

Equipoise

*Dr. Prachi Bagla**

Parenting style varies from culture to culture but for a feeling of love, affection, and a desire to have best for their children. Judging which style is better than others would be a mistake and making sweeping statements in this respect would be unfair. Besides which family structure, nuclear or extended family (or joint family as it is called in India) is ideal for raising and taking care of children is also not conclusive.

In modern times parenting, though highly satisfying, has become a challenge due to cut throat competition, professional stress, information overload and a variety of pressures due to unrealistic goals, debt, and early onset of health issues (especially in those nuclear families where both parents are busy in their career). In such a scenario parenting is not easy.

Those who are able to balance their professional and family responsibilities, maintain warm and loving interaction within families, set rules and norms of compliance, listen and empathize with each other, solve problems amicably, spend quality time together will prove to be good parents also.

Parenting has undergone massive transformation all over the world including in India. But basics of parenting, like keeping eye over children, need to guide them, acknowledging and understanding their feelings, and remaining available to help whenever they have problems are intact. As earlier there is still a need to keep the bonding with the children strong and creating an open and relaxed environment at home. Children on their part are expected to have faith, trust and respect for their parents.

However, there is a word of caution here! Being a parent doesn't mean 'owning' your children. There is absolutely no need to indulge too much and interfere in each and every matter. Parents who believe in providing their children enough space, keeping aside their ego by giving an opportunity to take the lead and have no desire to control lives of children will be doing a good job as parents. So children should be allowed to be what they are meant to be and parents have to be just a true support and guide them.

After a certain age there is, in fact, as much to learn from children as there is to teach.

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Expert speaks

Parenting is bidirectional. It's a process where parents and children both impact one another. Parents bring certain morals, values and qualities to the parenting relationship that can affect their decisions as parents. Parents' temperaments and personalities also affect parenting behaviours. Not only parents, but children also tend to go through different stages in life, leading the parents to create their own parenting styles keeping a lot of characteristics and factors in consideration.

Sometimes parents don't fit into just one category, so don't get disheartened if you feel at times, you tend to be permissive or neglectful and other times when you are more authoritative or authoritarian. As parents, don't ever engage in guilt or self-blame when you cannot remain consistent. That's not helpful for anyone. Always try to be on the same page when it comes to parenting. Together as a couple viz a viz parents, always have one parenting style when balancing life and dealing with your child. That way, you can build a positive bond with your child while healthily establishing your authority. And over time, it will ensure your child has healthy growth and development. □□□

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