

Parenting Discovery Form

Take some time to reflect and ask the Holy Spirit to increase your awareness of your parenting by looking at how you were parented and your own style.

Section 1: Exploring Where You Came From

This first section is designed to help you better understand the people who have shaped you most in your role as a parent.

1. Describe some of your most vivid positive memories as a child with your parents. What stands out and why?
2. What admirable qualities did your father have that shaped the person you have become? Give some specific examples of how these qualities made you a better person. What did he do that made these qualities evident? What can you do to emulate them?
3. What admirable qualities did your mother have that shaped the person you have become? Give some specific examples of how these qualities made you a better person. What did she do that made these qualities evident? What can you do to emulate them?
4. What qualities do you think were missing in either one of your parents? How would you be a better person if your parents had exemplified these traits?

Section 2: Sharing Your Self-Reflection

This second section facilitates a bit of inner exploration of your personality and shows you how your personality cannot help but shape you as a parent – for good and for not so good.

1. Because of your natural hard wiring, what one or two positive traits do you instinctively bring to the enterprise of parenting? How do these positive traits shape your child?

2. Take a deep breath, do some honest reflection, and identify one or two traits you currently lack that would significantly improve your effectiveness as a parent. In other words, what missing trait is likely to be your biggest hurdle on the road to becoming the parent you want to be?

Section 3: This third section gets more personal, so do your best to put your guard down and cultivate a receptive heart and listening ear. The goal is to learn a bit more about yourself – like when you look in the mirror.

1. Invite a close friend or family member to share with you one trait that he or she sees in you that makes you a great parent.

2. Invite a close friend or family member to share with you one trait that he or she perceives to be deficient in you – a trait that would make you a more effective parent. This is a time to invite feedback and avoid defensiveness.

“The day the child realizes that all adults are imperfect, he becomes an adolescent; the day he forgives them, he becomes an adult; the day he forgives himself, he becomes wise.” Alden Nowlan

Section 4: Identifying Your Top Two Traits

Finally, I want you to review the list of the “ten traits worth considering.”

First, identify two traits from the list that you believe you are most naturally inclined to embody. In other words, which two traits come easiest to you? While you are at it, identify the two traits that you think comes easiest to your children’s other parent?

Second, identify two traits that you believe would make you a better parent. In other words, which two traits do you currently lack but seek to attain? If you have more than one child, do you wish to exemplify more of a certain trait with each unique child?

Giving the Praise They Crave: **Being an Affirming Parent**

Counting to Ten – again: **Being a Patient Parent**

Hearing What They Don’t Say: **Being an Attentive Parent**

Seeing a Picture of Their Future: **Being a Visionary Parent**

Building a Better Bond: **Being a Connected Parent**

Commemorating Milestones: **Being a Celebratory Parent**

Keeping Your Word: **Being an Authentic Parent**

Creating the Safest Place on Earth: **Being a Comforting Parent**

Instilling Wisdom: **Being an Insightful Parent**

Practicing the Presence of God: **Being a Prayerful Parent**

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