

KNOWING YOUR TEEN

I. Something has changed!

II. Discovering Your Teen's Unique Personality

A. Proverbs 22:6: Train up a child in the way he should go

_____.

B. My teen's "bent" is a _____.

C. The strengths of his/her temperament are

D. The weakness of his/her temperament are

III. Summary Thoughts

A. Since temperament is genetic, _____

_____.

B. Since each child is uniquely created, _____

_____.

C. Since adolescence pushes life out of balance, _____

_____.

D. Since my child has entered adolescence, _____

_____.

IV. The Bottom Line

A. _____ your parenting to fit your teens' temperament.

B. _____ their "bent," even when it's driving you crazy.

Homework – Read *Praiseworthy Qualities For Your Teen*.
– Use several one-liners to affirm your teen's strengths

Praiseworthy Qualities of the “Lion” in Your Life

ASSERTIVE

You are able to take action in situations when other people are hesitant or are looking for a way out. As an assertive person, you can meet a challenge head on without having to be told again and again to do something. In fact, you're the kind of person who can find pleasure in tackling difficult assignments – you see them as challenges that will stretch your abilities.

Assertiveness, balanced with being sensitive to other people's feelings, is a great strength, especially as you use it to meet the needs of other people.

Related weaknesses; insensitivity, lacks empathy.

DETERMINED

Determination is a great strength that achievers share. It means you can make up your mind to do something, and you won't stop until you get it done! Sure, there will be plenty of obstacles, but your determination will somehow find a way over, around, or through them.

One building block of determination is maintaining an open mind to better ideas and better ways to do what you're doing. So, unlike the stubborn person who says, "I'm sticking to my original plan no matter what!" you are open to plans and ideas that help you get the job done.

Your determination can be an inspiration to others. It shows that God can sharpen a person's mind to see ways around the roadblocks!

Related weaknesses: overbearing, domineering, headstrong.

DILIGENT

You give serious and energetic effort to what you set out to do. Some people begin a project with good intentions but lack the ability to follow through and complete it. You are able to keep working on a project until it's done.

That's why you can be relied on to get a job done to the best of your ability. This strength will allow you to be successful in whatever you set out to do because you won't stop until you reach your objective.

Related weaknesses; one-track mind, overindulgent self-interest, never slows down.

COURAGEOUS

You are able to hold to the course of action you believe you should take. You might become afraid in the face of danger, but you'll continue to do what you believe is the right thing to do because it's what you want to do.

Other people might start out, but they will fall by the wayside in the face of danger or difficulty. Not you. You have the strength of your convictions and the willingness to stand alone if necessary. As you keep your God-given courage balanced with sound thinking, you'll continue to be an inspiration for those people around you.

Related weaknesses; recklessness

DECISIVE

Unlike others who seem to waver back and forth because of doubt, you are able to make decisions. You have the ability to size up all the facts and make your choice based on what you believe is the best option available.

Being decisive doesn't mean you always make decisions quickly, nor does it mean that your decisions are easy. But when you make your decisions, you move forward with it, and you don't feel a need for looking back and wondering. If the decision turns out to be wrong, you are able to accept it as a mistake and learn from it.

In the future, this trait can give the people you live and work with a great feeling of security and confidence in you. Just keep in mind that others may want to be included in making decisions, especially the ones that affect them.

Related weaknesses; stubborn, overly independent.

Praiseworthy Qualities of the “Lion” in Your Life (con’t)

GOAL-ORIENTED, PURPOSEFUL

Being purposeful is a strength of every achiever. It means you have the ability to give direction to your actions. You don’t beat the air with aimless energy; you direct your actions toward accomplishments.

You have the strength of knowing what results you want to get, developing a course of action to reach those goals, and then reaching them. Other people may talk about things they want to do, but you allow your actions to speak for you. You get results!

You act on purpose, directing your energy and actions toward what you want to accomplish. Because you are goal-oriented person, you can be relied on to use all of your resources to do what you commit yourself to do.

Related weaknesses; inflexible, push too hard.

PERSEVERING

You have the ability to withstand hardships and overcome obstacles. We all have a breaking point when the going gets too rough. However, the breaking point for some people is shortly after they start. Not so for you.

You seem to be able to keep going even when you get tired and even though you might feel like quitting at times. Somehow you have the capacity to reach within yourself, or possibly through your dependence on God, to find strength to keep going.

Related weaknesses; overly competitive, never slows down.

DIRECT, STRAIGHTFORWARD

Being direct and straightforward means that you are honest and up front with people as you relate to them. They never have to wonder what you are thinking – you’ll tell them.

This can be a refreshing strength in a day when some people just say what they think the other person wants to hear, or purposely try to deceive others. People can rely on you meaning what you say. As long as you temper this strength with tact, you’ll find that most people greatly appreciate your being up front with them.

Related weaknesses; tactless, blunt, harsh, disrespectful, mean.

CONFIDENT

You know your abilities, and you have a good sense of what you can and can’t do with them. Being a confident person, you believe you can make a valuable contribution to other people, and you know you can use your strengths to make a difference in your world of interests.

Your confidence enables you to be free to put your best effort into whatever you’re doing without being afraid of how it’s coming across to other people. It also allows you to make mistakes without being crushed afterward. A person like you, who has the freedom to make mistakes, also has the freedom to succeed. Keep in mind that your show of confidence, balanced with a genuine humility, is a real inspiration to other people.

Related weaknesses; self-sufficient, cocky.

RESOURCEFUL

You are able to deal quickly and effectively with problems. Some people run away from anything that looks like a potential difficulty, but not you. It’s not that you want things to be hard; you just see problems in a different way.

The people who run from difficulties feel that problems have little or no redeeming value. As a resourceful person, you see problems in a more positive way – as opportunities to find solutions. Sometimes you use the resources you already have available to find a solution. Or you devise your own ways to handle a problem. The bottom line is that you can be a very good problem-solver, and in the world in which we live, that’s a valuable strength to possess.

Related weaknesses; overly independent, scheming.

Praiseworthy Qualities of the “Otter” in Your Life

PEOPLE-PERSON

There’s no question about it: you are a people-person! You like your friends, and you want them to like you. You really want others to accept you.

Some people are uncomfortable when they are put in the spotlight. Not you. When you are up in front of others, you come alive. You love to entertain, make people laugh, and have fun with others. For you, it’s the more the merrier.

You also have an ability to put people at ease. When there’s a conflict brewing, you work to build bridges between people to help them get along better.

As long as you keep this strength balanced with the ability to stand firm in what you believe when others try to get you to do things you know are not right, you will have the ability to lead others without giving in to them.

Related weaknesses; overly dependent on what others think and say about them, easily give in to peer pressure, make promises that are not kept, over commits.

GOOD COMMUNICATOR

Words come easily for you. You are very gifted at expressing your thoughts, opinions, and ideas. You have the capacity to express yourself through words in a clear manner, so other people can easily understand your thoughts and ideas.

Positive communication is one of the many building blocks for positive relationships. It’s also a powerful asset for anyone interested in influencing the lives of other people. Your communication skills will help you to pass on to others the ideas you think are worthwhile and, in so doing, you can help shape the way other people think.

Related weaknesses; talks too much, interrupts when others are talking, smooth talker, poor listener.

ENCOURAGER

You are good at coming alongside people and lifting their spirits with your sincere words and helpful actions. We all lose perspective every now and then, and we tend to feel a little down. That’s when we need someone like you. You have the ability to forget yourself and your problems and help others see that things really can work out.

Encouragement takes many different forms. Sometimes you use words to build up another person; on other occasions you take some action to help a person in a time of need. Or you might take the time to be with someone, just understanding and being there. However you do it, your encouragement is a breath of fresh air to many people.

Related weaknesses; insincere compliments.

EXPRESSIVE, DRAMATIC

You have a gift for talking so that other people clearly understand what you’re saying. Some people just use plain old nouns and verbs to get across a point. You use an artist’s canvas. When you talk, people listen with their imagination.

Many times you gesture with your hands to make your point. Your face shines with intense emotion, and the tone of your voice goes up and down. All this helps to get your message across by drawing people into what you’re saying.

That’s a tremendous strength to have in communicating the emotions of what you say along with the truth. People can understand descriptive mental pictures far better than simple words. Your expressiveness helps other people see life so much more fully.

Related weaknesses; exaggerates.

HUMOROUS

You look on the lighter side of situations and find humor in them. A person like you, with a good sense of humor, is fun to be around—not necessarily because everyone wants a good laugh, but because someone with a sense of humor usually has a more positive attitude.

Humor helps other people relax and can be used to relieve tense moments. People like you help the rest of us loosen up a little and learn that God knew what He was doing when He gave us the gift of laughter.

Related weaknesses: wisecracker, clowning around, does not take things seriously (uses humor to ignore problems).

Praiseworthy Qualities of the "Otter" in Your Life (con't)

IMAGINATIVE

You are gifted with an active and creative imagination. You can form an image of something in your mind and see it clearly when there's nothing tangible to see. Imaginative people like you have created great works of art, literature, and drama; they have invented the machines and have come up with the new ideas and projects that have improved our lives.

Related weakness; daydreamer, loses touch with reality.

ENTHUSIASTIC

You put your total enthusiastic interest and effort in the pursuit of what you want. You pour your full self into your activities. Some people simply go through the motions of life, but not you. You live life with a passion. Life for you is seldom routine; it's an opportunity for you to express to others what you believe is important.

You enjoy a faster pace, and you like the freedom to choose what you want to do next. This feeds your enthusiasm and keeps a smile on your face.

With this strength, you can make a great impact for good on the lives of many people, helping them look and feel more positively about what they are doing.

Related weaknesses; disorganization, lack of objectivity.

PERSUASIVE

This means you have the ability to come up with words that cause others to agree with your ideas or your course of action. Others, as a result of your words, will either form a new attitude or take action that they would not have taken if it weren't for you.

Great leaders are persuasive people, for they have to get other people of various backgrounds and attitudes toward life to walk together toward specific objectives. You have an important ingredient for leadership, and you will find great demand for your skill as long as you use it in a positive way.

Related weaknesses; manipulative, overbearing.

OPTIMISTIC, POSITIVE

You seem to look for the best in people and situations. That's what I call optimism. An optimistic person looks for, and actually expects, the best possible outcome in most situations.

Many people have eyes only for the negatives, and they focus too much on the possible problems they'll face in different situations. You have a hopeful, expectant attitude, even when things do not look promising. In spite of the circumstances, you do not easily get discouraged. When optimism is linked with a careful study of the facts, it can inspire other people to start working the best, instead of settling for mediocrity.

Sure, you have some negative thoughts once in awhile, just like anyone else. Not every tough situation will seem to have good in it. But overall, you are an upbeat person who is willing to work at seeing difficulties in a positive way. Your positive approach is the foundation upon which new plans can be made. It also helps raise the spirits of other people.

Related weaknesses: idealistic, unrealistic, lack of objectivity, overly emotional even when presented with the facts; ignores facts in order to emphasize feelings.

SPONTANEOUS, FLEXIBLE

You enjoy activity, and you're able to jump into something at a moment's notice. Some people like to plan out an activity beforehand; planning is good, but there are times when it's better to do things on the spur of the moment. You have a knack for doing this.

You can pick up and go right away, and you enjoy the adventure of trying something new and different. Usually you are not disturbed if things don't go your way; you just adjust, "go with the flow," and make the best of it. You don't want to get bogged down in a bunch of details. You like to act on your gut reactions and explore your hunches. This makes you an enjoyable person to be with.

Related weaknesses; impulsive, lack of urgency, disorganized.

Praiseworthy Qualities of the “Retriever” in Your Life

ACCEPTING

You help other people feel good about themselves. They know they can relax and be authentic around you – they don't need to pretend to be somebody they are not when they're with you.

By allowing people to be themselves, you give them the freedom to make mistakes. When people have the freedom to fail, they also feel free to take risks – which gives them the opportunity to achieve great things.

So, by accepting people, you are building within them the foundation upon which they will find success and fulfillment.

Related weaknesses: lacking conviction, being too lenient.

CONTENT

Most people desire to be satisfied in what they do, but not everyone attains it. Some people set such high standards for themselves that they never feel much sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in what they accomplish.

Being content or easygoing means that you have the capacity, even when problems arise, to be more positive than some people might be, and you actually see some benefits in the problems. This gives other people a more relaxed feeling around you. You have the kind of outlook that enables you to smell the roses of life each day.

Related weaknesses: lazy, unmotivated, lacking initiative.

HELPFUL

It's easy in our world to be so caught up in what we're doing that we don't notice when other people might need a helping hand. But you notice, and you're willing to help even if it means going out of your way to do it. You're willing to help, not for any personal reward, but simply because you know a person needs help. You want to do what's best for that person, even if he shows little gratitude.

Most people say that the person who impresses them most is the person who is eager to lend a helping hand.

The people in your life know you care about them, and you will work at helping discover ways to resolve their problems. Your concern is no doubt a great encouragement for the people in your life. We need more helpful people like you in this world.

Related weaknesses; overly accommodating, rescuer.

COOPERATIVE

Being cooperative means you have the ability to work with other people in an agreeable way. You are neither threatened by the input of others, nor are you domineering in expressing your ideas, even though you have good ideas to contribute. You believe other people also have good ideas, and you are willing to make personal sacrifices to get best results when you know how they want something done.

You're a team player, and you know that two people can usually accomplish more working together than separately. Your ability to cooperate, as long as you keep contributing your own ideas, will be a plus in helping to get the best results in your projects.

Related weaknesses: wishy-washy, overly accommodating, lacks assertiveness, gives in too easily.

SOFT-HEARTED, COMPASSIONATE

You hurt when other people hurt, and you are happy when others are happy. You live your own life, but you are able to experience what others are experiencing and feel what they are going through. Other people feel comfortable when they're with you because we all like to be with people who work at understanding us.

You won't simply feel sorry for someone – you'll go out of your way to help a person feel better. You can be a great comfort to people who are going through times of tragedy and sorrow, sometimes by just being there for them.

Related weaknesses; pushover, easily influenced, overly burdened by the problems of others – assuming ownership of those problems.

Praiseworthy Qualities of the "Retriever" in Your Life (con't)

SUBMISSIVE, OBEDIENT

Both followers and leaders must have this strength. Being obedient means that you are committed to live according to the boundaries set by your authorities (i.e., your parents, teachers, bosses).

You may not agree with everything your authorities decide, but you do give your best effort in helping to carry out the tasks and responsibilities you are given. In a society that often glorifies individuality, regardless of how it affects other people, you set an example of how things work more smoothly in a proper authority structure.

Related weaknesses: pushover, weak-willed, willing to compromise personal sense of responsibility.

GOOD LISTENER

You tend to listen more than talk. You pay careful attention to what other people say, and you think before you speak so that what you say complements what the other person has just said.

What a great strength to have in developing relationships with other people! Some people are so interested in talking that they don't pay attention to what the other person is saying. They just wait for their chance to talk back. As you keep your strength of listening balanced with responding to what the other person said, you help people feel appreciated.

Related weakness: non-communicative

STEADY

You feel most comfortable with routines and familiar ways of doing things. You feel uneasy when things change too quickly; you prefer things to stay the same.

In a world that seems to change every day, it's not always possible to keep things the same. Balancing your steady temperament with some flexibility in the right situations will help you process change more effectively. Because you are a stable person, you can be an anchor when the waters of our lives get stormy.

Related weaknesses: resists change or new ideas, inflexible, stubborn.

MODEST

Being modest means you don't push yourself into the limelight for things you have either said or done. In other words, you don't go out of your way to call attention to yourself.

You feel more at home talking about the accomplishments of other people than about your own. You want to be appreciated, but not in public way. Modest people like you are very refreshing in a look-at-me world.

Related weaknesses: resists compliments, shrugs off praise, discounts own abilities.

RELIABLE

You can be depended on to do what you say you'll do when you say you'll do it. You give your best effort, even when it's inconvenient for you to do so. People depend on you; they know you do your duties in a responsible manner and you follow through on what you say you'll do.

If some unforeseen circumstance makes it impossible for you to keep your commitment, you'll try to notify the proper people ahead of time. You'll give the same great quality effort each time, even if what you do is routine and you have to do the same thing over and over again.

You are able to give unswerving allegiance to either a person or a cause, even at great personal sacrifice. In sports, you would be called a "die hard" fan. In terms of civics, you would be called a patriot. Your strength of devotion is an inspiration to those with whom you work. Your word is as good as action. That's one of the reasons people have confidence in you. You can be trusted!

Related weaknesses: overly accommodating; is easily taken advantage of.

Praiseworthy Qualities of the "Beaver" in Your Life

ANALYTICAL

What a great strength it is to be able to see a person or situation and easily see both strengths and weaknesses. You can quickly perceive things in people and situations that others have a more difficult time noticing.

When properly balanced with the discernment of knowing when to point out a weakness to someone and when to keep silent, your strength of being analytical can be used to make good things even better. Every planning committee needs at least one analytical person who can quickly size up the positives and negatives in a situation. We also need analytical people like you who can look within us and help us see what strengths we have.

Related weaknesses: overly critical, cynical, overly analytical.

CURIOUS

You have a questioning mind. You are not satisfied with seeing that something works; you want to know how and why it works.

You have the kind of questioning mind that blazes news trails, looking for different answers, rather than settling for what has been. Thanks to curious people like you, we have made great advances in science, medicine, and technology. Curiosity, balanced with sensitivity to the needs of others is a great strength when you use it to find new ways to benefit other people.

Related weaknesses: nosy, asks too many questions, "interrogates" others.

CAUTIOUS

You like to do things in *your* time and in *your* way, rather than jump into something new and different. You think things through, evaluating possible choices and probable consequences before taking action. Being careful prevents you from making many rash and unwise decisions.

This strength keeps you from being pressured by others to do something you don't want to do before you are ready to do it. This can save you a lot of heartache in the future.

Related weaknesses: unsociable, lack of boldness, skeptical, distrustful.

CONSCIENTIOUS

You work hard and strive for excellence in all you do. You give focused attention to key details and enjoy performing tasks precisely and accurately. You make sure things are done right, and you are willing to stay on a job until all the loose ends are tied together.

Because of this strength, you are a valuable asset to any planning team. You insist that plans are completed before action is taken. Some people might get a little impatient with you because they want to get things going, but they will eventually see the wisdom in your approach.

Related weaknesses: worries too much, perfectionistic.

OBJECTIVE

You have the ability to look at all perspectives on a problem or decision. You are able to discern the facts and sort out feelings and opinions. You are even able to understand the feelings, views, and backgrounds of those who disagree with you.

This strength allows you to carefully weigh all relevant aspects of a problem without distorting them. This is an invaluable asset in any group.

Related weaknesses: insensitive, unfeeling, lack of emotional response.

Praiseworthy Qualities of the "Beaver" in Your Life (con't)

DISCERNING

You have a good understanding of both people and situations. In a world that places so much emphasis on surface appearances and quick impressions, we need more people like you who won't be taken in just because something looks good or someone sounds reasonable.

You have the ability to grasp the reality that lies beneath the surface. In many situations, your intuition enables you not only to understand the truth, but also to know the right thing to do. The cutting edge of discernment reaches its greatest potential when it is sharpened by principles from the Bible. As you can see, with this strength you are able to contribute greatly in working with people. So continue to think deeply about things to get a better grasp of what action you should take with the people you meet and the situations you face.

This strength can be used to help people who aren't getting along to come to a better understanding of each other. You're a valuable person to have in group situations!

Related weaknesses: can be hard to follow this person's logic or pathway to conclusions.

SERIOUS MINDED, PREPARED

You take your responsibilities and your work seriously, and you desire to give your very best effort to what you choose to do. Because excellent results seldom happen by accident, you know that a best effort also requires good preparation. You have the ability to think ahead and plan what a task requires in terms of time, talent, and effort. This enables people to have confidence in what you do because they know you have put a great deal of thought into your actions.

Related weaknesses: perfectionist, takes too much time to complete assignments.

SELF-CONTROLLED

Having self-control means you're able to keep your emotions and actions in check and keep a cool head when other people might feel like exploding. You have a good grip on your desires, and you can say no to those actions that might be harmful to you.

Self-control also allows you to channel your energies in the direction you want to go. All successful people exercise this quality to accomplish what they set out to do.

Related weakness: emotionless.

INDUSTRIOUS

Being industrious means you work hard at what you do. It seems that some people work harder trying to get out of work than they actually work, but not you. You aren't looking for an easy way out. You know that hard work will eventually pay off. That's why you can be relied on to get a job done to the best of your ability.

Your strength of being industrious allows you to be successful in whatever you set out to do because you won't stop until you get it just right. That also makes you a valuable asset for any project that needs a person with stick-to-it-iveness.

Related weakness: too demanding or exacting, both of themselves and others (this may be hidden or below the surface, rather than spoken).

DOES THINGS CORRECTLY

You have high standards and you stick to them. You will not settle for doing less than your best, and you do not like any mistakes. Having things "right" is important to you. As long as you balance this strength with tolerance and you allow yourself and others to occasionally fail, you will contribute much to plans and the people in your life. This strength sets a good example for others.

Related weaknesses: rigid, judgmental, "nit-picky."