

| Section A | A | MA | MD | D |
|--|---|----|----|---|
| 1. I believe that I have clear expectations for how my children should behave, and I make sure they are rewarded or punished, according to that expectation. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. I feel that it is my responsibility to set goals for my family and serve as their guide. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. I believe that my values should be taught to my family and if my children have different values, they can choose those for themselves when they are old enough to make those choices. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. I feel that one of my roles in the family is to determine the social image that our family displays to the public. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. I think that I need to serve as a controlling force until my children can make their own decisions. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. I may not be smarter or stronger than anyone else in the family, but I have the role of setting and enforcing values. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. As long as my children live in my house or under my supervision, they will follow the rules. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. This family is not run by democratic vote. I take full responsibility. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 9. Most times I have to make decisions about the family behavior and discipline by myself. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. I think that the most important attitude my family can have toward me is respect. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| Section E | A | MA | MD | D |
|---|---|----|----|---|
| 11. I believe that it is more important for my family to learn <i>how</i> to accomplish goals than to actually accomplish goals. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. My philosophy is to develop a team spirit with my family in dealing with our problems. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. Accomplishing a common goal is more important than the personal achievement of any one member of the family. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 14. I feel that one of a parent's most important tasks is to teach a child how to set realistic goals for himself. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. Learning how to trust one another in difficult times and relying on one another's abilities are very important skills for all family members. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. It is important for the parent to listen to the child and respect what the child wants and needs. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 17. Although the parent has the responsibility for the child, it is important to share the decision-making. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 18. Children's behavior should always have consequences, good or bad. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 19. A parent's rewards are in seeing the child achieve his goals. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 20. The parent-child relationship is the most important lasting legacy in a family. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| | A | MA | MD | D |
|---|---|----|----|---|
| Section P | | | | |
| 21. I feel responsible for my family's success or failures and would probably do some of their work for them rather than let them fail. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 22. I am too lenient with my child and allow him or her to get by when I should be more consistent. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 23. It is probably partly my fault if my child gets into trouble, because I did not do my job as a parent as well as I should have. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 24. My parents were too hard on me, so I try to give my children what I didn't have in terms of freedom to be their true selves. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 25. My child sometimes blames me for a problem and part of me agrees because I feel guilty. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 26. I try to motivate my family by making them feel guilty if they don't do the right thing. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 27. I want my child to behave and be a good person because he wants me to be proud of him. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 28. My child often expresses the thought that I owe him a good life because I am the parent. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 29. I would like my family to remember how much I sacrificed for them. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 30. I try not to put too much pressure on my child because it is not fair to him. | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Scoring the Parenting Styles

Add up your totals for each section separately and write them here:

A: _____

E: _____

P: _____

Circle the meaning of your score in each of the three categories below:

Section A: Authoritarian

- 33–40 High identification with the Authoritarian style
- 25–32 Dominant behaviors for the Authoritarian style
- 18–24 Average or moderate behaviors for the Authoritarian style
- 10–17 Low behaviors for the Authoritarian style

Section E: Equalitarian

- 30–40 High identification with the Equalitarian style
- 23–29 Dominant behaviors for the Equalitarian style
- 15–22 Average or moderate behaviors for the Equalitarian style
- 10–14 Low behaviors for the Equalitarian style

Section P: Permissive

- 34–40 High identification with the Permissive style
- 27–33 Dominant behaviors for the Permissive style
- 18–26 Average or moderate behaviors for the Permissive style
- 10–17 Low behaviors for the Permissive style

RED ALERT: The labels of Authoritarian and Permissive may sound judgmental or negative to you. I want to emphasize that this interpretation is not accurate. An Authoritarian parent is not synonymous with dictator or controlling and should not be considered a negative or toxic style of parenting. This style is simply more directive and tends to problem-solve by taking primary control of a situation. In fact, using this style, you can achieve a high standard of compliance, as long as you approach your child in a loving, caring manner. The Authoritarian style of parenting is effective in another way too: It provides the important ingredient of structure, which is needed by many children.

A Permissive parent is not synonymous with passive, lazy, unin-

volved, neglectful or wishy-washy. Nor is this style characterized by the type of parent who says to his kids, “Sure, go ahead and drink with your friends.” In reality, the Permissive style actually requires more effort on the part of parents because they must instill a greater degree of self-determination in their children in order to get results. This approach is based on the familiar proverb, “If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach him to fish, you feed him for a lifetime.” There’s a lot of truth in those words, as they apply to the Permissive style of parenting. It is this style that does one of the most effective jobs of imparting skills, values and self-worth in children and ultimately empowers them to make responsible choices and decisions. For parents using this style, their interactions with their child often involve more trial and error, as well as more words spoken. But it is time and effort well invested in promoting the maturity and self-responsibility of their children.

Everything related to parenting styles depends on the type of child you’re managing, which we will assess a bit later in this chapter. Sometimes, the Authoritarian style is best and is the only style that gets results with certain children and in certain situations. Sometimes, the Permissive style works the best of any style. So if your dominant style is either of these, please don’t judge yourself; both styles can be acceptable and effective.

Authoritarian

If you scored in the dominant-to-high range in Section A, your dominant parenting style tends to be *Authoritarian*. This parent tells a child what to do and what not to do; the rules are clear and usually inflexible. It would not be surprising to find that an Authoritarian parent controls most of the decision-making processes in his or her family. Using the Authoritarian style, a parent sets family goals, gives the rewards and handles the punishment—and does so sensitively and usually not in an arbitrary fashion. There is absolutely no ambiguity in terms of what is expected, who does what in the family or how misbehavior will be disciplined. The Authoritarian style tends to be confrontational at times.

Equalitarian

Scoring in the dominant-to-high range in Section E indicates that you tend to use the *Equalitarian* style when parenting your children. You give

your children a role in making choices; your family operates like a team, and decisions are made somewhat democratically up to a point. Your entire family is involved in goal-setting, decision-making and problem-solving, and there is usually an atmosphere in your family of effective communication and team spirit. The Equalitarian style of parenting is usually successful at negotiating compromises.

A parent using the Equalitarian style believes in giving children choices. Children in these families learn that their opinions and thoughts count. Rules in the household are simple, with reasonable consequences for breaking them, and children understand the reasons behind the rules. There is room for flexibility, however. If a child's bedtime is 8:30 P.M., it might be extended if there is a special show on television they want to watch. Generally, a parent using this style is responsive, attentive and sensitive to children's needs. Discipline is viewed as an opportunity for a teachable moment.

Permissive

If you scored in the dominant-to-high range of Section P, yours is a *Permissive* style of parenting. You generally take a more gentle approach, intervening only when your kids get off track or into trouble. You keep your children within broad boundaries, plus work to make everything seem as if it were your child's idea in order to give a lot of ownership.

Adopting this style, you act compassionately, empathetically, and encouragingly. You have the ability to tap your children's internal motivations, such as need for self-improvement, more personal goal attainment or even guilt. As a result, you know how to push the right buttons to motivate your child in the right direction. Many great inventors and sports figures had permissive mothers who maintained this primary pattern, including Lance Armstrong, Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein.

Permissive parents generally encourage freedom of expression so as to enhance their children's creativity and allow them to voice their opinions.

You may have scored in the high-to-dominant range of one of these parenting styles, meaning that there is a dominant theme of Authoritarian, Equalitarian or Permissive parenting running through your behavior. Or you may have scored high on each and every style dimension. That's a

good thing, really; it means you have a well-developed range of styles. If you are high in one dimension and low in another, you need to recognize that you may need to make a conscious decision to step up and lead more effectively when it is called for, even if it means using the style with which you have the most difficulty.

What your score can also tell you is how people, including your children, may perceive you, based on your style of interacting with them. Given a dominant score in any of these styles, it is very likely that others perceive you as having certain traits, some may be reacted to negatively and some may be reacted to positively. These are listed in the table below. The aggregate of these traits is what defines your children's reactions to you, and therefore, your relationship with them. If you don't understand why your children react to you the way they do, it may be because they are simply responding to one or more of these traits. If that's the case, begin consciously, purposely and actively changing your style to improve your interactions with your family.

| AUTHORITARIAN | EQUALITARIAN | PERMISSIVE |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisive • Requiring • Efficient • Assertive • Task-oriented • Controlling • Strict • Rigid • Inflexible • Domineering | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative • Team player • Sharing responsibility • Decision maker • Not bossy • Ingratiating • Avoiding leadership • Undisciplined • Reactive • Manipulative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting • Supportive • Respectful • Open • Agreeable • Assuring • Conforming • Motivating from behind the scenes • Pushing the child on self-goals • Relying on internal structure • Too lenient • Too time-consuming |