

Temperamental Assessment

Using the chart below, determine the *temperamental attunement* between you and your primary caregiver(s).

	Easy	Shy	Spirited
1. Activity	Active	Likes quiet play	Fidgety and very active
2. Regularity	Predictable eating and sleeping	Predictable eating and sleeping	Unpredictable patterns
3. Reaction to new people	Interested	Reluctant	Either delighted or rejecting
4. Unexpected Change	Easily adapts	Reluctantly adapts	Easily adapts or gets very upset
5. Intensity of Feelings	Mild/gentle	May be mild or spirited	Spirited and passionate
6. Usual Mood	Happy and easy going	Happy but easily thrown off balance	Big ups and downs
7. Persistence	Ok with not getting his/her way	May give up or become tenacious	Never gives up
8. Distractibility	Focused	Very Focused	Easily distracted
9. Sensitivity to noise/smell/tactile stimulation	Not much	Ultrasensitive	Not much, or a lot

Step 1. First, take note of which responses apply the best to you, and then which apply the best to your mother (or early caretaker). It may help to speak with him or her directly regarding the nine dimensions listed, but if this is not possible, identify the most applicable response to the best of your recollection.

Step 2. Record your observations on the template provided. For example,

<i>Dimensions of Temperament</i>	<i>You</i>	<i>Your Caregiver</i>
1. Activity	Easy	Shy
2. Regularity	Easy	Shy
3. Reaction to new people	Easy	Easy
4. Unexpected Change	Shy	Spirited
5. Intensity of Feelings	Shy	Spirited
6. Usual Mood	Spirited	Easy
7. Persistence	Spirited	Easy
8. Distractibility	Spirited	Spirited
9. Sensitivity to noise/smell/tactile stimulation	Easy	Shy

Dimensions of Temperament	You	Your Caregiver	How do you know? What are the images, memories, or behaviors that inform your response?
10. Activity			
11. Regularity			
12. Reaction to new people			
13. Unexpected Change			
14. Intensity of Feelings			
15. Usual Mood			
16. Persistence			
17. Distractibility			
18. Sensitivity to noise/smell/tactile stimulation			

Step 3. Questions to Consider:

1. Along what dimensions were your temperaments different? How did this influence your experience of early childhood? Did it facilitate bonding, or cause friction?
 - For example, if you had a “spirited” temperament when it came to activity, but your mother was more “shy,” this could have resulted in frequent punishment or time-outs, if she was unable to accommodate your more spirited needs. (Mothers who are *aware* of and *allow for* temperamental differences can often compensate for them.)
2. Along what dimensions were your temperaments similar? How did this influence your experience of early childhood? Did it facilitate bonding, or cause friction?
 - For example, if both mother and child have a “spirited” mood with “big ups and downs” there is great potential for argument and dissonance within the family; when its good, it’s really good, but when its bad, its really bad. Or, if both mother and child have “mild or gentle” intensity of feeling, their relationship will most likely be harmonious.
3. In your adult relationships, examine the temperamental dimensions of your past (and current) partners. Do any patterns emerge? Are there any similarities between these patterns and the patterns from your early childhood?