

FACT SHEET

The First Question: Why Are You Here?

Perhaps your father was a picture-perfect, wise, and loving man. Or he may have been abusive, cutting, critical, and harsh. Most likely, he was somewhere in between.

Our experiences with fathers are so varied that we can't list all the possibilities, **but each of us has had a father experience**, even if it was his absence. That experience directly affects how we parent our own children.

This is a challenge to you to be a BETTER father to your children:

**We are going to ask you to make changes in your life;
To choose your children's interests over your own.**

We are going to ask you to ignore what you FEEL like doing and do what is RIGHT instead.

What Are Your Tools?

Researchers have found that certain parenting styles and strategies help a child succeed in many different areas of life. **Responsiveness** is how you respond to your child.

1. Are you warm and affectionate?
2. Do you give unconditional acceptance?
3. Are you full of praise for your child?

If so, then you would have a high level of responsiveness.

Demandingness is the expectations and limits you put on your child.

1. Do you require your child to get good grades?
2. Do you closely control access to electronics?
3. Do your children have chores and consequences if they do not do them?

Then you would likely have a high level of demandingness.

What Does It All Mean?

Researchers have found that children are more likely to be emotionally, socially, physically, and psychologically successful when they have parents with an authoritative parenting style.

Parents who are responsive and open to the child's needs while also setting goals and having expectations will likely:

- Increase their child's academic performance
- Reduce their aggressive behaviors
- Lower their levels of obesity
- Increase the likelihood that they will be successful in college.

In short, the authoritative parenting style seems to work best for the long-term success of children.

The Second Question

No matter where you ended up on the test of parenting styles, there is now a second question you need to ask yourself... What kind of father do you WANT to be?

1. Do you want to be a loving father who provides guidance and support?
2. Do you want to be a father who is present and involved?

What are the things you need to work on to get over to the authoritative category?

1. If you are **permissive**, you may want to work on leadership and having appropriate expectations for your children.
2. If you are **authoritarian**, you may want to work on being understanding and tender.
3. And, if you are **disengaged**, you will want to work on both of these aspects.

While it is likely you are already trying to be that type of father; each of us only has so many tools we can use. So, let's change that. Through these lessons on being a father we want to give you tool after tool that will help you be the father you want to be.

Now, take some time to fill out the short Parenting Test on the next page to see where you fall on the parenting styles chart.

This will help you understand where you are so you can make a plan to get to where you want to be.

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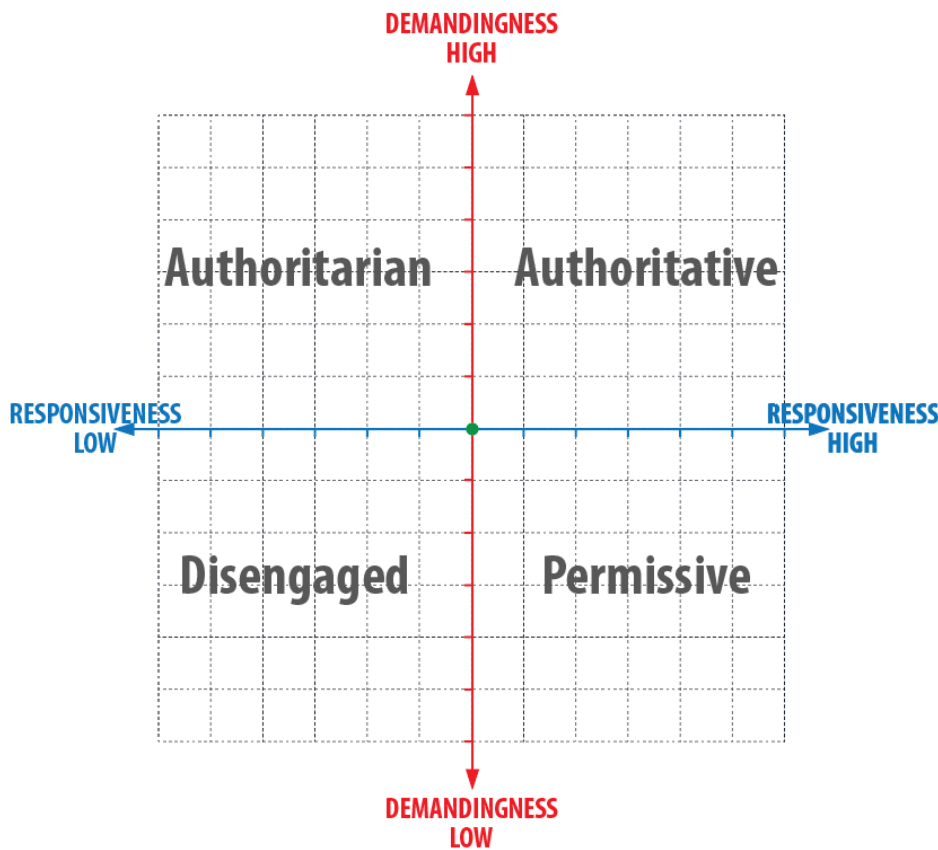
FACT SHEET**SHORT PARENTING TEST**

1. My children (will) have electronics use strictly monitored and controlled.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
2. Society would be better if parents had more rules for their children.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
3. My children should follow my instructions right away without talk-back.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
4. I (will) have expectations for my children; I will help provide goals for them to reach.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
5. My children (will) need constant love and attention to get them through childhood.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
6. My children (will) feel free to discuss the house rules and restrictions with me.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
7. I (will) love my children no matter what they do.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree
8. I (will) respond to my child's emotional needs quickly and with empathy.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Disagree
 3. Somewhat disagree or agree
 4. Agree
 5. Strongly Agree

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Take the first four questions and add together the numbers in front of the answers. If you chose 1) Strongly Disagree – that is 1 point, if you chose 2) Disagree that is 2 points and so on. Add together your answers on the first four questions and write down your score. This is your demandingness score. A score of one to eight would be considered low demandingness and a score of twelve to twenty would be considered high demandingness. A score between 9 and 11 could go either way. Now, do the same for the second four questions. This is your responsiveness score. Again, a score of one to eight would be considered low responsiveness and a score of twelve to twenty would be considered high responsiveness. A score between 9 and 11 could go either way.

Demandingness Score: _____ Responsiveness Score: _____



Now that you have your scores, where do you fit on this chart? If you have low responsiveness and low demandingness, your parenting style would be classified as “disengaged.” If you have low responsiveness and high demandingness, then you are categorized as authoritarian. If you have high responsiveness and low demandingness, then you are categorized as permissive. Finally, if you have both high responsiveness and demandingness, your parenting would be categorized as authoritative.

Circle a few of the words to describe what kind of Father you want to be to your kids.

- | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------|---------|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Supportive | Loving | Playful | Protective | Understanding | Challenging |
| Honest | Kind | Leading | Strong | Hard-Working | Compassionate |
| Encouraging | Warm | Tender | Powerful | Affectionate | Sympathetic |