

## Psionic Abilities and Powers Update

This handout features updated rules and additions to The Way of the Psionicist: Psionic Abilities and Powers. These new psionic rules appear in the DARK SUN Expanded and Revised Campaign Setting and AD&D Player's Option: Skills and Powers. Please incorporate this update into the use of these rules.

### Psionic Combat

Psionic combat is used by psionicists to open closed minds so that other psionic powers can be employed against them.

Psionic combat between psionicists should be a rare and momentous occasion, full of danger for both participants. During combat in the physical world, when a warrior of higher level confronts a lower-level fighter, the higher-level warrior has a distinct advantage. The same is true for battles on the psionic plane (also referred to as the mindscape).

When attacking a nonpsionic mind (a character with no PSP pool), one successful attack opens the target's mind.

When attacking a psionic mind, that mind remains closed until it is reduced to 0 PSPs or the attacker achieves a *critical mental hit*.

### Achieving a Critical Mental Hit

To achieve a critical mental hit and immediately open a closed mind, the following conditions must be met.

\* The attacker must roll a natural 18, 19, or 20 when making his MTHAC0 roll, and the roll must beat his MTHAC0 number by 5 or better.

*Example:* A 3rd-level psionicist with an MTHAC0 of 18 can achieve a critical mental hit against a target with a MAC 3, since he can roll a 20 and hit that target with 5 to spare. He can't achieve a critical mental hit against a target with a MAC 2 (or better), however.

*Example:* A 3rd-level wild talent with an MTHAC0 of 19 can achieve a critical mental hit against a target with a MAC 4, since she can roll a 20 and hit that target with 5 to spare. She can't achieve a critical mental hit against a target with a MAC 3 (or better), however.

\* The target must fail a saving throw vs. paralyzation, or the attacker must inflict enough mental damage in this attack to reduce the target's PSPs by 25% of its PSP pool maximum (not the target's current PSP amount). *If the damage is 25% or more of the PSP maximum, no saving throw is made.*

*Example: Ulcen of Tyr achieves a critical mental hit on Fenka of Raam. Fenka has a maximum of 40 PSPs. She has to either fail her saving throw vs. paralyzation, or Ulcen must inflict enough mental damage to cause Fenka to lose 25% of her PSP maximum in a single attack (10 or more PSPs) for Fenka's mind to become opened. Fenka can attempt a save if the damage is less than 25% of her PSP maximum, but not if it's equal to 25% or more.*

### **The Five Psionic Attacks**

The following changes have been made to the five psionic attacks.

\* **Ego Whip** inflicts 2-7 points of psionic damage (1d6+1) for every 4 PSPs the attacker spends. This is limited by the attacker's level; a 3rd-level psionicist can spend up to 12 PSPs (cost x level--4x3 =12) for 3d6+3 points of damage.

\* **Id Insinuation** inflicts 3-10 points of psionic damage (1d8+2) for every 6 PSPs the attacker spends. This is limited by the attacker's level; a 3rd-level psionicist can spend up to 18 PSPs (cost x level--6x3 =18) for 3d8+6 points of damage.

\* **Mind Thrust** inflicts 1-4 points of psionic damage (1d4) for every 2 PSPs the attacker spends. This is limited by the attacker's level; a 3rd-level psionicist can spend up to 6 PSPs (cost x level--2x3 =6) for 3d4 points of damage.

\* **Psionic Blast** inflicts 5-16 points of psionic damage (1d12+4) for every 10 PSPs the attacker spends. This is limited by the attacker's level; a 3rd-level psionicist can spend up to 30 PSPs (cost x level--10x3 =30) for 3d12+12 points of damage.

\* **Psychic Crush** inflicts 4-13 points of psionic damage (1d10+3) for every 8 PSPs the attacker spends. This is limited by the attacker's level; a 3rd-level psionicist can spend up to 24 PSPs (cost x level--8x3 =24) for 3d10+9 points of damage.

**Psionic Attack Reminder.** It is strongly recommended that every

player and DM create a set of psionic combat cards--the name of each attack and defense written on a separate index card. To secretly indicate how many PSPs you want to spend on an attack, place a die that shows the number you want to multiply the effect by. For example, if you want to multiply the effect of a mind thrust by 3 (a cost of 6 PSPs), place a die with a 3 showing.

***Psionic Attacks Rules Change.*** The number of PSPs an attacker puts into a psionic attack must be declared before the attack roll is made. The cost for failing the attack is one-half of the declared PSPs.

***Example:*** *Ulcen of Tyr decides to attack with a mind thrust. (His player places a mind thrust card face down in front of him.) He's a 4th-level psionicist and he wants to put everything he can into the attack. (His player sets a 1d6 under the card, hiding the face-up 4.) The base cost of a mind thrust is 2, so if the attack succeeds Ulcen will pay 8 PSPs ( $2 \times 4 = 8$ ) for 4d4 points of psionic damage. If the attack fails, the cost to Ulcen is 4 PSPs ( $8/2 = 4$ ).*

## **The Open Mind**

When a mind is voluntarily opened, there is no adverse effect (unless the psionicist uses a power that causes one). When a mind is forced open by psionic attack, however, the target suffers because of it.

\* An opened mind is vulnerable to psionic powers; the round in which a mind is opened, the attacker can use a psionic power on it.

\* A mind that has been forced open is stunned. It receives a +2 penalty to its initiative in the next round (only), and in that round it can spend PSPs to become closed. If the opened mind doesn't have enough PSPs, it remains open for  $1d4+1$  rounds (see below).

## **Closing the Open Mind**

Closing a nonpsionic mind hasn't changed. See page 10 in *The Way of the Psionicist* or page 149 in *S&P*.

Here are the new rules for closing a psionic mind.

\* If the mind was opened by a critical mental hit, the target can close its mind in the following round by spending PSPs equal to *double* the cost of

the last defense it used. So, if a mind was opened in the round it used the mental barrier defense (costs 5 PSPs) , it can close its mind in the next round by spending 10 PSPs (5x2=10).

\* If the mind opened by a critical mental hit doesn't have enough PSPs remaining or doesn't want to spend them, it remains open for 1d4+1 rounds. After that, a successful Wisdom check with a -3 penalty closes the mind. One check per round.

\* Rules concerning a mind opened by reducing it to 0 PSPs remain the same (page 11 of *WotP*).

### **Psionic Attacks Vs. Psionic Defenses**

When a psionic attack clashes with a psionic defense, cross-reference the two on the table to find the attacker's modifier. The modifier is applied to the *attacker's* MTHAC0 roll.

*Example: Fenka attacks Ulcen with a psychic crush. Ulcen defends with a thought shield. The resulting modifier is -4. This is applied to Fenka's MTHAC0 roll. She needs a 14 or better. She rolls a 16. 16-4=12. Ulcen's defense holds and Fenka's attack fails.*

### **Psionics Errata**

The following errata apply to the psionics system presented in the 1st printing of *Player's Option: Skills & Powers* and *The Way of the Psionicist* from the new DARK SUN boxed set.

**S&P p. 146, col. 1, [[paragraph]]2, sen. 2/WotP p. 7, [[paragraph]]7:**  
Change "That mind is now open and" to "A mind with 0 PSPs is open and ..."

**S&P p. 146, Table 75/WotP p. 8, Table II:** The second column heading should be "MTHAC0 Bonus." As these are bonuses, it might be easier to remember if the plusses are changed to minus signs.

**S&P p. 148, col. 1, [[paragraph]]3:** Cross-index the attack with the defense on Table 76.

**S&P p. 148, Table 76:** Reverse all plus and minus signs (but see "Psionic Attacks Vs. Psionic Defenses" above).

**S&P p. 155, col. 1, [[paragraph]]1:** The bonus proficiency is contact. There is no psionic defense proficiency.

**Note:** Table 76: Psionic Attacks vs. Psionic Defenses has been causing some confusion. If you have the first printing of the S&P book, the modifier you obtain from this chart applies to the attacker's MTHAC0 roll, not the MTHAC0 target number. Your PC's MTHAC0 doesn't change, simply apply the modifier from Table 76 to the result of your d20 roll.

**S&P 2nd Printing p. 148, col. 1, [[paragraph]]3:** Delete the last sentence of this paragraph.

**Note:** The 2nd printing of the book reverses the + and - signs on Table 76. This means that the modifier obtained from the table now applies to the attacker's MTHAC0 target number, not to the MTHAC0 roll. The effect is the same, only the nomenclature is different--mind thrust is still the best attack to use against mind blank, for example.

### Quick MACs for Monsters

To determine a monster's mental armor class (MAC), find its Intelligence on the table below. This provides a range for the monster's base MAC score. Then roll for a MAC modifier on either the high (for a creature with psionic abilities beyond those of a wild talent) or the low (for creatures with psionic abilities equivalent to wild talents or nonpsionic beings) psionic tables.

<b>Intelligence</b>	<b>Base MAC</b>
Non-	5-6
Animal	5-6
Semi-	7-8
Low	8-9
Average	8-10
Very	8-9
High	7-8
Exceptional	6-7
Genius	5-6
Supra	4-5
Godlike	2-3

### Quick MACs for High Psionic Creatures

<b>1d10 Roll</b>	<b>Modifier</b>
1-2	+1 MAC
3-4	No modifier

5-6	-1 MAC
7-8	-2 MAC
9	-3 MAC
10	-4 MAC

### **Quick MACs for Low Psionic Creatures**

<b>1d10 Roll</b>	<b>Modifier</b>
1	+2 MAC
2-3	+1 MAC
4-5	No modifier
6-8	-1 MAC
9	-2 MAC
10	-3 MAC