Encounters

SOCIAL

Social encounters involves a PC communicating with other PCs or NPCs. As the conversation unfolds, both sides may need to make various tests using their social or mental characteristics to attempt to achieve their desired result.

EXPLORATION

During exploration encounters the PCs navigate their environment, scout new locations, or search for supplies. You will narrate the results of the PCs' actions, describing the area as their actions affect it or revealing new, previously unexplored locations as their endeavors take them onward.

SURVIVAL

Survival encounters include any time-sensitive encounters in which the PCs are in danger. They may be engaging in combat with hostile characters, surviving environmental effects such as treacherous weather or fire, or dealing with any number of other threats.

DOWNTIME

These are situations that have little to no significance to the overall plot; you can cover them with simply a few quick statements summarizing the passing of time. Downtime is when the PCs can worry about things like converting their stress into traumas or healing their traumas over time.

Setting Goals

As the world begins to end, everything is thrown into complete chaos. To keep their heads straight, and to help drive the story forward, it's good if your PCs have some concrete goals they want to accomplish. While goals can vary wildly from group to group, scenario to scenario, and location to location, there are several overarching needs that most groups must work to fulfill in games of Apocalyptic Horror:

➢Acquire Weapons
➢Gather Food and Medicine
➢Establish a Safe House
➢Find Long-Term Safety

Cling to Life

Whenever you completely fill a stress track, you don't necessarily have to die, but can try to cling to life by making a test using the defensive stat from the category in which you suffered the stress. If you succeed at the test, you are still removed from play in the way appropriate to the category in which you acquired the stress, but you are removed only temporarily. You immediately take a severity 3 trauma in the matching category and remove all stress from the top two tiers of the maxed-out stress track, leaving the three boxes in tier 1 filled in, etc..

Using Tests Effectively

The key to using tests effectively in your story is timing. Overwhelming your PCs with too many tests bogs down the game and makes individual outcomes less meaningful, while never requiring tests makes the PCs feel powerless and detached from the game.

WHEN TO ADD POSITIVE DICE

Positive dice are added to a test's dice pool to represent any circumstances that could be helpful to the character making the test. Use positive dice to reward planning ahead and creative thinking. If a player devises a really clever plan or does a great job acting in character, reward that player with an extra positive die to encourage good roleplaying in the future.

WHEN TO ADD NEGATIVE DICE

Negative dice are added to a test's dice pool to represent any circumstances making the task more difficult or dangerous for the character to perform.

Pacing Negative Dice:

Since negative dice commonly result in a character suffering stress, they are a great way to manage tension over the course of a game. Keep an eye on your PCs' stress tracks and use them to guide you in adding negative dice to their pools. If you want to increase the tension, start adding more negative dice to tests until the PCs have a decent amount of stress.

DETERMINING RESULTS

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Using Tests Effectively (cont)

The results of a dice pool are a great storytelling opportunity, giving you lots of resources to help you craft a creative outcome. Each die is added to the pool for a reason; similarly, the result of each die can have a purpose.

Making a Test

STEP 1: Determine the Task

➢Specify desired action

➢Determine applicable characteristic.

STEP 2: Assemble the Dice Pool

➢Start with 1 pos. die then add pos. & neg. die due to situation and training.

➢+1 Positive dice for: Positive Features, Equipment, Assistance and Situational Benefits

➢+1 Negative dice for: Task Danger and Difficulty, Negative Features, Traumas and Situational Hindrance

STEP 3: Roll and Resolve

➢Roll dice pool

➢Remove opposing doubles in pairs

➢Remaining pos. dice with a # equal to or lower the characteristic are successes

➢Suffer stress = the remaining neg. dice

Opposing Tests

Both parties roll and whoever scores the greater number of successes wins the challenge. If the result is a tie, whoever has the higher value in the characteristic used for the test wins. If it is still a tie, or if you both fail the test, the contest is a draw or keep re-rolling until there is a winner.

Opposing Tests (cont)

MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

On occasion, opposed tests may be made between three or even more characters. All participants make the appropriate test, and the character with the highest result is the winner.

Pushing Yourself

If you choose to push yourself when performing a test, add one positive die and one negative die to the pool before rolling. You may do this only once per test.

Trauma

Each trauma has two parts: a word or phrase naming it, and a severity. The name of the trauma describes its effects on you. A trauma's severity, on the other hand, is a number between one and three, tracked in that trauma's three boxes, which are filled in from left to right. When you remove your stress to acquire a trauma, that trauma's severity is equal to the number of tiers in the stress track that had any boxes filled in. The trauma's severity determines just how hard that trauma will be to heal.. Whenever you make a test that could reasonably be hindered by trauma, you add a negative die to that test. Particularly severe traumas can add even more negative dice, at the GM's discretion.

Trauma (cont)

You can never have more than three traumas in a category at once. If you ever suffer a fourth trauma in a category, you immediately die without any chance to cling to life.

RECOVERING FROM TRAUMAS

When you decide to begin treating one of your traumas, specify to the GM what measures you are taking to do so. You then must undergo the treatment for the amount of time specified for a trauma of that severity, as listed below:

Severity 1: One day

Severity 2: One week

Severity 3: One month

Once the entire treatment time has elapsed, you must make a test to see if the treatment succeeded. This test uses the defensive characteristic from the same category as the trauma, add Pos. & Neg dice as normal. If the test succeeds, reduce the severity of the trauma by one. If this reduces the severity of a trauma to zero, the trauma is healed and can be removed from your character sheet. At the GM's discretion, when the severity of a trauma is reduced due to treatment, you can alter the nature of the trauma based on the in-progress healing.

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Characteristics

PHYSICAL

Dexterity (offensive): Dexterity is your coordination and general motor skills. Balance, speed, and grace are all governed by Dexterity.

Vitality (defensive): Vitality is your physical strength and toughness. It determines elements of your character ranging from how much weight you can lift to how well you resist disease and toxins.

MENTAL

Logic (offensive): Logic is your awareness of your surroundings and ability to think on your feet. If you are hacking into a secure computer system or noticing an ambush, Logic is the characteristic you are using.

Willpower (defensive): Willpower represents your memory and mental resilience. Everything from resisting the horrors of the world to recalling specific information from years ago uses Willpower.

SOCIAL

Charisma (offensive): Charisma is your general demeanor and social skills. It governs how easily you can use words and actions to sway others, whether through careful negotiation or harsh threats.

Empathy (defensive): Empathy is your ability to understand and sympathize with others. From determining whether someone is lying to predicting an adversary's next move, it can be very useful.

Stress

All stress is tallied on one of the three stress tracks in your three categories. Whenever you take points of stress, fill in an equal number of boxes on the stress track in the appropriate category, starting with the boxes in the first tier, proceeding up to the second once all three boxes in the first are full, and so on.

If all nine boxes in a category are full, you immediately die or experience a serious trauma.

Stress comes from two primary sources:

- Performing difficult or dangerous tests
- Experiencing traumatic events

➢Whenever you make a test, you gain a number of stress points equal to the negative dice left in the pool.

RECOVERING FROM STRESS

To reduce accumulated stress, you first need to diagnose the problem and realize how it is affecting you. By spending a short time analyzing how it has affected you, you can convert your stress into a trauma. This removes your stress from that track, but gives you a trauma in the same category. Traumas can hurt your performance by adding negative dice to tasks you attempt. However, they can also be cured over time.

OVERFLOW STRESS

Stress (cont)

It is not uncommon for a single source to deal enough stress to complete a stress track and “overflow” it. If you cling to life and have overflow stress, that overflow stress is recorded on your stress track after you remove the stress from the top two tiers.

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