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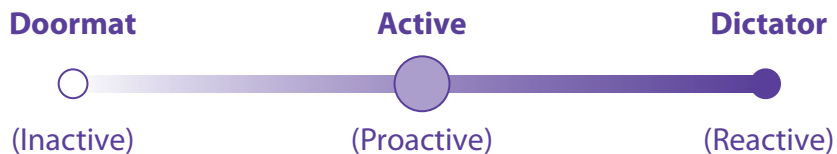
The Parenting Style Continuum

In this book we present the Active style of parenting as the most effective of the three styles, as well as the most compatible with our modern democratic society and Christian faith. That does not mean Dictator- and Doormat-style parents are entirely wrong in their approaches. In fact, both of these styles have their strengths.

Comparing the Styles of Parenting

	Dictator ○	Doormat ≡	Active ⊗
Weaknesses	Reactive Out of sync with life in a democracy Invites rebellion or crushes spirit Low in support	Inactive/Reactive Out of sync with life in a democracy Fails to teach or spoils Low in discipline	
Strengths	Setting Limits Firmness (discipline) Parent is confident	Providing choices Nurturing (support) Parent is caring	Pro-active Combines discipline and support Firm and nurturing Confident and caring Invites cooperation

Imagine the three parenting styles on a continuum:



can dig deep within to find that reservoir, and from that source we can nourish our families with love. Scripture captures it best:



**“Love is patient, love is kind.
It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.
It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking,
It is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.
Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.
It always protects, always trusts, always hopes,
always perseveres. Love never fails.”**

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a (NIV)

Remember, we communicate through three channels: words, tone of voice, and body language. It is important that we use all three of them when we say “I love you.” When we build the foundation of our family on the limitless love of God, we will be able to stand firm as we face life’s storms, winds, and rising waters.

Family Meeting: Bedtime Routines

Take a few minutes this week to discuss your family’s bedtime routine with your children. Let them help determine how it will go, keeping in mind our guiding principle of “freedom within limits.” You, as the parent, still have the responsibility to determine matters of health and safety, so leaving out teeth brushing, for example, is not an option. However, whether to brush her teeth before or after her bath, whether she should brush her upper or lower teeth first, or what flavor toothpaste to use are choices your child can help to make. Put “the method of choice” we learned in Chapter 1 to good use!

Be sure to cover some of the following questions during your meeting:

- What time is lights-out for each child? Will you allow a period of quiet reading after lights out?