



HARP Sanity System

Table of Contents

Why A Sanity System?	2
Dark Knowledge (Re/SD).....	2
Sanity Check	3
Familiarity.....	3
Magical Research.....	3
Mental Breaks	3
Healing Breaks	4
Therapy.....	4
Cure Insanity Spell.....	4
Holding On To Sanity	4
Charms.....	4
New Talents.....	4
New Spells.....	4

Why A Sanity System?

Sanity Systems are a useful tool for campaigns where the unnatural is an anathema to common thought. For example the mere act casting real spells on Portage and Main in downtown Winnipeg would draw more than just the occasional stare and guffaw. It would radically challenge the witnesses' world view.

In more fantastic settings such things would not raise more than the hackles of caution. But even in a fantastic realm where giants and orcs are common place, the dead that walk and things from the depths of hell give a man pause... and more.

This system is only for GM's that want a touch of foreboding and dark horror elements to pervade the campaign. It makes confronting the unknown dangerous, and researching magic a thing of caution. The scale of it is dependent upon the cultural context of the campaign. In some settings terrible

things are more accepted than in others. This is completely left up to the GM's decision.

As is the extent of events that require a sanity check. A GM may decide that nothing short of a confrontation with a Demon or God would break a mans mind. Or he may feel that the death of a loved one could snap a mans mind. It really depends on the feeling you are trying to evoke.

Dark Knowledge (Re/SD)

The things you wish you never knew, the ones you can't escape from. The things that wake you screaming in a puddle of sweat. The strange notions that beckon you with glee, and the knife sitting there mocking you with dreams of its own.

Dark knowledge is earned like a scar, and unlike other skills no development points are spent in acquisition. When a person is traumatized by horrible events BEYOND SOCIETAL NORMS they have a chance of glimpsing the dark knowledge.

When they poke into too many corners and read forbidden things they can learn dark knowledge. Unlike arcane lore it serves no useful purpose, it only destabilizes a mind that holds it.

Unlike other skills ranks are gained contrary to intention by failing sanity checks or through research. Also unlike other skills the Stat Bonus is negatively applied. So a character without trauma in life begins with a negative stat bonus (Re/SD) and a -25 for no ranks.

When ranks are acquired the characters mind begins the slide into madness, the further you go the faster you go. Ranks are never forgotten, never healed.

Example: *Gorlenfink a Gnome Mage begins with (Re/SD) of (-11-3)= -14 since at this point he has gained no ranks in Dark Knowledge he also has a -25 giving him a -39 total.*

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Sanity Check

When something truly monumental happens, like a death of a loved one, seeing the dead walk, a massive battle and a field bathed in blood, or summoning your first demon a check is made to see whether the character assimilates the event or whether the event breaks the character.

To make a sanity check the character makes a will save minus the Dark Knowledge score. The difficulty is determined by the GM to suit the situation. And the result is compared to the Sanity CRR table.

A character encountering an Undead Class I for example would make a check at Light difficulty CRR. For each Class of undead higher the difficulty would increase by one. So a Class IV undead would be a Very Hard difficulty.

Other modifiers for life shattering events are left to the GM's discretion. Remember though it is a long campaign try not to break their spirit to early... that way when you break them later it will hurt all the more.

SANITY CASCADING RESISTANCE ROLLS	
RR	No Effect: Your world view is unchanged what you have seen / learned
RR - 10	Shaken: The ease with which you once saw the world is gone... doubt and suspicion creep into even mundane situations.
RR - 20	Paranoid: The world is not as it seems... you are not who you think you are... something is very wrong here. Mundane situations are fraught with tension. Lasts for 1d10 times 1d10 hours. One rank Dark Knowledge gained
RR - 30	Delusional: They are listening to my thoughts, must not let them know, until I am ready for them. Oh no they can see my plan... the voices. Must remain calm. They smell fear. Lasts for 1d10 times 1d10 hours. Two ranks Dark Knowledge gained.
RR - 40	Temporary Break: A complete break with reality occurs for 1d10 times 1d10 hours. Reactions are random and rolled on the Break Chart below. Three ranks Dark Knowledge gained.
Failure	Permanent Break: A permanent break with reality has been formed. Roll on the Break Chart to determine the type. Five ranks Dark Knowledge Gained. The break needs professional or magical healing.

Familiarity

It does breed contempt, or so I'm told. Each time characters encounter the same type of trauma or Class of unnatural creature the difficulty is lowered one level. So after a few encounters with low level undead, they simply become mundane.

Magical Research

This dangerous pursuit can also bring on a check since the learning of sigils requires a mental leap. In the same tomes that useful spells are writ, dark secrets best left uncovered also lurk.

The danger of learning a spell or ritual is proportional to its base PP cost. For every five ranks of base PP cost the difficulty increases by one (starting from Light). So a 20 PP ritual (before the doubling) would be an Extremely Hard modifier. This is only rolled after the base amount of ranks to cast the spell or ritual are achieved (but before casting penalties)

Unlike encounters no Familiarity reduction is allowed. Spell research is dangerous.

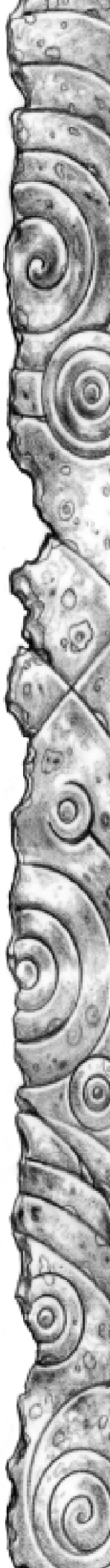
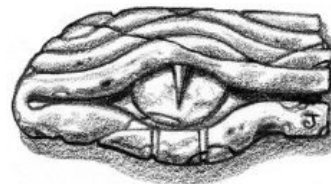
Mental Breaks

Characters in a mental break are unresponsive, capable of no actions, must be led around, tended, and cared for at all times. Some must even be restrained. Sleep inducing herbs and spells are essential tools in dealing with the broken, as are gags and ropes.

All actions of broken minds are at a -30 and random in nature. All attacks are without parry or other manoeuvres.

Let the players have fun acting out the insanity.

BREAK CHART	
Roll	Break Type
1	Catatonia
2	Nonsensical gibbering
3	Constant screaming
4	Constant laughing
5	Self directed violence
6	Random outward violence
7	Fractured personalities
8	Child like state
9	Repetitive obsessive speech
10	Repetitive obsessive actions





Healing Breaks

Therapy

Therapy from a qualified practitioner can reduce the length of time for a temporary break by rolling a very hard manoeuvre roll on the percentage table. The result is the shortening of the break. Only one attempt can be made for temporary breaks.

Permanent Breaks have a chance per year of being cured, the practitioner attempts a sheer folly manoeuvre to find the Percentage chance of healing the break that year. The player then rolls simple percentile dice. For the character to come out of it the player must roll below the practitioner's result.

Example: Gorlenfink has been in protective care for a year, his mental health practitioner is accomplished (skill +50). He rolls an 87. Since this is a Sheer Folly manoeuvre the result is $50+87-80=57$. So Gorlenfink must roll a 50 or less to escape his mental break.

Cure Insanity Spell

Most breaks are caused by exposure to concepts well beyond normal experience, whether it be spell research, exposure to a mystical event, or confrontation with powers demonic and divine. Only the *full scaling* of the spell (9 PP) will have any effect.

Holding On To Sanity

Long term, lets face it, you need to keep your mind. So how in a world fraught with challenges to mind and soul does one do that?

The first and most obvious method is to funnel a few extra ranks into Will Saves as a preventative. But once ranks in Dark Knowledge begin to accumulate other measures must be taken, well here are a few methods for good mental health.

Charms

Charms and talismans of warding vs sanity must be *specific to a creature or circumstance* and carry a heavy price tag. Use the Steady Mind Spell for base PP cost for these items.

These do have the advantage of perpetual protection, but cannot be used for spell research without inhibiting the research in equal measure.

New Talents

MENTAL RESILIENCE (DP 30) - Character gains a special -25 bonus to Dark Knowledge. This may only be take once.

BLISSFUL IGNORANCE (DP 15) - Character is generally unaware of the deeper implications of his surroundings. Character gains a Special -25 bonus to Dark Knowledge and a -10 penalty to Perception. This talent may not be taken with Mental Resilience.

New Spells

Steady Mind

PP COST: 4
RANGE: Self
DURATION: 1 round / rank
RR: -
SPELL TYPE: Utility
SPHERES: Universal

DESCRIPTION: Caster gains a + 20 bonus to sanity checks for the duration. This cannot be used for spell research without inhibiting the research in equal measure.

Scaling Options:

Increase Bonus (for each additional +10) +2 PP
Increase Targets (additional target, touch) +4 PP
Increase Duration (5 rounds / rank) +6 PP
Increase Duration (10 rounds /rank) +10 PP

Fragile Mind

PP COST: 5
RANGE: 10'
DURATION: 1 round / rank
RR: Magic
SPELL TYPE: Attack
SPHERES: Harper, Cleric, Necromancer

DESCRIPTION: Target gains a -30 penalty to sanity checks for the duration. This subtle manipulation spell can be used to cause great mischief in the wrong hands.

Scaling Options:

Increase Range (+50') +1 PP
Increase Penalty (for each additional -10) +2 PP
Increase Targets (per additional target) +4 PP
Increase Duration (5 rounds / rank) +6 PP
Increase Duration (10 rounds /rank) +10 PP