

Psionics

Extension Module for Fate's Edge

Design Philosophy: Psionics in Fate's Edge represents the disciplined mastery of the mind's hidden potentials. Unlike the chaotic forces of magic or the structured pacts of Patrons, psionic power comes from within, shaped by will and honed by practice. This internal source makes psions both powerful and vulnerable—their greatest strength is also their most dangerous weakness.

Introduction: The Mind Ascendant

In the shadowed courts and ancient ruins where Fate's Edge adventurers tread, power comes in many forms. Some bargain with Patrons, others weave elemental forces, and still others summon spirits from beyond. But there exists a subtler path—one that requires no oaths, no incantations, no material components. This is the path of Psionics, where the disciplined mind becomes the greatest tool of all.

Psionics represents the evolution of human potential, the unlocking of abilities that science claims impossible and magic struggles to explain. Where a warlock might call lightning from the sky, a psion shapes reality through the sheer force of thought. Where a mage might scry through mystical mirrors, a psion reaches across space with their consciousness alone.

But this power comes at a cost. The mind that bends reality to its will also bears the scars of that bending. Mental Fatigue becomes as real a threat as physical exhaustion, and the constant strain of psychic activity can fracture even the strongest psyche.

1 Core Mechanics

1.1 Mental Fatigue Track

Your Mental Fatigue track represents your capacity for sustained psychic activity, combining both mental acuity and spiritual resilience.

$$\text{Mental Fatigue} = \text{Spirit} + \text{Wits}$$

This creates a unique resource pool that emphasizes the mental and spiritual aspects of psionic power. High Spirit *or* Wits characters can become effective psions, but true masters often excel in both.

1.2 Psionics Skill

Psionics is a learned Art that requires dedicated study and practice. Unlike magical paths that might be granted through Patronage, psionic abilities must be earned through XP investment.

Psionics (0-5): This skill represents your training, control, and understanding of psychic phenomena. You cannot use psionic Arts without investing in this skill.

1.3 Resolution

All psionic effects use the standard Fate's Edge resolution system:

Wits or Spirit + Psionics vs. DV

Choose your Attribute based on the effect:

- **Wits + Psionics:** Precision, subtlety, mental effects, quick actions
 - **Spirit + Psionics:** Raw power, spiritual effects, duration, sustained effort
- DV is set by the GM based on narrative scope (2-5+).

2 Psionic Consequence Tracks

To streamline play, psionic consequences use centralized tracks rather than per-Art clocks.

2.1 Mental Resonance [4]

Tracks general psionic activity and attracts attention.

- **Mark when:**
 - Using DV 4+ psionic effects
 - Maintaining effects for 2+ scenes
 - Using 2+ different Arts in one scene
 - Extended combat psionic use
- **When Full:** Gain 1 free psionic use (no Mental Fatigue cost), BUT attract psionic attention (GM draws from Deck of Consequences)
- **Clear by:** Meditation scene or psychic dampening effect

2.2 Psychic Contamination [6]

Tracks harmful or aggressive psionic use.

- **Mark when:** Using Psychic Assault, harmful Telepathy, causing mental Harm, or aggressive mind intrusion
- **When Half Full:** -1 die to social rolls, generate +1 SB when using psychic abilities
- **When Full:** Gain "Psychic Scars" (-1 die to social rolls), attract psychic predators
- **Clear by:** Psychic cleansing rituals, meditation, or specific XP expenditure

2.3 Echo Traces [4]

Tracks scrying and precognitive activities.

- **Mark when:** Using Clairvoyance, Precognition, extended psychic sensing, or probing multiple minds
- **When Full:** Leave psychic traces that can be tracked by other psions
- **Clear by:** Psychic concealment, changing location, or time passage

3 Psionic Arts

3.1 Telekinesis

Attribute: Spirit + Psionics (raw force), Wits + Psionics (precision)

SB Generation: Based on mass/force level

Effect increases DV and generates additional SB:

- **Light (DV 2-3):** No additional SB
- **Medium (DV 4):** +1 SB on Partial/Miss
- **Heavy (DV 5+):** +2 SB on Partial/Miss, +1 SB on Success

Mechanical Benefits:

- Can be used as a weapon (Harm based on force)
- Can provide cover or barriers
- Can manipulate objects at range

Example: Moving a cup (DV 2) vs. hurling a boulder (DV 5)

3.2 Telepathy

Attribute: Wits + Psionics

SB Generation: Based on depth of intrusion

- **Surface Thoughts:** No additional SB
- **Emotional State:** +1 SB on Partial/Miss
- **Deep Memories:** +2 SB on Partial/Miss, +1 SB on Success

Mechanical Benefits:

- Read intentions before social interactions
- Communicate silently with party members
- Detect lies and deception

Defensive Mechanic: Targets can resist, converting attacker's successes to SB against them

3.3 Clairvoyance

Attribute: Wits + Psionics

SB Generation: Based on range and complexity

- **Near Range:** No additional SB
- **Distant Range:** +1 SB on Partial/Miss
- **Complex Scrying:** +2 SB on Partial/Miss, +1 SB on Success

Mechanical Benefits:

- Scout ahead without physical presence
- See through illusions and magical concealment
- Gather intelligence from afar

Consequence: Marks Echo Traces [4] clock

3.4 Biofeedback

Attribute: Spirit + Psionics

SB Generation: Based on intensity of effect

- **Minor Healing (DV 2):** No additional SB, heal Harm up to Psionics skill level
- **Moderate Healing (DV 3):** +1 SB on Partial/Miss, heal Harm up to Psionics skill level
- **Major Healing (DV 4+):** +2 SB on Partial/Miss, +1 SB on Success, heal Harm up to Psionics skill level

Mechanical Benefits:

- Convert 1 Harm to 1 Mental Fatigue (1:1 ratio, max = Psionics skill level)
- Enhance physical abilities temporarily (+1 die to physical rolls)
- Suppress pain and physical debilities

Limitations:

- Cannot heal Harm above your Psionics skill level
- Cannot heal during active combat without -1 Position penalty
- Marks Mental Resonance when healing

3.5 Astral Projection

Attribute: Spirit + Psionics

SB Generation: Based on distance and duration

- **Near Projection:** No additional SB
- **Distant Projection:** +1 SB per range band beyond Near
- **Extended Duration:** +1 SB per additional scene

Mechanical Benefits:

- Move through physical barriers
- Scout dangerous locations safely
- Communicate across vast distances

Vulnerabilities:

- Physical body is Unconscious/Helpless
- Non-physical interactions generate SB
- Harm to astral form affects physical body

Ultimate Risk: Death in astral form = Death in physical form

3.6 Psychic Assault

Attribute: Wits or Spirit + Psionics

SB Generation: Always generates +1 SB (inherently disruptive)

- **Minor Assault (DV 2-3):** No additional SB beyond base +1
- **Moderate Assault (DV 4):** +1 additional SB
- **Severe Assault (DV 5+):** +2 additional SB

Mechanical Benefits:

- Deal direct mental Harm to targets
- Bypass physical armor and defenses
- Can target specific mental faculties

Consequence: Marks Psychic Contamination [6] clock

3.7 Mind Shield

Attribute: Wits + Psionics

SB Generation: Based on intensity of protection

- **Passive Defense:** No additional SB
- **Active Barrier:** +1 SB per psychic effect blocked
- **Area Protection:** +2 SB, marks Mental Resonance

Mechanical Benefits:

- Resist psychic intrusion and telepathy
- Protect allies from mental effects
- Create zones of psychic dampening

Paradox: Protecting others costs double Mental Fatigue

3.8 Empathic Manipulation

Attribute: Presence + Psionics

SB Generation: Based on emotional intensity

- **Subtle Influence (DV 2-3):** No additional SB
- **Moderate Manipulation (DV 4):** +1 SB on Partial/Miss
- **Strong Influence (DV 5+):** +2 SB on Partial/Miss, +1 SB on Success

Mechanical Benefits:

- Improve social interaction Position (+1 step)
- Calm hostile creatures
- Inspire or demoralize groups

Risk: You experience the emotions you're trying to induce

3.9 Precognition

Attribute: Spirit + Psionics

SB Generation: Inherent to the Art (+1 SB minimum)

- **Minor Visions (DV 2-3):** +1 SB total
- **Major Sight (DV 4):** +2 SB total
- **Detailed Prophecy (DV 5+):** +3 SB total

Mechanical Benefits:

- Gain advantage on future rolls (GM discretion)
- Avoid specific dangers
- See probable outcomes of decisions

Consequence: Marks Echo Traces [4] clock

Paradox - Future Fixation: When Echo Traces fills from precognition:

- Players lose 1 Boon per session until cleared
- Certain actions become Desperate Position due to "fighting fate"
- Lasts until next Downtime OR significant choice that defies the vision

Psionic Costs

3.10 Base Costs

- **Activation:** 1 Mental Fatigue
- **Maintenance:** 1 Mental Fatigue per Scene/Significant Time
- **Skill Requirement:** Must invest XP in Psionics skill

Psionic Consequences

3.11 Mental Fatigue Overflow

When Mental Fatigue exceeds your track:

1. Increase Harm by one level (e.g., 0→Harm 1, Harm 1→Harm 2, Harm 2→Harm 3)
2. Clear all Mental Fatigue to 0

3.12 Psionic Backlash

All psionic rolls that generate 1s create Story Beats for the GM, representing:

- Mental strain and headaches
- Psychic feedback affecting other abilities
- Attracting unwanted attention from psychic entities
- Temporary loss of specific psionic abilities

3.13 Consequence Track Resolution

When consequence tracks fill:

- **Mental Resonance Full:** Gain 1 free psionic use, attract attention (Deck draw)
- **Psychic Contamination Half Full:** Social penalty, increased SB generation
- **Psychic Contamination Full:** Permanent Psychic Scars, predator attraction
- **Echo Traces Full:** Leave detectable psychic signature

3.14 Long-term Effects

Prolonged psionic use can lead to permanent Conditions:

- **Psychic Scars:** -1 die to social rolls due to mental trauma
- **Migraine Sensitivity:** -1 Position in bright lights or noisy environments
- **Empathic Resonance:** Constantly feel others' emotions as background noise
- **Astral Echo:** Leave faint psychic traces that can be tracked

Psionic Society

3.15 The Silent Orders

Psionic practitioners rarely form large, public organizations. Instead, they gather in small, secretive conclaves known as Silent Orders. These groups share techniques, warn of dangers, and maintain the delicate balance between using their powers and being consumed by them.

3.16 The Psionic Underground

In many regions, psionic abilities are feared or outlawed. Practitioners must hide their talents or face persecution. This has led to the development of the Psionic Underground—a network of safe houses, coded signals, and false identities that allow psions to move freely while concealing their true nature.

3.17 Psionic Artifacts

Objects that have been exposed to strong psionic energies can retain psychic imprints. These artifacts might enhance psionic abilities, store mental energy, or even house fragments of consciousness. However, they often carry the mental scars of their previous users.

GM Guidance

3.18 Introducing Psionics

Psionics should feel rare and mysterious. Not every NPC should have psychic abilities, and when they do, it should be notable. Consider making psionic practitioners:

- Members of secretive orders
- Individuals who have undergone specific training or trauma
- People with unique genetic or spiritual heritage

3.19 Balancing Psionic Power

Psionics can be incredibly versatile. To maintain balance:

- Emphasize the consequence tracks and SB generation
- Use Story Beats liberally for psychic activities
- Introduce psionic-specific threats (psychic predators, mental parasites)
- Remember that Mental Fatigue overflow leads to real Harm

3.20 Psionic Antagonists

Enemies with psionic abilities present unique challenges:

- They can bypass physical defenses
- They might know the PCs' plans before they're enacted
- They can turn the PCs' emotions against them
- They leave no physical evidence of their crimes

3.21 Psionic Encounter Design

When designing encounters for psionic characters:

- Include psychic dampening fields (reduce Psionics dice)
- Feature enemies with Mind Shield or psychic immunity
- Create scenarios where psionic use attracts unwanted attention
- Design social encounters where telepathy reveals hidden agendas

Character Options

3.22 Psionic Talents

Characters can invest XP in psionic-specific Talents:

- **Psionic Resilience (3 XP):** +1 to Mental Fatigue track
- **Focused Mind (4 XP):** Reduce SB generation from psionic use by 1 (minimum 1)
- **Psychic Synergy (5 XP):** When assisting another psion, both gain +1 die
- **Mental Fortress (6 XP):** Immune to non-magical psychic intrusion
- **Expanded Resonance (4 XP):** Mental Resonance clock increases to [6]
- **Echo Dampener (3 XP):** Reduce Echo Traces generation by 1 (minimum 1)
- **Contamination Control (4 XP):** Psychic Contamination clock increases to [8]

3.23 Psionic Complications

Consider these Complications for psionic characters:

- **Uncontrolled Talent:** Your powers activate involuntarily under stress
- **Psychic Mark:** You're known to psionic hunters or organizations
- **Mental Parasite:** A fragment of another consciousness shares your mind
- **Empathic Overflow:** You constantly feel others' emotions, making social interaction difficult
- **Temporal Sensitivity:** You occasionally glimpse possible futures, generating Story Beats

Comparison to Other Paths

3.24 Psionics vs. Cantor's Path

Both represent internalized power, but:

- **Psionics:** No Corruption Clock, instant effects, diverse Arts, consequence tracks
- **Cantor:** Corruption progression, delayed effects, mimics existing Rites, Push It mechanic

3.25 Psionics vs. Runekeeper

- **Psionics:** Autonomous, Mental Fatigue resource, SB/consequence focus
- **Runekeeper:** Patron-dependent, Obligation resource, Push It for power

3.26 Psionics vs. Freeform Caster

- **Psionics:** Defined Arts with unique mechanics, single roll activation, consequence tracks
- **Caster:** Elemental flexibility, Weave+Cast requirement, Backlash risk, freeform effects

3.27 Psionics vs. Invoker

- **Psionics:** Instant effects, personal resource management, consequence tracks
- **Invoker:** Ritual preparation, Symbol maintenance, Crack the Seal for emergencies

Conclusion: The Mind's Edge

Psionics in Fate's Edge represents the ultimate expression of human potential—and its greatest peril. The disciplined mind that can move mountains with thought can also be shattered by the weight of that responsibility. Every psionic practitioner walks a razor's edge between godlike power and complete mental collapse.

With streamlined consequence tracks and clear mechanical benefits for each Art, this final revision provides a balanced and playable psionic system. The focus on Story Beat generation and centralized consequence management maintains the flow of Fate's Edge while providing the unique mechanical identity psionics deserves.

This extension offers tools for players who want to explore the depths of mental discipline, and for GMs who wish to introduce subtle, mind-bending threats to their campaigns. Remember that psionics is not just another form of magic—it is the manipulation of reality itself through the power of consciousness.

Use these rules to tell stories where the greatest battles are fought in the space between thoughts, where the most dangerous weapons cannot be seen, and where the line between hero and monster is drawn in the architecture of the mind itself.

The future belongs to those who can shape it with their thoughts alone. Will you be among them?