



# Playful Mind



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**Fitter Brein**

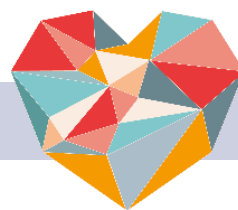


Dementia  
in Cultural Mediation



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# The activity



## Name of the activity

The title of the activity is '**Playful Mind**'.

During this activity we use the game of checkers. Checkers is seen as a cultural heritage in the Netherlands and everyone has experience with it in one way or another. They played it as a child or as an adult.

It is a game recommended for seniors to train their memory and keep their brain fit and healthy for as long as possible.

## Summary

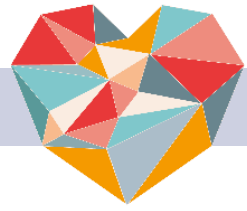
It is an activity in which the participants play the game of checkers. The participants have certainly played this in their past or have seen it played as it is a very popular, easy to play board game.

The activity starts with the history of checkers. A short video and some photos of well-known and famous checkers players of the past are shown.

For the participants who want to really play the game, a short introduction of the game and the rules are given alongside some fun tricks. For those who want to play but don't know how, the rules are explained and the game is played together with the host or a volunteer. The emphasis is on reminiscing and socializing.

If participants remember the game and are triggered to play it competitively, this is of course possible. For other participants it may be enough to just play with the pieces or look at the pictures.

# Content



## Target group

This activity is suitable for people with an early or middle stage of dementia. It is accessible for a person with dementia who still lives at home but also for someone who already lives in a care home.

It is not really suitable for someone who is visually impaired but with some help almost everything is possible of course.

## Objective

The objective of this activity is to (re)introduce the participants to the game of checkers.

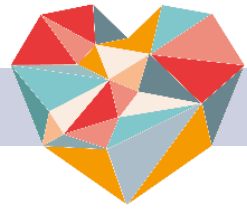
If they have played it in the past, it will bring back memories and gives an opportunity to talk about these memories. How they used to play checkers or even with who or where. In addition, playing checkers brings relaxation and fun.

## Partners

Depending on the location where the activity is organized, additional partners or organizations are needed.

In general it is important to work together with care homes or health care organizations where people with dementia live and spend their days. It is also good to involve other (social) initiatives where people with dementia get day care or can enjoy other activities.

# Practical



## Venue

'Playful mind' is an indoor activity and is preferably organized in a care home or another (social) organization that is easy accessible and has some specific facilities:

- The venue should accommodate approximately 15 participants.
- There should be about 7 small tables (for 2 persons and a checker board) or 4 large tables (for 4 persons and 2 checker boards).
- There should be enough parking nearby.
- The venue must be accessible for people with disabilities or those who use a walker or sit in a wheel chair.
- A room must be available that has a screen, a beamer and audio equipment.

## Day, time & duration

The activity can of course be organized at all times and various places. However, a regular moment at a fixed location can be nice.

For example, think of organizing it every Thursday afternoon from 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM. The duration of the activity is about one hour.

## Group size

At least two participants would be preferable.

The maximum group size is 15 but this might also depend on the available space at the location.

## Supervisors and hosts

For this activity access to one or two employees or volunteers is needed. It might help that the people who host this activity and those who help, have some experience with checkers themselves. However, this is certainly not necessary. Anyone can quickly understand the basics of checkers and be educating in giving this workshop.

There is even an online training course available at the website of the Fitter Brein organization.

It would be good to have employees from the care organization present who can monitor the well-being of the participants.

## Materials & facilities

There are some materials and facilities needed for 'Playful Mind', like:

- A computer or laptop with HDMI connection.
- A beamer to show the presentation, video and images.
- Some kind of audio equipment as the video contains sound.
- 7/8 checker board and 7/8 boxes with checker pieces.

Tea, coffee and some sweets are offered. Every participant will receive at least one consumption but a second cup should not cause a problem.

## Costs

There are no costs for the participants.

## Name tags

The host and helping employees or volunteers will wear a name tag so the participants do not have to remember these names.

Participants themselves do not have to wear a name tag.

## Memento

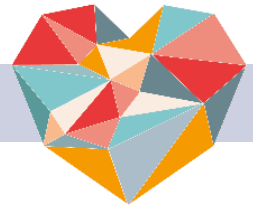
The participants will receive their own magnetic checkers board as a memento after the activity. This way they can take something home and play the game again with their relative, family member or friends.

## Afterwards

During the event, pictures will be taking (after asking for consent) and published on the website of [www.fitterbrein.nl](http://www.fitterbrein.nl) and or shared on any other relevant platform and social media channels.

After the activity, the organization will make a nice report of the activity. This will be published on [www.fitterbrein.nl](http://www.fitterbrein.nl) but can also be shared on social media channels and with other involved or interested parties.

# Communication & Registration



## Communication

Spread the word about this activity!

The communication to reach the right people will go offline and online through various channels.

Simple language and pictures are used so the communication is easy to read.

### Offline:

- A health care organization of another (social) initiative is contacted. Together with this organization, participants are made enthusiastic about participating in the activity. As the target group is present in most health care organizations, they will be easy to reach.
- Posters and flyers are made to hang or hand out within the organization and/or visitors.

### Online:

- The activity is promoted via social media (Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn). This to not only reach and invite participants, but perhaps also get the interest of other potential organizations for future moments and collaborations to organize this activity.

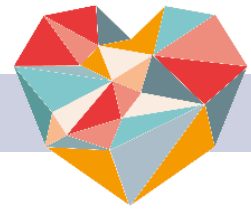
About three weeks before, promoting the activity starts to reach out to the target group and potential participants.

## Registration

People can sign up for 'Playful Mind' by sending an e-mail to [info@fitterbrein.nl](mailto:info@fitterbrein.nl)

But also by registering at the care home or other (social) organization with whom the cooperation is.

# Description & Program



## Preparation

The organization (people who host and present the activity) and the location manager (where the activity takes place) deploy the room together. Set up the tables, for two participants or for four participants.

The participants are placed on a chair at a table. On each table you have one or two checkers boards (depending on a table for two or four participants). The presentation takes place on a (beamer) screen. Participants sit in a way that they can all see the presentation and video.

## Welcome

The participants are warmly welcomed. They are all asked to take a seat (or guided to a seat) in the room layout. When everyone is seated, the activity can begin.

Coffee/tea and something sweet is offered.

## Introduction

The host(s) of the activity introduce themselves (who they are, why they do this) and also explain what the activity is all about: reminiscing, sharing their stories about checkers, making new memories, socializing with each other, learning to play checkers and some information about checkers as a way to keep the brain fit.

A suggestion for an introduction can be:

“Welcome everyone. It is so nice to see you and that you are present this afternoon and attending our activity ‘Playful Mind’. We will give you a short overview of the history of checkers and also address the differences between the house-garden-and-kitchen rules and the official rules.

Together we will watch a short but beautiful video of the late Jannes van der Wal, world champion checkers and probably someone you are familiar with!

After this, you will all play the game together and against each other. If you are not in the mood to actually play the game, no problem! There is enough to talk and reminisce and it is always nice to just watch the others play. I’m sure we are going to have a very nice and pleasant afternoon together!”

All this is told with a lot of enthusiasm and energy. The tone and atmosphere is "warm" and "cozy".

## Program

- A short video of Jannes van der Wal (5 minutes)
- Reminiscing about the video (5 minutes)
- Explanation of the rules of checkers (5 minutes)
- Playing the game (35 minutes)
- Ending the activity (10 minutes)

### 1. Video Jannes van der Wal + reminiscing

In the seventies and eighties he was a very famous Dutch checkers player who became Dutch and International champion for several times. Maybe participants have seen Jannes van der Wal on TV or have even seen him in action in real life. How was checkers in the past, what did they think of Jannes van der Wal, did they play checkers themselves and against whom? Are there nice stories to share?

Show a piece of the video with sound on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mZVTtxvVDo>

The video is in Dutch. Possible sections from the video to show: 0:15 – 5:22 of 16:35 – 19:33 of 24:40 – 29:40

### 2. Explanation of the rules of checkers 'then and now' + interaction

Checkers is played by two people, on opposite sides of the gameboard. One player has the dark pieces; the other has the light pieces. Players alternate turns. A player may not move an opponent's piece.

Only the dark squares of the checkered board are used. A move consists the moving of a piece diagonally to an adjacent unoccupied square. If the adjacent square contains an opponent's piece, and the square immediately beyond it is vacant, the piece may be captured (and removed from the game) by jumping over it. When presented, capturing is mandatory. The player without pieces remaining, or who cannot move due to being blocked, loses the game.

What to do when there are no pieces captured? You may continue the game (if it is not convenient) or you indicate that the opponent must reset the move and still capture the piece by jumping over it (if this is convenient).

Give the participants enough space to ask questions about the game. Make sure they understand and if not, sit with them and calmly explain parts of the rules again and ask them about their own experiences and stories.

### 3. Playing the game

After the presentation, a game of checkers is played. The participants at tables are already facing an opponent. They can now play a game themselves. The host and other supervisors walk around to answer questions, give tips or just have a chat. The intention is that the atmosphere is warm and pleasant and there should be ample opportunity to talk and interact.

### 4. Ending the activity

After the game, there is a plenary closing with all the participants and supervisors. The host and/or organizer tell more about what he saw and noticed when the participants started playing checkers. Maybe some nice anecdotes. Gives some final tips and conclude with a few words of thanks and a review of the activity.

And of course ask the participants how they experienced the activity. What did they like and feel? The organization and/or location manager (possibly other parties) are also thanked for making this activity possible.

Before they leave, all participants receive a present: their own board of checkers and maybe some flyers of Fitter Brein.



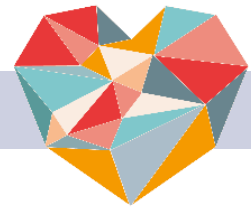
# Evaluation



The activity is thoroughly evaluated with the people who were hosting the activity, everyone who helped and the organizations involved. Attention is paid to:

- The program: was there sufficient variety, a fun content, perhaps even a learning effect.
- Playing the game of checkers: was there enough time to play, did all participants understand the game and/or participated as expected.
- Communication: did the message get across well, was there clear communication, was there any confusion at some point.
- Atmosphere.
- Objectives.

# Checklist, when to do what



## One month before the activity

- Appoint people who will host the activity and help during.
- Make agreements with the health care organization about time, specific location/room but also to help recruit participants.
- Arrange a room and check whether the necessary equipment (beamer, audio, screen, tables and chairs) is available there.

## Two weeks before the activity

- Contact the health care organization about how the registrations are going (how many participants).
- If the wish is to attract media or more awareness for the activity, write to some media channels or create a news item other channels can publish.
- Spread promotion of the activity through social media.

## The week before the activity

- Arrange all necessary checkers materials: the checker boards, the checker pieces + a demonstration board (if needed).
- Check the presentation (PowerPoint).
- Promote via Social Media + other media channels / make addition appointments (if needed).

## The day before the activity

- Check the material: sufficient checker boards + pieces, PowerPoint on USB / mail, laptop + battery ready, photo camera, etc.
- Have the memorabilia ready (checker boards / possible flyers or brochures).
- Plan the trip and travel time well so the location is reached on time.

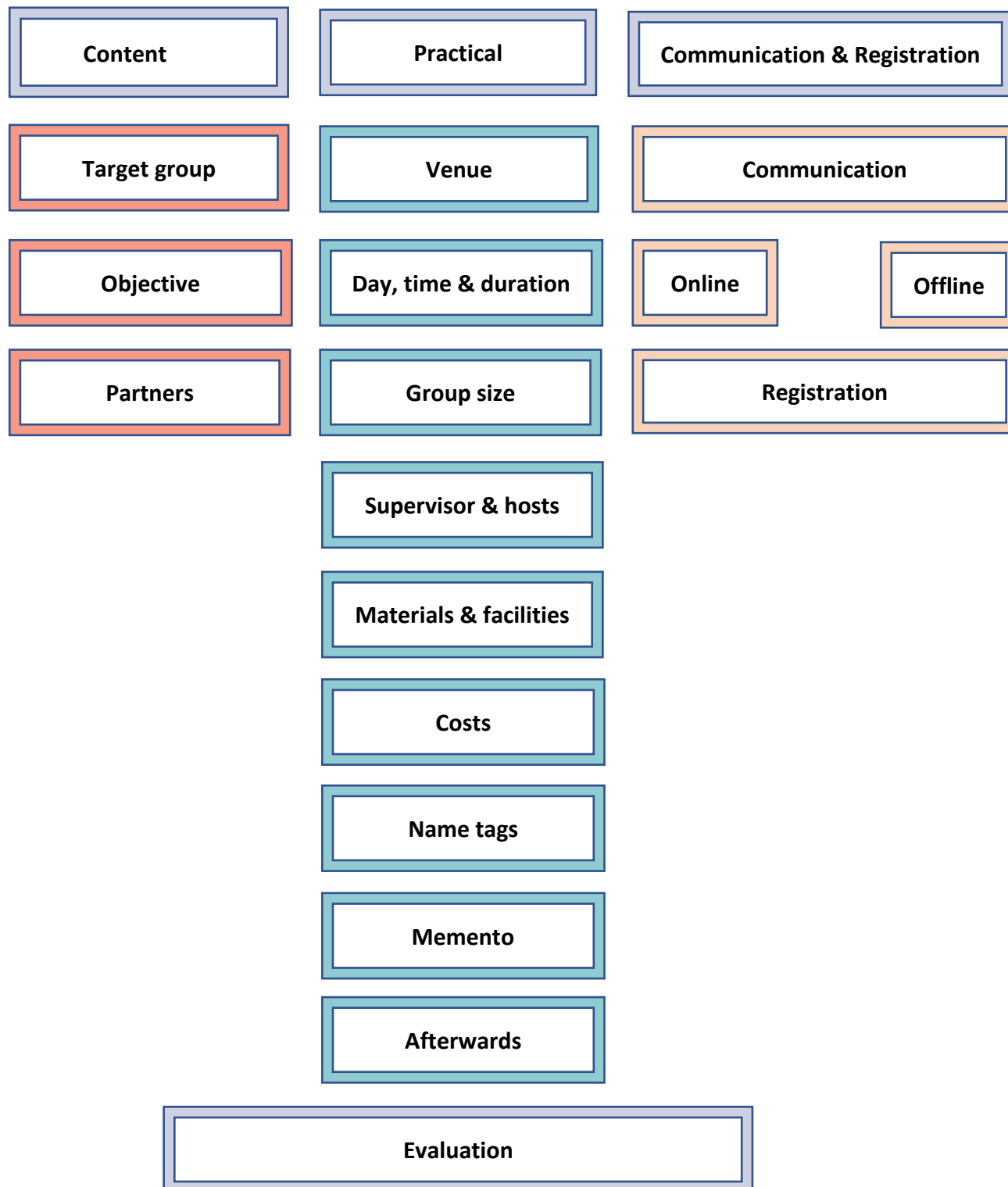
## Day of the activity

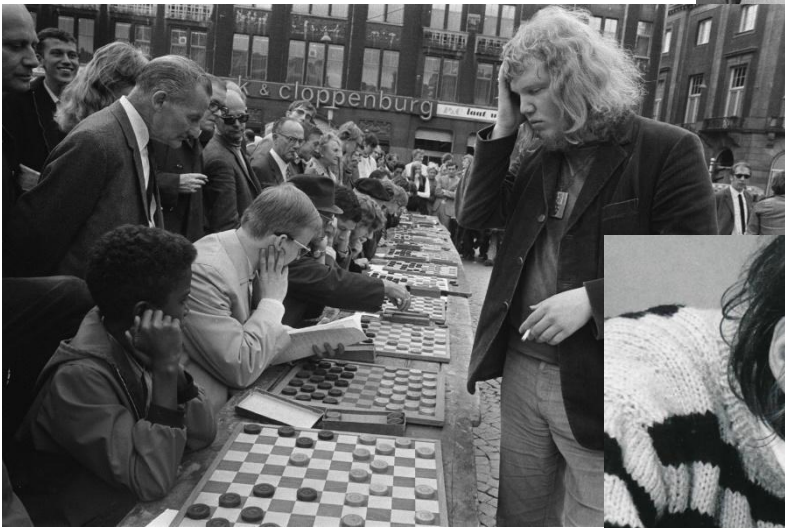
- Be present 60 minutes before the activity starts.
- Install and check everything: video and audio check.
- Prepare tables and checker boards.

## **Corona**

Corona could cause some problems as this does affect the activity. There are guidelines for how to play checkers responsible from the KNDB / NOC \* NSF. These guidelines are then applied.

# Points of attention







Bron: Nationaal archief / NOS / DvhN

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