

Presbyterian Counseling Center

February, 2011

CENTERPOINT

“Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.” (Proverbs 22:6)

What kind of a parent have you been?

Fueling this question is the flurry of media attention and debate over Amy Chua’s book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*. The Chinese American mother’s new memoir of how she raised her two daughters stirs up some unsettling questions about parenting.

Mrs. Chua presents an extreme, non-negotiable style of parenting. For instance, her daughters were not permitted to earn a grade lower than an A. The “tiger mother” forced her daughters to practice the violin and piano daily for hours, starting when they were pre-schoolers. Once she berated both girls for the sloppiness of handmade birthday cards they had made for her, and she refused to accept the cards.

The book has provoked outrage at this mother’s extreme expectations and authoritarian approach. “She must be crazy.” But upon reflection there has also been a more reasoned response. “Could she be right in some respects?” The daughters have grown to be admirable, successful young adults.

Parenting may often seem like a puzzle to be solved. In actuality it is a complicated dance that balances responsible good sense and empathic love.

The Presbyterian Counseling Center is here to help families explore specific issues of parenting.

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