

Fatherhood

“A self-reflection exercise for new fathers”

Here is a “**Complete the Sentence**” style questionnaire designed to help a **new father** explore and reflect on **post-natal challenges** across seven important domains. This tool encourages honest, nonjudgmental self-reflection and is suitable for personal use, partner dialogue, or in therapy/support groups. This questionnaire is for gentle self-exploration and is not meant to be used as a diagnostic tool.

Purpose: To help you explore your emotional, physical, and relational experiences as a new dad. Parenthood is a huge shift—and it’s okay to feel overwhelmed, disconnected, or unsure.

Instructions: Complete each sentence with the first thought that comes to mind. No pressure to be “right”—just be real.

Preparedness for Fatherhood

1. I felt least prepared for _____.
 2. I wish someone had warned me about _____.
 3. Before the baby arrived, I thought parenting would be _____.
 4. The moment I realized I wasn’t fully prepared was _____.
 5. I’m still trying to figure out how to _____.
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Desire for Fatherhood

6. I always thought I’d become a father because _____.
 7. I felt excited about becoming a dad until _____.
 8. Part of me still questions _____.
 9. I sometimes feel disconnected from this role because _____.
 10. I feel guilty when I think _____.
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Perceived Support

11. I feel most supported when _____.
12. I feel invisible in parenting conversations when _____.
13. I wish people asked me more about _____.
14. When I’m struggling, I usually _____.
15. I don’t feel comfortable reaching out for help because _____.

Bonding with My Child

16. I feel closest to my baby when _____.
 17. I worry I'm not bonding enough because _____.
 18. I thought bonding would happen naturally, but instead _____.
 19. I sometimes feel like an outsider when _____.
 20. I feel unsure of what to do when the baby _____.
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Access to Care (Physical, Mental, Emotional)

21. I didn't expect I'd need support for _____.
 22. It's hard to talk to someone about _____.
 23. I wish there were more resources for dads dealing with _____.
 24. I'd be more likely to get help if _____.
 25. When I feel overwhelmed, I usually _____.
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Birthing Experience

26. During the birth, I felt _____.
 27. I wasn't prepared for how _____ it would be.
 28. I felt helpless when _____.
 29. I wanted to support my partner more but _____.
 30. Looking back, I still carry feelings about _____.
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Beliefs About Fatherhood & Parenting

31. I used to think dads should always _____.
 32. Now I see fatherhood as _____.
 33. I feel like I'm falling short when _____.
 34. I compare myself to other dads when _____.
 35. I wish more people understood that being a father means _____.
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Reflection Prompts:

- Which domain brought up the most emotion for you?
 - What surprised you about your answers?
 - Is there one area where you'd like to ask for more support or clarity?
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Remember:

You don't have to have all the answers—or feel connected right away—to be a good dad. Postnatal challenges affect fathers, too. Talking about it is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Important Reminder:

It's okay if you don't feel the way you thought you would. **You are not alone.** Many fathers experience emotional challenges and this is not a reflection of failure, it's a call for compassion and support. Speak to your therapist about individual or group support options that may be best suited to your circumstances.