DragonNet RPG

Planescape related ideas

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1. An alternative to alignment

Need one or more gauges/scales which indicates a characters moral standings. The character position on these gauges/scales will influence where his soul will go after death. Those adhering to a diety will probably go where the diety decides, depending on how faithfull they have been. Need a way to measure this. Also need a way of measuring moral standings of characters not adhering to a diety.

Proposal #1: A set of binary scales where each scale is poled by two opposing concepts.

During play, characters will slide back and forth on these scales depending on their actions and intentions. When they finally die, the position they have on the various scales will determen to what Outer Plane their soul will go to. Their position on the scales will also influence how well they fit in and how confortable they will be when visiting the Outer Planes.

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Ex: Moral concepts
Malevolent - Benevolent (allmost Good - Evil; to fuzzy?)
Static - Dynamic
Passive - Agressive
Active - Passive
Orderly - Chaotic
Persistent - Caducous
Constructive - Destructive
Apathetic - ?
Empathic/Empathetic - ?
Oportunistic
Compassionate -
creative -
organized

Potential candidates:
Liberal - Conservative
sensible - foolhardy/rash/impulsive
Spontaneous/Impulsive - Controlled/diciplined/restrained
Calm - Restless
joyful - gloomy
immoral/vicious - virtuous/righteous
brutal - gentle
playful - serious
Social - Reserved
genuine - descreet
savage - civilized
diciplined - indulgent
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Table 1. Personality Traits

Trait	similar traits	Trait	similar traits
Cautious	*unadventurous*	Reckless	*rash/adventurous*
Indifferent	*apathetic*	Sympathetic	empathic
Merciful	*forgiving/benevolent/ peaceful/harmonious*	Merciless	*vengeful/cruel/relentless/ malevolent/sadistic*
Humble		Proud	
Vigilant	*suspicious/worldly*	Trusting	*naive*
Independent	*confident/individualism/ creative?/free-spirited*	Reliant	*insecure*

Trait	similar traits	Trait	similar traits
Deceptive	*malevolent/calculating/ manipulating/untruthful*	Honorable	*fair*
Competitive		Cooperative	*united*
Selfish	*power-hungry/greedy*	Generous	*selfless/common good*
Emotional	*passionate/impulsive/ spontaneous/ boisterous/hearty/fierce*	Composed	*intellectual/diciplined/ (self-)controlled/emotionless*
Instinctive	*destructive?/wild/ savage/uncivilized*	Rational	*orderly/organized/ civilized/logical*
Cowardly		Brave	
Dominant	*supressive/agressive?/brutal*	Submissive	*passive/gentle*
Pragmatic	*flexible/dynamic/ opportunistic/creative?*	Idealistic	*rigid/lawful/persistent/ conservative/static*

These binary scales will be reflected in the "alignment" of the various Outer Planes.

Abyss - Chaotic, Malevolent, Selfish, Instinctive, Spontaneous, Agressive, Merciless, Brutal, Cruel, Power-hungry, Dominating, Destructive

Acheron - Dominating, Ordely, Disciplined, Supressive, Cruel, Agressive, Cooperative/United, Relentless

Arborea - Spontaneous, Impulsive, Emoitonal, Dynamic, Adventurous, Benevolent, Boisterous, Wild, Passionate, Heartly, Fierce, Competitive, Celebrant, Creative

Arcadia - Peaceful, Benevolent, Orderly, Organized, Common good, Lawful, Harmoneous

Baator - Dominating, Rigid, Malevolent, Oportunistic, Power-hungry, Cruel, Agressive, Selfish, Sadistic, Greedy, Calculating, (Self-)controlled, Manipulating

Beastlands, the - Wild, Uncivilized, Instinctive, Savage

Bytopia - Individualism, Peaceful, Persistent, Creative, Organized, Industrious, Unadventurous, Fair, Cooperative

Carceri - Dominating, (Rigid), Cruel, Cunning, Untruthfull, Malevolent

Elysium - Sympathetic, Benevolent, Selfless, Empathic, Passive, Cautious, Merciful, Peaceful, Independent, Emotional

Gehenna - Greedy, Selfish

Gray Waste, the - Caducous, Indifferent, Malevolent, Selfish, Merciless, Apatethic, Hopeless, Emotionless

Limbo - Chaotic, Dynamic, Indifferent

Mechanus - Orderly, Rational, Controlled, Conservative, Static, Persistent, Rigid, Organized, Emotionless, Logical

Mount Celestia - Peaceful, Organized, Merciful, Benevolent

Pandemonium - Lonely, Maddening

Ysgard - Agressive, Persistent, Adventurous, Individualistic, Free-spirited, Fierce, Competitive

A macabre example: Consider a Mage skilled in Portal/Travel magic (and maybe som Soul magic). One way he might do a Planeshift spell could be to seek out a person with matching "moral" as the plane he wish to travel to. Then, through some sort of ritual the Mage could release the victims soul from his physical body and let it find its way to the Plane it belongs. The Mage would then be able to use this "conduit" as an express route and hitch-hike to the intended Plane. Nifty! :-)

A character's position on the various scales will to some degree be reflected on the character's Aura.

2. Backgrounds

Backgrounds are like Gifts and Flaws only they relate more to a character's history rahter than to a character's abilities.

Freeform text is a fairly good way of describing a characters background. Would it be even better to combine it with predetermened backgrounds as in the Storyteller system?

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Ex:
Bloodline (depending on definition, could be a Gift or Flaw or both)
Bloodline, Planetouched - Someone of your ancestors where not human.
Resources
Social Status/Influence
Allies
Enemies
Secret Identity
Contacts
Devine Spark - the Spark of the upper planes; potential God? Wherever you thread, light follows. Easily
Infernal Taint - the Taint of Evil runs through your vains. Darkness surrounds you. Intimidating. You s
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Backgrounds should be characteristics relating to characters, to characters history, etc. Where Gifts and Flaws are [internal] characteristics of a character, Backgrounds are [external] characteristics. Gifts and Flaws are inate characteristics a character is born with. Backgrounds are characteristics that are accumulated over a period of time in a character's history. Backgrounds tend to be of a more social nature than Gifts and Flaws.

Purpose of predefined Backgrounds.

• To work as hooks and inspiration for describing a character's history.

• To be a guide on what aspects of a character's history to focus on that could be relevant in a game session.

• By assosiating each Background with a value (but not making it a Gauge - that is, not have it increase during play) we will have a way of grading Backgrounds (to indicate its severity/power) and also to compare characters and NPCs with the same or relating Backgrounds.

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Example Background values:
    | Severity/Power
---|---------------
 1 | Minor
 2 |
 3 | Moderate
 4 |
 5 | Extreme
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3. Combat

Key factors that determine the lethality of a weapon: Control, Impact and Range

Control: How easy the weapon is to use.

Impact: The degree of damage that can be done with the weapon, depending on the weapon's mass and velocity of the part that hits the target. Momentum $p = mv$, where m is the object's constant mass and v the velocity.

3.1. Thoughts on combat actions

Every combatant can do 1 offensive action per round unless otherwise specified. For each additional offensive action taken during a round, a penalty of 5 is subtracted from ALL actions that round. So making an additional attack will reduce both attacks AND all defences by 5 for that round. [Offensive action penalty = -5 x (# of attacks - 1)

Every combatant is considered to defend themselves unless otherwise specified and will get to defend against all incoming attacks. However, defending against multiple opponents is more difficult than defending against a single opponent. For each opponent except the first, all defence checks are done with a -5 penalty. So defending against two opponents will reduce both defence checks by 5. Defending against three opponents will reduce all three defence checks by 10, and so on. [Defensive action penalty = -5 x (# of opponents - 1)

Offensive and defensive action penalties are cumulative.

Example 1.

Making two attacks against two opponents in addition to defending against both of them will result in a total penalty of -10 on all actions: -5 for the additional attack -5 for defending against the second opponent = -10

4. Cultures

The scope of a given culture may vary, but at most it should govern an entire Plane. May be narrowed down to a Layer, Realm or even City.

Abyssal.

- Description: Inhabitants of the Abyss are too chaotic and unorganized to have any form of culture. Survival of the fittest.

- Typical careers: None in particular

Cager.

- Description: Spent most, if not all, of your life in the Cage.

- Typical careers: Guide/Tout, Merchant, Mercenary, ...

Norse.

- Description:

- Typical careers: Merchant, Warrior, Seidr, Volve, ...

Baatorian.

- Description: The Baatorian culture is a cruel one, based on desception and backstabbing.

- Typical careers: Merchant, Slaver, Scout, Trooper, Warrior, ...

...

- Description:

- Typical careers:

5. Gifts and Flaws

Equation 1. Gift and Flaw Cost

Cost = Base Cost x Severity x Frequency

All factors range from 1 to 5 [1:5]. Gifts have positive Severity. Flaws have negative Severity.

Purpose of Base Cost (BC): To scale the cost of gifts and flaws to the same "range" as skills and specialties. BC for gifts and flaws probably be the average of skills and specialties BC range. Ex: Skills & Specs BC range: [1:5] => Gift & Flaw BC: $(1+5)/2 = 3$.

Purpose of Severity (SEV): To scale the cost of gifts and flaws depending on how impacting they will be during game play when it comes into play.

Purpose of Frequency (FRQ): To scale the cost of gifts and flaws depending on how often they come into play.

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    |Severity   | Frequency
----|---------------------
 1  | Noticable | Rare (1-2 during a campaign lasting several adventures)
 2  | Mild      | Sometimes (1-2 during an adventure lasting a few sessions)
 3  | Moderate  | Frequent (1-2 during a game session)
 4  | Severe    | Often (Almost every encounter/conflict/pressed situation)
 5  | Extreme   | Almost always (self explanatory)
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Example Gifts:
Blessed - some advantagous effect
Teleportation - instantanious movement from A to B. Quick activation but strains the body to the extrem
Planeshifting - move to another Plane by the power of WIL. Must focus on destination.
Nightvision - can see as if daylight with the most minimal lightsource, only B/W vision
Telepathy - mental communication with other entities
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Regeneration - accelerated healing

Example Flaws:
Cursed - some disadvantagous effect
Phobia - fear of something
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6. New Heaps

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Insanity
Reputation (could also be a Background)
Taint
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Purpose of Reputation: - Can work as a plot hook by letting NPCs have knowledge of the character's deeds and seek him out for a job. - Characters can be reconized on the streets - for better or for worse. Potential plot hook. Should reputation be a binary scale? Ex: balancing between Fame and Infamy. Or should it simply be a measure of how known the character is - regardless of how "positive" or "negative" this would be?

Purpose of Insanity: Some places and situations will seriously affect a character's state of sanity. (Ex: The howling winds of Pandemonium). The Insanity heap could be a measure of a character's current state of mental health. The more a character is exposed to dementing situations the higher the heap will be. How to decrease the heap? I.e. how to get rid of insanity? Checks involving Will Power and maybe Psyche.

Porpose of Taint:

7. Journal

A tool for players to document their character's progress and adventures. The journal could be a wrapper for all sheets relevant to a character. Ex: Character Tamplate, Gate/Portal Key Register, Aquaintances, Places Visited, etc.

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This is the journal of _____
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8. Magic

"To the magician the magical act, that of causing a transformation in a thing or things with or without any physical contact, is accomplished by an imaginative act accompanied by the will that the wanted change will occur. The magical act and imaginative act becomes one and the same. The magician knows with certainty that for the change to occur he must will it to happen and firmly believe it will happen. Here it may be noted that magic and religion are akin: both require belief that a miracle will occur."

Willpower should be an integral part of doing magic. Only the really headstrong and will-full should be able to change reality by will alone.

When power is drawn from external sources (internal being the mage himself), other attributes than willpower should be considered. More spiritual attributes might be used - as in psyche, or maybe even aura as in gaining the "favour" of an entity able to bestow power on the mage.

I'm thinking gathering the necessary energy should be tiring and hence increase fatigue. Controlling or conducting the energy should.. Source uses WIL Conductor uses PSY/INT

How magic works mechanicaly:

1. When the desired effect, source and conductor is decided, the mage starts to gather the energy (Source check). This should take time proportional to the energy gathered. A mage should have a potential that will limit the amount of energy he is able to gather at any one time. If this potential is exceeded, the mage could (read: should) be in trouble. The mage is using his own body/soul/ whatnot as a temporary storage for the gathered energy. Exceeding the potential may result in overload!

2. When the desired amount of energy is gathered, the mage will then channel this energy into the desired effect (Conductor check). If this check fails, magic is astray and weird things might happen. This should take time proportional to the intricacy of the desired effect. The more complex the effect, the more time is required. The process may be speed up at the cost of an increased Conductor TD.

Gather, contain, conduct. Your typical Fireball[TM] spell.

Gather, conduct while continued gathering (continuous flow of energy). This would be more subtle effects over a prolonged period of time (seconds, minutes, days, even years).

Aim conduction, gather and conduct (continuous flow of energy).

Magical potential: Could use a mage's Magical Source skill. Gathered energy = Magical Source tr lvl [+ Talent (WIL?)]

8.1. Magic and the Planes

How do the Planes affect the various ways of performing Magic?

Elemental magic should be enhanced when performed on the Elemental Planes. For instance, Fire magic should be enhanced on the Plane of Fire, Earth magic should be enhanced on the Plane of Earth, etc.

Similarilty, specific conductors of elemental magic should be diminished or even cancelled when used on unrelated or opposed Elemental Planes. Fire cancelled on the Plane of Water, Air on the Plane of Earth, etc.

9. Soul

soul syn with psyche

soul - the spiritual nature of humans, regarded as immortal, separable from the body at death, and susceptible to happiness or misery in a future state

ghost - the visible disembodied soul of a dead person

spirit - the vital principle or animating force within living things

10. Synergy bonus amongst skills

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Combat - +1 per CL of Athletics


CL = Competency Level (1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, 21-25, 26+)


Skill Template
Name:
BC:
Description:
Example specialties:
Synergy:
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11. Weapon Clasification

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Ranged Weapons (Used with Ranged Combat Skill)
- Bows (Specialty)
-- Short Bow
-- Long Bow

- X-bows (Specialty)
-- Light X-bow
-- Normal X-bow
-- Heavy X-bow

- Thrown (Specialty)
-- Daggers/Knives
-- Spears

Close Weapons (used with Close Combat Skill)
- Articulated (Specialty)
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- Daggers
- Swords
- Axes
- Polearms (Specialty)
- Staves (Specialty)

Weapon Style Specialties
 One-Handed
 One-Handed and Shield
 Two-Handed
 Dual Weapons
 Polearms
 Staves
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12. Misc

12.1. Frenzy (Rage, Adrenaline Rush, Berzerk)

A combat oriented mental state often associated with viking berzerkers.

> **Adrenaline**
>
> A hormone secreted by the adrenal medulla that is released into the bloodstream in response to physical or mental stress, as from fear or injury. It initiates many bodily responses, including the stimulation of heart action and an increase in blood pressure, metabolic rate, and blood glucose concentration.

Benefits: +2 STR (adrenaline kick), +2 WIL (more stubborn and hard to controll), +2? BOD (adrenaline kick), oblivious to pain, skip uncouncious check, ignore fatigue

Drawbacks: -2 AUR? (might have intimidating presence), -4 DEX, -4 INT (reduses ability to reason), -2 PER (tunnel sight)

How to activate?

- Maybe use one or more "personality traits" from "atrenative to alignment". I.e. must lean towards Agressive, Dynamic, Emotional...

- Make Frenzy a Combat specialty and use standard Task Resolution to activate/de-activate. Frenzy >= TD to activate; Frenzy < TD to de-activate; This would make Frenzy a Conflicted Gauge. Makes sense. If it's easy for a character to enter Frenzy, it's probably hard for the character to leave it again.

How to "de-activate"?

- Last a fixed/variable periode of time

- Task Resolution involving WIL - makes sense in that WIL governs self controll; does not make sense in that activating Frenzy actually increses WIL to make you stubborn/hard to control; Does it perhaps make sense to use INT or PER? Need to be aware of your actions and surroundings, and be able to calm yourself. Sounds like PER and WIL should be involved, and INT for reasoning and logical thought; Maybe Frenzy should not increse WIL after all...?

- ...

12.2. Addiction

Could be a major source of motivation for the addicted character.