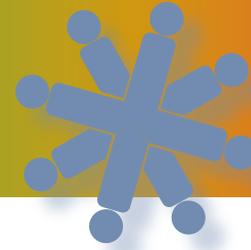


Families & Aging

Dilemmas & Decisions

*An educational board game
to foster insights and problem solving*



What would you do if :

- Your spouse could no longer drive safely—but insisted on driving anyway?
- Your parent needed to move and had only two choices: a nursing home or your already crowded home?
- Your elderly relative said, “I want to die.”

Urgent and difficult questions like these come up every day in families with elder members, in caregiving relationships, and in professional settings.

The educational game *Families & Aging* is designed to help practitioners who work with older adults, instructors who work with students, family members themselves, and other audiences discuss challenging family situations and work toward potential solutions. Participants can:

- Gain clearer insight into the issues and their own personal and family values,
- Identify alternative approaches to difficult situations, and
- Strengthen communication, decision-making, and relationship skills.

The board game stimulates discussion on six major themes: health, money, living arrangements, relationships, parent–child relations, and death.

The *Families & Aging* CD contains the principal component pieces of the game and

a complete, step-by-step Facilitator’s Guide, all ready to produce from high-resolution, full-color PDF files.

The following game pieces are on the CD.

- The **game board**, available in two sizes for flexibility in various game setups and situations. The smaller board is 8.5 x 14 inches. Suitable for printing on home or office color printers, the smaller board can be given to each person playing the game. The larger board is 22.5 x 25.5 inches and is designed for commercial printing on paper or vinyl. The larger board is for use by a group of players.
- **Playing cards**, in seven sets of 25 cards each.

A preview of the Facilitator’s Guide begins on the next page.

To order *Families & Aging* (EM 8881), please visit <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>
Or, contact:

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Facilitator's Guide preview

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Families & Aging is an educational game in which players confront problems, dilemmas, and decisions that families face in later life. These include driving problems, communicating about aging-related concerns, providing care, placing a parent or spouse in a care facility, and responding when a person says, "Let me die."

Players are challenged to examine their values and attitudes and to identify alternative approaches to problems. Because players assume a variety of roles during game play, they also learn to view issues from the perspective of various family members and to consider the impact of decisions on older adults, other family members, and themselves.

WAYS TO USE THE GAME

For more than 25 years, the game has been used successfully with a variety of audiences throughout the United States.

With families The game is used in educational programs and support groups for families who face issues and decisions about older family members. The game often is played for 15 to 25 minutes at the beginning of an educational program. Through game play, family members find that they are not alone in their personal situations or feelings. The game also helps create a greater comfort level for people to talk openly about their personal situations and ask questions in a larger group discussion.

Some families also have played the game at home, using it to initiate discussions with older family members about aging-related issues. This is a nonthreatening approach because players are not dealing with a particular individual's situation but rather with situations on game cards.

With practitioners and professionals

The game is used in community agencies, senior adult housing, health care facilities, and other organizations where staff work with older adults. The game can help staff to experience and appreciate the family history and relationships of elders and their families, and the emotions, issues, and tough decisions families face. Follow-up discussion can reinforce the importance of being nonjudgmental, provide practical implications of game play in working with older adults and families, and identify ways for staff to support families.

With students The game is used in community college and university classrooms as a sensitivity and awareness activity in human development and family sciences, social work, sociology, gerontology, counseling, medical, and nursing courses. As an experiential learning activity, the game can help students prepare for work with families.

BASICS OF THE GAME

Component pieces

The *Families & Aging* CD includes two options for a game board (in two sizes) and the playing cards, all of which are ready to manufacture from the full-color, high-resolution PDFs provided.



The Small Game Board (above) and the Playing Card Board

- The Small Game Board and its companion, the Playing Card Board, are in the file "SmallBoard.pdf."
- The Large Game Board is in the file "LargeBoard.pdf."
- The playing cards are in the file "PlayingCards.pdf."

The cards are grouped by topic into seven sets of 25 cards each: *Health, Money, Living Arrangements, Relationships, Parent-Child Relations, Death, and Dialogue*. Each card presents a real-life family concern, problem, or situation.

Other pieces needed In addition to the game boards and playing cards, the game facilitator will need to provide a playing piece (game board token) for each player and one die for each player group.

Playing time

At least 20 minutes is needed to benefit from the game. Play may extend more than 2 hours if all game cards are used. Some groups will proceed through many cards in the time allotted for play. Others will complete only a few game cards because of greater in-depth discussion and/or diversity of opinion among the players.

It's best to allow 30 to 45 minutes for discussion after the game, for further exchange of ideas, clarifications, and skill-building.



The Large Game Board

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

The optimum number of players per group is four to six. Large groups can be divided into groups of four to six who play simultaneously. Or, one group of four to six players may play while the others sit around the players, observing and contributing to discussion.

HOW TO PRODUCE GAME MATERIALS

Game boards

You have three options for producing game boards:

1. Produce game boards and playing cards yourself, using a home or office color printer

2. Take the PDF files to a local commercial printer, or
3. Work via the Internet with a manufacturer of game boards

Office/home printer For this option, you will use the file "SmallBoard.pdf." Using a standard office or home color printer, print one small-version game board for **each player** and one playing-card board for **each group** of four to six players. Each board is 8.5 by 14 inches (legal-size paper). Each prints on only one side of the paper. For durability, you might want to print the boards on heavier paper and laminate them after printing.

Local commercial printer For this option, you will use only the file "LargeBoard.pdf." You will need to work with a printer that can

output a single sheet that is at least 23 by 26 inches. Commercial printers, including those who produce blueprints, should be able to handle this job easily; to find one, look in your community's telephone directory Yellow Pages under "Blueprinting" and "Printers."

For durability, you might want to ask the printer to laminate the sheet after printing it. If you want to be able to roll up the laminated sheet for easier storage, ask the printer's advice on paper weights and laminations. Or, ask about printing the large board on vinyl, which is easy to roll up.

An Internet vendor Several companies offer game-manufacturing goods and services via their websites. Search for them online using keywords such as "board game manufacturers." Typically the vendors offer materials for do-it-yourself game manufacturing as well as the option to have them manufacture the full set of game materials for you.

Playing cards

All playing cards are in the file "PlayingCards.pdf." The file is set up to print seven cards on 8.5- by 14-inch (legal-size) paper, printing on **both** sides; thus, you will need to set up a home/office printer for "duplex" printing or tell the commercial printer that the file prints on two sides.

Cut the printed sheets on the dotted lines to get the finished cards. For durability, you might want to print the playing cards on heavier paper or laminate them.

Other playing pieces

You can buy playing pieces and dice online (try searching on "game board pieces") or from local craft or similar stores.



Playing Cards are in seven sets of 25 cards each.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Setup

If using the Small Game Boards, set out one Small Game Board and one playing piece for each participant and one die and one Playing Card Board for each player group. Place the seven sets of cards in the marked places on the Playing Card Board. Players sit so they can easily reach the cards. Each player selects one playing piece and places it in the space marked START on his or her Small Game Board.

If using the Large Game Board, set it out and place the seven sets of cards in the marked places on the Large Game Board. Provide one die and the appropriate number of playing pieces. Players sit so they can easily manipulate the playing pieces and cards. Each player selects one playing piece and places it on the Large Game Board in the space marked START.

Options for playing cards Facilitators may choose to use all the game cards or select cards that are most appropriate to the audience or program focus. For example, within each card set there are situations