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In mom and dad's shadows: An exploration of family of origin influence on parenting styles

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IN MOM AND DAD'S SHADOWS:

AN EXPLORATION OF FAMILY OF ORIGIN

INFLUENCE ON PARENTING STYLES

By

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the influence that family of origin upbringing has on current parenting practice. Eight adult children were interviewed, and their experience, past and present, is interpreted within the literature review frame of two broad parent-child interactions: emotional support and parental control. Interviewees' current parenting behaviors are also examined within the literature review discussion on continuity of behavioral patterns between generations. Research findings are then discussed within a theological and pastoral focus on differentiation in family.

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Correspondence with *Canadian Living* Magazine:
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I. DEFINING THE RESEARCH

Even when the father dies, he might well not be dead,
since he leaves his likeness behind him.
            -- *Ecclesiasticus 30:4*

These words of practical wisdom, attributed to Sirach, a respected Jewish scribe and teacher ca. 180 B.C., are contextually framed within a teaching on child rearing. Then, as now, observers of human interaction know of the incredibly impacting influence parenting has on children, not only for the child(ren) for whom it is intended, but also for the generation that may follow. "Like father, like son" and "Like mother, like daughter" echo in folksy language a human reality that children invariably become a looking-glass reflection of parental values and beliefs concretized in parental direction.

Indeed, the question may be asked, *how else can it be?* The pattern is so obvious. When a man and woman marry, and then have children, a family is begun. Every family needs some order, and so parents parent, direction is given, and consequently people are made and family systems are developed. So pivotal is the family and the direction given it that John Paul II observes, "The future of humanity passes by way of the family" (*Familiaris Consortio, 86*).

Very interestingly, it is only within the last twenty years that there have been focused studies on parenting as a relational behavioral pattern across generations. Some of these studies have been rooted in socialization theory (Bandura, 1977). Other work has

been based on intergenerational theory (Bowen, 1978). Quite understandably, further research has acknowledged and refined transmission aspects of both theories: that relationship patterns, as can be applied to parenting, develop through social modelling within the family (Williamson & Bray, 1988) and are maintained out of loyalty to the preceding generation (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981). This certainly feeds into David Freeman's therapeutic experience that our own parents' behavior toward us is significantly determined by their parents' behavior toward them (Freeman, 1992).

Theory, research, and therapeutic experience acknowledge generational impact. Inherently acknowledged is the pivotal locus of generational roots and personal definition in the family of origin. It is in this social group, conditioned and mediated by parents, that each one of us becomes a relational being. It is here that each one of us learns to communicate, express affection, and settle differences among family members. It is in the family of origin that we "get our wings," our skills, to be individuals and persons.

In time, each person moves out of the family of origin and with marriage and the begetting of children develops a new family of origin, which for the spouses is called the family of procreation. The circle of life continues. Yet even in this circle, the children now become parents, in some way parent and direct in the shadow of their parents. The question of interest to me is, *how much*? and secondly, *in what ways*? Is the parenting effective? Indeed, what makes for effective parenting? It is certainly reasonable to hypothesize from theory, research, and lived experience that a person's parenting skills

and style are directly correlated with the experience of being molded (parented) in his/her family of origin.

My primary thesis research question is now formulated: *What influence does one's family of origin upbringing have on present parenting style?* I already know from my reading research that this question must be explored in the context of intergenerational family systems theory. On the practical level, I also realize that this research question on parenting style must logically be explained in two distinct segments: that of a person's upbringing, and that of the same person's paıental direction given to his/her children. The pivotal key for understanding these dimensions is hypothesized to be in the child rearing memories and experience of those adult children who are interviewed. For this reason, the interview questions (Appendix C) are designed to elicit not only memories of family of origin parenting behaviors (in manner of communication, affection, and discipline), but also reactions to the formative influence these have had on current parenting practice.

These findings are then examined from the perspective of a second research question: *To what extent is present parenting style a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation?* This question mirrors the core longitudinal notion inherent in the theory of multigenerational transmission, that there is "an endless chain of family influence linking the developmental experience of each generation to that of its immediate and distant ancestors" (Carter & McGoldrick, 1980, p. 43). So, in order to explore this question, it seems necessary to discover that which is common in parenting behaviors between two

generations. What does the "chain of influence" look like? What parenting behaviors (in manner of communication, affection, and discipline) carry over from the family of origin experience? Is there a pattern?

If so, it is hypothesized that the pattern may emerge from an intergenerational perspective that realistically considers both the current interactional patterns of parenting and the construction of the meaning given to those relational patterns in the family of origin (Freeman, 1992). For example, consider spanking as a parenting strategy. In a research study using retrospective reports from college students, it was discovered that when spanking was used as a corrective supplement to positive communication (e.g., praise, affection, reasoning, no putdowns) with the child, the negative effects of spanking were eliminated (Larzelere, Klein, Schumm, & Alibrando, 1989). To the surveyed college student, *how* parents spanked outweighed *whether* or *how often* spanking was used. By extrapolation to the transmission of parenting patterns, it is hypothesized that the emotional meaning and directive intent given to a discipline strategy in one generation may validate or invalidate the use of that strategy in a next generation.

Indeed, it is further hypothesized that a discipline strategy and the philosophy underpinning its use - controlling, permissive, or empowering - strongly inform the manner of parental communication, expression of affection, and the settling of relational differences among family members. In fact, the attitudinal base to parenting style is considered so important to this research that all the interviews were preceded with a non-

threatening questionnaire entitled, *What Kind of Parent Are You?* (Appendix F). This brief survey became a wonderful springboard for generating reflection on the manner and tone of current parenting practice and its roots in family of origin upbringing.

The specific research design certainly frames the topics for research in the Literature Review: parenting behavior, intergenerational theory and the transmission of attitudes, and the development of outcomes in children. However, the research design, though specific in the formulation of interview questions, allows for the human factor of great personal diversity in the experience of parenting and having been parented. It is this qualitative aspect of the interview research that generates both fascination and respect for the development of family systems and legacies.

Unfortunately, the empirical findings and data analysis may be somewhat cloaked in academic interpretation, and on one level they may lose the human dimensions reflected in the accounts of the eight people interviewed. Nevertheless, it is my dual hope to portray and honor not only the family relationship patterns of these people, but also their conscious efforts to be sensitive and aware parents.

If this thesis was quantitative in nature, it would end with some concluding reflections on the analyzed data. However, this thesis is qualitative, and the humanity it mirrors must find some response in realistic life applicable reflections that are both psychologically and spiritually sound. In parenting, more than all else, people are made (Satir, 1988). Parents become architects not only in the development of a little one, but

also in the formation of a family system whose constitution includes self-worth, communication, rules, and beliefs. The concern for any healthy family system and the legacy it perpetuates is that the system be open, loving, and nurturing, and that it be in balance among its members and mirror the life-giving Spirit of a God whose very nature is generating relationship and circulation of love. Psychological balance is spiritual balance. This truth is manifested in the complexities of parenting explored in this thesis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

PART ONE
EFFECTIVE PARENTING STYLES

Two big questions present themselves to every
parent in one form or another: "What kind of
a human being do I want my child to become?"
and "How do I go about making this happen?".
-- Virginia Satir, *The New Peoplemaking*

In the task of raising children, every parent is challenged to answer these questions

in some way. The desire is to be an effective parent, one whose direction molds a child

to become a genuine person capable of successfully engaging in the world. Insofar as

children relate to what is concrete and real, parents form their children in their modelling

and in the daily messages of what is said and done in relationship and in manner of

communication. They also form their children in the chemistry of family socialization and

in the emotional security of being in a place called "home."

The tangible home atmosphere generated by parents is really a mirror of an interior

disposition that constitutes the fundamental core of parenting. That core lay in the depth

of parent self-esteem. It lay in the concepts, attitudes, and feelings inside parents and in

the behavior between them. It lay in the ability to value the self and in turn to treat self,

spouse, and child with dignity, love, integrity, and compassion. Systemically, the healthy

self-esteem dynamic is cyclical, generative, and nurturing (Satir, 1988).

Researchers and theorists indicate that this parent-child interaction in self-esteem finds expression in the relational manner with which parents support their children. In parenting that is nurturing, this generally means that parents express interest in children's activities, talk with them a good deal, take them out on outings or play with them, provide help with everyday problems and school work, and express enthusiasm and praise over their accomplishments (Gecas, 1971; Rosenberg, 1965). It would appear that parental warmth and acceptance of a child reinforces this emotional support and induces a son or daughter to believe that he/she is loved, wanted, accepted, and worthy of respect (Brody & Schaefer, 1982; Sears, 1970). In turn, children may become poised, active, and confident. Yet, it should not be surprising that these children often have poised, active, and confident parents (Baumrind, 1975; Coopersmith, 1967).

Researchers and theorists also indicate that emotional support constitutes only one of two broad parental interactions in the nourishment of child self-esteem (Baumrind, 1977; Coopersmith, 1967). The second broad interaction, correlated with the first, is the exercise of parental control reflected in the number of decisions made by the parents, the amount of supervision given, and the number of rules set for children. This is the dimension of discipline, the structured guidance given a child in the development of relational self-confidence and pro-social conduct. Apparently, when firm discipline (control) is combined with parental warmth (support), child response is consistently manifested in positive self-esteem and behavior. This is borne out in research among

children, adolescents, and young adults (Amato, 1986; Baumrind, 1977; Bishop & Ingersoll, 1989; Coopersmith, 1967).

However, the research on support and control is primarily founded on the parental perspective, and it is based on parents' reports and observations of parental behavior. The perspective of the child is far less researched, and the literature is sparse on how children perceive parent-child relations. In addressing this research gap, Amato (1990) discovered good support for children's perceptions of family life as also being organized around the fundamental interactions of support and control. He also discovered that consistent with Rollins and Thomas' (1979) symbolic interactionist perspective (actor/reactor), children age appropriately perceived parental behavior as critical determinants of their own actions and reactions. For primary children, who depend on their families for an environment that is warm, responsive, and helpful, the support dimension received greater meaningful emphasis than the control dimension. In contrast, adolescents, who are mainly concerned with issues of independence and autonomy and find sources of support outside the family in peers, school, and part-time work, considered the control dimension to be of greater concern than the support dimension. Reinforcing these findings on developmental needs is earlier research (Amato, 1989) that parental control was found to be positively correlated with the competence of primary school children, but negatively correlated with the competence of adolescents.

On one level, it may be concluded that a parent's sensitivity to a child's

developmental needs impacts immensely for a positive response to parental direction. On another level, perhaps that which best unifies the child-parent interaction is a report by young adults that mothers and fathers are rated highly as good parents if they are perceived as being warm and permissive, rather than hostile and restrictive (Parish & McCluskey, 1992). Here again is the recurrent theme that child perceptions of acceptance and the granting of age appropriate autonomy are definitive correlates and possible determinants of self-esteem in both girls and boys (Anderson & Hughes, 1989; Growe, 1980; Kawash, Kerr, & Clewes, 1985).

Further research substantiates that perceptions of parental warmth and the allowance for child autonomy contribute markedly to the development of an internal locus of control, an aspect of healthy self-esteem (De Man, 1982; De Man, McKelvey, & Van Der Riet, 1987). In a later study of the relationship between parental control in child rearing and anomie (alienation to accepted social codes), De Man, Labreche-Gauthier, and Leduc (1991) discovered that adolescents who had experienced permissive child rearing tended to report lower levels of anomie. Those nurtured in autonomy seemed more self-assured, grounded, and certain of personal and social norms. Interestingly, correlational analysis revealed a strong contrast in those subjects who came from family backgrounds high in parental control. These adolescents reported greater levels of anomie in feelings that the world and oneself are adrift and wandering, lacking in clear rules and stable moorings.

These studies on internal grounding naturally springboard to the link between parental discipline and child moral internalization. It is universally acknowledged that in discipline a child receives the directive experience for developing and achieving self-control. That self-control may be hypothesized as being cemented, or internalized, by conditioning parenting styles (Hoffman, 1975) that Baumrind (1971) distinguishes as authoritarian or authoritative. Hoffman (1970) refers to these as power assertion and induction; Rollins and Thomas (1979) prefer the nomenclature to be coercion and induction/power. Regardless of the name, it has been researched that coercion is negatively related to moral behavior, and that its opposite, induction, is related positively to moral behavior (Hoffman, 1970). In a review of the literature on this association, Rollins and Thomas (1979) found strong support for generalizing that the more parents exercised induction in parenting their children, the more children behaved morally.

Simply from the experience of relating as one human being to another, the latter generalization based on numerous empirical studies is not difficult to understand. Coercion is defined as parental behavior in a contest of wills with the child. In this contest, a child is pressured to behave; external sanctions are generally imposed "in physical punishment, deprivation of material objects or privileges, the direct application of force, or the threat of any of these" (Hoffman, 1970, p. 286). By contrast, induction may be defined as parental behavior that intends to gain a child's voluntary behavioral compliance. There is no conflict of wills; "the parent gives explanation or reasons" for

the desired behavior and indicates to the child consequences of the behavior for self and for others (Hoffman, 1970, p. 286). With less child energy focused in emotional resistance to punitive consequences (hostility, fear, anxiety), Hoffman (1975) reasons that the emotional space given a child generates a responsive internal compliance that is cognitively understood and processed.

Hoffman (1975) also suggests that a parental determinant for using coercion or induction may be based both conceptually and reactively in the long-range character goals set for a child. Suspecting truth in this speculation, Kuczynski (1984) notes two kinds of socialization goals that commonly impact on parenting: goals for short-term compliance, and goals for long-term compliance. Short-term compliance may be defined as "compliance with a request or prohibition in the immediate situation and usually in the parents' presence" (Kuczynski, 1984, p. 1062). Long-term compliance is "compliance that persists beyond the immediate situation, such as in the parents' absence, or on other future occasions" (Kuczynski, 1984, p. 1062). Hypothetically, parents may assert power to establish a short-term control over behavior, and then conversely, utilize reasoning, character attributions, and nurturance to establish a more internalized or enduring control over behavior.

The results in Kuczynski's research are enlightening. The hypothesis that reasoning would be implicated as a long-term strategy for internalization received support in the study. The hypothesis that coercion is a maximizing strategy for short-term payoff in

immediate compliance was not supported; any perceived manipulation to control without explanation was reacted to adversely. Interestingly, "the essential difference between the two conditions was that in the long-term condition, techniques such as reasoning, character attribution, and nurturance were more likely superimposed on a predominantly power-assertive interaction" (Kuczynski, 1984, p. 1069). Similar findings in earlier studies seem to validate Kuczynski's work; these indicate that inductive reasoning accompanied by the exercise of explicit control induces internalization of the norms underlying compliance with young children (Baumrind & Black, 1967; Lytton & Zwirner, 1975; Walters & Grusec, 1977).

Perhaps Diana Baumrind offers the best single insight for processing the literature research on effective parenting styles. She reflects that "it is more meaningful to talk about the *patterns* of parental authority than about the effects of single parental variables" (Baumrind, 1971, p. 95). By definition, patterns mirror the repeated or complementary elements in the process of parenting; in them there is a consistency and regularity that cuts through the snarling complexity and confusion that variables often render. In focusing on parenting patterns, Baumrind offers two propositions applicable for discussion.

The first general proposition centers on certain parental practices and the development of social responsibility in young children: "Parents who are just and fair, and who use reason to legitimate their directives are more potent models and reinforcing agents than parents who do not encourage independence or verbal exchange" (Baumrind, 1971,

p. 96). A measure of respect characterizes the discipline encounter, and that respect is shown in the time parents give to an explanation for their directive. In fact, it would appear that when parents verbally explain their rationale in punishment, there is less need to resort to intense or instantaneous punishment (Parke, 1969). This kind of fair-play interaction is remembered by college students, especially when parents refrained from verbal abuse and used more praise and reasoning (Joubert, 1984).

Baumrind also articulates a second proposition concerning parenting patterns. This proposition centers on the relationship between certain parental practices and the development of independence in young children. She states: "Firm control can be associated in the child with independence, provided that the control is not restrictive of the child's opportunities to experiment and to make decisions within the limits defined" (Baumrind, 1971, p. 98). By *firm*, it is understood that parents effectively enforce rules with consistency and structure, without giving in to a child's coercive demands. It is also understood that there need not be many rules or intrusive directiveness of the child's activities (Baumrind, 1971). These dynamics confirm earlier research (Baumrind, 1967) that warm-controlling parents often pair with responsive, assertive, self-reliant children. It would seem plausible, then, that young children nurtured in this parent-child interaction progressively become the children in the parent-child interaction described by Coopersmith (1967).

In this interaction, 10 to 12 year-old boys are judged to be high in self-esteem if

they come from homes in which mothers set definite regulations, enforce rules consistently, and make relatively firm decisions. That mothers believe in strict parenting and follow through on it evidently leads to a greater interaction between parent and child and facilitates within the child growth in a confident comfort level for defining relational boundaries both for life at home and the world beyond it. With rules, a child is given a clear standard for "judging success and failure" (Coopersmith, 1967, p. 208). In the absence of rules, it is conceivably difficult for any boy or girl to judge himself or herself favorably or unfavorably. It is possible that a child could remain in a state of personal doubt as to personal worth. It is also possible that doubtful preteens could develop as teens high in levels of anomie.

From the research, it then becomes clear that there is a developmental and cyclical pattern in effective parenting and child development in self-esteem. That pattern initiated with a pre-schooler possesses elements that carry over with the school child and then the adolescent. Perhaps it is Coopersmith (1967, p. 236) who best describes the structural conditions for truly effective parenting: "Total or nearly total acceptance of the children by their parents, clearly defined and enforced limits, and the respect and latitude for individual action that exist within the defined limits." Baumrind (1967) simply states it differently; she describes Coopersmith's three conditions as parental direction that is warm and controlling, yet instrumentally nurturing in the development of a child's independence and social responsibility.

Twelve years later, in an extensive literature review on parenting dynamics, Rollins and Thomas (1979) strongly echo the general research conclusion that parental support and positive control impact positively on the child. On this premise, the authors proceed to generalize that with parental support, the child develops an internal locus of control, moral behavior, and instrumental competence. They also generalize that parental induction (as positive control) nourishes moral behavior and instrumental competence in the child. According to Rollins and Thomas, these positive child development outcomes are in response to specific positive parenting behaviors.

Even more generally, Rollins and Thomas (1979) believe that there is a dynamic parent-child exchange of action and reaction in parenting practice. Positive parenting behaviors parallel positive child development. Negative parenting behaviors parallel negative child development. Parenting behaviors may also be conditioned. All these interactional dynamics are presented in Tables 1 and 2, which serve not only as a concise overview of concepts presented in this section, but also as a focused prelude to the next discussion on the transmission of parenting patterns.

TABLE 1.

DYNAMICS OF PARENT-CHILD EXCHANGE IN PARENTING PRACTICE

Relational Pattern: Parenting Focus on Child Development

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPPORTIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE PARENTING

Parenting Practices	Positive Child Developmental Outcomes
▸ Parental warmth, involvement, acceptance ▸ Inductive discipline: reasoning, clear communication, low levels of disapproval ▸ appropriate monitoring, promotion of cognitive functioning, nurturance of child autonomy.	▸ high self-esteem, academic success, psychological adjustment, instrumental competence, self-confidence, social skills, moral development, internal locus of control, growth in autonomy and differentiation.

INFORMED, IMPACTED BY:

▸ Satisfaction in parenting

▸ Parents' emotional balance

▸ Parenting beliefs (relational, focus on child development)

TABLE 2.

DYNAMICS OF PARENT-CHILD EXCHANGE IN PARENTING PRACTICE

Relational Pattern: Parenting Focus on Control

CHARACTERISTICS OF HARSH, DESTRUCTIVE PARENTING

Parenting Practices

- authoritarian, coercive discipline: low
frustration level, aggressive behaviors
(yelling, spanking, slapping, shoving, or
hitting the child with an object)
- Non-nurturance expressed in hostility,
rejection, emotional deprivation

Negative Child Development Outcomes

- low self-esteem, academic failure,
delinquency, psychopathology, substance
abuse, anomie, low self-autonomy, fusion to
parents and/or family

INFORMED, IMPACTED BY:

- Dissatisfaction in parenting

- Parents' emotional strain

- Parenting beliefs (individualistic values, focus on child management)

PART TWO
TRANSMISSION OF PARENTING STYLES

Families are mini-cultures and they share language,
attitudes and behavior in common. These tend to be
acted out in each generation, and passed along.
-- Carolyn Foster, M.A., *The Family Patterns Workbook*

From Carolyn Foster's statement one may extract the core elements intrinsic to the

research question of parenting style transmission: family, language, attitudes, and

behavior. In family, especially in the early formative years, each of us experience our

parents as the entire world. That world is conditioned by parental language, attitudes and

behavior. So forceful is parental influence that children (2 - 10 years) have been observed

interacting with their infant siblings (6 - 11 months) in the very manner similar to that of

their mothers (Crittenden, 1984). Though the same research acknowledges the molding

power of later life influences, it nevertheless concludes from the observed data that

"parental style of child rearing begins to influence the child at a very early age and that

most children are influenced to be similar to their parents" (Crittenden, 1984, p. 438).

This is not altogether surprising. Axiomatic to social learning theory (Bandura,

1977) is that children first learn how to enact social relationships in the family

environment. They learn not only by direct first-hand experience, but also by observing

the behaviors of their parents, their primary models. Children become socialized to

acceptable family behavior, and in the human need to belong and be accepted, they mirror

the language, attitudes, and behavior of the culture in which they live. In the need to

belong, manifested in family likeness and custom, there may be produced a continuity that spans the generations. This is the basic premise in the theory of intergenerational transmission, that relationship patterns are transmitted through a process of social modelling within the family (Williamson & Bray, 1988) and are often invisibly (unconsciously) maintained in loyalty to the preceding generation (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981). This is the sense in Carolyn Foster's statement that commonly shared family language, attitudes, and behavior "tend to be acted out in each generation, and passed along."

The sense of a link between behavioral patterns across generations is not a new idea. Indeed, the concept has spawned a number of studies in such areas as parenting, child abuse, and marital communication (Elder, 1984; Rutter, 1989; Van Lear, 1982). Uniquely common to these investigative topics is a research focus on lineage transmission of general relationship patterns that may predict continuity between and across generations. Additional conceptual support for this may be found in Giddens' (1979) theory of structuration which posits that the continuity of a society is the result of the continuous production and reproduction of its social structure. If one applies this theory to the social unit of family, it may be hypothesized that children learn to replicate the behavioral patterns that effectively bind one family generation to the next with consistency and continuity. Certainly, the research focus on behavioral patterns is correct: patterns, rather than variables (Baumrind, 1971), are definitively more meaningful in understanding parenting similarities between generations.

Behavioral patterns, gestated and developed in family structure, constitute not only the relational map of a personality, but also the basic blueprint for later parenting (Satir, 1988). Spousal interaction and influence may modify the basic blueprint (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Melby, 1990), but the essential core of that blueprint apparently remains deeply imbedded as a link to the preceding generation (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Wu, 1991). Therefore, the link is systemic, and individual behavior (in parenting) is interconnected and mutually influenced by the behavior of other family members, first in the family of origin, and secondly by the spouse in the family of procreation (Freeman, 1992; Williamson & Bray, 1988). There is a process of interconnection and interpenetration, a process of threading passage (see Figure 1). Perhaps the best unifying explanation for that passage and its synthesis is to be found in the principles of social learning (Bandura, 1977) and exchange (Nye, 1979, 1982).

These principles find concrete expression in the dynamic of child rearing, the formative process in which parents set the structure for a child's socialization. The basic mechanisms for this process are in the structural interactions of parental involvement and parental control (Amato, 1990; Rollins & Thomas, 1979). Research has indicated that when parents are loving, encouraging, and interested in their child, and discipline with reasoning and respect, the child outcomes (in exchange) are often manifested in high self-esteem, academic success, and psychological adjustment (Coopersmith, 1967; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Similarly, and in contrast, studies indicate that when parents are more committed to individualistic values (Wilson, 1983) and control attempts for child behavior

Figure 1

Social Learning/Exchange Impacts on Parenting Quality

A process of interconnection and interpenetration
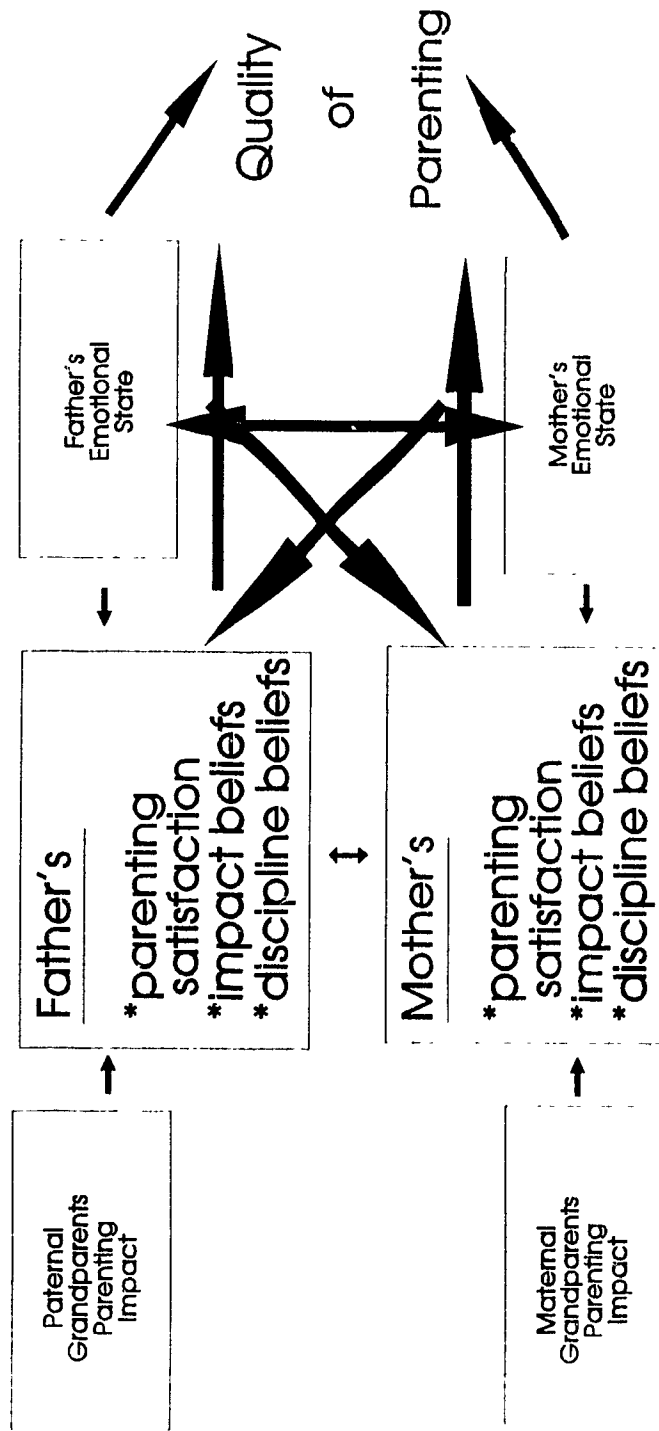
are coercive and harsh (e.g., yelling, threatening, hitting) the child response (in exchange) is frequently mirrored in delinquency, low self-esteem, and academic failure (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). It may be summarily stated (in Tables 1 and 2) that two types of parenting exist, constructive and destructive, and that the process for each lies in the modelling and exchange of behavior patterns (Simons et al., 1990).

Natural to the process and its transmission is a developmental chain of events that connects the experiences of childhood to adult life. Figure 2 illustrates this chain and the main forces that impact it. Each fundamental link in the chain affects the other: the determinants of parenting shape child rearing, which in turn influences child development, which in cyclic fashion impacts as parenting determinants on another generation of parents. The parenting process per se (child rearing and child development) is one of continuous exchange and reciprocity between the parent(s) and child in the family environment (social context). The impacting relational process on the child primarily resides within the parents whose perspective is rooted directly in the experience of their upbringing, and indirectly in their parenting satisfaction and beliefs, as well as personal emotional state. The basic chain links and its impacting forces interpenetrate, and the interaction itself becomes the unifying and connecting process in parenting (Bandura, 1977; Belsky, 1984; Simons, Beaman, Conger, & Chao, 1993).

By its very nature, systemic process is interconnection. So, in order to explore the parenting transmission process more fully, it truly helps to examine the various major pathways, internal and external, that bridge the parent to child in relationship. First,

Figure 2

PARENTING
TRANSMISSION
PROCESS

SOCIAL CONTEXT

Parent ↕ Child

Child
Rearing

Child
Development

INTERGENERATIONAL
CYCLE

Determinants of
Parenting

Indirect
* Parenting Satisfaction
* Parenting Beliefs
* Parents' Emotional State

Direct
Parents' Upbringing
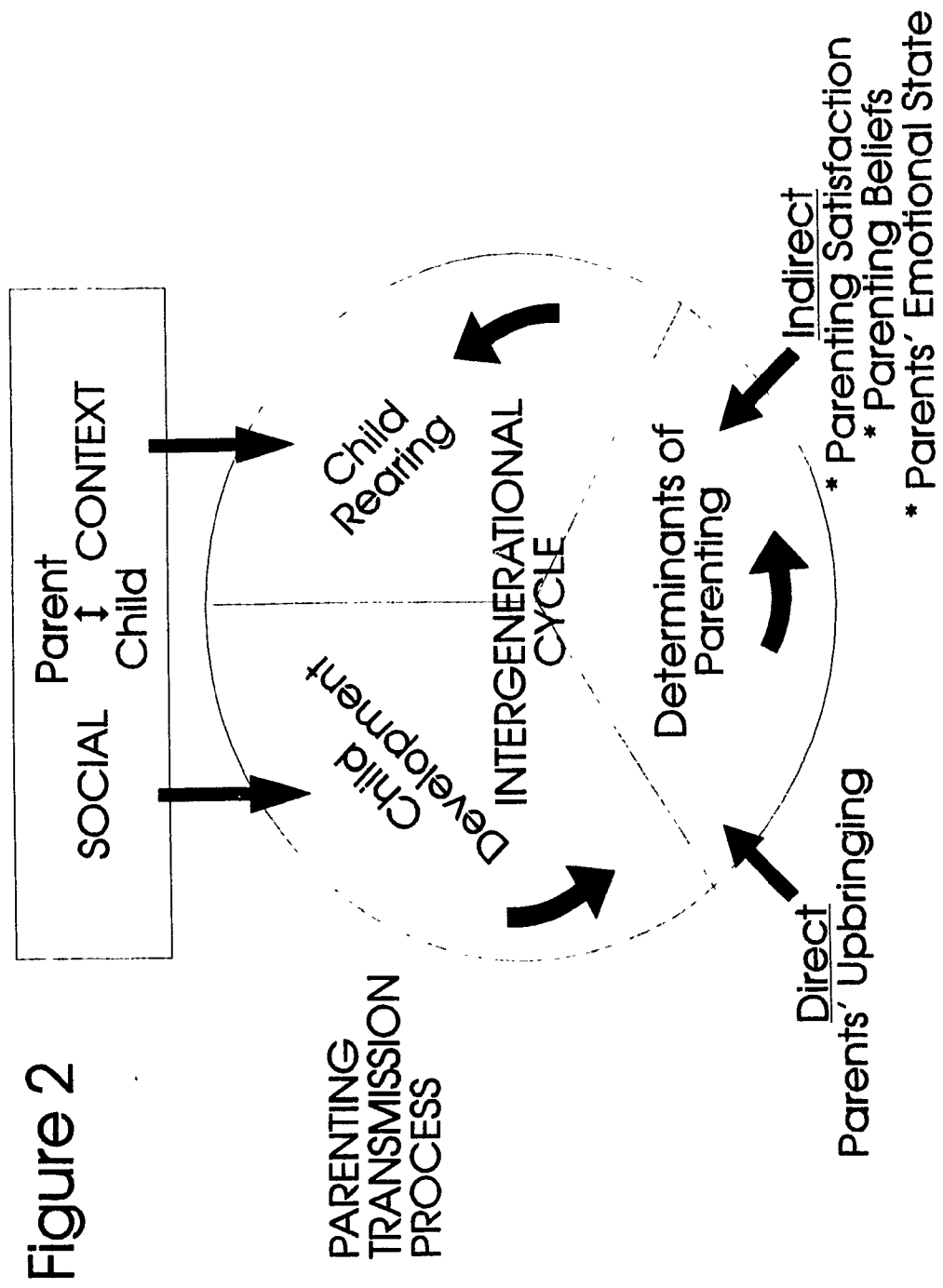
within the parent-child relationship itself, the degree of satisfaction experienced in parenting strongly impacts on parenting quality. Most parents enter parenthood with the expectation that in having children there will be relational stimulation and personal rewards in the reciprocity of affection and relationship. When those affirmations are missing and the parenting experience becomes one of continuous frustration, then anger naturally sets in (Homans, 1974). According to the principles of social learning/exchange theory, the parent will either withdraw from the relationship, or behave aggressively when the child doesn't respond as expected (Bandura, 1977). This very dynamic is often confirmed in the parent response to discipline coercively (Simons et al., 1990). The parent response is again echoed in research that led Simons et al. (1993) to conclude that when parents are dissatisfied with their children's behavior, they are definitely less supportive (to the child) and apt to engage in harsh discipline.

External to the parent-child relationship, yet closely associated with parental (dis)satisfaction in parenting, is the emotional state of the parents. When emotions are in general equilibrium both within and between parents, it can be fairly assumed that relational calm between parent and child prevails, and that for the child a general supportive dimension exists. However, when parents are depressed and stretched out emotionally (Brody & Forehand, 1988; Conger, McCarthy, Young, Lahey, & Kropp, 1984), as may be especially due to marital tension or financial hardship (Caspi & Elder, 1988; Simons et al., 1990), it is natural for the parent-child relationship to become strained. The tension may be manifested in a depressive, diminished interest in activities

and situations previously experienced as rewarding (Willner, 1985). It may also be evident in a continuous and rising dissatisfaction with child behavior, resulting in harsh discipline (Simons et al., 1993). Therefore, the research links parents' emotional well-being to quality of parenting, and it again may be empirically framed in the principles of social learning/exchange theory (Bandura, 1977).

A second external impact on the parent-child relationship is a parent's personal belief, especially the mother's, that parenting, far more than outside forces, significantly affects a child's developmental values, self-concept, and eventual life choice (Simons et al., 1993). This belief is rooted in both applied theory and cultural convention: a) the theory that people invest effort in an enterprise (such as parenting) when they judge themselves capable of producing a valued outcome (Bandura, 1977); and b) the widely acknowledged social conviction that the mother is the primary parent both in the early periods of infancy and in the general care and supervision of children (Lamb, 1977; LaRossa, 1986; Parke, 1981). Within this belief framework, fathers generally perceive themselves cast in a collaborative, supportive role to the mother (Barnett & Baruch, 1988; LaRossa, 1986; Simons et al., 1990), often playing with the children and enforcing discipline. Effective parenting practice (discipline) then becomes the concrete expression of parental confidence to mold a child (Simons et al., 1993).

Research also indicates that this parenting confidence (mirrored in parents' personal impact and discipline beliefs) is fundamentally imbedded in the experience of one's upbringing and the impact that experience has had on the conceptual role of parent (Simons

et al., 1991). In combination with the internal and external impacts on the parent-child relationship, there is then constituted what may be termed as *Determinants of Parenting* on child rearing and consequential child development. This process of interconnection is illustrated in Figure 2.

Summarily expressed, both upbringing and current parenting practice may mirror parenting energies directed either on child management or child development (Simons et al., 1993). If the parenting effort is conceptually focused on child management and compliance, coercive and harsh parenting may be considered quite acceptable and effective (see Table 2, Parenting Focus on Control). Aggressive parenting behaviors of grandparents may even be reflexively imitated by adult children, with little awareness of alternatives or concern with rationalization (Simons et al., 1991). On the other hand, if the parenting effort is conceptually focused on child development, parent-child interaction is likely to be inductive and supportive (see Table 1, Parenting Focus on Child Development). At the very least, research indicates that parents who received positive parenting as children tend to believe that parenting is consequential for child development, and that belief in turn is related to more effective parenting of their own children (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Melby, 1988). One parenting determinant is indisputably clear: "The parenting an individual received as a child affects the quality of his or her parenting as an adult" (Simons et al., 1993, p. 103).

This particular experiential construct is the core pivot to research studies on parenting (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Rollins & Thomas, 1979) and parenting legacies

(Fishel, 1991; Kramer, 1985). Quite interestingly, the parenting an individual received is also the pivotal focus of studies in child abuse and neglect (Davoren, 1975; Hopkins, 1970; Ney, 1988). Family of origin parenting is commonly perceived as the root causal factor in the repetition of abusive parenting behaviors from one generation to the next (Jayaratne, 1971). Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) certainly suggests that children learn to replicate their parent's style of upbringing (Crittenden, 1984). Over the years, numerous clinicians are reported to have validated this perspective (Parke & Collmer, 1975; Silvers, Dublin, & Lourie, 1969; Steele & Pollock, 1968).

More recently, various researchers (Herrenkohl, Herrenkohl, & Toedter, 1983; Kaufman & Zigler, 1987; Kempe & Kempe, 1978) have questioned the generational hypothesis of abuse and its basis on retrospective studies of disturbed adults. Kadushin (1974), in reviewing the literature, was one of the first to conclude that there was sparse valid evidence to support the contention that abusive parents were themselves abused as children. Even Steele & Pollock (1971, p. 360) found that among their subjects "several" had experienced severe abuse, and "a few reported never having a hand laid on them." Indeed, the consistent lack of substantive evidence to legitimize this generational hypothesis led Jayaratne (1977, p. 8) to review then existing literature and conclude that much of it "is spotted with definitional confusion, poor methodology, clinical assumptions, and definite a priori expectations of the research," and on that basis the conclusions simply do not stand the test of empiricism. However, Jayaratne did *not* doubt that experiential and observational learning significantly affect parenting practice.

Recognizing this reality, Belsky (1984) asserts that parental dysfunction - in the form of child maltreatment - has significance in its power to reveal mechanisms of influence that govern parental behavior. For example, the experience of stress has been cited as a common denominator among abusing parents (Steele & Pollock, 1971). In fact, research on child abuse and impacting correlates commonly highlight three sources of stress: marital tension, weak social networks, and job strain. Conversely, the marital relationship, social supports, and satisfying employment may also be resources for an easement to stress and therefore strengthen parental competence (Belsky, 1984). This double edge to mediating factors effectively underscores the interplay of multiple conditioning determinants on parenting (see Figures 1 and 2, Indirect Determinants), and it partially accounts for the myriad of differences in eventual parenting style (Kaufman & Zigler, 1987; Simons et al., 1991).

The impact of social mechanisms on parenting also attests to a dynamic interplay of extrinsic forces on parents in the family setting. It is this setting which constitutes the environment in which the parent-child exchange occurs over time. Quite naturally, this time period covers many life-cycle developments and changes in both parents and children. Relational tensions are normal. Yet, in the midst of these tensions there arises a basic core interactional style (e.g., respectful, aggressive, etc.) that evokes reciprocal maintaining responses from others (Caspi & Elder, 1988). These intrinsic parent-child responses, rooted in repetition, find expression in established habits, cognitive sets, and coping styles. Within this dynamic, a particular relational continuity unfolds for offspring because

"children carry with them the results of earlier learning and of earlier structural and functional change" (Rutter, 1989, p. 26). There is continuity in transmission, and the relational patterns (Tables 1 and 2, Parenting Focus) of one generation strongly shape the developmental milieu of the next (Caspi & Elder, 1988).

CONCLUSION

This concept of continuity applies to the transmission of parenting behaviors, one generation to the next. The transmission process is illustrated in Figure 2. In the environment of the family, parents are the acknowledged conduits for child socialization. As transmitters, parents funnel to their parenting the outcomes of both rooted experience (upbringing) and current life conditioners (parenting satisfaction and beliefs; and parents' emotional state). These outcomes find expression in discipline behaviors (childrearing practices) that not only exemplify relational patterns (see Tables 1 and 2), but also strongly impact on child development and the child's future parenting style. The social learning and exchange between parent and child (Bandura, 1977) becomes the unifying dynamic principle in the transmission process (see Figure 1; see Tables 1 and 2).

As indicated in Figure 1, eventual parenting quality (past, present, or future) is a product of various interconnecting and interpenetrating chain effects and strands that are both normal and common (Rutter, 1989). The interplay is always an active process, and one that mirrors relational and structural patterns (Bowen, 1978; Giddens, 1979) regarded as either constructive (see Table 1) or destructive (see Table 2). The outcomes in child

development (see Tables 1 and 2) then attest to the quality of parenting and the level of emotional differentiation (emotional maturity) in the systemic parent-child exchange (Freeman, 1992; Minuchin, 1974; Satir, 1988). Quite truly, the transmission of parenting behaviors is both complex and fascinating.

I return to the research question: To what extent is current parenting a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation? Or, more simply, to what extent do we parent as our parents? Based on the literature reviewed, it would appear that parents generally manifest a process of both continuity and change: in parenting, adult children fall back on their upbringing; yet, in light of their own experience, they selectively choose to model behaviors that mirror values, beliefs, and attitudes important to them (Gelso, 1974; Van Lear, 1992; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988). In parenting behaviors, adult children are not mindless clones of their parents (Gelso, Birk, & Powers, 1978). Nevertheless, those who currently parent acknowledge their parenting style roots in the family of origin, and they confirm the significance of parenting practice and transmission as part of an ongoing relationship between parent and child (Simons et al., 1993).

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The main data that goes into our family blueprints
comes from experiences in our own families.
-- Virginia Satir, *The New Peoplemaking*

Introduction

Academic theory and research are one matter. Human data that supports or invalidates that research is quite another. More than the first, it is the second research that is critically important in offering concrete insights to the human condition, as in this research, the human reality of current parenting and its roots in family of origin upbringing.

Within the latter sentence are three phrases that set the framework for data presentation and interpretation: *current parenting*, *its roots*, and *family of origin upbringing*. In order to understand the interconnection and interpenetration of these systemic elements, it makes sense to focus the discussion on parenting behaviors (or styles) in a logical sequence: family of origin upbringing, current parenting, and its roots. The first two topics are set in the order of time; the third topic is a reflection on the transmission link between upbringing and parenting. With the research findings presented in this specific topical sequence, an eventual holistic picture forms. Appropriately, a conclusion (rooted in the data) makes a human response to the research questions.

Research Methodology

As stated in the Introduction, the first research question asks: What influence does family of origin upbringing have on present parenting style? Quite practically, the question then needs to be segmented into two parts: 1) What was the experience of being parented in the family of origin? 2) What is the present experience of parenting children in the formative years, ages two to twelve? In answering these questions, the qualitative research moves to the second research question: To what extent is current parenting a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation?

For consistency in research design, the interview questions (see Appendix C) needed to be formulated in alliance with the Literature Review research that all parent-child exchange in parenting may be narrowed to two broad interactions: the manner of emotional support to the child, and the exercise of parental control. Concretely, this translated to the composition of a series of semi-standardized interview questions that focus on parenting attitudes both in one's family of origin and present family. Questions centre on emotional support to the child (manner of communication and affection) and the exercise of parental control (manner of discipline, including rewards and punishments; and an offshoot of discipline, the manner of handling differences or conflict between the parent and child, as well as between siblings).

As a conversational warm-up to the interview itself, the eight interviewees responded to a twenty question survey entitled *What Kind of Mother Are You?* from the

September 1989 issue of *Canadian Living* Magazine (see Appendix F). For the purpose

of this study, the word "parent" was substituted for "mother." The sole intent for the use

of the questionnaire was to initiate reflective discussion upon an interviewee's own

parenting style (controlling, empowering, or permissive) and that of his/her parents.

As anticipated, responses to the survey and subsequent interview were as diverse

as those comprising the research sample. Among the interviewees were three men and five

women, ranging in age from 32 to 57 years. The subjects' experience in marriage

(ranging from 4 to 35 years) and parenting (ranging from 2 to 34 years) spanned from

neophyte to seasoned. Implicitly affecting the diversity in perspective were religious

backgrounds in various traditions: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Dutch Reformed, United

Church, and agnostic. Explicitly affecting the recounted experiences of parenting are the

personal demographics of each subject, especially family of origin size, the size of present

family, and the ages of children who fall within the study target range of 2 to 12 years (see

Table 3).

In accordance with accepted interview procedure, interviews were tape recorded,

transcribed, given to participants for their review, and then coded for analysis. Complete

confidentiality has been maintained. Names quoted in text are not the real names of

interviewees' family members.

TABLE 3

INTERVIEWEE DEMOGRAPHICS

INTERVIEWEE	SEX	AGE	FAMILY OF ORIGIN SIZE	# OF CHILDREN IN PRESENT FAMILY	CHILDREN'S AGES
Subject 1	F	40	2 parents, 4 children	5	6, 8, 11, 13, 17
Subject 2	M	32	2 parents, 4 children	1	2
Subject 3	M	37	2 parents, 4 children	3	4, 9, 13
Subject 4	M	38	2 parents, 3 children	1	6
Subject 5	F	36	2 parents, 2 children	1	6
Subject 6	F	47	2 parents, 3 children	3	11, 19, 21 youngest at home
Subject 7	F	57	2 parents, 10 children	8	11, 16, 23, 26, 28, 31, 32, 34 two youngest at home
Subject 8	F	42	2 parents, 4 children	2	3, 9

NOTE: For this study, interview questions about current parenting centred only on those children whose ages fell within the range of 2 to 12 years. In families with children older than age 12, the ages of the children in the study target range are underlined.

PART ONE
PARENTING STYLES: FAMILY OF ORIGIN

Presentation of Data

For simplicity and accuracy, it seems rather appropriate to chart the interviewees'

experience of being parented. In charting that data on Table 4, the reader is able to gain

a quick overview of those parent-child interactions that have informed eight adults

currently engaged in parenting. Faithful to the Literature Review and the interview

questions, the chart summarily presents the parenting interactions of relational support

(manner of communication, expression of affection) and the exercise of parental control

(manner of discipline, including rewards and punishments; and the handling of differences

between the parent and child, as well as among siblings). One additional data is presented

on the chart, that of primary parent and disciplinarian. This provides important

information about designated parenting roles in a family.

Emotional Support

In the manner of communication, it is recounted that interviewees' parents,

especially those who were male, primarily spoke for a purpose. Subjects 3 and 4 echo

each other: "Dad spoke when he wanted something done" (Subject 3); "With respect to

my father, any communication was conveyed because he wanted us to do something"

(Subject 4). Subject 2's mother clearly communicated her intentions in setting rules but

was unclear in stating her emotions. Subject 5's parents spoke without "trying to

determine your feelings or how you feel." Subject 1 described communication with her

TABLE 4 - FAMILY OF ORIGIN PARENTING STYLE

Topic	Subject 1 - Female	Subject 2 - Male	Subject 3 - Male	Subject 4 - Male
Communication	•difficult: no developed relational bridge	•clear in terms of rules •double messages in terms of expressing feelings	•father: rigid, spoke for a purpose •mother: flexible, would talk about anything	•father: rigid, spoke for a purpose •mother: personal, relational, nurturing
Expression of Affection	•great affection: hugging, touching	•expressing emotion difficult for parents; hugging stopped after a certain age •affection expressed in doing for children	•father: cold, distant •mother: very affectionate, kissing, hugging	•father: not openly affectionate •mother: openly affectionate
Primary Parent, Disciplinarian	•parenting shared	•mother (father away a great deal)	• parenting shared • father a strict, firm disciplinarian	•parenting shared - mother: the primary communicator, educator - father: strict disciplinarian
Discipline	•Liberal (coach type) - father mild in correction - no corporal punishment - punishment rare - loose reins	•Authoritarian (coach type) - time out in bedroom, rarely spanked - generally forbidden to do something; guilt inducing withdrawal of privileges	•Authoritarian (police type) - father's word was "law" - discipline through routines - spankings for strong misbehavior (lying, trying to steal something) - both parents consistent	•Authoritarian (police type) - father: corporal punishment (belt, hand, shoe), and swift - mother: yelling for correction
Handling of Differences	•individual child disposition respected	•preconceived expectations for children; individual child differences acknowledged with difficulty	•Parent-child differences - father: rigid, his way - mother: flexible, able to negotiate •Sibling differences - sibling tensions eliminated by house rules	•Parent-child differences - father: no compromise - mother: compromise •Sibling differences parents stepped in, policed

TABLE 4 - FAMILY OF ORIGIN PARENTING STYLE

Topic	Subject 5 - Female	Subject 6 - Female	Subject 7 - Female	Subject 8 - Female
Communication	•from adult, parent perspective; insensitive, unfeeling to child's perspective	•rich, open communication with both parents •specific boundaries about adult/child information •mother uncomfortable with sexual issues	•lacked open communication; children talked to rather than talked with	•a positive experience: fairly open, non-covert, very direct
Expression of Affection	•no overt expression of affection from either parent	•both parents very warm,affectionate: would cuddle on sofa, hold hands when walking	•mother: very affectionate with hugs, a kiss, hair rub, endearing words •father: relationally distant	•mother: hugs, verbally affectionate •father: hugs, "shake on the head," twitch of arm, small treats, planning trips
Primary Parent, Disciplinarian	•mother •when involved, father could be strict, severe	•shared parenting •father the primary disciplinarian	• mother primary parent on home scene • shared discipline	•shared parenting and discipline
Discipline	•Authoritarian (police type) - mother: stern look, use of spoon - father: very stern look, the rare spanking	•Authoritarian (coach type) - emphasis on rewards (extra treats, more privileges) rather than punishments - father gentle in correction; but could sometimes be harsh in punishment (spankings)	•Authoritarian (coach type) - mother gentle, yet rules strictly enforced - discipline (order) achieved in: mother's angry, upset face; father's loud voice - rewards felt in mother's praise	•Authoritarian (coach type) - parents in consistent agreement on discipline - spanking for rudeness or talking back - time out in room "to think" - child solutions sometimes elicited by mother
Handling of Differences	•authoritarian, no negotiation •gender difference acknow-ledged in certain situations	•authoritarian: father had last word	•Parent-child differences - mother's disappointment a controlling force •Sibling differences - settled by mother separating children	•Parent-child differences - majority rule or parent decision with caring explanation - individual differences acknowledged

parents as difficult and "miles apart. There wasn't a developing relationship." In the words of Subject 7, "We were talked to."

On the other hand, Subjects 6 and 8 spoke of communication with both parents as a positive experience. Subject 6 described talking with her parents as "rich." Subject 8 described her parents as being "fairly open" and "very direct" in communication. Subjects 3 and 4, males, spoke positively of their mothers. "She'd talk about anything," said Subject 3. Subject 4 spoke of his mother as "taking an interest in me personally, what's going on inside."

In the expression of parent-child affection, responses were both consistently similar and somewhat varied. Many family of origin parents were experienced as "very affectionate" (Subject 6). Subjects 1, 6, and 8 experienced this warmth with both parents. Subjects 3, 4, and 7 experienced open affection with their mothers, and non-tactile, relational distance with their fathers. Subject 2 described his parents as having difficulty in expressing emotion, yet knew of their affection for him in things done for him. Subject 5 stated, "The obvious concern was there, love, but never expressed [by either parent] in open affection."

Parent Roles

Among the eight interviewees, four (Subjects 2, 3, 5, and 7) spoke of their mothers as both primary parent and disciplinarian. Only Subject 6 mentioned her father as the primary disciplinarian. Subjects 3, 4, and 5 described their respective fathers as "strict

disciplinarians" when the occasion arose to become involved. Otherwise, the parents of Subjects 1, 3, 4, 6, and 8 shared the parenting load.

Parental Control

According to those interviewed, most experienced discipline as authoritarian. This mode varied in degrees from strict authoritarian with stern looks (Subject 5) and corporal punishment (Subjects 3, 4, and 5), to mildly authoritarian characterized by time outs "to think" (Subjects 2 and 8) or withdrawal of privileges as a guilt inducing ploy to correct misbehavior (Subject 2). Subject 7 spoke of rules being strictly enforced, but without spankings, or as with Subjects 2, 6, and 8, the rare spanking "for rudeness or talking back" (Subject 8). Only Subject 1 spoke of experiencing a liberal discipline with "loose reins," rare punishment, and the absence of any corporal punishment.

In handling any parent-child differences or differences that arose among siblings, it is reported that family of origin parents generally stepped in (Subjects 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7) and settled for everyone. When parent-child tensions arose, Subjects 3 and 4 spoke of fathers who didn't compromise, yet their mothers could, and would. Subject 5 spoke of both her parents as being "very authoritarian. There was no negotiation."

In contrast to Subject 5's experience is the parent-child experience of Subject 8 whose parents would step in with "a caring explanation." Subject 8 also reported that her parents respected the individual differences and idiosyncrasies of each child. Subject 1 also spoke of her parents respecting sibling differences: "We were all treated very

differently." However, Subject 2 reported that his parents "handled the differences among us with difficulty. It took them the longest time to realize my brother had other talents just as valid [as good marks]."

Interpretation of Data

Emotional Support

On examining the dynamics of parent-child emotional support, it would certainly appear that the manner of parent communication is closely linked to the expression of affection. For example, Subjects 3 and 4 stated their fathers spoke for a purpose and that each was not openly affectionate. Each father was also described as a strict disciplinarian. In interesting contrast, the same interviewees spoke of their mothers as "flexible" (Subject 3) and "interested in how I was doing" (Subject 4). No doubt, these bold expressive differences explain the contrasting parent-child relational tension and ease each experienced as adolescents. Subject 3 stated, "Dad, big argument all the time, his way or no way." Subject 4 said, "I never had too many differences with my Mom because we had so much open communication."

Modified echoes of contrasting mother and father emotional support may be found in Subject 7's experience. In the communication dynamic of being "talked to rather than talked with," Subject 7 remembers her father as relationally distant. Yet, within this same dynamic, Subject 7 fondly remembers her mother as being very affectionate in speaking "endearing words."

Interaction of Support and Control

Apparent opposites often point to an underlying truth. In the experience of emotional and relational polarities (emotional distance, parenting for compliance; relational warmth, parenting for cooperation), as well as in the reported experience of positive communication (Subjects 6 and 8) and warm affection (Subjects 2, 6, and 8), human warmth emerges as a moderating influence on the reported exercise of authoritarian discipline in various families of origin (Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8). This warmth (emotional support), when combined with firm discipline (parental control), understood as enforcement of clearly communicated rules, apparently evoked in the various Subjects a response of general cooperation even in the strictest households. This general finding corroborates well the research of Baumrind (1977) and Coopersmith (1967) on this specific parent-child interaction of support and control in the formative years. Beyond those years, however, it would seem that support, rather than control, best elicits cooperation, as Subjects 3 and 4 indicated. Their experience corroborates Amato's (1989) research on adolescent response to emotional support and parental control.

Impact of Roles, Beliefs, and Life Events

Reflecting on her parents, Subject 7 made a series of striking comments that link parental role and belief to the expression of emotional support and parental control. "Parents were disciplinarians, and as disciplinarians told children what to do. Dad was the uthority, the boss in our house. If Dad made a decision, Mother just followed. She

had more the nurturing role, she just followed along." These roles and beliefs activated in parenting were also informed by life impacting events recounted by Subject 7 as surviving the post World War II days and emigrating to Canada. Subject 7's father apparently saw himself as the breadwinner: "He felt responsible for everyone's welfare." Subject 7 then linked this strong sense of responsibility quite specifically to her father's parenting: "He had a hard time letting his children go, allowing them to grow up. He felt responsible in telling his kids what to do, what not to do. My Dad couldn't let go; he felt too responsible."

These quotes highlight very well the forceful impact of major life events on parenting concepts that inform actual parenting. A second interview example also arises from a post World War II experience. Subject 4's father, "being one of the older brothers, was sent out to work and do menial tasks so that he and his brothers could bring home bread to the family while the others [younger siblings] went go to school." Not having been educated, it is understandable that Subject 4's father placed strong importance on education as a vehicle to opportunities (that he didn't have).

David Freeman (1992) maintains that family stories shape people's relationships. From the interviews it may also be said that family stories shape the parenting beliefs, which in turn function as a determinant on parenting practice (see Figure 2). If, as recounted, two fathers focused emotional energies on survival, it then makes sense that a

no-nonsense approach to living spilled over in non-relational parenting. Let the mothers relate and nurture.

From these post-war stories, two universal interactional dynamics emerge: 1) that life events inform experience, which in turn informs the manner of emotional support activated in the exercise of parental control; and 2) that parental warmth, communicated personally or in caretaking, by one or both parents, seems to moderate the apparent emotional aloofness in authoritarian discipline and consequently elicits child cooperation.

PART TWO
PARENTING STYLES: PRESENT FAMILY

Presentation of Data

As was mentioned earlier, discussion on current parenting had been initiated with each interviewee responding to a parenting style survey entitled, *What Kind of Parent Are You?* On the survey itself, scoring existed for five parenting styles that fall within three childrearing types: *controlling*, which embraces the "police" style (authoritarian) and the "mother hen" (overprotective); *empowering*, sometimes referred to as "coach" parenting; and *permissive*, which includes both a "liberal" and "hands off" approach to parental direction. Quite interestingly, after scoring, seven of eight parents interviewed fell within the *empowering* or "coach" parent typology, with scores spread between 52 and 61 (see Table 5). Subject 5 scored at the high end of Mother Hen with 50; and though Subject 3

scored as a "coach" parent, a score of 52 in relation to parenting his four-year-old son

indicates that he leans to being watchful.

TABLE 5

WHAT KIND OF PARENT ARE YOU?
INTERVIEWEES' SURVEY SCORES

Interviewee Score	Parent Type Score Range	
Subject 1 - 59	Police	20 - 35
Subject 2 - 57	Mother Hen	36 - 50
Subject 3 - 52	Coach	51 - 70
Subject 4 - 59	Liberal	71 - 85
Subject 5 - 50	Hands Off	86 - 100
Subject 6 - 58		
Subject 7 - 61		
Subject 8 - 59		

The common parenting mindsets quite obviously affect the various parenting

practices recounted in the interviews. These parent-child interactions are once again

charted, and the reader may gain a quick overview of these in Table 6. As with Table 4,

the table format presents a summary of parenting interactions manifested in the expression

of emotional support (manner of communication and affection) and parental control

(manner of discipline). Once again, the primary parent and disciplinarian is designated

as information about parenting roles.

TABLE 6 - INTERVIEWEES' PARENTING STYLE

Topic	Subject 1- Female	Subject 2- Male	Subject 3 - Male	Subject 4 - Male
Communication	•direct, open communication: - listen to children - accept feelings, opinions	•direct, clear communication •child permitted to express emotion appropriately	•direct with natural child •restrained, limited with stepchildren	•open communication: - talk a lot
Expression of Affection	•warmth in touching, caring •saying "I love you" •verbal praise, affirmation	•openly affectionate: - hugging, touching - saying "I love you"	•openly affectionate with natural child •restrained, limited with stepchildren	•openly affectionate with hugs, kisses
Primary Parent, Disciplinarian	•mother	•shared parenting	•shared parenting with natural child •mother primary parent and disciplinarian to her children (his stepchildren)	•shared parenting
Discipline	•encourage credible reasons for behaviors •Forms of punishment - no corporal punishment - natural consequences - age related time outs, withdrawal of privileges	•firm application of certain rules (child age 2) •raised voice to express alarm	•abrupt, expeditious •authority expressed in: - voice - home routines	•expressed approval or disapproval (words, facial expression, shift in temperament) •no spankings; use of time outs, explanations
Handling of Differences	•Parent-child differences child's age, disposition and personal need respected •Sibling differences encourage children to see systemic impact	•Parent-child differences allowance for child explanation	•direct, authoritative with natural child •restrained, limited, or hands off with stepchildren	•talk things through

TABLE 6 - INTERVIEWEES' PARENTING STYLE

Topic	Subject 5- Female	Subject 6- Female	Subject 7 - Female	Subject 8 - Female
Communication	•discussion •parent effort to listen to what the child is feeling	•open, direct communication that covers events, feelings, perceptions, reactions •open to discussion re: sexuality	•strong parent effort to talk with children, rather than to them; spend time with them, sit with them.	•very open and direct, non-covert, affirming with praise •free expression of opinions, feelings •parent openness to reevaluate decisions
Expression of Affection	•some physical expression of affection in hugs and kisses	•warm, open affection in cuddles, kisses, hugs •verbal praise, reinforce-ment	•tactile affection in hugs, kisses, head rub •saying "I love you" •parent attention, interest	•tactile affection in hugs, kisses •positive reinforcement in verbal affirmation, praise
Primary Parent, Disciplinarian	•shared parenting	•mother (single parent)	•mother	•shared parenting
Discipline	•generally discussion with consideration for child's feelings •disapproval with stern look, raised voice •no physical punishment	•training for self-responsi-bility (natural consequences accountability, I-state-ments) •interventions sometimes direct, firm yet gentle •small rewards in treats •parent affirmation, praise	•soft, gentle, yet directing with clear expectations •training for independence, personal responsibility, making decisions	•discipline goal: - learn a lesson •Discipline measures: - light spanking or tap to impress danger (child age 3) - time out with explanation - physical restraint for temper tantrums - solution elicited from child - loss of privileges
Handling of Differences	•sometimes authoritarian •sometimes sensitive to child's needs	•"process" discussions to clear the air •time outs, cooling off periods, then regroup	•child personality, disposition respected •Sibling differences: - parent intervention when siblings can't first settle themselves	•child personality and disposition respected •sense of fairness conveyed

Emotional Support

All those interviewed were consistent in stating that they were open and direct in communicating with their (natural) children. Subject 8's words ring as a recurring echo: "I'm very open and very direct. They certainly know what I'm about." For Subjects 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8, this openness embraces listening, and this listening is tied to the parental acceptance of a child's feelings and opinions (Subjects 1, 2, 5, 6, and 8). The comments of Subjects 1 and 2 encapsulate the dynamic: "I listen. I'm not saying I agree with them, but I try not to jump on them" (Subject 1); and, "I tell her exactly what I'm thinking, what I'm feeling, and if she disagrees with me, that's fine, we'll take it from there" (Subject 2).

Communication is also described as simply talking and doing things together. Subject 4 states: "Angela and I talk a lot. We talk about her day-to-day activities at school, dealing with friends, any other significant things that have occurred during the day. Sometimes it's just Angela and I. We like doing things together, like going ice skating, swimming." In the words of Subject 7, the parent-child dynamic is simple: "Communication: spend time with them, sit with them. That's what children need."

Subject 8 made a link between communication and affection: "Communication is mostly verbal. Yet, I communicate a lot with affection." This affection, like the communication, is reported as open and direct, and it is often tactile with hugging, kissing, or some form of touching. This physical expression of affection is uniformly reported by all those interviewed. Verbal expression of affection is most often stated in, "I love you,"

specifically mentioned by Subjects 1, 2, 7, and 8. Communicating praise and affirmation are also noted as specific expressions of affection by Subjects 1, 6, 7, and 8.

Parent Roles

Parenting roles are reported as shared among Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8. For Subject 3, however, shared parenting is limited to his natural child; his wife assumes the role of primary parent and disciplinarian to her two children by a previous marriage. The role of primary parent and disciplinarian is also taken on by three women: two have husbands who are farmers and very tied to their work (Subjects 1 and 7); the third is a single parent (Subject 6).

Parental Control

All eight of those interviewed stated they exert parental control without using corporal punishment. All parents send the message to their child(ren) that there are behavioral limits. These limits are apparently impressed in the firm application of certain rules (Subject 2), by routines in the home (Subject 3), and in parent expectations clearly expressed (Subject 7). Sometimes, parental disapproval in facial expression or raised voice (Subjects 4 and 5) shifts misbehavior quickly. Subject 3 spoke especially of expressing authority in his voice. Other parents spoke of correcting with discussion (Subjects 4, 5, and 6) or a caring explanation (Subject 8) especially given with consideration for the child's feelings in reaction to an intervention (Subject 5). When

these approaches fail, Subjects 4, 6, and 8 make use of time outs to ease tension, and then they return to discuss an issue more calmly.

Correcting with calm and consideration for the child is especially challenging for Subject 8 and her husband. Their three-year-old son often has temper tantrums, and they settled on an intervention in which they firmly control at first, and then they give control over to their child. Subject 8 relates:

> Timothy started to cry. He got very upset and started throwing things in his room. Bernie sat with him and held him for awhile. Then Timothy was fine after that. (With me, I would hold him and rock him, "You'll be okay.") It never takes long; he settles right down. He's a different child, like a catharsis. Then you say, "Well, what do you think we have to do, Timothy?"

Training a child to think and decide, to assume responsibility for personal action, is a discipline goal that especially motivates parenting style in Subjects 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8. "I want my children to make decisions, to be independent," says Subject 1. Subject 7 spoke of her evolution to this approach:

> When we started to have children, we wanted them to start being self-thinkers, be independent. Ever since the kids were young, we let the kids do things themselves. Don't jump in right away. Ted is a great believer of that. I wasn't at first. I wore the "protective mom." I felt I had to jump in. I later thought, "They can do that. They really can, if you let them." I quite agree with Ted. Let them make mistakes. It's good for them.

Subject 7 also gave an example of her present approach:

> Now with Joel, I recently went into the old mode about completing the rough draft for his speech. Joel got real upset. He doesn't like me to interfere. Now here's where Ted helps me: "Why don't you

leave him alone? He knows he has to do it." Ted is right; I'm slipping back into this old thing. So next morning I apologized to Joel and told him the assignment is between you and your teacher, that I wouldn't say anything more. Joel was a happy kid. I guess what I've done is give him the responsibility.

Joel is a kid who wants to do his own thing. To be strict with Joel in discipline would hurt him. He's a child who needs that freedom to do his own thing. All he needs his parents for is to guide him a little, here and there. Don't make it sound like it's your idea; make it sound as if he's doing this.

Subject 7's sensitivity to her son's individual need is connected to the parenting skill of handling parent-child differences. Subjects 1, 4, 5, 6, and 8 were quite specific about talking things through with their children when parent-child differences arise. Subject 6 referred to such discussions as "process meetings" in which both parent and child talk about the facts of a situation and then discuss respective feelings, perceptions, and reactions to it. "It helps to clear the air before it gets out of hand," said Subject 6.

Subjects 1 and 7 also spoke of "clearing the air" in the matter of settling conflicts or differences between siblings. Each parent set a tone. Subject 1 told of delicately directing her son to consider the interactive impact that his actions and his sister's response to them have on each other and other family members. Subject 7 spoke of directing her two children to settle matters between themselves, but she admitted that "when it goes too far [in arguing], I step in and say, 'That's enough.'"

Interpretation of Data

From the overview given to current parenting practice, it may certainly be concluded that the reported parenting is quite deliberately supportive and constructive.

This general pattern is made evident on two levels: 1) the level of emotional support, in which there is an intermingling of open, direct communication with openly expressed, warm affection; and 2) the level of parental control, in which emotional support is concretely manifested in parenting direction that has its primary focus on child development.

Emotional Support

As often indicated in the interviews, current parenting practice is rooted in the family of origin upbringing. Subject 6 quite openly admits: "I'd say we have the same type of [parent-child] affection going on as I grew up in. Mitch, even though he's eleven, still kisses me good-bye and gives me a hug, and I give him one too." For the same Subject, the good communication remembered in her upbringing is now enlarged to "process meetings where we can sit down and not just talk about the facts that are happening in our lives, but also discuss how we feel and how we perceive what is happening, how we're reacting and reacting to others." Subject 3 speaks of routines both in his upbringing and current parenting. Routines give order: "I know with my brothers and sister growing up, we didn't fight a lot because we knew the rules and regulations." The pattern for any carryover (from upbringing to current parenting) really seems quite simple: like a good recipe, what is appreciated is repeated.

However, some adult children parent in a manner different from that of their parents. For these Subjects, the choice is quite deliberate and is in reaction to personal

upbringing. Subjects 2 and 5 speak of their respective conscious effort to be emotionally

supportive.

Subject 2 states:

> Part of my parenting is in reaction to what I experienced, e.g., in
> communication. I want to communicate more clearly: no double
> messages, tell her [Lorna] exactly what I'm thinking, what I'm
> feeling, and if she disagrees with me, that's fine, we'll take it from
> there. At least we can talk about it, rather than feeling guilty about
> it....Certainly my manner of affection is in reaction to my
> upbringing. I already now, and I hope to continue, express my
> affection openly, hugging, touching, telling her I love her.

Subject 5 states:

> [With my parents] there wasn't much of trying to feel what you're
> feeling, very little of that. At times I felt angry and resentful,
> frustrated....There was no physical affection from my mother or
> father....[In parenting Angela] I think there's more discussion, an
> effort to listen to what she's feeling, her side. In expressing
> affection, I'm definitely more physical than my parents. I'm not
> saying that I'm constantly hugging and kissing her [Angela], but
> compared to my parents I'm more physical.

Both Subjects 2 and 5, one male and one female, have made a conscious choice to

be relational in parenting their children. It is interesting to find an echo of this choice in

the two other men who were interviewed. Each of them, in his respective upbringing,

experienced an emotionally non-expressive, authoritarian father and an openly affectionate,

flexible mother. Conscious of these relational dynamics, Subjects 3 and 4 speak of both

the past and the present.

Subject 3 states:

> Dad spoke when he wanted something done. Mom would talk about anything. Mom was very affectionate, still is, kissing, hugging. Dad's still very cold, distant....I communicate well with Cole. He gets the everyday four-year-old affection because he still wants to sit on your lap, he still wants to share your cookies or sandwich.

Subject 4 relates a similar story:

> Any communication conveyed by my father was because he wanted us to do something. My mother was the primary communicator in our family. She took an interest in me personally, what's going on inside. My father would never openly show affection. My mother did....Angela and I talk a lot. We talk about her day-to-day activities at school, dealings with friends, any other significant things that have occurred during the day. We have open communication. And I express affection toward Angela every day. We get up in the morning, we start off with a hug, and a kiss good-bye before I go to work. At night when I get home, she greets me at the door, and I hug her. That's when I start talking to her about her day.

Parental Control

In these accounts from Subjects 2, 3, 4, and 5 (as also with the four other interviews), there is a noticeable choice to govern parent-child interactions with relational warmth and sensitivity. In all the interview accounts given, this general relational pattern filters through to the parental direction (control) given each child. In this direction, parents are unanimous in the absence of corporal punishment. They are just as unanimous not only in setting behavioral limits, but also in setting the relational tone in the use of respectful discussion to "process" parent-child differences and conflicts among siblings. It is a given that a child can have feelings and opinions, and be listened to.

For Subject 7 this type of direction began with a reactive choice to parent

somewhat differently from her parents. She recounts:

> I think as a youngster it would have been better if we had more
> direction. I don't remember my parents checking homework at all.
> We were always good in school. Report cards were glanced at,
> then put away. It was never talked about, "You did great here,
> work a little bit on here."
>
> I don't think it meant they didn't care. They cared, but
> report cards and school weren't talked about. Somehow, we got the
> feeling those things weren't that important. You did what you did,
> you did what you had to do. How you felt about it wasn't really
> that important. Those things happen (e.g., school difficulties,
> friends), and you'll figure it out. With my children I've done it
> differently. I've talked about those things. I've given more
> importance to report cards. I've given more attention. It's
> important to me; it should be important to you.

Subject 7 speaks of giving *attention*. That means she deliberately chooses to spend

time with her child, in directing, correcting, and communicating with interest and

enthusiasm. This relational manner characterizes the parenting of all those interviewed,

and echoes research done by Amato (1986, 1989), Gecas (1971), and Rosenberg (1965)

on parent-child processes that support and nurture children. For Subject 7, the parenting

focus is not on child control, but on child development, and nurturing growth in those

skills that develop decision-making, personal responsibility, and independence. Consistent

with this parenting principle is Subject 7's story of approaching her son about his school

speech. She expressed her concern for completing the assignment, then gave him the

personal space he needed to assume responsibility for completing it himself, his way.

Both Subject 7 and Subject 1 were quite explicit in stating their desire to mold decisive, responsible, and independent children. Subject 1 states, "This is something that wasn't instilled in me." Nor was it instilled in Subject 7: "It was well into our marriage that I made a conscious decision on my own." Here again parents react to a perceived gap in their upbringing and decide that their parenting will be somewhat different.

Nevertheless, the parenting style reactively initiated seems to have within it elements of the upbringing experience. Subject 4 refers to this when he reflects that he has taken a "180^0 turn" from the manner of his authoritarian father. "I think there is a balance. I think what characterizes the relationship with my daughter is respect, and I think you have to mix authoritarianism with a little bit of flexibility."

Baumrind (1967, 1971) and Coopersmith (1967) would no doubt agree with this assessment and find in it three key words that also defined their research: *balance*, *respect*, and *flexibility*. In balance, parenting has both warmth and direction in defined and enforced limits. With respect, the parent is non-coercive, and the child is generally cooperative. With parenting flexibility, a child is given the latitude for individual action that nurtures self-direction and responsibility. In one short statement and three key words, Subject 4 defined effective parenting and summarized well the collective parenting pattern of those interviewed.

PART THREE
TRANSMISSION OF PARENTING STYLES

Presentation of Data

Attention now shifts to an examination of parenting practice and its relevance to the second research question: To what extent is present parenting style a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation? From the latter presentation on current parenting, a dilemma is immediately presented. In various interviews it is already acknowledged that present parenting manner is very similar to that modelled in the family of origin. For example, Subjects 1, 6, and 7 explicitly state that they express affection in a manner very similar, if not identical, to that of their parents. Yet, other interviewees speak of parenting in reaction to family of origin upbringing. Subjects 1 and 7 speak of a gap in their child rearing: for them, this was not growing in the ability to make decisions. In light of this, these Subjects educate their children for growth in responsibility .

The research question must therefore examine the dynamics of relational continuity and structural change (Rutter, 1989) in the context of parenting practice, one generation to the next. For the examination to be meaningful, it would seem that the elements of continuity and change are best appreciated by noting patterns in parenting behaviors, rather than variables (Baumrind, 1971). On this research premise, Table 7 is constructed. Table 7 clearly extracts from each interviewee's story those parenting behaviors that are carried over from upbringing, and those parenting behaviors that are initiated in reaction to

TABLE 7 - INTERVIEWEES' CURRENT PARENTING BEHAVIORS

INTERVIEWEES	FAMILY OF ORIGIN CARRYOVER	CONSCIOUS CHANGE FROM UPBRINGING
Subject 1	•warmth in caring and affection •respect for individual differences •no corporal punishment	•give greater structure in direction •nurture developing relationship with each child •encourage children to be independent and make decisions
Subject 2	•age appropriate rules set •firm application of clearly stated rules •raising voice to indicate danger	•communicate more clearly; no double messages •express affection openly: hugging, touching, saying "I love you" •accept child's emotional response as valid
Subject 3	•discipline through routines •setting limits with authority	•communicate openly •be affectionate with (natural) child
Subject 4	•father's defined standards •mother's communication, affection, flexibility	•be open in communication and expression of affection •temper authority with flexibility and sensitivity
Subject 5	•strict demands for behaviour that is disciplined, responsible and well mannered	•make effort to be fair, flexible, and understanding •be open to discussion •be more physically expressive of affection
Subject 6	•open communication •adult/child boundaries re: appropriate information •warm affection expressed in cuddles, hugs, kisses •gentle, firm direction, sometimes with teasing •rewards as expression of relational warmth	•enlarge communication to embrace process: events, feelings, perceptions, reactions •communicate openly for discussion of sexual issues
Subject 7	•open affection in hugs, kisses, head rub, saying "I love you" •mother's "soft touch" in discipline	•talk to and with children: spend time with them, sit with them •structure direction with guidance and attention to child development •train children for independence, personal responsibility, and making decisions

TABLE 7 - INTERVIEWEES' CURRENT PARENTING BEHAVIORS

INTERVIEWEES	FAMILY OF ORIGIN CARRYOVER	CONSCIOUS CHANGE FROM UPBRINGING
Subject 8	• open, direct, non-covert communication • age appropriate direction, e.g., light spankings at early age to impress danger or set limits • mother's approach to elicit child's solution to a problem • encouraging self-direction • individual differences respected	• accept free expression of child's opinions and feelings • be more flexible • be open to reevaluating a decision • focus on child development; discipline rather than punish

upbringing. In making the comparison, it then seems possible to determine the core

parenting patterns that bridge two generations.

The concrete data must first be summarily presented in pattern format. Parenting

behaviors cited as being carried over from the family of origin experience to current

parenting are:

Communication:
- open communication
    modelled by both parents - Subjects 6, 8
    modelled by mother - subjects 3, 4
- adult-child boundaries re: appropriate information - Subject 6

Affection
- open warmth in caring and tactile affection
    modelled by both parents - Subjects 1, 6, 8
    modelled by mother - Subjects 3, 4, 7
- rewards as expression of relational warmth - Subject 6

Discipline
- defined standards stated and applied - Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- age appropriate rules and direction - Subjects 2, 8
    spankings at early age to impress danger - Subject 6
- gentle, firm direction
    modelled by father - Subject 6
    modelled by mother - Subject 7
- no corporal punishment - Subject 1
- parent flexibility
    modelled by mother - Subjects 3, 4
- self-direction encouraged - Subject 8
- respect for individual differences - Subjects 1, 8

Parenting behaviors cited as being initiated in reaction to upbringing are:

<u>Communication</u>
- direct, open communication - Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- clear communication,
    no double messages - Subject 2
    "process" communication - Subject 6
- parent acceptance of child's opinions, feelings - Subjects 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- discussion that includes listening for understanding - Subjects 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

<u>Affection</u>
- open expression of affection - Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5
- communicating affection in relationship bond with each child - Subject 1

<u>Discipline</u>
- discussion for understanding, direction - Subjects 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
- authority tempered with flexibility, fairness, sensitivity - Subjects 4, 5, 8
- greater structure, direction - Subjects 1, 7
- encouraging child to be responsibly independent, to make decisions - Subjects 1, 7
- allowing for individual differences - Subject 7
- parent openness to reevaluating a decision - Subject 8

Interpretation of Data

Both in the Literature Review and among those interviewed, the family is acknowledged as the primary environment and relational sphere for socialization. In this socialization, parents send very clear messages concerning limits for emotional expression and acceptable behavior. In the interaction, the parent triggers a response in the child. Emotions pass between parent and child, and patterns in the exchange can be observed. It is argued that these child rearing patterns strongly impact on the manner of current parenting and find concrete expression in the manner of parent-child communication, affection, and exercise of discipline.

parenting and find concrete expression in the manner of parent-child communication, affection, and exercise of discipline.

Emotional Support

Based on the data presented, a number of relational behaviors experienced in upbringing have carried over to current parenting, the most notable being that of open warmth in caring and affection. Of those interviewed, six of eight experienced tactile relational warmth from at least one parent. From that good experience, those six in turn are now extending tactile relational warmth to their children. The two interviewees who did not experience openly expressed tactile warmth (Subjects 2 and 5) nevertheless state that they knew they were loved and cared for in the consistency of caring parent behaviors (e.g., preparing meals, buying presents). In this sense, each of those interviewed developed as persons with a sense of personal worth, and from that psychological stance each presently function as adult parents capable of conveying tactile relational warmth to their children.

A second relational behavior, less universally expressed in upbringing, is that of parent-child communication characterized by conversation centred on the child's perspective and general well-being. Only four interviewees report having had this nurturing experience, Subjects 6 and 8 with both parents, and Subjects 3 and 4, both males, with only their mothers. Yet, in the sphere of current parenting, Subjects 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 were quite explicit about communicating with their children with deep

personal interest. *What are you thinking?* and *What are you feeling?* are normal questions. Less relationally explicit was Subject 3 who simply spoke of positive and direct communication with his natural son.

Parental Control

However, Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 spoke of direct and clear communication regarding rules for behavior in their formative years. Interestingly, this purpose for direct communication parallels the same Subjects' description of their upbringing as authoritarian. Perhaps the best explanation for this parallel lay in Subject 7's observation that "in those days parents were disciplinarians, and as disciplinarians (parents) told children what to do." Parents assumed roles. Subjects 3, 4, and 7 tell of the authority role being exercised by their respective fathers. Each Subject also remembers their father as being non-expressive emotionally. Subjects 3, 4, and 7 then relate that their mothers assumed the relational nurturing role to them as children. As related by these Subjects, the dual thrust to parenting was to manage children and to form them to compliant behavior. Expressions of authoritarian control varied (strong authoritative verbal direction, corporal punishment, withdrawal of privilege, time outs), but the parental invocation of some power was considered quite acceptable.

In contrast, Subject 1 described her upbringing as liberal. Punishment was rare, and there was no corporal punishment. "My parents never slapped. That I respected and appreciated." In her current parenting, Subject 1 stated she gives more direction with

consequences for misbehavior, but like her parents she makes no use of corporal punishment.

Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 also use no corporal punishment in current parenting. In fact, none of these Subjects replicate the authoritarian drive for child compliance in discipline. Indeed, this group of parents and Subject 1 are both united in a parenting belief that setting behavioral limits is important for the development of a child. This shared belief arises from two distinct discipline reactions to upbringing, as well as from two common relational experiences. Subject 1, liberally disciplined, regrets her youthful irresponsibility in the absence of defined, enforced limits. Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, strictly disciplined, respect the responsible socialization firm guidelines provided. For Subject 1, the love she experienced as a child, and the corresponding desire to have reciprocated that love in filial respect because of limits, generates the parenting desire to set firm guidelines for child behavior, but in combination with warmth and affection. For Subjects 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, the experience of being loved, and knowing that one is loved, generates a softer replication of the authoritarian experience; authoritarian becomes authoritative. Behavioral limits are still maintained, but with parent flexibility and sensitivity to child perspective and individual need. For Subjects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, emotional support merges with parenting structure, and the parenting focus is on child development. Child cooperation, rather than compliance, is the parenting goal.

Transmission: Continuity and Change

It would seem that these outcomes are not accidental. Thus far in the analysis, it has been discovered that in the transmission of parenting patterns, one generation to the next, there are dynamic elements of both continuity and change in behavioral patterns that had been modelled. The one salient behavioral pattern that looms forward as a forceful link to the next generation is that of affirming affection. That dynamic, more than any form of parental control, is apparently blueprinted into the psyche and carried over into positive parent-child interaction in current parenting. Even if parenting had been emotionally aloof and sometimes harsh, as in Subject 5's child rearing, the deeply absorbed dynamic, at its most fundamental imprinted level, apparently generates in the adult child a desire to parent with consistency and balance in the expression of emotional support and discipline.

It is this desire for balance that explains Subject 4's stated "180° turn" from the authoritarian parenting he received. In his current parenting, Subject 4 chooses "to mix authoritarianism with a little bit of flexibility." Evidently, there is a tempering, as there also is a tempering of Subject 7's childhood experience. According to Subject 7, her mother "softly" disciplined without voicing strong demands or rendering heavy consequences. So, Subject 7 chose to give more structure to her parenting manner by stating her concerns and expectations forthrightly and by rendering some form of consequence for misbehavior.

Effecting a balanced shift in parenting style is not always a unilateral endeavor. Subjects 2, 7, and 8 openly acknowledge the influence a spouse has in assisting and validating change. Subject 2 credits his wife as helpful in the encouragement given to be openly affectionate with his daughter. Subject 7 admits "taking a bit from what Ted feels (i.e., be stricter) and a little bit from experience and hitting a middle road." Subject 8 states that her husband "quickly brings in reality when I'm not rational in some things."

Some non-familial influences may help to spark considerations for a change in parenting style. Subject 8 acknowledged the (mild) impact her nursing background and professional reading has had on her concept of parenting. Subject 7 told of participating in a *STEP* parenting programme that had initiated reflection within her. Yet, more than all else, life experience and knowing the legacies and stories that shaped the experience (e.g., Subject 4 and 7's stories of post World War II impacts on their parents) seem to generate the in-depth awareness that gives rise to parenting somewhat differently than one's parents.

Somewhat differently: somewhat, i.e., to a certain degree; and differently, i.e., not the same. When the two words are applied to parenting behaviors examined within the systemic interconnections of family relationships and structure, *somewhat differently* connotes: a) parent behavior roots in the previous generation, the family of origin (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Ulrich, 1981; Freeman, 1992; Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Wu, 1991; Williamson & Bray, 1988); and b) parent behavior roots now modified by life

experience and adapted to the present in the family of procreation (Freeman, 1992; Williamson & Bray, 1988). For those interviewed, there is parenting connection (continuity) to upbringing and decisive parenting application (change) to the present. For them, that is manifested in two parenting patterns, one relational and one structural, which emerge as their link between generations: a fundamental parent-child warmth and concern, and a deep respect for defining behavior limits in a child. From the research one conclusion is incontestable: the relational and structural patterns in the parenting of one generation strongly shape the developmental milieu of the next.

To what extent is parenting style a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation? With upbringing, spousal influence, and parenting experience in her life quiver, Subject 7 reflects:

> We're raising our children quite different than how our parents raised us. But there's a continuity; I can sense it. It's probably more in our values. What we value, I think, we are passing on to our children. How you discipline your children is the cosmetics of it. The deep down life values I got from my parents, Ted from his, are very similar. And we're passing them on. The way you do things, the way you live your life, that's a little different.

Conclusion

Based on the data presented, family of origin upbringing very definitely impacts on the manner of current parenting. Some family of origin parenting behaviors are replicated because the adult child not only remembers, but more importantly respects the parenting approach or belief of his/her parents (e.g., respecting individual child

disposition). On the other hand, family of origin parenting behaviors deemed as unfeeling, insensitive, or non-nurturing are selectively rejected by the adult child. It is interesting to note that all of those interviewed (seven from an authoritarian background and one from a liberal environment) have deliberately chosen to focus parenting practice on the development of their children. Parental warmth and direction, rather than parental control, constitute the current parenting rudder. As Subject 1 stated, "I've kept the good and changed what I didn't think was so good. I think I've passed on a lot of the good stuff. I hope I have."

IV. PASTORAL REFLECTIONS

> In a higher world it may be otherwise, but
> here below to live is to change, and to be
> perfect is to have changed often.
>   -- John Henry Newman

Natural to all life is change. Change does not deny origins or roots; it springs from them. In this sense, each created thing grows in paradoxical connection to, and distinction from, parent beginnings. In all of creation, there is rootedness and growth, continuity and change. In family systems language, there is *process*.

Continuity and Change: A Process Review

The entire research on parenting behaviors and their formation is a study in *process*. As informed by the Literature Review, the process, at its most basic level, is characterized by an interconnection and interpenetration of parent-child interactions. In this process, there is constant relational change. In parenting children, parents teach, model, and form behaviors which they consider appropriate. In turn, children respond to the repetitious directives. Patterns in child behavior emerge. Systemically, the parent-child exchange defines a child's upbringing which, in the course of time, later informs the parenting practice of an adult child (see Figure 2).

This process frames two research questions, one that is general, and another which is more specific: 1) What influence does family of origin upbringing have on present parenting style? 2) To what extent is parenting style a faithful reproduction of the

preceding generation?

In answer to the first question, upbringing definitely impacts on current parenting. This general conclusion is well confirmed in each interviewee's recollection of being parented. More specifically, each recollection confirms the first hypothesis in the research: that the pivotal key for understanding the link between upbringing and current parenting is to be discovered in the child rearing memories and experience of those adult children who are interviewed. Without invoking memories and experience, the research remains sterile and theoretical.

With interview data, the research proceeds to a more human plane and explores a very real question: To what extent is present parenting style a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation? In this question, one word and one phrase suggest a possible complexity: *extent*, and *faithful reproduction*.

Use of the word *extent* hints at human variation, and that, quite naturally, was verified in the interview accounts. No one's story was the same; variables affecting past and present parenting were numerous. Nevertheless, process was evident, and patterns about parent-child interaction and its meaning did emerge. In this sense, the second hypothesis was verified, that: a) a chain of influence links two generations; and b) the pattern in that chain considers both the current interactional pattern of parenting and the construction of the meaning given to those relational patterns in the family of origin.

In concrete human terms, consider the research findings. Of those interviewed,

seven adult children came from authoritarian homes; one came from a liberal environment. In current parenting, all the adult children define behavior limits for their children. Respect for having had defined limits and the one wish for having had more definition in limits synthesize as the common chain of influence that generates current parenting with firm, defined limits. It is especially important to note that for all the adult children, parenting with defined limits is a *choice*.

The latter choice is one of parenting structure which, as the Literature Review indicates, constitutes only one of two broad parent-child interactions. The second parent-child interaction is relational, and it is activated in emotional support. As expected, remembered expressions of emotional support varied. Nevertheless, all those interviewed spoke of having experienced some kind of emotional support in being loved and knowing that one is loved. That most fundamental human experience, the experience of affirmation in affection, thus emerges as the relational link in a second chain of influence that connects two generations.

In combination, the two intergenerational chains of influence verify the theoretical interconnection and interpenetration of parent-child control and support. Parental discipline does have its parallel in the manner of relating to the child (see Tables 1 and 2). For example, Subjects 3, 4, 5, and 7 spoke of their respective fathers as having been authoritarian; as well, each man communicated only for a purpose and was non-expressive emotionally. Despite this memory of relational manner, each adult child's gut awareness

of parental love and concern (expressed in the demand for good behavior and success) now renders some meaning and understanding to the directive intent of their father's discipline manner. In the adult realization of intent, there is the awareness of core parent-child affection. That adult awareness apparently influences the conscious decision to parent with structured limits, but with more overt warmth.

In current parenting, the research findings indicate that all the adult children parent in a relational and structural manner unlike their parents. Adult children parent with expressive warmth and defined limits, with allowances for child perspective and individual growth. An authoritarian (or liberal) undertone is virtually absent; and though adult children of authoritarian parents understand the means and intent in the authoritarian manner of their parents, they themselves do not replicate that authoritarian discipline. For all those interviewed, understanding parent motive simply doesn't confirm the plausibility of the third research hypothesis: that the emotional meaning and directive intent given to a discipline strategy may validate or invalidate the use of that strategy in a next generation. Adult children have simply made a definitive *choice* to parent with a balance of overt warmth and firm direction.

Choices are often informed by a motive, and that is the thought in the fourth hypothesis: that a discipline strategy and the philosophy underpinning its use - controlling, permissive, or empowering - strongly inform the manner of parental communication, expression of affection, and the settling of relational differences among family members.

It would certainly seem that research findings affirm this proposition. Data has already been presented on the parallel between authoritarian discipline and relational manner in the family of origin experience. For those raised in authoritarian families, child management or control was the parenting focus. In contrast, the findings on current parenting indicate that adult children relate warmly to their children and firmly direct them to grow in personal responsibility. For adult children, the parenting focus is on child development.

Having addressed the three hypotheses related to the second research question, it is now appropriate to restate that question and concisely respond to it. *Question*: To what extent is present parenting style a faithful reproduction of the preceding generation? *Answer*: Based on the research, adult children do not blindly replicate their parents' parenting style; they selectively choose to define their own parenting manner.

Those choices seem to be based primarily on the meaning adult children give to their upbringing experience and to the kind of parent-child experience they wish for their children. Realistically, the extent or breadth of the choices are as diverse as those interviewed. Nevertheless, parenting style roots are acknowledged to be in the family of origin; that is the basis of a parenting continuity or connection to the preceding generation. Most significant, however, is the research discovery that parenting behaviors are not predetermined by the family of origin. Change, and *choice* for change, stamp the developmental process in parenting behaviors.

Human Choice in Theology

In relating the Genesis story of creation from the Jewish perspective, Harold Kushner (1993) describes Eden as a stable, perfect, and predictable world. The laws of physics govern nature. All living creatures live by instinct. However, in the programmed world of Eden, there is no choice, especially no moral choice.

Then, "perhaps because God loves goodness even more than He [sic] loves perfection" (Kushner, 1993, p. 18), God created Adam and Eve, and blessed them with the capacity to be moral on the basis of free choice. One day, Adam and Eve's moral capacity was tested, and they chose to eat the designated forbidden fruit of one tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Had Adam and Eve obeyed God's directive, "they would have added to the world the one thing God [as perfect goodness] could not create: goodness, freely choosing what is right" (Kushner, 1993, p. 18). Eden, as the perfect world of God, would have been complete.

In eating the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve chose to be selfish. For their choice, they were expelled from Eden and entered our imperfect world. In this world, they and their descendants made many choices, some good, and some bad. As often as the choice was made for goodness, this imperfect world and those in it became more whole and complete.

In the Jewish perspective, we honor our creation as image of God when we freely choose to do good. In the Christian tradition of creation-centered spirituality, we co-create

with God when we choose to do good (Fox, 1981). Common to both perspectives is the sense of God's presence and an attunement to God's Spirit. In the warmth of this Spirit, we are empowered or graced to move beyond self and touch others with "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience" (*Colossians 3:12*). In us, God's breath *(ruach)* "re-creates" and transforms the world (Fox, 1981). Human encounters become characterized by love, joy and peace *(Galatians 5:22)*. God's design for Eden is activated.

The design is intended to be generative, as the life in the Trinity is generative. George Maloney (1979, p. 92) draws a parallel between the Trinity and human love that overflows to family (community):

> As the Father and Son wish to perfect their love by sharing it with
> the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, so do a husband and wife wish
> to fashion a community of at least three by a child. Two in love
> move toward union, but only in the sharing of their mutual love
> with a third person does their union become fulfilled.

Love never remains just between two persons. Of necessity, love is interpersonal and energizing, as the circulation of love in God is interpersonal and energizing. When human beings love, they freely choose goodness; they enter into the very life of God, are touched by it, and ennobled to consciously choose for goodness again. The breath of God stimulates human choice.

John Taylor (1972, p. 33) explains and reflects:

> In Christian terms, this means that the Creator Spirit works from
> the inside of the [evolutionary] processes not only by startling his
> creatures into awareness and recognition and luring them towards
> even higher degrees of consciousness and personhood, but also by

always from the contrast between the actual and the potential, between things as they are and things as they might be. It is as though his ceaselessly repeated word to eveiy detail of his creation is: "Choose! I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life. Stay as you are and drop out; change, however painfully, and move towards life." Whenever I learn a little more of the processes of creation I am amazed afresh at the unbelievable daring of the Creator Spirit who seems to gamble all the past gains on a new initiative, inciting his creatures to such crazy adventure and risk.

Perhaps the most crazy adventure and risk in life is that of marriage and parenting (George Maloney's metaphor for Trinitarian love). Certainly, no other life venture offers more opportunity for awareness, choice, and choice for change. Challenges are presented daily. We dialogue with our memories and experiences rooted in upbringing. We dialogue with our spouses. No approach, no manner is definitively predetermined. Considerations are made. The welfare and good of children is foremost. In that sense, we do what God cannot: we freely choose goodness, and in parenting we re-create a small portion of the world in family.

Human Choice as Differentiation

Choice needs to be informed; knowledge is a necessity. With knowledge, alternatives become available; selection is possible. In applying reason to selection, chance is virtually eliminated. When judgment is finally made, that which seemed potential is set in motion. Sometimes, choices are choices for change.

Choices are continually made in parenting. Direction is given, and parental manner

informs the directions. Yet, unique to parenting is the reality that a particular parental

direction and manner may instinctively surface because, from family of origin modelling

and upbringing, both are so rooted and imprinted in the psyche. Subject 2 recognizes that:

"Every now and then I catch myself saying, doing something that is directly from my

parents. I have to stop and think: Where does that come from? Do I really want to take

this attitude or not?" Subject 2 then gives an example:

> One time, I was very tired; my daughter was cranky. I was trying
> to get her to do something. And I was thinking: "You have no
> right to be so upset; you have no right to be giving me such a hard
> time." And Bing! Whoa! That came directly from my Mom. And
> I thought, "What am I saying? You have every right to feel
> whatever you want."

Subject 2 was definitely aware of rooted behaviors. As the interview proceeded,

he was also aware that he could change those behaviors, and then told of changes he had

initiated. Subject 4 echoes the decision: "I don't totally subscribe to the theory that we

are products of our environment. I think that we, as rational human beings, know what's

happening to us; we know that we can change the pattern, we can change behavior."

Virginia Satir (1988) cautions that any change initiated in parenting behaviors

should begin from the perspective that a parent is doing the best he/she can. From that

position, a parent may move forward with confidence to the task of examining present

parenting behaviors in the light of upbringing. For current parenting, one asks: What

works? What doesn't? Why? Then one reflects on upbringing: Is my approach or

manner really rooted in upbringing? What was good in my upbringing? What was weak?

How did I respond? How did I feel? More specifically, Paris and Paris (1992, pp. 35-46) suggest a series of questions for identifying family of origin legacy: How did we (family members) love each other? How did we give emotional support? What were the expectations for me? How was discipline rendered? How was family conflict handled?

In honestly addressing these latter questions, a parent is deliberately identifying relationship patterns learned and internalized in the family of origin. This act is a necessary first step in *differentiation* (self-definition), a process in which the adult acknowledges his/her internalized link to family of origin, yet stands apart from it as an individual with personal beliefs, life goals, and relational boundaries (Bowen, 1978). In negotiating a balance between the two forces (family of origin link and personal distinction), an adult child then freely chooses to parent in a manner that suits his/her goals in a parent-child relationship (child management or child development). That is why Subject 7 can state: "We don't necessarily follow what our parents did. I have changed in that regard."

Parents as Architects

Based on the interview conversations and the data developed in Table 7 (Interviewees' Current Parenting Behaviors: Family of Origin Carryover and Conscious Change from Upbringing), it would seem that the eight adult children in this research are *Synthesizer* parents. For Elizabeth Fishel (1991, p. 123), the *Synthesizer* is a differentiated parent, one "who has achieved both distance from his past and his parents and has

compassion for them. He is able to take from the past what works best, alter what hasn't worked, and set aside what has become irrelevant or outmoded." The Synthesizer also considers child perspective by asking, "Would I want it done to me?" (Coloroso, 1994, p. 15). With judicious insight and a sense for balance, the Synthesizer seems able to develop a parenting style blend that he/she believes appropriate for their child, in this era.

As emotionally differentiated parents, Synthesizers maturely assume the job of a parent, "to encourage a child along the path toward independence" (Peck, 1978, p. 176). This means that Synthesizers deliberately direct their children to grow as competent, responsible individuals who, on the basis of parent taught values and behaviors, are able to engage successfully with the world. Roberta Gilbert (1992), a former colleague of Murray Bowen, defines these values and behaviors as : parent-child respect, with intact boundaries (no emotional manipulation, under/overfunctioning, or relational competition); openness in verbal communication, with parent and child speaking for the self and the self only (I-statements and responsible processing of feelings); and listening to the child. In combination, these parent-child behaviors (framed in Bowen theory) are a recipe for child cooperation and eventual emotional differentiation.

Similar to the latter recipe is the collective recipe for parenting that can be extracted from the parenting behaviors of those interviewed (see Tables 6 and 7):

> *Communicate!*
> * Be open, direct, and clear in speaking.
> * Listen.
> * Talk *with* the child.

- Be attentive.
- Do things together; take interest.
- Express affection in touch and in words.
- Accept the child's opinions and feelings; teach *appropriate* expression.

Discipline with defined limits:
- Set age appropriate rules.
- Discipline, rather than punish. Be respectful.
- Correct with discussion, or a caring explanation; no corporal punishment.
- Set natural consequences.
- If there are occasional negative consequences, let them be mild, of short duration, and fitting for the misbehavior, such as loss of a privilege or a brief time out.
- Temper authority with flexibility and sensitivity.
- Structure direction with guidance and attention to child development.
- Be sensitive to individual need.
- Train children for independence, personal responsibility, and making decisions.

Pastoral Counselling for Parents

The task for the pastoral counsellor is challenging in its simplicity: "Find the light that shines in every person (parent) or family, and uncoil the wrappings that shroud that light" (Satir, 1988, p. 133). More specifically, encourage the adult child to tap into his/her accumulated life experience (beginning with upbringing) to develop a differentiated, synthesized decision for constructive parenting.

For both counsellor and parent, the development of this decision will be framed by the words and example of Jesus: "Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart" *(Matthew 11:29)*. In humility, one stands before God in honest self-knowledge; personal

strengths and weaknesses, and personal history, are all in the open. The humble person is not arrogant; he/she, as one human being among many, understands self and the human condition. This understanding flows out to others in gentleness and compassion. These qualities find expression in constructive parenting. These qualities are also hallmarks of a parent who, in humility before God, is touched by God, and with God re-creates the world (in family) in deliberate choices for goodness.

Scott Peck (1978, p. 189) quite rightly observes that "what we learn about the nature of the world when we are growing up is determined by the actual nature of our experience in the microcosm of the family." The home environment and the relational tone given to it by parents is crucially important, for it is there that a child forms his/her world view. That is why John Paul II can say with deep conviction, "The future of humanity is forged within the family" *(Familiaris Consortio, 86)*.

THESIS RESEARCH PROPOSAL

TITLE AND AREA:

An exploration of family of origin influence on parenting styles.

ADVISOR: Dr. Delton Glebe

READERS: Thomas St. James O'Connor and Gloria Taylor

COURSE TITLE: M.Th. Research Project/Thesis, TH680E.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

"What influence does your family of origin upbringing have on your present parenting style?"

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

The proposed research is to be conducted in fulfillment of the requirements of the above named course, TH680E.

The purpose of the study is to examine present parenting styles with respect to young children and to note the repetitive patterns rooted in/stemming from family of origin upbringing.

FIELD:

Eight (8) parents of children ages 2-12.

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH:

I propose to conduct a qualitative study based on interviews with eight parents of children ages 2-12. The meetings will be initiated with a twenty (20) question questionnaire entitled, "What Kind of Mother Are You?" from Canadian Living Magazine, September 1989 (for the purpose of this study, "parent" will substitute "mother"). I am seeking permission from the editors of Canadian Living to use this questionnaire to stimulate interview response. The interview will take the form of semi-standardized questions, formulated upon review of the literature, which will aid in further personal reflection regarding the participants' family of origin upbringing and present parenting styles. I will then analyze their stories and note any patterns. I will conclude with a theological reflection on the family and its dynamics and propose recommendations for pastoral counselling.

INTERVIEWS:

I propose to make initial contact with prospective participants by telephone and explain to them the nature and purpose of the research and arrange a meeting. Approximately one week later the interviews will take place.

APPENDIX A

Prior to the interview, each participant will be asked to sign a consent form stating that he/she understands:
a) the nature of the research being conducted;
b) that his/her involvement in this project is voluntary;
c) that the findings of the project will remain confidential;
d) that he/she has the right to withdraw at any stage of the study.

As stated in the consent form, the interviews will be taped, and the tapes transcribed for analysis. Participants will have the right to review the transcripts and make revisions, if necessary. All tapes will be erased at the conclusion of the project.

THESIS OUTLINE:

<u>Chapters</u>

I. Introduction: Research Method
II. Review of Literature
III. Data Analysis
IV. Conclusion: Theological Reflection and Recommendations
for Pastoral Counselling

APPENDIX B

Gregory Bassett
28 Lingwood Drive
Box 789
Waterford, Ontario
NOE 1YO

June 15, 1994

Dr. Richard Crossman,
Principal-Dean
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary
Waterloo, Ontario
N2L 3C5

Dear Dr. Crossman,

Thank you for your time in advising me concerning my thesis research proposal.

As indicated in our discussion, my thesis proposal contains some minor modifications from the Research Proposal submitted last Fall for TH.664I, Research Design in Marriage and Family Therapy and Pastoral Counselling. For my thesis research, I propose to interview eight parents (not six) of children ages 2-12 (not ages 3-10).

In light of these modifications, and of the technical advice given by Dr. Glebe and Tom O'Connor (c.f. June 14, 1994 letter), I am requesting ethical permission and approval for my thesis proposal.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Gregory Bassett

ENCLOSURES
- letter of June 14, 1994
- Research Proposal for TH.664I
- photocopies of previous correspondence and recent letter to Canadian Living
- Thesis Proposal

APPENDIX B

Gregory Bassett
28 Lingwood Drive
Box 789
Waterford, Ontario
NOE 1YO

June 14, 1994

Dr. Richard Crossman,
Principal-Dean
Waterloo Lutheran Seminary
Waterloo, Ontario
N2L 3C5

Dear Dr. Crossman,

I am writing to seek clarification and advice concerning the development of my thesis proposal, "An Exploration of Family of Origin Influence on Parenting Styles".

My thesis proposal and design has its beginnings in Theology 664I, Research Design in Marriage and Family Therapy and Pastoral Counselling. At the time I took TH.664I last Fall, Daniel Cho and I collaborated in the assigned research project. I intend to develop upon the research project, Daniel Cho does not. Do I need to seek a formal release from Daniel to expand upon, and in some instances use, material submitted by him in the research paper?

In consultation with Dr. Glebe and Tom O'Connor, I do know this much:

a) the Research Design paper forms a substantial core for a thesis;

b) the thesis interviews should be conducted by me; any interviews conducted by Daniel for TH.664I should not be used for my thesis;

c) those interviewed by me for TH.664I can sign a new consent form and permit their interviews to be used for thesis data;

d) I now need to request a new permission from Canadian Living to use the questionnaire "What Kind of Mother Are You?" (September 1989 issue) as a springboard for thesis research interviews.

.....2

APPENDIX B

2

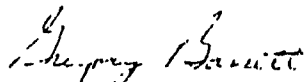I have one important question concerning thesis interviews:
Do I need to seek ethical approval for conducting the interviews?
My thesis is an extension of the research project, and ethical
approval had been received to conduct interviews for that project.

Finally, are there any ethical concerns I am overlooking?
Please advise.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Gregory Bassett

APPENDIX B

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

TITLE AND AREA:

An exploration of family of origin influence on parenting styles.

NAMES OF RESEARCHERS:

Gregory A. Bassett and Daniel W. Cho (students at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary).

NAME OF ADVISOR:

Thomas St. James O'Connor (Waterloo Lutheran Seminary).
Course title: Research Design in Marriage and Family Therapy and Pastoral Counselling, TH 6641.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

"What influence does your family of origin upbringing have on your present parenting style?"

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

The proposed research is to be conducted in fulfillment of the requirements of the above named course, TH 6641.
The purpose of the study is to examine present parenting styles with respect to young children and to note the repetitive patterns rooted in/stemming from family of origin upbringing.

FIELD:

Six (6) parents of children ages 3-10.

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH:

We propose to conduct a qualitative study based on interviews with six parents of children ages 3-10. The meetings will be initiated with a twenty (20) question questionnaire entitled, "What Kind of Mother Are You?" Canadian Living Magazine, September 1989 (for the purpose of this study, "parent" will substitute "mother"). We are seeking permission from the editors of Canadian Living to use this questionnaire to stimulate interview response. The interview will take the form of semi-standardized questions, formulated upon review of the literature, which will aid in further personal reflection regarding the participants' family of origin upbringing and present parenting styles. We will then analyze their stories and note any patterns.

We propose to make initial contact with prospective participants by telephone and explain to them the nature and purpose of the research and arrange a meeting. Approximately one week later the interviews will take place.

Prior to the interview each participant will be asked to sign a consent form stating that he/she understands:

i.   the nature of the research being conducted,
ii. that his/her involvement in this project is voluntary,
iii. that the findings of the project will remain confidential,
iv. that he/she has the right to withdraw at any stage of the study.

As stated in the consent form the interviews will be taped, and the tapes transcribed for analysis. Participants will have the right to review the transcripts and make revisions, if necessary. All tapes will be erased at the conclusion of the project.

The Principal-Dean

Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

Founded in 1911
A federated college of Wilfrid Laurier University

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 3C5 Telephone (519) 884-1970

July 26, 1994

Mr. Gregory Bassett
28 Lingwood Drive
Box 789
Waterford, ON   N0E 1Y0

Dear Gregory,

Your letter of June 15, 1994 has been reviewed in which you identify the
minor modifications you propose to make to the Research Proposal submitted to and
approved by the Seminary Ethics Committee for the course TH664I this past Fall.
Those modifications include, 1) raising the number of parent interviewees to
eight, and 2) including parent interviewees whose children range from ages 2 - 12.
In that letter you request ethical approval to conduct interviews based on this
modified Research Proposal as a part of your M.Th. thesis.

I am happy to inform you that you have been granted such approval with the
understanding that:

1. The thesis interviews will be conducted by you and only the interviews
   done by you will be used in the thesis.

2. Those persons who are interviewed will sign new consent forms which are
   identical to those approved for the above course except for the following
   modifications:
   a) Identification of yourself as the sole researcher.
   b) Identification of the purpose of your research as the preparation of
      an M.Th. thesis at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.
   c) Identification of Dr. Delton Glebe as your thesis advisor and include
      his phone number.

3. A new permission will be obtained from <u>Canadian Living</u> to use the
   questionaire "What Kind of Mother Are You?" as a part of your thesis
   interviews.

4. Your research will be conducted in accordance with the Research Proposal
   approved for the course TH 664I except for the modifications noted above.

If you have any further questions about this matter please feel free to
contact me after August 25, 1994 at your convenience. Best wishes on your thesis
work.

Sincerely yours,

Richard C. Crossman
Principal-Dean

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. In your family of origin, what was your childhood experience with your parents re:

   •manner of communication
   •expression of affection
   •the handling of differences with you ; and siblings
   •the kind of discipline, including rewards and punishments

B. In your present family, what is your experience with your children re:

   •manner of communication
   •expression of affection
   •the handling of differences with you and siblings
   •the kind of discipline, including rewards and punishments

PM-1 3½"x4" PHOTOGRAPHIC MICROCOPY TARGET
NBS 1010a ANSI/ISO #2 EQUIVALENT
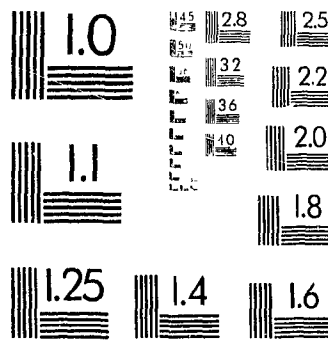
PRECISION^{SM} RESOLUTION TARGETS

CONSENT FORM

I, _____. hereby agree to
participate in the research project entitled, "An Explo-
ration of Family of Origin Influence On Parenting Styles,"
being conducted by Gregory Bassett for the course M.Th.
Research Project/Thesis in Marriage and Family Therapy
and Pastoral Counselling (TH680E) at Waterloo Lutheran
Seminary.

I understand that the purpose of the study is to examine
present parenting styles with respect to children ages
2-12 and to note the repetitive patterns stemmmng from
family of origin upbringing. In this regard, I will be
asked about both my family of origin experience and my
experience today as a parent. I have the right not to
answer specific questions or discuss particular aspects
of my life.

I understand that this interview will be taped, and that
the tapes will later be transcribed for analysis. I will
have the opportunity to review the transcript of the inter-
view and make any final revisions as I see necessary. Only
the researcher, Gregory Bassett and his advisor, Dr. Delton
Glebe, will have access to the transcripts. The tapes will
be erased at the conclusion of the project. Any questions
I may have concerning this project may be directed to Doctor
Delton Glebe at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary at (519) 884-1970.

I understand that my interviewer is required by law to report
any revelation of child abuse or instance in which I may be
of harm to myself or others.

I understand that my identity and all information I will
give remains confidential. Upon request I will be pro-
vided with a summary of the research findings at the con-
clusion of the study.

I have read the above terms and hereby agree to partici-
pate in the research project.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Witness:_____
        (bound to confidentiality)

Gregory Bassett
28 Lingwood Drive
Box 789
Waterford, Ontario
NOE 1Y0

October 6, 1994

Ms. Olga Goncalves,
Promotion/Business Coordinator
Canadian Living Magazine
25 Sheppard Avenue West, Suite 100
North York, Ontario
M2N 6S7

Dear Ms. Goncalves,

I am presently engaged in a thesis research project entitled,
"An Exploration of Family of Origin Influence on Parenting Styles".
I intend to submit my research to the Faculty of Waterloo Lutheran
Seminary, Wilfrid Laurier University, in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Theology in Pastoral Coun-
selling (with particular focus in marriage and family therapy).
My research is totally non-profit, and there is no intent to pub-
lish the findings beyond those stipulations agreed to by any gradu-
ate student submitting a thesis to Waterloo Lutheran Seminary and
Wilfrid Laurier University (c.f. Partial Copyright Licence).   .

The nature of my research is qualitative, and therefore much
of the research data is extracted from personal interviews. In
order to initiate discussion from those being interviewed, I am
asking your permission to use a twenty question questionnaire en-
titled, "What Kind of Mother Are You?" published in the September
1989 edition of Canadian Living Magazine. Actually, for my pur-
pose, the word "mother" in the questionnaire title should be re-
written "parent".

A more detailed explanation of my intended research is given
in the enclosed research proposal submitted to Dr. Richard Crossman,
Principal-Dean of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary.

Thank you so very much for your consideration of my request   .

ENCLOSURES

•Partial Copyright Licence   Respectfully,

•Thesis Research Proposal and
 Interview Questions

•Previous correspondence to Canadian Living   Gregory Bassett
 (October 13, 1993) and their response
 (October 18, 1993)

•"What Kind of Mother Are You?" questionnaire
 as modified for interview use

Canadian Living

25 Sheppard Ave. West, Suite 100, North York, Ontario M2N 6S7   Tel: (416) 733 7600 Fax: (416) 733 3398

October 18, 1994

Mr. Gregory Bassett
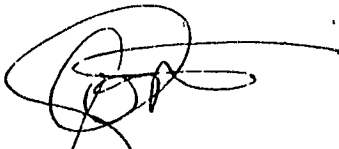28 Lingwood Drive
Box 789
Waterford ON N0E 1Y0

Dear Mr. Bassett;

Thank you for your letter to Canadian Living. I am pleased to grant you authorization to reprint the quiz, *What Kind of Mother Are You?* which was featured in our September 1989 issue of *Canadian Living*.

I understand that the quiz will be reprinted for non-profit, educational purposes only and will be used to initiate discussion from those being interviewed for your thesis research project. You may also substitute the word *Mother* with *Parent* in the article for your purpose.

It is our policy to ask that copyright credit be given and that each article read **Canadian Living - September 1989.** We also ask that the authors name appear on the reprints.

Once again, thank you for your interest in *Canadian Living*. I wish you great success in your ventures.

Sincerely,

Olga Goncalves
Editorial Coordinator
Canadian Living Magazine

TELMEDIA

What kind of mother are you?

I here are as many types of mothers as there are mothers.
We've classified them into five general categories.
Which one fits you best?

By Laetetia Alexandre
Translated by Katharine Vanderlinden

Some of these questions deal with children in a particular age group. Whatever the age of your kids, pick the answer that is closest to what you think your reaction would be in the situation described. For each question, circle one answer.

1 For me, children are:
a) A constant source of joy.
b) A gratifying responsibility.
c) A breeding ground for accidents.
d) Free beings.
e) A daily duty.

2 I want to know where my adolescent children are at all times:
a) Always true.
b) Usually true.
c) More or less true.
d) Usually false.
e) Always false.

3 I've planned an evening out with friends, and my eight-year-old child comes down with the flu:

a) I immediately cancel my plans.
b) I go anyway but worry the whole evening.
c) I don't change my plans.
d) I leave a precise list of instructions with the babysitter.
e) I give the babysitter a telephone number where she can reach me in case of emergency.

4 I supervise my children's homework:
a) Every evening.
b) Often.
c) Occasionally.
d) Rarely.
e) Never.

5 My relationship with my children is based on:
a) Respect.
b) Communication between equals.
c) Authority: I'm the boss and they obey.
d) The law of the jungle — and I don't always win!
e) Protection.

6 I'm the disciplinarian when my children do wrong:
a) Always.
b) Usually.
c) Sometimes.
d) Rarely.
e) Never.

7 When my 16-year-old son or daughter invites friends to the house:
a) I keep a close eye on them.
b) I take advantage of the chance to go out.
c) I don't mind as long as they don't bother me.
d) I get to work preparing refreshments.
e) I trust them and leave them alone.

8 My children obey me:
a) Without question.
b) Usually.
c) Half of the time.
d) When it suits them.
e) Every now and then, when I'm there.

9 Bedtime is:
a) Organized.
b) Time for cuddling.
c) Time for negotiation.
d) A story, a kiss and good night.
e) A thankless task.

10 **My five-year-old child throws a tantrum in a store because she wants a toy:**
a) I buy it right away because I can't refuse her a thing.
b) I continue shopping as if nothing had happened.
c) I buy it for her just to keep her quiet
d) I make her understand that if she wants to go shopping with me again, she'll have to learn to behave.
e) I punish her immediately.

11 **My son's teacher calls to say the child is having difficulties in class:**
a) I tell her it's her job to deal with the problem.
b) I get more details and go to the school to discuss the matter further.
c) I set up a study program with my child.
d) I decide the teacher doesn't like my son.
e) I talk the problem over with my child and his teacher and take action according to what transpires.

12 **When my son leaves for camp for the first time my first reaction is:**
a) To make a list of instructions for the counsellors.
b) Finally, a breather!
c) To buy him some little treats to take along
d) I'm happy for him — and for myself.
e) I realize he's growing up.

13 **My daughter has some friends I find rude and obnoxious:**
a) I forbid her to see them.
b) We talk it over but I maintain the right of veto.
c) I decide it's a passing phase.
d) I supervise them closely.
e) I tell myself my daughter is free to choose her own friends.

14 **I buy gifts and surprises for my child:**
a) Often, when I see something I think he'd like
b) On his birthday and at Christmastime
c) When I'm particularly pleased with him, as well as on special occasions
d) If he behaves himself
e) When he asks for them

15 **My 13-year-old daughter wants to take on a paper route so she'll have more spending money:**
a) I encourage her plan on the condition that it remains her responsibility
b) I go along on the route with her to make sure she honors her obligations.
c) I give her more spending money; it's too dangerous for her to be out in the streets so early in the morning.
d) I don't mind as long as she doesn't make a mess of the house
e) I leave her free to do what she wants

16 **I bring up my children:**
a) Very strictly
b) In a way that allows them complete freedom; they have rights that must be respected
c) In a way that encourages the development of autonomy within a framework of limits
d) In a way that protects them from getting into trouble.
e) As well as I can.

17 **I discover that my 13-year-old child has taken some money from my purse:**
a) I ignore the incident.
b) I decide he's trying to tell me he needs more spending money.
c) I tell him it wasn't right to take the money.

d) I punish him severely
e) I explain that because he committed a theft, I have to punish him

18 **On weekends and holidays:**
a) I organize the children's time so they're constantly occupied, and I keep a close eye on them
b) The children and I decide together how they'll spend their time
c) The children are free to do what they want
d) I arrange my schedule around my children's needs
e) I enroll the children in various activities.

19 **My teenage daughter wants a punk haircut:**
a) I forbid it
b) She has the right to make that decision
c) I want to know who has had a bad influence on her
d) I decide that it's part of adolescence
e) I tell her I won't tolerate anything too radical, but I'll allow a reasonable cut.

20 **When my 10-year-old comes home with bumps, scratches and torn pants, my first reaction is:**
a) To take the child to hospital
b) To punish the child
c) "What happened?"
d) "It's nothing serious "
e) To find the culprits

SCORING SHEET

Instructions:

- Place the letter answer/response to each question in the first space.
- Place the number assigned for each question/response in the second space.
- Then add up all the numbers to find your total.

1. _____ _____   6. _____ _____   11. _____ _____   16. _____ _____

2. _____ _____   7. _____ _____   12. _____ _____   17. _____ _____

3. _____ _____   8. _____ _____   13. _____ _____   18. _____ _____

4. _____ _____   9. _____ _____   14. _____ _____   19. _____ _____

5. _____ _____   10. _____ _____   15. _____ _____   20. _____ _____

Total: _____   Total: _____   Total: _____   Total: _____

Final Total: _____

ANSWERS

	a	b	c	d	e
1	2	3	1	4	5
2	1	2	3	4	5
3	2	4	5	1	3
4	1	3	2	4	5
5	3	4	1	5	2
6	1	5	3	2	1
7	1	5	4	2	3
8	1	3	2	4	5
9	1	2	4	3	5
10	2	5	4	3	1
11	5	4	1	2	3
12	1	2	5	3	4
13	1	3	5	2	1
14	2	1	3	5	4
15	1	1	2	5	1
16	1	4	3	2	5
17	5	4	2	1	1
18	1	3	4	2	5
19	1	4	2	5	3
20	2	1	3	5	4

SCORE

20-35 Police Mom. 36-50 Mother Hen.
51-70 Coach Mom. 71-85 Liberal Mom.
86-100 Hands off Mom.

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SCORING EXPLANATION

Police Mom
You are the type of mother who lives to control every situation. You always know exactly what your child is doing and when and why he is doing it. He is probably well behaved, but what about his autonomy? If you have no problems with him before adolescence, you surely will then, when he has to make some decisions for him self. Give your child a chance to develop self-confidence, to make his own choices and to accept the consequences. Give him a little freedom, and you may be surprised by how well he manages.

Mother Hen
You tend to overprotect and spoil your child. You dote on her and try to arrange things so she'll avoid all unpleasant experiences. You do it, no doubt, from the best of motives; you love her very much! You want to save her pain, but you're not necessarily helping her by doing so. You won't always be there as watchguard. Give her a chance to assume responsibility and develop the skills she needs to succeed in life. Have confidence in her and she will make you proud.

Coach Mom
You are the type of mother who encourages your child's autonomy while at the same time exerting a certain discipline. You offer guidance while helping your child acquire a sense of responsibility. You set clear limits based on sound values and respect for authority. The key to this approach is to maintain an equilibrium between freedom and constraint. At times, this can be a real challenge, but it is one of the best parenting methods.

Liberal Mom
You believe that children should live without constraints and have sole control over their own decisions. But remember, when they're adults, your children will have to conform to society's rules and will probably find that difficult if they've always done exactly as they please. Children need to learn to observe certain rules and respect certain limits. No doubt, your approach encourages them to develop autonomy, which is laudable, but you should retain some authority and give them the benefit of your experience.

Hands-off Mom
At your house, a kind of law of the jungle reigns. Every situation becomes a subject of dispute between you and them, and you usually give in rather than fight. In a sense, you have bought your own peace and freedom at the price of your authority. Your role as mother must often be very difficult, and there may come a time when it would be wise to seek outside help in turning the situation around. Right now, you've been defeated. ●

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