



## **FOUR WAYS OF PARENTING**

For any situation that requires parenting - advising and supporting - there are four possible ways of responding. Nurturing and structuring and protecting ways encourage positive self-esteem. Marshmallowing and criticizing are ways tear down self-esteem. Below are situations. Each situation has a response given by a nurturing, a structuring and protecting, a Marshmallowing and a criticizing parent.

Read each of the four responses to each situation. Allow yourself to hear the positive and the negative implications of each. Rewrite each answer to fit your own value system where needed.

### **Parent Messages**

Nurturing - This message is gentle, supportive, caring. It invites the person to get his or her needs met. It offers to help. It gives permission to succeed and affirm.

Marshmallowing - This message sounds supportive, but it invites dependence, suggests the person will fail and negates.

Structuring and Protecting - This message sets limits, protects, asserts demands, advocates ethics and traditions. It tells ways to succeed and affirm.

Criticizing - This message ridicules, tears down, tells ways to fail and negates.

**Situation** Adult says, "I'm going to read a book called Self-Esteem: A Family Affair, and I don't really know if I'll find it helpful.

Nurturing - I hope it will be helpful, interesting and fun.

Marshmallowing - Do you have to? I'm sure you know all that stuff already. Books can't teach you anything

Structuring and Protecting - I trust you to think things through and to decide what will be helpful for you.

Criticizing - You should have to read a book. You should just automatically know how to run a family.