



## Meta-Emotion Exercise

Let's start our learning journey by first understanding our beginnings. With greater knowledge of our origins, we can pinpoint what will be helpful to change.

**Instructions:** Fill out the questionnaire by thinking about your own childhood. Refer to these definitions of parenting styles for dealing with emotions.

### **Emotion Dismissing**

My family member was uncomfortable displaying or talking about the emotion, tried to either not show, minimize, or to quickly dispel these emotions in themselves and others.

### **Emotion Disapproving**

My family member was harsh, disapproving, and negative about the expression or talking about these emotions in themselves and others.

### **Emotion Coaching**

My family member was comfortable with the expression of these emotions, and also talking about, exploring, and understanding emotions in themselves and others.

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## Sadness

Sadness includes feeling disappointed, hurt, or having the experience of failure, grief, rejection or loss. Think about whether or not there was comfort and emotional presence during sad moments.

Think about how you or your parents handled feelings of sadness when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

I felt comfortable talking to my parents about feeling sad as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

I was pleased by how my parents responded to me when I was sad as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

I felt comfortable when my parents showed me that they felt sad.

5      4      3      2      1

My parents were good at comforting me when I was sad as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Sadness, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Sadness, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Sadness, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent or parent figure could you talk to most easily about sadness?

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## Anger

Anger includes experiencing irritability, frustration, rage, having one's goals blocked, and feeling criticized by others, or how you may have felt when others were unfair or demanded perfection from you.

Think about how you or your parents handled feelings of anger when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

I felt comfortable talking to my parents about feeling angry.

5      4      3      2      1

I was pleased by how my parents responded to me when I was angry as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

I felt comfortable when my parents showed me that they felt angry.

5      4      3      2      1

My parents were good at understanding and comforting me when I felt angry as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Anger, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Anger, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Anger, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent or parent figure could you talk to most easily about Anger?

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## Fear

Fear includes feeling nervous, unsafe, apprehensive, stressed, or scared as opposed to feeling calm and relaxed.

Think about how you or your parents handled feelings of fear when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

I felt comfortable talking to my parents about feeling scared or anxious.

5      4      3      2      1

I was pleased by how my parents responded to me when I was feeling scared as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

I often saw my parents express their own anxiety, worry or fear and it was okay.

5      4      3      2      1

I was generally comforted by my parents whenever I was worried, afraid or anxious.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Fear, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Fear, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Fear, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent or parent figure could you talk to most easily about Fear?

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## Affection

Affection includes verbal affection, warmth, displays of love, hugs, kisses and non-sexual touch, delight upon reunion when you've been apart, kind words and compliments as opposed to expressing coldness.

Think about how you or your parents handled feelings of affection when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

My parents were very affectionate towards me when I was a child.

5      4      3      2      1

It was easy for me to seek and receive affection from my parents when I was as child.

5      4      3      2      1

I often saw my parents express affection towards each other when I was a child.

5      4      3      2      1

I am very comfortable being affectionate towards my partner and children now.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Affection, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Affection, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Affection, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent or parent figure gave you the most Affection?

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## Pride

Pride includes feeling proud of something you accomplished. It is expressed by words, a smile or non-verbal ways that convey respect and admiration. Pride also refers to having someone make you feel good about yourself rather than expressing contempt or shame.

Think about how you or your parents handled feelings of pride when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

My parents often showed me that they were proud of me.

5      4      3      2      1

I was pleased by how my parents responded to me when I was feeling proud of myself.

5      4      3      2      1

I could always talk to my parents about my successes as a child.

5      4      3      2      1

I often saw my parents express pride in one another's accomplishments.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Pride, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Pride, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about how I was parented for Pride, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent or parent figure showed you / gave you the most Pride?

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## Negative Emotions

Negative Emotions include feelings of upset, distress, anxiety, panic, loneliness, fear, grief, and pain.

Think about how you or your parents handled negative emotion when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

While growing up, my family was very emotionally expressive.

5      4      3      2      1

As a child, it was fine for me to show my strong negative emotions, like my anger/ unhappiness.

5      4      3      2      1

My parents thought it was important to express our emotions or feelings.

5      4      3      2      1

I often saw my parents talking to one another about their feelings.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about Negative Emotions, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about Negative Emotions, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about Negative Emotions, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent figure allowed you to express the most negative emotion?

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## Positive Emotions

Positive Emotions include interest, excitement, adventure, discovery, curiosity, feeling carefree, delight, joy, etc. For example, when you were really interested in something, could you talk about it with your parents?

Think about how you or your parents handled positive emotion when you were a child:

5= strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree

I felt comfortable talking to my parents when I was feeling these positive emotions (for example, when I wanted adventure or play).

5      4      3      2      1

As a child, it was fine for me to show my strong positive emotions, to be exuberant or show passion for something.

5      4      3      2      1

My parents thought it was important to express feeling strongly or excited about something.

5      4      3      2      1

I often saw my parents expressing strong positive emotions like excitement, silliness, playfulness, joy.

5      4      3      2      1

Overall, when I think about Positive Emotions, I think my mom was:

\_\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about Positive Emotions, I think my dad was:

\_\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, when I think about Positive Emotions, I think my caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Which parent figure allowed you to express the most positive emotion?

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## Total Score

Review and total your check marks.

Overall, your mom was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, your dad was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

Overall, your other caregiver was:

\_\_\_\_ Dismissing      \_\_\_\_ Disapproving      \_\_\_\_ Emotion Coaching

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