

ACTION #2

Have a Regular Heart-to-Heart: The Modern Dads Relationship Inventory™

The Modern Dads Relationship Inventory is a series of questions designed to initiate and encourage ongoing dialogue between dads and children. It's a structured way to have a heart-to-heart talk about your lives and your relationship with each other.

STEP 1: PREPARE

To effectively introduce this activity to your child and make the most of the experience, you'll need a bit of preparation.

1. Think about when and where you will do The Relationship Inventory and how you can make it special.

The Relationship Inventory should be done outside of the home. Consider taking a drive or a walk, sitting in a park, having a meal at a quiet restaurant, etc. Make sure there is enough privacy so your child will feel comfortable talking; a baseball game, crowded café or mall will likely be distracting and defeat the purpose. However, to make this a special event, you could go to a movie, a game or the mall after doing The Relationship Inventory.

2. Introduce the idea to your child and expect resistance.

Tell your child about *The Modern Dads Handbook*. Describe The Relationship Inventory and your ideas for making it a special event; ask for their ideas. You may get some resistance, especially from a teenager. Explain that it's very easy, it would mean a lot to you, and they'll have a good time. When younger children resist, emphasize the fun part; with older children emphasize how important they are

to you, how time flies, and that you want to make the most of it. If necessary, use a food/fun bribe. As a last resort, require it, just as you would any other family obligation.

Note: if you get a great deal of resistance or think it would be better to ease into it, you can select a portion of the questions and shorten the activity. I recommend selecting some questions from each section. Also, I encourage you to eventually do the entire Relationship Inventory in one sitting.

STEP 2: DO THE RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

Determine which version of The Relationship Inventory you will be using and carefully read through it.

pg 96	The Relationship Inventory for Children	Ages 5 - 10
pg 98	The Relationship Inventory for Teens	Ages 11 - 18

Each version has its own step-by-step instructions. Follow them closely so each of you gets enough time to speak.