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When Parents Disagree

By Patty Hone

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by: **Patty Hone**

Moms and dads, are there times you think that parenting would be easier if you didn't have to make family decisions? Having a partner that is not in agreement with your parenting ideas or discipline approaches is more than just frustrating. It can be a cause of division in even the best of relationships. Furthermore, how you handle your disagreements will have a direct impact on your relationship with your partner and with your children.

It would be great if every couple agreed on everything but that is an unlikely event. One partner may have been raised in a relaxed environment; another may have been raised in a very strict home. What is acceptable by one partner may be appalling to another. It is important to discuss with your partner what your parenting objectives are. Decide what values are important to both of you. You will find that some things are more important to you than to your partner and vice versa. Here are some steps you can do to work towards resolving parenting disagreements.

1. Discuss your parenting objectives. What is important to both of you? Sit down with your partner and decide what values are most important. Also what areas are not as important?
2. Talk about where your children are developmentally and what they are capable of understanding. Sometimes the reasons for parenting disputes are because one partner thinks that a child is capable of understanding something and the other disagrees. Knowing what your child's cognitive level is will help you to make better decisions. Do not compare your child to other children. You can use examples based on what they are capable of doing and not doing. For instance, if you ask them to get something out of their toy box, do they understand and go get it? If not expecting your child to be able to understand certain things may be unreasonable.
3. Find out what both of your parenting strengths and weaknesses are. Many times both parents want the same things for their kids. Compliment your partner on his/her strengths. Don't just point out your partner's flaws.
4. The majority of parenting disagreements are over discipline methods and when it is appropriate to

discipline. One parent may think that spanking is the best method and the other may prefer time outs or something else. One of the most effective ways to resolve this issue is to talk about it. Find out the reasons why your partner feels the way he/she does. There are pros and cons to every form of parenting. Talk about why your partner thinks his/her discipline style is the better method. Sometimes talking about it will help you to see each other's point of view.

5. If the discussion gets heated, agree to disagree. Fighting about how to parent is only going to make the situation worse. Walk away, take a break and discuss it when you are not angry.

6. Plan ahead. Discuss problem situations you are having with your children. For instance, if you are having a problem with your child having temper tantrums, discuss how you think this should be handled. If you have a plan in action, it will be easier for both of you to follow each other's wishes.

7. Pick your battles. Some things you may never agree on. You don't have to agree on everything. Find the issues that are most important to you and work on resolving those first.

8. Do not argue about parenting in front of your children. This is easier said than done. The best way to handle a situation you don't agree with is not to interrupt but to wait till later and then discuss how you think it could have been handled differently.

9. Work on role modeling communication. If your children see that you communicate and problem solve together, they will grow up to do the same. Children often repeat patterns of their own parents. Look at your relationship and evaluate how you communicate. Is this the way you would like your children to communicate with their future partner?

10. Parenting and relationships are a growing process. The more you communicate the better parent/partner you will be. Learn from each other and listen to each other. Build on your parenting strengths and tackle your parenting weaknesses a little at a time. It won't happen over night but if you continue to discuss things with your partner calmly and positively you will become better parenting partners.

Patty Hone is a wife and mommy to three kids. She is also the owner of Justmommies.com. Justmommies is an online community for mommies to make friends and find support. Please visit Justmommies at <http://www.justmommies.com>.
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The Entrepreneurial Potential Quiz

By William Piker

The 25 questions in this quiz are designed to measure competitiveness, self-reliance, patience, emotional stability, flexibility, objectivity, and other important entrepreneurial traits. When you've finished, you can total your score to see how you might fare as a business owner. Give yourself 4 points for each A answer, 3 points for each B answer, 2 points for each C answer, and 1 point for each D answer.

1. I would readily give up the security of working for someone else for the autonomy of running my own business, even if it meant more work and less pay.

- A. strongly agree
- B. moderately agree
- C. moderately disagree
- D. strongly disagree

2. I'm more determined than most people and can do just about anything I set my mind to.

- A. strongly agree
- B. moderately agree
- C. moderately disagree
- D. strongly disagree

3. I have a sharp, analytical mind.

- A. strongly agree
- B. moderately agree
- C. moderately disagree
- D. strongly disagree

4. I've worked long hours for extended periods of time in my previous jobs, and I'd still be willing and able to do so if necessary.

- A. strongly agree
- B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

5. I've always been driven to be the best in everything I do.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

6. I can deal with chronic problems and obstacles without getting frustrated or losing my temper.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

7. I welcome a challenge and hate to feel like I'm wasting my time on routine tasks.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

8. I value competence over personality, and would rather work with a difficult person who's competent than a person who's very congenial but less competent.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

9. I'm more likely to organize a group of people and take charge than to follow the lead of others.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

10. I'm more comfortable making decisions and giving orders than having decisions made for me and taking orders.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

11. I'm efficient and able to stick to a strict timetable in order to complete tasks in a timely way.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

12. I'd value my employees' well-being, but not at the expense of my business.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

13. Given reasonable odds, my efforts usually influence the outcome of an endeavor.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

14. My energy level is higher than that of most people.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

15. I'm able to remain calm and perform well in a crisis.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

16. I can be patient and acknowledge when a situation is beyond my control.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

17. I love the challenge of analyzing, attacking, and completing a complex task.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

18. I've often led and directed projects and groups.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

19. I can easily change course once I've started a project.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

20. I'm capable of firing an unproductive employee, although I would not be happy at the prospect of doing it.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

21. I like to experiment and try new things—from meeting new people to trying new activities.

A. strongly agree

B. moderately agree

C. moderately disagree

D. strongly disagree

22. I've had years of experience, either in business or as a hobby, in the field in which I plan to start a business.

A. more than 3

B. 1 to 3

C. between 6 months and 1

D. 0

23. I've had the following business experience:

A. owned and managed my own business

B. management-level experience (supervised others)

C. employee-level experience (no supervisees)

D. none

24. I've been ill to the extent that it curtailed my activities over the past three years.

- A. 0 to 5
- B. 6 to 10
- C. 11 to 15
- D. 16 or more

25. I function most effectively if I get at least hours of sleep a night.

- A. 5 or less
- B. 6
- C. 7
- D. 8

INTERPRETING YOUR SCORE

92-100 The Fortune 500 Awaits!

You possess most, if not all, of the key personality and behavioral traits of the successful entrepreneur. Get to work!

84-91 Go For It!

You're no Micheal Dell , but you still possess an encouraging number of entrepreneurial characteristics. If your score on the last five questions was 23 or above, your behavioral attitudes

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