



RECAPTURING THE VISION

Effective Parenting 101

What is Parenting?

Webster's New World Dictionary defines "parenting" as work or skill of a parent in raising a child or children.

What is the Purpose of Parenting?

To protect and prepare your teen to survive and thrive in a democracy. What stops them from being successful in their parenting is that they are using old, outdated techniques that their parents used and which are not effective today, then the harder they try to get these techniques to work, the worse the situation seems to get.

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Three Styles of Parenting

1. **Autocratic:** The autocratic parent uses rewards and punishment to enforce requests. Children are given detailed instructions and expected to follow them. There is little or no room for the child to creatively solve a problem.

Research shows that children brought up in autocratic families seldom thrive. Either their spirits are broken and they give up or they rebel. This rebellion usually happens during the teenage years when the child has developed enough power to fight back.

2. **Permissive:** The permissive parent allows the child to do his or her own things. In these households there is little respect for order and routine. Few limits are placed on anyone's freedom.

Children raised within the permissive style feel insecure. They have almost no sense of belonging. Because they have not learned to cooperate they are often difficult to live with. These children have difficulty adjusting when the world outside the family begins imposing rules on their behavior.

3. **Authoritative/Active:** In the respectful or democratic style of parenting the parent is the leader and teacher who encourages cooperation and stimulates learning. As the child assumes more and more responsibility, the parent gradually releases the limits.

Research has shown that the respectful parenting style produces positive self-concept, honesty, responsibility, compassion, problem-solving, self-control, and acceptance of self and others.

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Parent Assessment

Parenting Style Quiz

The following quiz is divided into two parts with fifteen statements each. Part I is designed to help you identify your beliefs about being a parent. Part II focuses on your current home situation. As you read each statement, decide how much you agree with it. Then write the number from 1 to 5 that corresponds to your level of agreement: **1.** strongly disagree; **2.** disagree; **3.** neutral; **4.** agree; **5.** strongly agree

Part I: Beliefs

- ___ 1. It is better to give a little ground and protect the peace than to stand firm and provoke a fight.
- ___ 2. Children need discipline that hurts a little so that they will remember the lesson later.
- ___ 3. Children shouldn't always get their way, but usually we ought to learn to listen to what they have to say.
- ___ 4. The child-parent relationship is like a war in which if the parent wins, both sides win; but if the parent loses, both sides lose.
- ___ 5. If parents provide a good environment, children will pretty much raise themselves.
- ___ 6. The parents' role is like that of a teacher who is preparing the child for a final exam called life.
- ___ 7. Childhood is so short that parents should do everything to make it a happy time.
- ___ 8. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" is still the best policy.
- ___ 9. Children need to learn what they may or may not do, but we don't have to use punishment to teach them boundaries.
- ___ 10. Whether we like it or not, children have the last word about what they will or won't do.
- ___ 11. If you give children free rein, they will eventually learn from the consequences of their behaviors what is appropriate to do and not do.
- ___ 12. Children first have to learn that the parent is boss.
- ___ 13. Too many children today talk back to their parents when they should just quietly obey them.

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- ___ 14. If we want children to respect us, we must first treat them with respect.
- ___ 15. You can never do too much for your child if it you do it out of genuine love.

Part II: Actions

- ___ 16. I often have to call my child more than once to get him or her out of bed in the morning.
- ___ 17. I have to constantly stay on top of my child to get things done.
- ___ 18. When my child misbehaves, he or she usually knows what the consequences will be.
- ___ 19. I often get angry and yell at my child.
- ___ 20. I often feel that my child is taking advantage of my good nature.
- ___ 21. We have discussed chores at our home and everybody takes part.
- ___ 22. My child gets a spanking at least once a month.
- ___ 23. My child has no regular chores around the home, but will occasionally pitch in when asked.
- ___ 24. I usually give my child clear instructions as to how I want something done.
- ___ 25. My child is a finicky eater, so I have to try various combinations to make sure he or she gets the proper nutrition.
- ___ 26. I don't call my child names, and I don't expect to be called names by my child.
- ___ 27. I usually give my child choices between two appropriate alternatives rather than telling my child what to do.
- ___ 28. I have to threaten my child with punishment at least once a week.
- ___ 29. I wish my child wouldn't interrupt my conversations so often.
- ___ 30. My child usually gets up and ready without my help in the morning.

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Scoring your questionnaire:

To determine your style as a parent, first transfer your score for each item to the blanks beside the following item numbers listed in parentheses. (Put your score for item #2 in the first blank, item #4 in the second blank, and so on.) Then add your scores in each row across, and put the sum in the last blank.

Autocratic belief score:

(2) _____ + (4) _____ + (8) _____ + (12) _____ + (13) _____ = _____

Permissive belief score:

(1) _____ + (5) _____ + (7) _____ + (11) _____ + (15) _____ = _____

Active belief score:

(3) _____ + (6) _____ + (9) _____ + (10) _____ + (14) _____ = _____

Autocratic action score:

(17) _____ + (19) _____ + (22) _____ + (24) _____ + (28) _____ = _____

Permissive action score:

(16) _____ + (20) _____ + (23) _____ + (25) _____ + (29) _____ = _____

Active action score:

(18) _____ + (21) _____ + (26) _____ + (27) _____ + (30) _____ = _____

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To get a clearer look at how your scores on the three styles compare, transfer each of the six totals to the appropriate blank in the table below. To get your combined scores, add your belief score and your action score for each of the three styles. Put these numbers in the blanks in the “Combined” column.

	Belief		Action		Combined
Autocratic	_____	+	_____	=	_____
Permissive	_____	+	_____	=	_____
Active	_____	+	_____	=	_____

Interpreting your scores:

The highest combined score possible for each style is 50. The higher your score, the more you tend toward that style of parenting. Your highest combined score, therefore, suggests the style of parenting you are currently using. If either of the other combined scores is within fifteen points of your highest score, consider your use of the two styles about equal. The greater the difference among scores, the greater your current preferences for the style with the highest score. Differences of more than fifteen points between belief scores and action scores for any style suggest that you tend to believe one thing, but do another.

High Autocratic Score: If you're like most people, you'll find yourself more autocratic than you thought you were. But after all, this was the predominant style parents used when you were growing up. If you scored highest on this style, you probably find yourself in frequent battles with your child. Anger and frustration probably characterize the power struggles that you and your child experience. You are probably reading this web page to find some relief, as well as a more successful approach.

High Permissive Score: In an attempt to avoid being autocratic, you may have overcompensated and developed a permissive style. If you are in this group, your relationship with your child may be pretty good as long as you do what your child wants. But you probably find that your child gets very hostile and perhaps even throws tantrums, when you do say no or make a demand of him or her. Your relationship is characterized by service and pleasing, but only in one direction. You may have already begun to resent this unfairness. If so, you probably scored higher on the autocratic scale than you expected. It is easy to get fed up with a permissive approach and flip back to an autocratic one.

High Active Score: If you scored highest on the authoritative/active style, your relationship with your child is probably already positive. Though problems certainly occur, an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and teamwork enables you to handle them without the hurt or resentment that characterize the other styles.