

Brainstorming Solutions

There are 2 teams with at least 2 players on each team. There is no maximum number of players.

The object of the game is to be the first team to make a circuit of the game board and arrive at the Home space.

Each team chooses a marker to move around the game board.

A roll of the 2 dice determines which team will start. The team with the highest number on the dice starts the play.

To play

A team member rolls the dice and advances the marker as many squares as indicated on the dice. A different team member rolls the dice and advances the marker with each turn.

The opposing team picks up a card from the top of the pile that corresponds with the color of the square on which their opponents landed.

The in-play team must successfully answer a question or follow the directions on the card. There are 5 types of cards:

Fact Cards (green): The in-play team answers the objective question written on the card accurately.

Challenge Cards (brown): The opposing team reads the instructions on the card and the in-play team must brainstorm one or more strategies for the behavioral challenges posed by the card. The team is encouraged to think creatively and “out of the box.” The person who rolled the dice will give the team’s answer.

The in-play team has 3 minutes to come up with an answer. The opposing team will start the egg timer for 3 minutes.

After the in-play team has given their response, the opposing team votes on whether the response is acceptable, creative, and workable.

Each team is urged to be tough, but fair, in determining whether to accept an answer. (*The tables will soon be turned!*)

Activity Cards (orange): The in-play team has 3 minutes to devise meaningful, person-centered activities, as directed on the card.

The opposing team will judge whether the activities suggested by the in-play team are acceptable, creative, and workable.

Wild Card (blue): The opposing team makes up a challenging behavioral or activity question for the in-play team. The in-play team has 3 minutes to devise an answer, and the opposing team will judge whether the answer is acceptable.

Crisis Cards (burgundy): The in-play team must move back the number of spaces indicated on the card.

If the in-play team successfully completes a Fact, Challenge, Activity, or Wild Card, they may stay on the square on which they landed. If their answer is wrong or deemed not acceptable, they must return to the previous square on which they landed.

The first team to complete the circuit of the board wins.

Who Should Use This Game?

This game is designed for anyone who provides care for persons living with dementia. Professionals in long-term care or assisted living facilities, adult day centers, senior centers, and agencies on aging will benefit from playing the game. In addition, family members and friends who provide care for persons with dementia will be able to brainstorm new approaches in caregiving.

Brainstorming Solutions for Dementia Care provides friendly competition in a fast-paced, interactive, and collaborative format. The main goals include learning about dementia and creating innovative solutions to challenges faced by those living with dementia and their care partners.

The Caregiver's Challenge

We appreciate your interest in learning more about dementia in order to provide the very best care for persons living with disabilities caused by dementia. Alzheimer's disease, Lewy body dementia, vascular dementia, and the frontal dementias are challenging to live with because they affect a person's ability to remember, reason, communicate, and perform even basic daily living activities. As brain cells become more and more damaged by disease, the personality may also change, causing a person to do or say things totally out of character. In spite of all of the losses caused by dementia, however, the core person remains capable of enjoying love, laughter, and moments of great joy. The challenge and privilege of care partners is to help persons with dementia to live happy, secure, and joyful lives.

Creators of the Game

Brainstorming Solutions for Dementia Care was created by Drs. Kim and Gail Petersen. The Petersens' journey with dementia began, as it does for many care partners, with personal experience as family caregivers. They both had much beloved grandparents who had Alzheimer's disease. The medical community didn't know a great deal about Alzheimer's disease 35 years ago when their families were first affected by this disease. So they began their quest to learn as much as possible about dementing illnesses.

In addition to having personal experience as dementia caregivers, Drs. Kim and Gail Petersen have worked in the field professionally for a number of years. Kim is a family physician and geriatrician who has been a medical director for long-term care and assisted living facilities for over 25 years. He has also been director of a Memory Diagnostic Center that specialized in the early diagnosis, treatment, and management of dementia. His wife, Gail, is an educator and linguist. She has studied learning theory and brain science and enjoys working with persons living with dementia and those who care for them to maximize function and minimize disabilities. Gail and Kim speak at conferences around the country to educate professional and family care partners about dementia. In addition, the Petersens consult with medical communities to help them establish Memory Diagnostic Centers. At these centers, people receive a comprehensive and compassionate diagnosis, treatment plan, and education about dementia.

Kim and Gail are deeply grateful to all of you who are caring for people living with dementia.