

Which of These 5 Types of Dads Are You?

One of the most amazing things I ever discovered after I started coaching, mentoring and counseling men was that almost every problem a man has emotionally can be traced back to an emotional wound caused by his father.

I think John Eldredge said it best in his bestselling book, *Wild at Heart*:

“Every boy in his journey to become a man, takes an arrow to the center of his heart in the place of his strength. Because the wound is rarely discussed, and even more rarely healed, the wound remains. And the wound is almost always given by his father.”

When we look back on our childhood, there are a lot of things we wish our dads would've done or didn't do. But the key is to *not* allow our past to negatively affect us in how we raise and relate to our own children. Regardless of the kind of father you may have had, there are typically five types of dads we can choose to become:

1. . **Dad:** This is the Prisoner of War Dad. This is the dad who is present in his children's lives, but he's not positively engaged in them. And he's not just disengaged—he's enraged. To his children, he always seems to be angry, and because of that anger, he hurts others with his words, tone and actions. The family walks on proverbial eggshells around him because they don't know when or if PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stressful Dad) will rear his ugly head.
2. . **Dad:** This is the Missing in Action Dad. This dad intentionally chooses not to be present in his children's lives. He may have brought them into the

world, but he doesn't want to have anything to do with them. He's not engaged, because his children don't even know who or where he is. They may have never even met, known or talked to him and probably wouldn't recognize him if they did. So he chooses to stay away, because the pain and shame of returning are too great for him to face.

3. . **Dad:** This is the Absent Without Leave Dad. Yes, he's physically present in the home, but he's not emotionally present when he's there. The children see him, but the children can't seem to talk to him. He comes home and isolates and secludes himself from the family. He may not necessarily be a bad dad—he's just emotionally detached from others in his home. So he struggles in silence as those he loves suffer and struggle in his absence.
4. **Reserved Duty Dad:** Reserved Duty Dad is the dad who treats being a dad like a part-time job. He's engaged with his children, but only occasionally—maybe only on the weekends when it's most convenient for him. He has the greatest of intentions, but his children require more time than he's willing or able to give. His children need him to be a full-time dad, but he's content with giving them part-time effort.
5. **Active Duty Dad (AKA an All Pro Dad):** Active Duty Dad isn't a perfect dad, but he's a consistently and emotionally present dad. He's actively engaged, attentive, available and accessible to his children. He's intentional about learning and winning the hearts of his children, even if he has to struggle to do it. He loves, protects, serves and provides for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. He's not afraid to affirm his love for his children, and when they're in his presence, they feel emotionally and physically safe and secure.

The type of dad we become is often influenced by the type of

dad we had growing up as children.

But regardless of the kind of father we had growing up, whether good, bad, average or absent, our dads may explain us as men; but they won't excuse us as fathers. Our children deserve for us to be the best version of ourselves, as men, and serve as a blueprint of what "real dad" should and ought to be.

Which type of dad are you? {eoa}

For the original article, visit .

Dr. Joe Martin is an author, award-winning international speaker and certified Man Builder. He's the creator and founder of and the host of the "Real Men Connect" podcast—the No. 1-rated podcast on iTunes for Christian men. He's also a husband and father of a blended family of two.