

Turnage, B. F., Hong, Y. J., Stevenson, A. P., & Edwards, B. (2012). Social work students' perceptions of themselves and others: Self-esteem, empathy, and forgiveness. *Journal of Social Service Research, 38*, 89-99.

Social work is an occupation that requires its practitioners to demonstrate empathy towards their clients via the process of empathetic perspective taking. Social workers are also encouraged to possess a high degree of self-esteem, as self-esteem is vital to psychological well-being. Finally, the social work professional must be able to engage in forgiveness of self and others in order to be an effective advocate for clients. The authors of the article investigated whether self-esteem and empathy have an impact on the ability of social workers to forgive themselves and to forgive others. Four research hypotheses were investigated. A total of 112 social work students in the state of Florida participated in a quantitative survey, but only 86 were included in the data analysis. Self-esteem, empathy, forgiveness of self, and forgiveness of others were the primary variables investigated during the project. Correlation coefficients, independent Samples *t*-tests, and ANOVAs were computed to investigate the research hypotheses. The study found that older individuals were more able to engage of forgiveness of others, that individuals with a higher level of self-esteem were more likely to forgive themselves, and that individuals with a higher level of self-esteem were more likely to forgive others. Females had higher levels of empathy than males, and forgiveness of others varied as a function of race/ethnicity. Self-esteem was found to be a significant predictor of both forgiveness of self and forgiveness of others. Emotional empathy was not a statistically significant predictor of forgiveness of self, but was a statistically significant predictor of others.