



Facilitation Notes - First Draft Jan 28, 2020

Introduction

Reach!TM is a social game designed to enhance the physical, cognitive and social-emotional wellbeing of people in later years. Playing Reach! helps players weave new ties, restore agency and confidence, feel good about themselves and build resilience within a positive environment. Through Reach! players become the authors of their own bespoke path to wellbeing.

It is a deceptively simple game: it's a conversational game and, as such, it is uncomplicated. Its language, however, is grounded in two decades of studies in Positive Psychology, Neurolinguistics and Coaching. Each word has been carefully selected to prompt a build-up of trust and enjoyment. Cards and bingo-like numbers are designed to evoke the familiar and ease participants into a playful mode.

You are receiving this document because you have accepted to partake to our pilot study in care home settings.

A heartfelt thank you for joining the pilot!

Your input is very valuable; you will be helping your residents and helping us refine Reach! so it will go on and enhance the lives of many elderly people all over the world for years to come. We hope you will enjoy the experience.

We are running a six-week pilot in several homes in the UK and Italy. Please follow the guidelines as much as you can so that results can be compared.

The guidelines in this document focus predominantly on helping you set up and run Reach!

We will be running a group on Telegram, a platform similar to WhatsApp, for the duration of the pilot. Every participating home can appoint two spokespersons who can share suggestions, tell us how the game went, and share how the game is affecting participants. They can do so by typing, recording audio or mini-videos of 1 minute each. We are aiming to make it as easy and immediate as possible to learn from each other.

Find Telegram Messenger link: <https://www.mastersofimpact.com/index.php/reach-game/> and join with your mobile number.

Once you have joined Telegram, search for and contact @ilariavilkelis or follow the link <https://t.me/joinchat/FFxRLhTcurfg8tZkZGTuhg> to join the group.

You are welcome to use Reach! in the ways you see fit to benefit your residents and your staff as long as there is a designated facilitator. However, since the pilot is taking place across several homes please commit to a common set of guidelines.

PILOT MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY

- **Play Reach! for six sessions once per week (30 mins to 40 mins per session)**
- **with 2 or more sets of four players (same players as much as possible)**
- **Fill the Reach! Effectiveness Sheet twice, once before 1st play and one week after last play for every set of 4 Players.**
- **Fill a Reflective Practice Sheet after each session.**
- **Keep track of topics chosen for each play.**
- **Participate and interact in the Telegram Group as much as you can.**
- **Agree to keep the Software confidential and not to share it with anyone.**
- **Have fun, be proud to be part of a pioneering experiment that could change the lives of many people around the world.**
- **Be in touch with Ilaria should you need any clarification of assistance.**

After each play, the Facilitator should complete the Reflective Practice Log and keep a note of the topics discussed and a list of the topics chosen. We recommend that during the play Facilitators actively listen instead of taking notes. Thus, factor in 15 minutes to make notes after the play.

During the play, when appropriate, a player could be charged of keeping track of the chosen topics.

Example: Mary: 2Blue, 4Red, 7Yellow, 19Green - John: 7R, 1B, 18Y, 17G, etc.

The notes should be given to the Facilitator after the end of the play.

Reach! Pilot Outcomes.

The ultimate goal of Reach! is to increase residents' well-being and create a positive atmosphere of trust and collaboration among them and with their carers.

The aim of the pilot is to answer the following questions:

- Do people enjoy playing?
- To what extent do people receive long-term benefits from playing?
- How is Reach! valuable to care homes? In which ways?
- To what degree may Reach! assist dementia-afflicted patients?
- How can Reach! have a financial impact on care homes?
- What do Home Directors need to see to find Reach! attractive?
- What does Reach!... improve - accelerate - avoid or save?

And to find out whether Reach! is an effective tool to

- Engage residents playfully
- Create a stronger community where residents interact, enjoy being together more and quickly integrate newcomers
- Learn about residents' preferences, wishes and even concerns or fears
- Find out useful elements that can be added to their individual care plans

We trust the pilot will also show positive longer term outcomes.

Reportedly, after an early trial, the Activity Leader shared that one of the players who would typically isolate herself was keener to seek other residents' company.

After playing with his Staff, a Home Manager felt Reach! could play a role in strengthening the caring team.

We hope that a six-week pilot may also highlight other unforeseen benefits in term of residents and staff cohesion, home atmosphere and more.

We welcome your help in answering questions such as:

- **What did you learn that you can use for the care plan?**
- **How is the game helping in your work as an activity leader/carer?**
- **How does the game fit in with CQC regulation?**

How to play Reach! Starting the game.

Set up.

Players gather around a **table or in a circle**.

They must be sitting comfortably, have a drink of water, but no food or other things that may distract them.

The group must consist of **four players**.

Four offers enough variety to make the game interesting, and a group small enough that players don't have to wait too long for their turn and become bored and disengaged. So even if the temptation is to include everyone, please create different teams, and stick to four players per game.

As the Facilitator, you establish the **playing order**, typically clockwise starting with the person you know will have the least difficulty playing.

This helps setting a good precedent. Inversely, if a player is known for being very reserved, you can set the order to have them play last to give them the time to figure out what is going on.

It's a good practice to **remind the players how to play at each game**.

Should it feel appropriate, you could also ask the players in turn to remind everyone how to play.

Gameplay.

Holding a tablet or a laptop, **invite players to take turn in selecting a topic**.

What colour? What number? Select by tapping on the screen or click on the trackpad.

The colours are loosely associated with topics about relationships, knowledge, self-awareness and physical activity: heart, mind, spirit, body.

While looking at the screen, each person, in turn, picks a topic, he/she speaks for a couple of minutes before moving on.

Only the Facilitator handles the screen and reads out the topics as they are written.

Do not paraphrase or summarise. Should the player find initiating a conversation around the chosen topic challenging, you can encourage them to seek assistance from the other players.

If you know some players to have the tendency to speak a lot, playfully remind them that each player has to speak in turn or to participate in the conversation.

Players are encouraged to **pick "cards" of different colours**.

*If they don't, nudge them gently but **never** antagonise or invalidate them; be playful about it!*

e.g. "Another red, Betty! Looks like you enjoy red, how about trying a different colour this time?"

If they insist on a colour, let it be, just make a note later.

There are no right or wrong ways to discuss a topic or to reply to a question. Reach! is about freely connecting with one's own personal experience.

How to facilitate Reach!

YOU KNOW YOUR ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK WHEN PLAYERS ARE

- engaged
- sharing freely
- laughing
- looking forward to playing again

And when you enjoy facilitating the game and are inspired by your residents!

While Reach! is conceived to feel like a game, the topics are designed to help participants reminisce, rejoice, and recall moments of their lives that gave them pleasure. In so doing, Facilitators and observers can gain an appreciation of the players likes/dislikes, their experiences, their needs and their preferences. Such information is very valuable to keep individual care plans up to date and monitor the psychological wellbeing of players.

Because of the playful setting, players are more likely to be relaxed talking to each other and more likely to share their perspectives than in formal interview settings. Through Reach! you can learn more about the players and faster. And most importantly, you can notice how they interact with each other: an interpersonal dimension that cannot be explored in a one-to-one settings.

Furthermore, early trials have shown that players prop each other up and that valuable information can be harvested by noticing how players react to each other. For example:

Player 1: Oh I love Italian food!

Player 2: Me too!

Player 3: Nah, I'd have Chinese any day of the week instead.

You have quickly gained three potentially useful bits of information about players' preferences.

In early trials, we have also seen players feel safe enough to recall painful memories. As long as the person is gently taken out from a temporary state of grief, the experience is a positive one. Vulnerability brings people together.

The guiding principles of the Facilitator

- **Favour engagement and enjoyment, diffuse potential tension**
- **Build players' confidence**
- **Ease communication**
- **Strengthen a sense of belonging**

It would be impossible to list in a document every potential situation. As a Facilitator, you simply rely on your instinct, listen wholeheartedly, show care, respect and keep the guiding principles in mind. You are learning along with all of us!

What follows are a few pointers on very common situations that may occur, and we trust that more ideas and best practices will be shared on Telegram in the weeks to come.

1. Build players' confidence

If the player starts talking freely, let them talk and check that others are following and are engaged. Facilitator can model engagement by actively listening, nodding, and showing interest, then involving others.

e.g. "David, did you hear what Penny said? What is your experience?"

Encourage and praise players, but avoid making comments on the content of the share.

Avoid questions like "do you agree/disagree" that create "sides" and separations.

Avoid judgements that **may alter the player's experience**; a Facilitator should be mindful of inadvertently changing the quality of an experience. Just bear witness to it and comment on the **here and now**.

Example of unhelpful facilitation.

"Betty, that's so amazing, it must have been so much fun!"

or

"Oh no, that must have been terrible, it must have been so upsetting!"

Example of great facilitation that builds cohesion

"Betty, thank you so much for sharing! It's lovely to see you smile as you recall this experience."

or

"Betty, thank you so much for sharing something so personal."

With the former, notice that what is described is something you see, a person smiling, and not what happened in the shared memory. With the latter, notice how the word "personal" is neutral: it is not tragic nor devastating, and it does not alter the experience for the player.

2. Favour engagement and enjoyment; diffuse potential tension

Should players appear hesitant, as the Facilitator you can encourage them with simple questions such as, *"What comes to mind right now?"* If the topic appears too difficult and players seem ill-at-ease, you can suggest to tweak the topic or even pick a different one.

Please note the difference between "comes to mind" and "remember". "Comes to mind" creates the space for a free association; "remember" is more related to specific facts occurring in a specific time and place. A person may have a hard time remembering, but it is likely that she may still be able to share something that comes to mind.

Example:

Topic: Recite your favourite poem.

Beth: "I don't know a poem"

Facilitator: "Is there something else that comes to mind, a proverb, a song?"

Beth may start singing... or she may utter, "No."

*Facilitator: “Does anyone else have a poem which they’d like to share with Beth?”
Make sure that Beth feels the others’ support and is not left with the sense that she failed her topic.*

The key is to keep players at ease, keep the conversation flowing, and **never invalidate someone for not knowing how to deal with a topic**. Keeping a relaxed and cheerful atmosphere is crucial to build trust.

Facilitators should **never imply** that there is a right and wrong way to play or that there are right and wrong answers. Why? When you feel you are wrong you are more likely to withdraw or blame yourself for not being like others. By doing so, you put distance between yourself and other players instead of building connection and camaraderie.

3. Strengthen a sense of belonging: spot commonalities

Beside keeping each player at ease, the Facilitator should comment in such way as to establish links between players.

Example

“So, both Anna and Betty visited London.”

“Both Jon and David have grandchildren.”

Stick to observation; don’t make comments like, “oh this is amazing/terrible/etc.” Let players add their spin; don’t lead them with your own.

Find what we have in common and strengthen a sense of togetherness. These prompts are likely to trigger further conversation.

Throughout the 7 weeks, we look forward to discovering more from your discoveries. Please share freely on our Telegram group – we want to know what works and what doesn’t. If there is a question that is causing difficulty, let us know. Help us build an inspiring, powerful game that will bring a million smiles!