SOLARPUNK FUTURES

The social ecological storytelling game where you and your friends build a better world

Table of Contents

🕐 **20 minutes**   **Ages 12+**   👤 **1-6 players**

SOLARPUNK FUTURES

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Print and Play Instructions

If you downloaded this along with the cards print and play file, and don't intend to cut all the cards out and shuffle, there is one main difference in gameplay. Any time the directions tell you to draw a card, instead do the following:

01. Find a random number generator app or online
02. Generate random numbers between:
    a.   1 and 7 for **Personae** cards
    b.   1 and 22 for **Value** cards
    c.   1 and 25 for **Tool** cards
    d.   1 and 17 for **Challenge** cards
03. You draw the card associated with the random number you generated. Repeat as needed.

REPORT

of the

DATA-RECOVERY TEAM ON THE ANCIENT DATA-STORAGE ANOMALY

Pursuant to request of the delegates to the Assembly for the Future

Fig. 1. **The Relic**, an 8 Bn year-old diamond-obsidian composite data-storage device (discovered March 02023)

A.F.F. Doc. 105-2

Overview

[Excerpts from report for assembly delegates]

Radio-carbon dating report

Despite extremely advanced information-density, **The Relic** *appears to be older than our best estimates for the age of the Earth — by a factor of 2.*

Author's Executive Summary

The techniques enclosed were all that was able to be recovered and reassembled from The Relic, *which is confirmed to function as an information storage device similar to our hard drives — though for what kind of computer, we can only speculate. It appears to contain a set of instructions for us (!!!) for...our future. Much of the information was corrupted. Our team has done their best to recreate instructions in the following report.* The Relic *included this address to this assembly, by name:*

> *"There is a narrow pathway to our future. Struggle in solidarity for utopia, now, there's not much time!" Good Luck*

Materials

Along with this report, you will find the following artifacts enclosed:

7 Personae Cards

22 Value Cards

35 Tool Cards

17 Challenge Cards

Future Recovery Techniques

Setup

01. First, separate the cards into four piles, one for each type of card (Personae, Values, Tools, and Challenges) and place them all in the middle.

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02. Grab paper and pen for each of the **Assembly Members** (players). Many of the techniques also benefit from a timer. A phone timer works great.

Technique 001: "Festival of Remembrance"

*The assembly must project their minds forward as a group of individuals from the future we've won, at a "Festival of Remembrance", a group must remember how each of your Ancestors (**Personae**) came together to overcome the challenges of the world before.*

This game has four phases:

01. The Challenge   **02**. The Ancestors   **03**. Building the New World   **04**. Remembrance

The Challenge

Draw one Challenge card as a group.

This technique starts when someone "I remember when we overcame the worst of _____". Everyone goes around the circle remembering specific elements of the **Challenge** and why it was so daunting.

> **OPTIONAL RULE:** Draw a **Value** card alongside the **Challenge** and decide as a group how capitalism masks the truth of that **Challenge** behind that **Value**. (i.e. greenwashing)

The Ancestors

Each player draws one Personae, one Value, and two Tool cards and remembers an Ancestor.

Each **assembly member** remembers a heroic **Personae**, the **Values** they struggled for, and the **Tools** they brought along or created along the way. Give yourselves 2 minutes in silence to remember (a timer and some paper to write on works great).

Describe the Ancestor's name, background, and how they first approached the Challenge.

Go around the circle briefly describing your **Personae**'s name, background, what motivates them to struggle for a better world, and how they initially approached the **Challenge** (with their **Values** and **Tools**) and where their individual efforts came up short.

Building the New World

Collectively tell the story of how the Ancestors came together to overcome the challenge.

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Work together to tell the rest of the story. It took everyone to overcome the **Challenge** (and many other unnamed ancestors, besides), so make sure everyone has a chance to explain the role of their **Personae**. It's always darkest before the dawn, so talk about what roadblocks were encountered and how you overcame them.

> Build on each other's ideas with consent. Build the story together: don't be afraid to "remind" or "be reminded" that something actually happened a little bit differently (i.e. modify or elaborate what someone else said). Any disagreements should be resolved in a comradely manner through **Modified Consensus**.

OPTIONAL RULE: Use a coin-flip to figure out the roadblocks. Heads and it took much longer than your Personae expected. Tails and some individual or organization betrayed them. Explain the details of how it was overcome.

Remembrance

Each player answers one:

- What might have gone differently?
- How long did it take? Could it have taken a much longer or shorter time?
- Were you able to fully overcome the **Challenge**, or just the worst of it? What is being done today, in the utopia to actively mitigate against it arising again?
- What other **Tools** and **Values** could have been used?
- How do you think these **Personae** felt when they were faced with this **Challenge**?
- Do any of the possibilities you envisioned, challenge, affirm, or clarify your current real-world impact?
- Who are some real-world people today facing this same **Challenge** that you hope will be remembered by future generations?
- How would this story have been told differently if it was...a superhero action movie, a dystopian novel, a satire/comedy, a romance, another genre?
- Add your own questions

Example of Play

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Protecting the Assembly's Integrity

*The techniques enclosed can expose assembly members to the traumas of the broadest sweeps of history. In order to ensure ongoing integrity of each **member of the assembly**, consent and boundaries around the techniques are key.*

Lines and Veils

Lines are hard lines around themes or ideas we do not cross. These are things that are not in the technique at all. They are not alluded to or done off screen. They simply do not happen.

Veils are things that happen "off screen" in the technique. They are things that are allowed to happen, but without details, and do not occupy the focus of the technique at any time.

X-Card

The X-Card is a tool that allows anyone during a technique to edit out any content anyone is uncomfortable with as you play. It's possible the technique will go in a direction the **assembly members** don't want. An X-Card is a simple tool to fix problems as they arise. (You can learn more about the X-card by John Stravopoulous at http://tinyurl.com/x-card-rpg)

*Remember, the integrity of each of the **members of the assembly** is more important than any given scenario.*

Modified Consensus

Modified consensus is a simple way to make decisions while ensuring all opinions are heard and no one feels strongly against any group decision. Consensus here does not necessarily mean "full agreement", but consent, as in "no objections". There are more formal models, but the basic procedures are:

- Discuss ideas freely and ensure everyone's voice is heard before making any proposals.
- Anyone can block any proposal if they feel strongly against it. (i.e. "this is not good enough for now or safe enough to try.")
- Test for consensus. Rather than taking a vote in favor, you ask if anyone objects to a proposal.
- If there is a block, the whole group searches for possible adaptations to achieve consensus.

A.F.F. Doc. 105-2

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- If, after discussion, no consensus can be achieved, a majority vote can be used.

Additional Techniques

Technique 104: "Nail, Meet Hammer"

*This technique can be used as individual **assembly members** or as a full assembly. It is more difficult with fewer members present.*

The assembly starts with 0 points.

Pick one Personae, Value, and Tool as a group. Draw 3 Challenges.

Assembly members describe to each other how they overcome each challenge using only the available **Personae**, **Values**, and **Tools**. If all present **assembly members** vote that the challenges have been creatively overcome, the game ends.

Players may draw additional cards. For each **Personae** drawn, add 3 points. For each **Value** drawn, add 2 points. For each **Tool** drawn, add 1 point. The more points, the more time it took to overcome that challenge.

Technique 759: "IRL RFN"

*This can be used as individual **assembly members**, or as a full assembly.*

Select a **Challenge** your community is currently facing in real life (right f'g now!). This does not have to be an existing card. Draw a **Value** to guide your way, then quick-draw **Tools** until you spark an idea. Organize a group to develop and put that idea into practice.

About This Game

This game was created by the artist collective Solarpunk Surf Club. We wanted to make a game that would create the social conditions to facilitate collective thinking toward realistic utopian futures and encourage people to engage in the real planning around what it might take to get there.

While leaving plenty of room for players, *Solarpunk Futures* is not neutral about the direction in which our utopia lies: consent, egalitarianism, direct democracy, and cooperation are all values embodied directly in the gameplay, as well as in many of the cards.

We exist in a time of deep alienation from each other and depoliticization from political ancestries we need to recapture. Whether players have known each other for a long time or they are strangers at a public game event, *Solarpunk Futures* aims to build community and fight social and political isolation through collaborative storytelling and play which allows us to let our defenses down and dream.

We hope *Solarpunk Futures* will be relevant to activists, educators and librarians, artists and performers, organizations, and existing community groups as a fun and engaging way to build teamwork and bring people together around compelling visions of the future. We anticipate the game will appeal to an intergenerational mix of teens and adults who will play with their families, in schools and other places of education, and in parks, libraries, and other public spaces.

Players can gain connections with one another and engage in fun, speculative utopianism to broaden their own ideas. Beyond the game, we hope this game inspires people to take immediate action in their communities to bring about the "solarpunk futures" they imagined.

Solarpunk?

Solarpunk is a visionary utopian politics and aesthetic that critically engages the reality of capitalist catastrophe while maintaining a radical optimism about humanity's hopes for a communal, ecological future.

It's a restorative justice process at a planetary scale — among people and between humans and non-human nature. That means reclaiming pieces of pre-capitalist culture, material accountability for old practices, and radical adaptability toward new ones, all while maintaining a utopian and ecological vision for the potentialities of our interrelations in the present.

Credits & Licenses

Solarpunk Futures was created by Solarpunk Surf Club and the following people made this game possible:

TKTKTK

To find out more about this game, updates, and expansions, check out our website at

TheFuture.wtf

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FAQ

Section for back-cover after playtesting TKTKTK