

Parenting Style Quiz

The following questionnaire 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.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Children need discipline that hurts a little so that they will remember the lesson later.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Children shouldn't always get their way, but usually we ought to learn to listen to what they have to say.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The parent-child relationship is like a war in which if the parent wins, both sides win; but if the parent loses, both sides lose.

1 2 3 4 5

5. If parents provide a good environment, children will pretty much raise themselves.

1 2 3 4 5

6. The parent's role is like that of a teacher who is preparing the child for a final exam called life.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Childhood is so short that parents should do everything to make it a happy time.

1 2 3 4 5

8. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" is still the best policy.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Children need to learn what they may or may not do, but we don't have to use punishment to teach.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Whether we like it or not, children have the last word about what they will or won't do.

1 2 3 4 5

11. If you let children have pretty free rein, they will eventually learn from the consequences of their behavior what is appropriate.

1 2 3 4 5

12. Children first have to learn that the parent is boss.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Too many children today talk back to their parents when they should just quietly obey them.

1 2 3 4 5

14. If we want children to respect us, we must first treat them with respect.

1 2 3 4 5

15. You can never do too much for your child if it comes from genuine love.

1 2 3 4 5

Part II: Actions

16. I often have to call my child more than once to get her or him out of bed in the morning.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I have to constantly stay on top of my child to get things done.

1 2 3 4 5

18. When my child misbehaves, he or she usually knows what the consequences will be.

1 2 3 4 5

19. I often get angry and yell at my child.

1 2 3 4 5

20. I often feel that my child is taking advantage of my good nature.

1 2 3 4 5

21. We have discussed chores at our home and everybody takes part.

1 2 3 4 5

22. My child gets a spanking at least once a month.

1 2 3 4 5

23. My child has no regular chores around the home, but will occasionally pitch in when asked.

1 2 3 4 5

24. I usually give my child clear instructions as to how I want something done.

1 2 3 4 5

25. My child is finicky eater, so I have to try various combinations to make sure he or she gets the proper nutrition.

1 2 3 4 5

26. I don't call my child names, and I don't expect to be called names by my child.

1 2 3 4 5

27. I usually give my child choices between two appropriate alternatives rather than telling my child what to do.

1 2 3 4 5

28. I have to threaten my child with punishment at least once a week.

1 2 3 4 5

29. I wish my child wouldn't interrupt my conversations so often.

1 2 3 4 5

30. My child usually gets up and ready without my help in the morning.

1 2 3 4 5

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:

$$(2) \underline{\quad} + (4) \underline{\quad} + (8) \underline{\quad} + (12) \underline{\quad} + (13) \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$$

Permissive belief score:

$$(1) \underline{\quad} + (5) \underline{\quad} + (7) \underline{\quad} + (11) \underline{\quad} + (15) \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$$

Active* belief score:

$$(3) \underline{\quad} + (6) \underline{\quad} + (9) \underline{\quad} + (10) \underline{\quad} + (14) \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$$

Autocratic action score:

$$(17) \underline{\quad} + (19) \underline{\quad} + (22) \underline{\quad} + (24) \underline{\quad} + (28) \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$$

Permissive action score:

$$(16) \underline{\quad} + (20) \underline{\quad} + (23) \underline{\quad} + (25) \underline{\quad} + (29) \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$$

Active* action score:

$$(18) \underline{\quad} + (21) \underline{\quad} + (26) \underline{\quad} + (27) \underline{\quad} + (30) \underline{\quad} = \underline{\quad}$$

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 the 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 preference 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. Do not be alarmed by this. It is common and understandable. 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 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. You are probably using many of the methods advocated and taught in Active Parenting courses at this website. Our goal is to support your efforts and help you discover other compatible techniques.

* The Active style is sometimes called the "Authoritative" or "Democratic" style.

