

YOUR STYLE OF DISCIPLINE

Preparation

Read Ephesians 6:4. “*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*”. RSV

Background

The purpose of this worksheet is to help you identify what your discipline style is, what it is based on, and how parent partners may clash and need to resolve their differences. To be really effective, there needs to be a balance between being too strict or too lenient and showing love and involvement.

The charts below show these areas. The lower left hand corner shows no justice (discipline) and no compassion (involvement) and the upper right-hand corner shows extreme amounts of both.

It is very likely that the way you were raised has influenced how you look at discipline and the same goes for your partner. Adjustments and compromises may need to be made.

Example

Before you start, let's apply a scenario about how a mother and father raised their children discipline-wise and how it shaped their view of discipline. This will give you an idea of how to fill in your own chart at the end of the next page.

Scenario

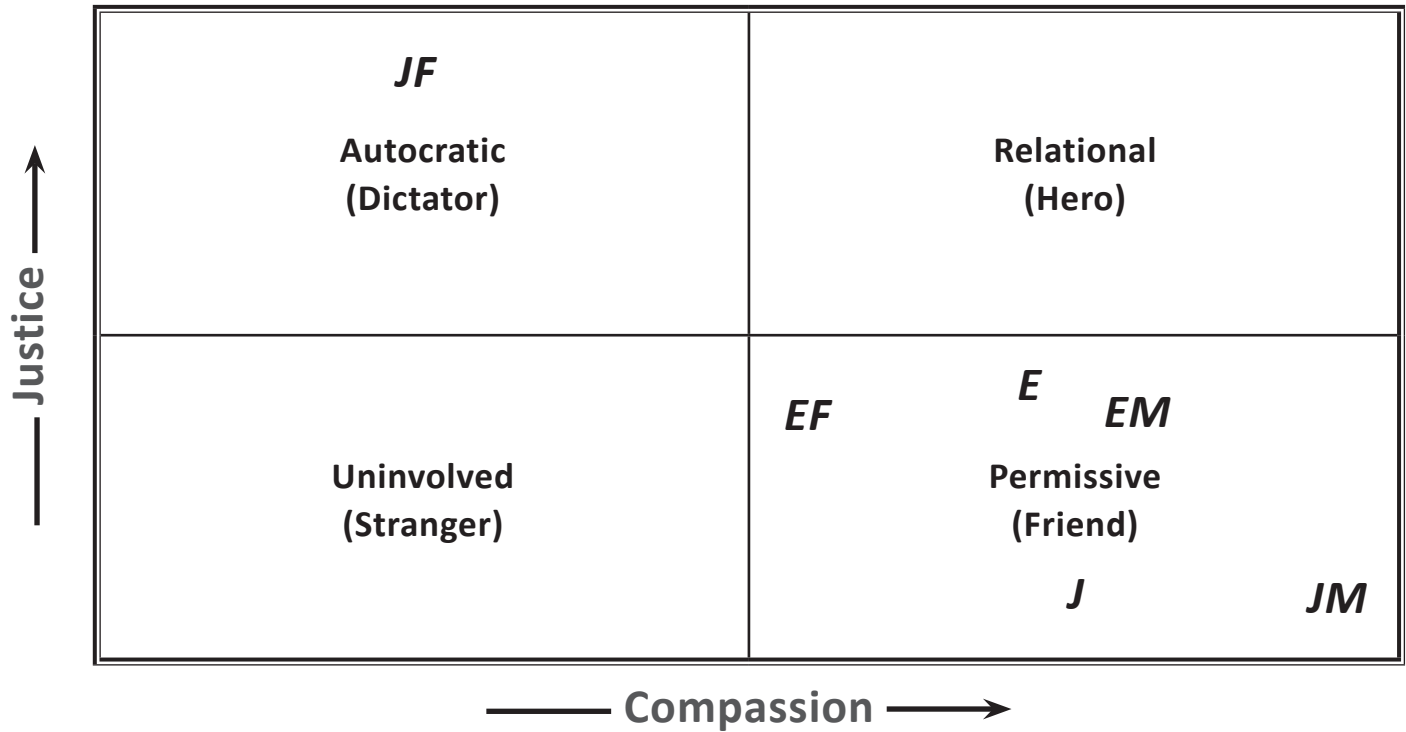
Jill and Ed are raising three children.

Jill comes from an abusive family where the father was uninvolved in her life, did not attend her school events, and was basically an absentee dad. He was extreme in his discipline techniques. In all fairness, though, he did show some compassion at times. We would put him in the top, middle dictator box as shown in the following example chart. We have marked it as JF, standing for “Jill’s father”. Her mother, however, was very loving but very passive. She wanted to have nothing to do with correcting the children and left that up to the dad. We have placed her at the extreme bottom, right corner of the Permissive (Friend) box with JM for “Jill’s mother”. Now that Jill has her own children, she finds herself more like her father in discipline than her mother and just naturally feels that discipline is Ed’s responsibility. She is angry because he is not living up to her expectations. We have placed a J on the chart to show where she feels she is.

Ed’s situation is represented by EF (Ed’s father), EM (Ed’s mother), and E (Ed’s current discipline style).

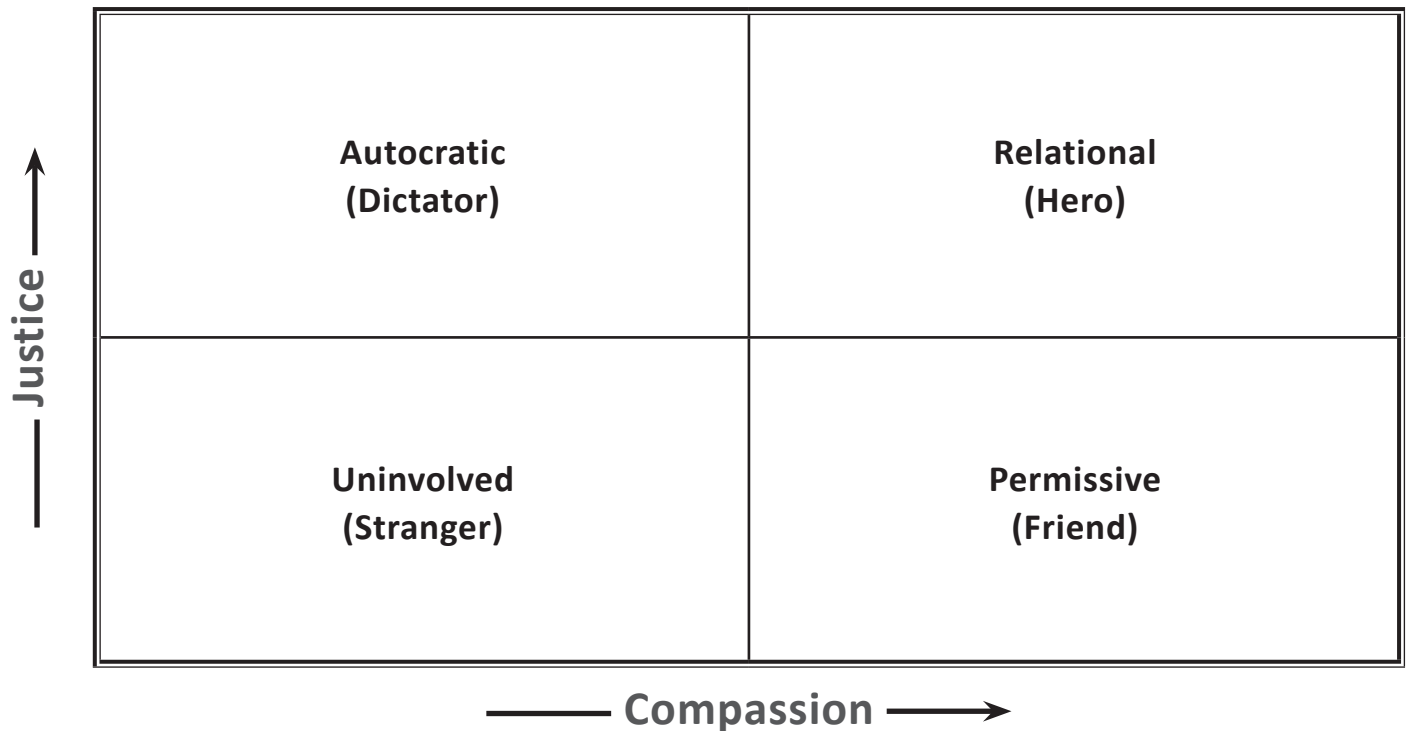
Question: What does the chart show about Jill and Ed’s disciplining styles, their possible disciplining issues, and what they should do about them?

Example Chart



Now fill in the chart below based on how you were raised and where you think you are now. Use M for my mother, F for my father, and ME for yourself.

My Chart



Question: What does the chart reveal about you and your partner's discipline styles and how you may have to make adjustments?