The Relationship Check Up® - A Proactive Relationship Building Activity
For Parents of Preteens & Teens (ages 9 - up)

ABOUT
Practically, the Relationship Checkup is a series of questions designed and sequenced to initiate and encourage ongoing dialogue between dads and their children. It’s a structured way to have a heart-to-heart talk about two central themes: your everyday lives and your relationship with each other.

Read through the STEPS below; feel free to change or modify how you do The Relationship Check Up in any way that works best for you. You may, for example, want to choose just a few questions to discuss in the car or over breakfast. The key is that both of you have a chance to talk and listen to each other.

INSTRUCTIONS
STEP 1. Together, read aloud all ten questions to make sure you both understand what’s being asked. Dad must assure his teen that there will be no negative consequences for being honest.

STEP 2. Split up, find a quiet place, and each think about your responses to every question alone. Agree to return in 15-30 minutes. It can be helpful to write down your answers.

STEP 3. When done, come back together. Agree on how much time you’ll take to share your answers. If possible, leave it open-ended.

STEP 4. Dad shares his answer to Question #1. Teen shares his or her answer to Question #1. Continue alternating responses to each question in order. Spend as much time discussing your responses as needed, rather than rushing to finish the activity.

QUESTIONS
1. One positive quality that I bring to our relationship is...
2. One positive quality that YOU bring to the relationship is:
3. A way that I sometimes make our relationship difficult is:
4. A way that YOU sometimes make our relationship difficult is:
5. One way I can strengthen our relationship is:
6. One way that YOU can strengthen our relationship is:
7. A subject I find difficult to talk about with you is...
8. A subject I think YOU find difficult to talk about with me is...
9. I think one of the best things YOU’VE done/do for me is:
10. In the next few months I would like us to…

*This interactive activity for Parents & Preteen/Teens is adapted by The Fatherhood Project from The Modern Dad's Dilemma (New World Library, 2010) by John Badalament. The ages (9 - up) are meant to be a guideline.

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