toward that person. The 30 questions are divided into three subscales: affective, behavioral, and cognitive. Under the affective subscale, participants are asked to rate their current emotions toward that person. Five emotions are positive (e.g. “*I feel warm toward him/her*”) and five are negative (e.g. “*I feel disgust toward him/her*”). Under the behavioral subscale, participants are asked how they act or would act toward that person. Five behaviors are formulated positively (e.g. “*I do or would show friendship toward him/her*”) and five are formulated negatively (e.g. “*I do or would ignore him/her*”). Under the cognitive subscale, participants are asked what they think about that person right now. Five thoughts are formulated positively (e.g. “*I think he or she is a good person*”) and five are formulated negatively (e.g. “*I think he or she is worthless*”). The answers in all subscales are rated on a 6-point Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree, 6 – strongly agree).

For the purpose of scoring the EFI-30, it is important to recode all 15 negatively formulated items. The overall forgiveness score result is calculated by adding up the 15 recoded items along with the 15 positively formulated items for each subscale.

**Pseudo-forgiveness subscale.** The EFI-30, as well as the original EFI-60, includes five items that belong to the pseudo-forgiveness subscale used for the internal validation of the EFI. These five items measure denial of the hurt, and pardoning or condoning the offender. Example items are: “*There was really no problem now that I think about it*” or “*My feelings were never hurt*”. Items are scored on a 6-point Likert scale (1 – strongly disagree, 6 – strongly agree). The recommendation is to eliminate participants from the data analysis who achieve a score of 20 or higher on the pseudo-forgiveness subscale as their forgiveness may not be authentic and they may in fact be denying the hurt and not seeing it as a serious problem.

**TRIM-18.** The Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (McCullough et al., 2006) was used to assess situational forgiveness toward another person, in addition to the EFI-30. The TRIM-18 is based on McCullough’s et al. (1997) understanding of forgiveness as a means of decreasing motivation to avoid the offender, decreasing motivation to revenge the offender, and increasing motivation to act benevolently toward them. The TRIM-18 consists of 18 items divided into three subscales: the avoidance subscale (7 items, e.g. “*I live as if he/she doesn’t exist, isn’t around*”), the revenge subscale (5 items, e.g. “*I’ll make him/her pay*”), and the be-

nevolence subscale (6 items, e.g. “*Even though his/her actions hurt me, I have goodwill for him/her*”). To measure the overall forgiveness score, the score of the benevolence items is added to the reversed scores of the avoidance items and revenge items. The original TRIM-18 has good reliability and validity (McCullough et al., 2006; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002). For the purpose of this study, the TRIM-18 was back and forth translated by the authors of this study. The statistical analysis indicated that one item had to be excluded from the Benevolence subscale: “*I have given up my hurt and resentment.*” Thus modified for our sample, the questionnaire (TRIM-17) had an internal consistency of  $\alpha = 0.938$  for the avoidance scale,  $\alpha = 0.869$  for the revenge scale, and  $\alpha=0.920$  for the benevolence scale (Záhorcová & Dočkal, 2022).

**HFS.** The Forgiveness of Others subscale from the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS; Thompson et al., 2005) was used to assess dispositional forgiveness toward others. The scale has six items assessed on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = almost always false for me, 7 = almost always true for me). An example item is: “*I continue to be hard on others who have hurt me.*” The original scale demonstrated good psychometric properties (Thompson et al., 2005). We consider the coefficient of internal consistency obtained for our set ( $\alpha=0.763$ ) to be sufficient for the scale used to validate the EFI-30.

**Subjective well-being.** The Satisfaction with Life scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985) was used to measure subjective well-being. The scale measures satisfaction with one’s life as a whole and consists of five items that are assessed on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). An example item is: “*In most ways my life is close to my ideal*”. The original scale showed good convergent validity with other scales and with other types of assessments of subjective well-being (Pavot & Diener, 1993). The scale was back and forth translated from English to Slovak by the authors of this study. Internal consistency of Slovak version was  $\alpha=0.891$ .

**Happiness.** The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS, Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) was used to measure happiness. It is a short scale that measures the individual’s level of global happiness. The scale contains four items that are assessed on a 7-point Likert scale. An example item is: “*In general, I consider myself... 1 – not a very happy person, 7 – a very happy person.*” The original scale has very good psychometric properties (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). For the purpose of this study, a Slovak version of the scale by Babinčák (2018) was used. The Slovak version of the scale used in the original study has convergent validity and adequate internal consistency ( $\alpha=0.770$ ). In our study it was  $\alpha=0.803$ .

**Depression and anxiety.** The Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS, Leung et al., 1993) was used to measure respondents’ mental health in terms of depression and anxiety. HADS contains seven items to measure depression and seven items to measure anxiety. Items are scored on a 4-point Likert scale. An example item for depression is: “*I still enjoy the things I used to enjoy*” (0 – hardly at all, 3 – definitely as much). An example item for anxiety is: “*Worrying thoughts go through my mind*” (0 – only occasionally, 3 – a great deal of the time). The scale has been used with different populations, including the general population, somatic, psychiatric, and primary care patients, and shows good psychometric properties in these (Bjelland et al., 2002). The scale was back and forth translated from English to Slovak by the authors of this study. The coefficients of internal consistency recorded for our sample were  $\alpha = 0.815$  for depression and  $\alpha=0.840$  for anxiety.

**Anger.** Anger was measured with the A-subscale from the Aggression Questionnaire (AQ, Buss & Perry, 1992). The scale consists of six items that are assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = extremely uncharacteristic of me, 5 = extremely charac-

teristic of me). An example item is: *“I have trouble controlling my temper”*. The original scale showed good internal consistency and stability over time (Buss & Perry, 1992). The scale was back and forth translated from English to Slovak by the authors of this study. The internal consistency for our sample was  $\alpha = 0.804$ .

## RESULTS

The Slovak version of EFI-30 is presented in the Appendix. The psychometric properties of the Slovak version of the EFI-30 were verified based on the framework of Classical Test Theory.

### Reliability

We were interested in the internal consistency of the subscales and the EFI-30 in its entirety; given the nature of the data, the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient appears to be a suitable indicator. Table 2 presents the observed values of  $\alpha$  for the whole representative Slovak sample ( $n=1209$ ), as well as for the subgroups, differentiated according to respondent gender and age.

Table 2 Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  values for the three dimensions and the total forgiveness score for the EFI-30

Group	Affective Dimension	Behavioral Dimension	Cognitive Dimension	Forgiveness - Total
Whole Sample	.926	.956	.924	.973
Men	.926	.951	.925	.973
Women	.926	.961	.924	.974
18 – 25 years-old	.920	.951	.915	.971
26 – 35 years-old	.931	.959	.926	.975
36 – 45 years-old	.934	.961	.932	.976
46 – 55 years-old	.914	.945	.905	.968
56 – 65 years-old	.920	.957	.925	.974

We worked out the contribution of each item to the total score by calculating the item-total correlation. This value also indicates the discriminatory power of each item. For the affective dimension, the corrected coefficients (in the whole sample) ranged between 0.644 and 0.826. The only lower correlation (0.388) was for the item no. 7 (*“I feel caring toward him/her”*). However, since the item’s contribution to the overall score is positive, and the reliability of the scale did not need to be increased by eliminating the item, we left the subscale in its original form with the ten items.

The corrected coefficients for the behavioral subscale ranged between 0.730 and 0.849. For the cognitive subscale they ranged between 0.499 and 0.865, with the lowest coefficient (0.383) being recorded for the item no. 23 (*“I think he or she is dreadful”*). There was no need to eliminate this item either. For the total EFI-30 score, the item-total correlations (for the whole sample) then ranged between 0.348 (*“I think he or she is dreadful”*) to 0.830. We do not provide a more detailed item analysis here because the above data sufficiently document the psychometric quality of the Slovak version of the EFI-30 tool.

The questionnaire also contains a five-item scale for pseudo-forgiveness. Its reliability in the Slovak version is shown in Table 3. The discrimination coefficients of the five items ranged between 0.841 and 0.887.

Table 3 Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for the pseudo-forgiveness subscale of the EFI-30

Group	$\alpha$
Whole Sample	.951
Men	.956
Women	.946
18 – 25 years-old	.945
26 – 35 years-old	.955
36 – 45 years-old	.952
46 – 55 years-old	.948
56 – 65 years-old	.947

### Internal validity

We subjected the data obtained from the 30-item questionnaire to a confirmatory factor analysis (Maximum Likelihood Method). We verified the six-factor solution documented by Enright et al. (2022), a three-factor solution corresponding to the three administered scales of the questionnaire, as well as a one-factor solution presented for the original 60-item version of the EFI (Enright & Rique, 2004). The results are shown in Table 4. The data corresponds best to the six-factor model; all models are acceptable according to the SRSM indicator. Items no. 7 and 23, already flagged up by the internal consistency analysis, show insufficient saturation. However, their exclusion did not affect the values of fit indicators. Therefore, we decided to retain them in the questionnaire. Table 5 documents the strong inter-factor correlations within the 6-factor model. Within the 3-factor model, the correlations have values 0.856 – 0.912. We also subjected all 35 questionnaire items (including the pseudo-forgiveness scale) to confirmatory factor analysis. The results show good agreement with the seven-factor model (CFI=0.932; TLI=0.925; RMSEA=0.066; SRMR=0.039;  $\chi^2=3368_{(539)}$ ), the pseudo-forgiveness subscale is a clearly distinguishable factor.

The interpretation of the factor analysis results cannot be based only on mathematical solutions, it must also make a psychological sense. The six-factor (seven-factor together with the pseudo-forgiveness scale) structure of the questionnaire, confirmed by confirmatory factor analysis, copies the method for creating the tool (six/seven areas consisting of five items). However, the content distinction of the factors according to the positive or negative wording of the item is not relevant in relation to forgiveness as an assessed variable. Also, the authors of EFI (Enright & Rique, 2004; Enright et al., 2022) did not plan to interpret the six dimensions of this instrument.

Because the values of the fit-tests in our sample are weaker than those reported by Enright et al. (2022) (CFI=0.95; RMSEA=0.56), we also subjected the data to exploratory factor analysis (Maximum Likelihood Method with Oblimin rotation) in search of a different solution from the one originally intended. This analysis found four factors with Eigenvalue greater than 1; parallel analysis suggested five factors. However, the results did not make sense with any multifactorial solution. All thirty items showed high saturation by the first factor, whereas the other factors showed only low (positive and negative) item loadings, which could not be meaningfully interpreted. The common factor explains 56.24% of the variance of the score obtained. As can be seen from the scree plot (Figure 1), the difference between the first and subsequent factors is so significant that a one-factor solution seems plausible.



Table 4 Results of the CFA for the models of the EFI-30

Item number	6-factor model		3-factor model		1-factor model			
	Factor	Saturation	Factor	Saturation	Factor	Saturation		
1	1. Affective dimension – positive items	.735	1. Affective dimension	.685	Total forgiveness	.664		
2		.895		.857		.835		
7		.449		.419		.423		
8		.852		.804		.771		
9		.886		.854		.842		
3	2. Affective dimension – negative items	.698		1. Affective dimension		.677	Total forgiveness	.646
4		.856				.778		.744
5		.905				.846		.800
6		.855				.809		.793
10	.766	.731				.700		
11	3. Behavioral dimension – positive items	.862	2. Behavioral dimension		.852	Total forgiveness		.847
16		.896			.845			.828
17		.883			.857			.839
19		.899			.855			.837
20		.884			.822			.812
12	4. Behavioral dimension – negative items	.840		2. Behavioral dimension	.768		Total forgiveness	.730
13		.946			.850			.803
14		.950			.848			.796
15		.866			.847			.817
18	.747	.741			.711			
22	5. Cognitive dimension – positive items	.873	3. Cognitive dimension		.861	Total forgiveness		.815
25		.911			.905			.841
27		.705			.693			.658
29		.815			.802			.787
30		.750			.737			.698
21	6. Cognitive dimension – negative items	.815		3. Cognitive dimension	.785		Total forgiveness	.742
23		.449			.396			.348
24		.827			.795			.741
26		.916			.882			.810
28		.540			.533			.519
CFI	.920		.823			.766		
TLI	.911		.809			.749		
RMSEA	.077		.114			.130		
SRMR	.042		.052			.060		
$\chi^2$	3209 <sub>(390)</sub>		6667 <sub>(402)</sub>			8697 <sub>(405)</sub>		

Table 5 Inter-factor correlations within the 6-factor model of the EFI-30

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
2	.815	–			
3	.874	.770	–		
4	.749	.804	.784	–	
5	.875	.788	.870	.711	–
6	.771	.820	.780	.725	.921

This can also be seen in the scree plot (Figure 2) for the exploratory factor analysis, which suggests the two factors are valid: the first factor – forgiveness – explains 53.01% of the variance, the second – pseudo-forgiveness – explains 8.55% of the variance of the total score. Factors are negatively correlated ( $r=-0.498$ ), which corresponds to the theory on which the pseudo-forgiveness scale is based (Enright & Rique, 2004). For practical purposes, the summary results of two factors can be interpreted: the total forgiveness factor and the pseudo-forgiveness factor.

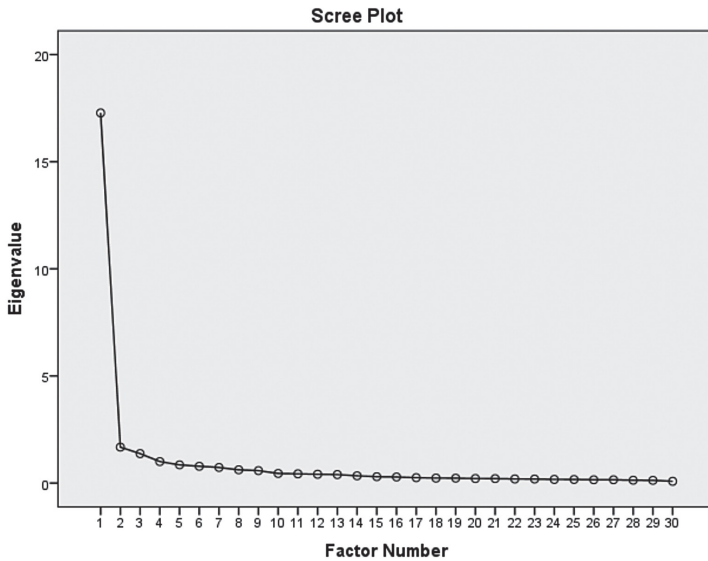


Figure 1 Eigenvalues of EFI-30 factors

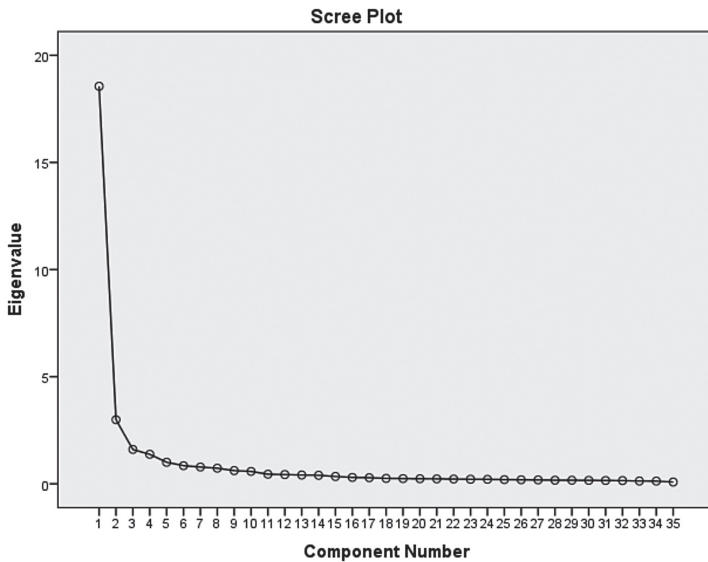


Figure 2 Eigenvalues of EFI-30 factors including the pseudo-forgiveness scale

## Criterion validity

Given the above, we will report the validation procedures relating to one comprehensive factor of forgiveness. We also performed calculations of the individual EFI-30 subscales, but the results are essentially identical to those presented below. In this case the sample consisted of 1,143 respondents. We excluded 66 people (5.5%) who scored high on the pseudo-forgiveness scale from the original sample, since their results may not represent real forgiveness but denial of the hurt instead (Enright et al., 2022). Enright and Rique (2004) set a cut-off score for this scale of 20 points, without stating how they arrived at this number. In our sample it represents the 90th percentile. The exclusion of 10% of participants seems disproportionate to us. Therefore, we chose the 95th percentile as the cut-off value, represented by 22 points on the pseudo-forgiveness scale. The proportion of individuals reaching or exceeding this limit was similar in all subsets (from 4% to 7%).

The results of the two forgiveness tests were chosen as the criteria for the concurrent validation. The TRIM-18 questionnaire (McCullough et al., 2006; TRIM-17 in the Slovak version – Záhorcová & Dočkal, 2022) assesses the same situational forgiveness construct as the EFI-30 questionnaire, although the scales are based on different theories. Hence we expect a high correlation between the total scores of both questionnaires. The TRIM-17 has a three-factor structure, which was also confirmed in our research (Záhorcová & Dočkal, 2022), so we will observe the correlations with the Avoidance subscale (we expect a medium-strong negative relationship), the Revenge subscale (we expect a medium-strong negative relationship) and the Benevolence subscale (we expect a high positive relationship).

Another tool that we used in the concurrent criterion validation is the HFS questionnaire (Thompson et al., 2005). This questionnaire is aimed at identifying the tendency to forgive others, i.e., forgiveness as a personal disposition. We therefore expect it to have a significant positive relationship with the EFI-30, but for that to be lower than the one obtained using the situational forgiveness rate.

The variation analysis of the results of the TRIM questionnaire revealed significant differences in the scores obtained by men and women (in the revenge dimension and the overall score) and in the scores for the assessed age groups (revenge, avoidance, and overall score). Gender and age had a smaller effect on the EFI-30 score; nonetheless we noted that as well. This applies to the HFS too. These differences could affect the identified relationships between the questionnaires so in addition to using the whole data set, we also separately evaluated the data in the sub-sets broken down by gender and age. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in Table 6. They are consistent with the validation hypotheses. The differences between the coefficients expressing the relationship between the EFI-30 and the TRIM (situational forgiveness) and between the EFI-30 and the HFS (tendency to forgive) are so obvious that there is no need to document their statistical significance.

## Construct validity

Theoretical considerations and previous research experience show that forgiveness is positively associated with subjective well-being and happiness (Bono et al., 2008; Maltby et al., 2005; Toussaint & Friedman, 2009), but negatively associated with depression, anxiety, or anger (Akhtar & Barlow, 2018; Freedman & Enright, 1996; Lee & Enright, 2014; Reed & Enright, 2006; Wade et al., 2014). Verifying these relationships will contribute to the construct validity of the EFI-30. Again we worked with the research sample of 1,143 participants divided by gender and age. The results of the correlation analysis are presented in Table 7.

*Table 6* Correlation between the overall forgiveness score of the EFI-30 and the criterion (TRIM, HFS)

Group	TRIM Forgiveness	TRIM Avoidance	TRIM Revenge	TRIM Benevolence	HFS Tendency to Forgive
Whole Sample	.908	-.884	-.597	.852	.471
Men	.905	-.869	-.607	.841	.458
Women	.910	-.896	-.586	.860	.478
18 – 25 years	.919	-.903	-.542	.842	.417
26 – 35 years	.907	-.888	-.539	.850	.375
36 – 45 years	.902	-.887	-.595	.860	.559
46 – 55 years	.894	-.858	-.639	.829	.507
56 – 65 years	.920	-.881	-.661	.879	.539

*Note.* All correlation coefficients are significant at  $p < .001$

*Table 7* Correlation coefficients of the total EFI-30 score with the other constructs

Group	Well-being (SWLS)	Happiness (SHS)	Anxiety (HADS)	Depression (HADS)	Anger (AQ)
Whole Sample	.208***	.158***	-.125***	-.135***	-.083**
Men	.209***	.145***	-.160***	-.107*	-.075
Women	.204***	.161***	-.100*	-.159***	-.102*
18 – 25 years	.192*	.236*	-.223*	-.254**	-.251**
26 – 35 years	.186***	.175**	-.105	-.110	-.112*
36 – 45 years	.211**	.136*	-.080	-.164*	-.043
46 – 55 years	.194**	.091	-.088	-.078	-.080
56 – 65 years	.172*	.148*	-.194**	-.124	-.007

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$

*Table 8* Correlation between the dispositional forgiveness HFS with the other constructs

Group	Well-being (SWLS)	Happiness (SHS)	Anxiety (HADS)	Depression (HADS)	Anger (AQ)
Whole Sample	.212***	.311***	-.314***	-.308***	-.281***
Men	.225***	.257***	-.364***	-.261***	-.300***
Women	.196***	.349	-.285***	-.351***	-.291***
18 – 25 years	.217*	.355***	-.353***	-.333***	-.246**
26 – 35 years	.258***	.330***	-.344***	-.321***	-.282***
36 – 45 years	.202**	.318***	-.299***	-.371***	-.270***
46 – 55 years	.196**	.308***	-.265***	-.318***	-.342***
56 – 65 years	.179*	.271**	-.305***	-.269***	-.213**

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ ; \*\*  $p \leq .01$ ; \*  $p \leq .05$

We captured these dimensions as dispositional attributes of personality so it is assumed that their relationships with situational forgiveness may be lower than the relationships with dispositional forgiveness. In our case, this represented the score of the HFS questionnaire. We verified the assumption that the personality variables have a stronger relationship with the HFS than the EFI-30 by calculating the correlations

Table 9 Comparison of correlations between assessed constructs and situational forgiveness (EFI-30) and dispositional forgiveness (HFS)

Construct	Correlation with EFI	Correlation with HFS	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>
Well-being	.208	.212	0.07	.572
Happiness	.158	.311	2.77	.002
Anxiety	-.125	-.314	3.41	.000
Depression	-.135	-.308	3.12	.000
Anger	-.083	-.281	3.51	.000

given in Table 8. In fact the relationships between the monitored constructs and the HFS, both positive and negative, are higher, which can be seen in the comparison of the correlation coefficients using a Fisher transformation, shown for the whole sample in Table 9. The exception is well-being, which correlates approximately equally with both types of forgiveness.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to validate the Slovak translation of the EFI-30 questionnaire using a representative sample of the Slovak working age population. Reliability was assessed on the basis of the internal consistency of the questionnaire, which indicated  $\alpha$  values higher than 0.9, and hence more than that stated by the authors of the original questionnaire (Enright et al., 2022). The contributions of the individual items to the overall score, also understood as discrimination coefficients in classical test theory, are very satisfactory, with two exceptions. We recorded lower values for *“I feel caring toward him/her”* and *“I think he or she is dreadful”*. The translation may have caused some problems. Many of the English terms used in the original wording of the items are more or less synonymous, and in Slovak they are often translated using the same word. In order to distinguish between them, the translators had to consider other options, and in these cases they may not have selected the optimal ones. “Caring” was translated into Slovak as an expression that is close to the meaning of “compassion”. “Dreadful” was translated using a phrase that may have complicated the understanding of the item. These items nevertheless contribute to the total forgiveness score and do not impair the psychometric qualities of the questionnaire.

Although the content validity is obvious, the answer to the question about the internal structure of the questionnaire is ambiguous. The original authors of the questionnaire did not subject their data to the factor analysis. Only in the creation of the thirty-item version of the EFI, six factors corresponding to the constructing of the questionnaire were documented using the confirmatory factor analysis (Enright et al., 2022). Our research also confirmed such a structure. However, the factors do not have a meaningful interpretation in relation to the observed phenomenon of forgiveness; even the exploratory factor analysis carried out on the same data did not find the six factors. We also found no evidence for a three-factor structure consistent with Enright’s theory. This may indicate that forgiveness always has an aggregate form – comprising affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects. Also, the results of the exploratory factor analysis can be best interpreted with a one-factor solution, although this was not confirmed by confirmatory analysis. Nevertheless, in practical work with the questionnaire, the interpretation of its total score can be recommended, just as the original authors did - they based this decision on the high internal consistency of the questionnaire (Enright & Rique, 2004).

In accordance with the assumptions of the authors of the questionnaire (Enright & Rique, 2004; Enright et al., 2022), we differentiated the scale of pseudo-forgiveness in our research. The analyses, which we do not present here, confirm the validity of the subscale – its correlations with the criteria and other assessed constructs are lower than the correlations of the forgiveness scale. We did not find forgiveness relationships with personality variables in the individuals who were excluded from further analysis based on their high pseudo-forgiveness scores. In this group, only the correlation with depression, which in the general population correlates negatively with forgiveness, was positive.

We sought evidence for the validity of the EFI-30 by correlating it with the criteria used in other forgiveness questionnaires. All the relationships were consistent with the hypothesis: EFI-30 forgiveness correlates highly positively with TRIM-18 situational forgiveness. Regarding the dimensions identified by the TRIM: the motivation to avoid the person who hurt them and the motivation to take revenge correlate negatively, whereas there is a high positive correlation between the EFI-30 score and benevolence. We verified these relationships in the whole sample as well as in the sub-sets divided by respondent's gender and age. There was some non-linear change with age, but this was in line with the expectations for each group. The validation hypothesis was also confirmed by the positive medium-high relationship between the EFI-30 situational forgiveness and the HFS dispositional forgiveness.

Another validation procedure used was construct validation, in which we assumed convergence between the EFI-30 forgiveness and well-being and happiness (Bono et al., 2008; Maltby et al., 2005; Toussaint & Friedman, 2009), and divergence from anxiety, depression, and anger (Akhtar & Barlow, 2018; Reed & Enright, 2006; Wade et al., 2014). The results for the whole sample and the sub-samples confirmed our expectations, although not sufficiently in some cases. It is clear that there is only a loose relationship between the dispositional characteristics of personality and situational forgiveness, and that with older ages there is no relationship at all. Theoretically, personality traits should relate more to the tendency to forgive than to situational forgiveness. This assumption has been clearly confirmed, and this contributes to the construct validity of the EFI-30.

In our research, we observed several other variables and the relationships between these and forgiveness will be the subject of further studies. However, we can already state that the Slovak version of the EFI-30 is a suitable tool for research purposes, but also for counseling work with clients of psychological services.

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## SÚHRN

Validizácia slovenskej verzie Enrightovho dotazníka odpustenia-30

**Ciele.** Vedecká psychológia sa posledné roky čoraz viac zameriava na skúmanie interpersonálneho odpustenia. Enrightov dotazník odpustenia-30 (EFI-30) bol vytvorený s cieľom hodnotenia situácie odpustenia človeku, ktorý nás hlboko a nespravodlivo zranil. Cieľom tejto štúdie je overiť slovenskú verziu EFI-30 na reprezentatívnom súbore slovenskej populácie (z hľadiska pohlavia a veku).

**Výskumný súbor.** Údaje boli zozbierané na reprezentatívnom súbore slovenskej populácie ( $n = 1209$  účastníkov: 50,4 % žien a 49,6 % mužov) v produktívnom veku od 18 do 65 rokov ( $M = 41,22$ ,  $SD = 12,78$ ).

**Štatistické analýzy.** Údaje získané pomocou 30-položkovej škály boli podrobené faktorovej analýze metódou Maximum Likelihood. Reliabilita subskál i celej škály EFI-30 bola overená výpočtom koeficientov vnútornej konzistencie. Kritériová validita bola hodnotená koreláciami so škálou Interpersonálnych motívácií súvisiacich s previnením-18 a subskálou odpustenia druhým z Heartlandského dotazníka odpustenia. Konštruktívna validita škály bola hodnotená koreláciami so škálami zameranými na hodnotenie subjektívnej pohody, šťastia, depresie, úzkosti a hnevu. **Výsledky.** Položky týkajúce sa afektívnej, behaviorálnej a kognitívnej dimenzie odpustenia sú sýtené jedným spoločným faktorom. Krátka subskála pseudoodpustenia tvorí špecifický faktor, ktorý s odpustením koreluje negatívne. Výsledky EFI-30 získané účastníkmi s vysokým skóre pseudoodpustenia boli preto z analýzy vylúčené. Dotazník má vysokú vnútornú konzistenciu (Cronbachova  $\alpha > 0,9$ ), dobrú kritériovú validitu (vysoké korelácie s inými škálami na meranie odpustenia) i konštruktívnu validitu (pozitívne vzťahy so subjektívnou pohodou a šťastím, negatívne vzťahy s úzkosťou, depresiou a hnevom).



**Enrightov dotazník odpustenia**  
**EFI-30**  
(Záhorcová & Dočkal)

V živote nás niekedy nespravodlivo zrania druhí ľudia, či už je to v rodine, medzi priateľmi, v škole, v práci alebo v iných situáciách. Uvažujte teraz, prosím, o **najnovšej** skúsenosti, v ktorej Vás niekto zranil **nespravodlivo a hlboko**. Na chvíľu si predstavte udalosti tejto interakcie. Sústreďte sa na osobu, ktorá Vám ublížila, a skúste si v myslí znova oživiť, čo sa stalo.

**1. Ako hlboko ste sa cítili zranený/á, keď sa to stalo?**

vôbec                      trochu                      stredne                      dost'                      veľmi

**2. Kto Vás zranil?**

dieťa      manžel/ka      partner/ka      príbuzný/á      kolega/gyňa      nadriadený/á  
kamarát/ka rovnakého pohlavia      kamarát/ka opačného pohlavia  
niekto iný; uveďte prosím kto: .....

**3. Žije ešte osoba, ktorá Vám ublížila?**

áno                      nie

**4. Kedy sa tá udalosť odohrala?**

Uveďte, prosím, pred akým časom:

pred ..... dňami                      pred ..... mesiacmi

pred ..... týždňami                      pred ..... rokmi

**5. Stručne opíšte, čo sa stalo, keď Vám tento človek ublížil:**

.....

.....

.....

Pomocou dotazníkových položiek, ktoré budú nasledovať, vyjadrite, prosím, svoj súčasný postoj voči tomuto človeku. Nehodnoťte svoje minulé postoje, ale to, aké sú Vaše postoje **práve teraz**. Všetky odpovede sú dôverné, preto, prosím, odpovedajte úprimne.

Ďakujeme.

Teraz, prosím, vyjadrite svoje **pocity a emócie**, čo **práve teraz** cítite voči osobe, ktorá Vám ublížila. Pri každej uvedenej emócií sa pokúste ohodnotiť svoje aktuálne prežívanie zakrúžkovaním číselnej hodnoty, ktorá najlepšie vystihuje Váš postoj. Nevynechajte, prosím, žiadnu položku.

**Voči danej osobe cítim:**

	veľmi ne- súhlasím	nesúhlasím	mierne ne- súhlasím	mierne súhlasím	súhlasím	veľmi súhla- sím
1. vrelosť	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. láskavosť	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. ľahostajnosť	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. odmietanie	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. chlad	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. odpor	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. súcitiť	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. náklonnosť	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. priateľstvo	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. znechutenie	1	2	3	4	5	6

Nasledujúce položky sa týkajú Vášho **súčasného správania** voči danej osobe. Zvážte, prosím, ako sa voči nej správate alebo ako by ste sa správali. Zakrúžkujte v každom riadku tú číselnú hodnotu, ktorá najlepšie vystihuje Vaše aktuálne alebo pravdepodobné správanie. Nevynechajte, prosím, žiadnu položku.

**K tejto osobe sa správam, resp. správam/ by som sa takto:**

	veľmi ne-súhlasím	nesúhlasím	mierne ne-súhlasím	mierne súhlasím	súhlasím	veľmi súhlasím
11. prejavím jej/mu priateľstvo	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. vyhnem sa jej/mu	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. ignorujem ju/ho	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. nevšímam si ju/ho	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. nezaujíma ma	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. pomôžem jej/mu	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. nadviazem s ňou/ním dobré vzťahy	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. nebudem sa s ňou/ním stýkať	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. preukážem mu/jej láskavosť	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. pomôžem jej/mu, ak má problémy	1	2	3	4	5	6

Nasledujúce položky sa týkajú toho, čo si o danej osobe **v súčasnosti myslíte**. Zamerajte sa, prosím, na to, čo prebieha Vašou myslou, keď teraz uvažujete o tejto osobe. Zakrúžkujte číselnú hodnotu, ktorá najlepšie vystihuje Vaše aktuálne myšlienky. Nevynechajte, prosím, žiadnu položku.

Myslím si, že je:	veľmi ne-súhlasím	nesúhlasím	mierne ne-súhlasím	mierne súhlasím	súhlasím	veľmi súhlasím
21. hrozná/ý	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. človek dobrých kvalít	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. naháňajúca/i strach	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. bezcenná/ý	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. dobrý človek	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. zlý človek	1	2	3	4	5	6
Čo sa tejto osoby týka:						
27. želám jej/mu všetko dobré	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. nesúhlasím s ňou/ním	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. mám o nej/nom priaznivú mienku	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. dúfam, že sa jej/mu darí	1	2	3	4	5	6

V súvislosti s osobou a udalosťou, ktorú ste práve hodnotili, vyjadrite sa, prosím, rovnakým spôsobom k posledným piatim tvrdeniam:

	veľmi ne-súhlasím	nesúhlasím	mierne ne-súhlasím	mierne súhlasím	súhlasím	veľmi súhlasím
31. Keď o tom teraz premýšľam, nebol to vlastne žiaden problém.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Nikdy som sa ne-trápil/a nad tým, čo sa stalo.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Na tom, čo mi tá osoba urobila, nebolo nič zlé.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. Moje city tým nikdy neboli zranené.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. To, čo mi ten človek urobil, bolo vlastne v poriadku.	1	2	3	4	5	6

### Vyhodnotenie EFI-30

Celkové skóre (položky 1-30)

Afektívna subškála (položky 1-10)

Behaviorálna subškála (položky 11-20)

Kognitívna subškála (položky 21-30)

Subškála pseudoodpustenia (položky 31-35)

Pre skórovanie EFI-30:

1. Skórovanie položiek 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 25, 27, 29, 30 je rovnaké, ako zakrúžkovala osoba vyplňajúca dotazník. Skórovanie položiek 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, (afektívna subškála), 12, 13, 14, 15, 18 (behaviorálna subškála), 21, 23, 24, 26, 28 (kognitívna subškála) je reverzné. Tzn. pokiaľ osoba získa skóre 1, táto hodnota sa rekóduje na 7. Naopak, pokiaľ získa skóre 7, táto hodnota sa rekóduje na 1. Bližší popis skórovania pre reverzné položky je uvedený v tabuľke 2:

**Tabuľka 1 - Skórovanie pre položky 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 25, 27, 29, 30**

Odpoveď	Skórovanie položky
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6

**Tabuľka 2 - Skórovanie pre položky  
3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28**

<b>Odpoveď</b>	<b>Skórovanie položky</b>
1	6
2	5
3	4
4	3
5	2
6	1

2. Pre výpočet Celkového skóre odpustenia pomocou EFI-30 je potrebné spočítať skóre afektívnej, behaviorálnej a kognitívnej subškály (s reverznými položkami). Celkové skóre EFI-30 môže byť v rozsahu 30 až 180. Skóre pre jednotlivé subškály EFI-30 môže byť v rozsahu 10 až 60. Vyššie získané skóre v EFI-30 indikuje vyššie situačné odpustenie respondenta/ky voči osobe, ktorá ho/ju zranila.

3. Skórovanie položiek subškály pseudoodpustenia 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 je rovnaké, ako zakrúžkovala osoba vyplňajúca dotazník. Skóre subškály pseudoodpustenia môže byť v rozsahu 5 až 30. Pokiaľ respondent/ka získa skóre 22 a vyššie, je vyradený/á z analýzy dát, nakoľko sa pravdepodobne neangažuje v autentickom odpustení, ale pseudoodpustení.