



Ultimate Relationships

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ULTIMATE PLUG-INS

Ultimate Relationships



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WELCOME TO ULTIMATE PLUG-INS!

THIS PRODUCT IS THE LATEST IN OUR LINE OF SUPPORT MATERIALS FOR THE HARDBACK rulebooks that comprise the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. When you see the “Ultimate Plug-Ins” logo at the top of a Legendary Games product, you know that it is designed to fit directly with the themes, scope, and style of those rules hardbacks, because every member of the Legendary Games team is a regular veteran contributor to those hardback rulebooks and their softcover expansions. When you buy Ultimate Plug-Ins, you are getting rules from the same people who bring you many of the rules you already use. The all-star designers of Legendary Games are committed to bringing you—the busy GM or player—the ultimate in third-party support for your Pathfinder campaign, combining innovative design, amazing artwork, and fantastic production values that are as functional as they are beautiful to give you everything you need to *Make Your Game Legendary!*

SPECIAL ELECTRONIC FEATURES

We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the [Pathfinder Reference Document](#), the official online compendium of game rules, as well as the [d20pfsrd.com](#). If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized.

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WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE ULTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

RUNNING AN ADVENTURE PATH IS A LONG JOURNEY FOR THE PCs, WHETHER THE ACTION OF THE Adventure Path takes place within a single city, a small kingdom, or an epic journey across a continent or an island archipelago, and Ultimate Relationships can serve as a toolbox for creating stories for your own NPCs or for use with character modules we will be creating for published Adventure Paths. Whether your PCs' journey is literal or figurative, Ultimate Relationships can help you encompass the flow and span of the campaign as a metaphor for the inner journey that each character takes along the way, progressing into someone different than they were at the beginning. With Ultimate Relationships, your PCs can join each NPC along his or her own personal journey. With their lives and fates intertwined, your game will never be the same.

The Legendary Games tradition is to combine rich story and background, innovative layout, beautiful aesthetics, and excellence in design that is second to none, allowing you to enliven and enrich your campaign in amazing and exciting ways. This product is the latest in that tradition, and we hope you enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it. Game on!



- Jason Nelson

ULTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIP RULES

A GOOD RPG CAMPAIGN, LIKE ANY GOOD STORY, NEEDS conflict and antagonists to lend it immediacy and drama. But a campaign with pure conflicts, without allies, family, romances, and other connections to friendly characters, quickly grows stale. Much like Shakespeare's comedic drunken porter scene in Macbeth released tension intentionally to strengthen the impact of the revelation of Duncan's murder just after, so too can points of lower intensity spent with friendly NPCs increase the impact of the game's dramatic high points. And sometimes, the relationships themselves can provide their own high points, their own drama, and powerful transformations that make a character more than just a set of statistics or an unrealistically uncaring avatar.

Ultimate Relationships contains a system for relationships that provides a meaningful progression and story for the significant NPCs your PCs might encounter in the course of a campaign, including secrets to uncover as the relationship progresses, and hurdles for the PC and the NPC to overcome together. Unlike other relationship systems that bottleneck on certain skills, often Diplomacy, Ultimate Relationships allows everyone to progress and reveal the NPC's story at their own rate; it just might take some characters longer than others.

This product contains a set of core relationship rules for making these kinds of interactions between PCs and NPCs a rich and vibrant part of your campaign. They are suitable for use in any campaign, but for groups playing in the official published Adventure Paths we will also be releasing a series of modules featuring the core NPCs from those Adventure Paths, as well as new NPCs introduced in the respective Adventure Path Plug-Ins from Legendary Games. The first such product, Imperial Relationships, describes how to use these rules in the Far Eastern Adventure Path, including four relationship links, one each for the Caravan Master, Destined Empress, Elven Protector, and Mystic Seer, with further modules to come to further expand the available NPC relationships in that Adventure Path as well as others.

RELATIONSHIP RANKS

Each character begins play at rank 0, ready to rank up to rank 1, with most NPCs. A PC can rise from ranks 1 through 10, learning more about that NPC's personality, goals, troubles, and secrets. **Rank 1** represents establishing a relationship, and **Rank 4**, **Rank 7**, and **Rank 10** are significant ranks that each represent a major breakthrough. To advance through relationship ranks, a PC must gain

enough camaraderie points to achieve the next rank and then succeed at ranking up.

CAMARADERIE POINTS

PCs can gain camaraderie points in several ways. First, when a PC performs a significant action aligned with the NPC's interest, that PC gains a number of camaraderie points with that NPC (typically 1 or 2). Second, whenever a PC levels up, the player can assign 2 camaraderie points each to an NPCs found in each book of the Adventure Path, to represent the PC spending extra time with that NPC (for example, a PC in Book 3 could assign 2 camaraderie points each to one NPC from Book 1, another NPC from Book 2, and another from Book 3). At the GM's discretion, an NPC might not be available as a choice if that NPC was unavailable for the entirety of the level (for example, if that NPC was in a coma or kidnapped). Lastly, once per milestone (see milestones on page XX), each PC can attempt to gain favor with each NPC available by spending a bit of time with them, offering a gift, a story, a witticism, or anything else the player can think of. In addition to the three standard ways of gaining Camaraderie Points, the GM should feel free to award or subtract camaraderie points whenever she feels it is appropriate based on a PC's actions or decisions. For instance, a PC who raised undead would likely meet with disapproval from good NPCs and lose camaraderie points. That same PC might gain camaraderie points with a cynical harpy NPC ally who was amused by the efficient use of the bodies. If a PC ever gains more than enough camaraderie points to rank up, the extra camaraderie points never apply to future ranks. Instead, they grant a bonus equal to the number of points to all checks made while ranking up.

Camaraderie points start at 0 for each new rank, but it is possible to lose camaraderie points when you have none left. This doesn't make the PC lose a rank. Instead, the relationship has hit a snag and becomes misaligned. Keep track of the negative camaraderie points. The PC suffers a -2 penalty to all checks to gain camaraderie points with that NPC as long as the PC has negative camaraderie points.

RANKING UP

TABLE 1: BASE REQUIRED CAMARADERIE POINTS TO RANK UP

RANK	BOOK 1 OR 2 NPC	BOOK 3 OR 4 NPC	BOOK 5 OR 6 NPC
Rank 1	0	0	0
Rank 2	2	2	1
Rank 3	4	3	2
Rank 4	6	4	2
Rank 5	4	3	2
Rank 6	6	4	2
Rank 7	8	6	3
Rank 8	6	4	2
Rank 9	8	6	3
Rank 10	10	7	4

Once a PC is ready to rank up with an NPC, they can choose to engage in a rank-up conversation with that NPC once per milestone. These conversations can be as short or long as the GM prefers, ranging from simply rolling some dice to lengthy conversations about the NPC's ongoing story. The friendly relationships presented in Imperial Relationships and future Legendary Games plug-ins each include a topic description to help guide you in roleplaying each of the ten rank-ups for each NPC. Sometimes, in unusual circumstances where a PC has delved deeply into a relationship faster than normally possible, these suggested topic descriptions might reference events that haven't happened yet. In this case, the GM should find an appropriate stand-in that preserves the required skills.

Each rank-up also requires a certain check to succeed at ranking up, possibly more than one. Significant breakthroughs often require three or more successes to complete. A PC may never Take 10 or Take 20 on the checks required to rank up, even if that PC has Skill Mastery or a similar ability, and a PC must make the checks without the assistance of others. Imperial Relationships and future plug-ins will include the checks and their DCs for the featured NPCs as well.

As usual, if you roleplay the rank-up conversation, award circumstance bonuses or penalties based on the way the PC interacts with the NPC, and remember to apply any excess camaraderie points as an additional bonus to all checks made while ranking up.

Success: If a PC succeeds at all of the required checks, the PC immediately gains a rank with that NPC, potentially gaining experience points or new abilities. No matter how many excess camaraderie points the PC had acquired before success, they do not affect the number of points required to reach the next rank. For example, if a particularly unlucky PC fails to rank up to 5 with an NPC several times, gathering 6 excess camaraderie points, when the PC finally succeeds, those extra points disappear, and the PC still needs 6 more camaraderie points to reach **Rank 6**.

Failure: If a PC fails to rank up, they need not despair. The act of attempting to rank up provides two camaraderie points (and since these are always in excess of the number needed to rank up, they provide a +2 bonus on all future attempts, as noted above). These points stack, so eventually

a persistent enough PC will succeed. If a rank up requires multiple checks in a progression, and you fail a later check, you can start from the check you failed instead of the first check (unless stated otherwise specifically). So for instance,

if you needed a Sense Motive to figure out that something is bothering the NPC followed by a Diplomacy to get them to talk about it, and you make the Sense Motive and fail the Diplomacy, you can start with the Diplomacy next time.

Affinities: Some NPCs have particularly good or bad affinities with certain PCs. Affinities range from Great to Terrible (see Table 2). Most NPCs have Average affinity for any given PC. However, if the PC has selected a campaign trait tied to an NPC or if the PC has the same card as the NPC, the PC automatically has one step better affinity with that NPC (or two steps better if both are true). Otherwise, if an NPC is attracted to the PC, is related to the PC, or any other reason that leads to a particular affinity, the GM can decide that the NPC and PC have a better than Average affinity, and if the NPC and PC are strongly at odds in ethos or worldview, the GM can decide that the NPC and PC have worse than Average affinity.

Because affinities only change the number of camaraderie points required for each rank, the GM can fluidly change affinities if the PCs and NPCs evolve to be better or worse suited to each other. If a PC ever has more than enough camaraderie points to rank up due to affinity, as usual these extra points provide an additional bonus to all checks made to rank up.

TABLE 2: EFFECTS OF AFFINITY

AFFINITY	EFFECT
Terrible	2 extra camaraderie points required for each rank, -5 to all checks to rank up
Bad	1 extra camaraderie point required for each rank, -2 to all checks to rank up
Average	No Effect
Good	1 fewer camaraderie point required for each rank, +2 to all checks to rank up
Great	2 fewer camaraderie points required for each rank, +5 to all checks to rank up

MILESTONES

SETTING THE PACE FOR MILESTONES ALLOWS YOU TO decide how often you want to include relationship elements in the context of your greater storyline. In general, it is best to have at least 5 milestones in each book of an Adventure Path, with a maximum that is often significantly more but depends on the scope of that book. For instance, a book about a long arctic journey might have more milestones than a book with a tense but quickly-building feud with a guild of ninjas. Each milestone gives a chance to rank up if the PC is ready as well as a chance to mingle with the NPC and possibly gain camaraderie points.

To gain camaraderie points at a milestone, the PC should describe how they are interacting with the NPC, for instance a gift they are giving, a joke they are telling, or an activity they are performing. The GM decides how well the interaction suits that particular NPC, from Terrible/Perfunctory (either something generic or unsuited for the NPC) to Perfect (something that is an amazing match for the NPC, like a star chart for the Mystic

Seer from the Far Eastern Adventure Path). For each of the NPCs in the Far Eastern Adventure Path, that NPC's entry contain tips about what sorts of interactions and gifts they prefer. Remember that Perfunctory is the worst category of gift, so a PC who doesn't stop to think about the NPCs or pay attention to what they like and instead buys the same gift for everyone will likely be working with a Perfunctory or Poor gift. Don't be afraid to be harsh on your decision here, as it's an important balancing factor for gifts and interactions. Remember, a perfunctory gift belongs in the worst category, not the average category.

Craftsmanship: Sometimes, craftsmanship is important. Whether a PC is reciting a haiku or inscribing intricate calligraphy, the quality of the gift depends on the level of

TABLE 3: QUALITY OF INTERACTIONS AND GIFTS

QUALITY	DC	EFFECT
Terrible/Perfunctory	$DC\ 25 + 2 \times target\ rank$	Gain 1 CP or 2 CP if result exceeds DC by 10
Poor	$DC\ 20 + 2 \times target\ rank$	Gain 1 CP or 2 CP if result exceeds DC by 10
Acceptable	$DC\ 15 + 2 \times target\ rank$	Gain 1 CP or 2 CP if result exceeds DC by 5
Good	$DC\ 10 + 2 \times target\ rank$	Gain 1 CP or 2 CP if result exceeds DC by 5
Perfect	$DC\ 5 + 2 \times target\ rank^*$	Gain 2 CP or 3 CP if result exceeds DC by 10

* A PC gains 1 CP for a Perfect gift even if the check is unsuccessful.

performance or craftsmanship. In general, anything worse than a DC 10 performance or craft is an automatic failure, 10-14 is two categories worse than normal, 15-19 is one category worse than normal, 20-29 is standard, 30-39 is one category better than normal, and 40-49 is two categories better. For instance, the Destined Empress loves adventure stories (a Good gift for her), so one of the PCs decides to relate a tale of his prowess fighting goblins. Unfortunately, he only manages a 13 on that perform check, little better than a beggar on a street corner. The Destined Empress is still impressed that he tried, so the gift counts as Poor (two steps worse than Good). Meanwhile, another PC attempts

to craft a gruesome ale mug from the skull of his fallen opponent to show the Destined Empress that no one should dare kidnap her again. Normally this would be a terrible gift for her, but somehow, he manages a 42 on the craft, creating one of the finest skull mugs in the lands. Thus it counts as an Average gift (two steps better than Terrible).

Repetition: If you feel that a PC is just doing the same thing over and over again, perhaps simply attempting to use their best skill because it has the highest bonus, feel free to count the interaction or

gift as one category worse after some amount of repetition, two categories worse after more repetition, and so on. If this brings the quality below Terrible/Perfunctory, levy a -5 penalty for each quality level below. If the PC comes up with a good rationale for using the same skill, then do not levy this penalty. As an example of a good rationale, suppose one of the PCs wishes to become the personal painter to the Destined Empress, although he begins with no painting talent. He starts by giving the Destined Empress a framed copy of the best painting he has ever made (DC 15), and then later, as he improves, he also gives her paintings of higher and high quality (perhaps DC 20, DC 30, and DC 40). Since each of these paintings represents a progression in the painter's journey to becoming a master painter, you might decide as a GM that this would not count as repetitive.

Once you have determined the quality of the gift or interaction given the NPC's preferences and the other factors above, the PC should roll a check to determine how well the NPC receives this interaction or gift. These checks are usually Diplomacy checks, but in some cases other skill checks would be appropriate. The DC of the check and its results are listed in Table 3. As with rank ups, whenever it is an advantage for the PC, allow them to roll a untrained ability check at the standard reduced DC (lower by an amount equal to the next rank).

RIVALRIES

Rivalries are a common trope in fantasy tales involving heroes from different backgrounds and clashing values.

A rivalry works similarly to a friendly relationship except that rivalry points (a rivalry's equivalent to camaraderie points) are earned through actions that challenge the NPC's competence or taunt the NPC in some way. Rivalries generally rank up by a show of competence rather than a specific rank-up event, as NPCs are unlikely to share their secrets and weaknesses with their rivals. Breakthroughs for a rivalry should always involve a significant competition between the two rivals, whether it's a wrestling contest, a cook-off, or a duel to unconsciousness. Affinities are typically reversed for rivalries, so for instance, even if they are on the same side, a necromancer and a sun priestess would not make easy friends, but they could make strong rivals. A PC's relationship with an NPC might evolve over time. Sometimes, a friendship becomes a rivalry or a rivalry becomes a friendship. To progress a rivalry into a friendship, a PC must earn 4 camaraderie points (or four negative rivalry points) with the NPC and choose to switch. At this point, the relationship becomes a friendship at rank 0 if her rivalry was rank 1 to 3, 3 if her rivalry was rank 4 to 6, or 6 if her rivalry was rank 7 to 10. Changing a friendship to a rivalry works in the opposite way.

CAMPAIGN TRAITS

A PC with a campaign trait gains several advantages at establishing a friendly relationship with their chosen NPC. PCs automatically start at **Rank 2** with their chosen NPC with an automatic two camaraderie points towards **Rank 3**. Furthermore, the PC has one better affinity with that NPC (so usually Good affinity).

AUTOMATIC RANK-UPS

Certain relationships exist between PCs and NPCs that are either abstract or take place from afar, such as a rivalry between the PCs and the villain they have heard of but never met. In these cases, the relationship will rank up when the PCs perform major actions in or against the interests of these NPCs.

THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP

In addition to the innate benefit of getting to know the NPCs better and take part in their ongoing story, this book presents mechanical perks from developing connections to NPCs that can enrich the game and encourage some of the more hesitant roleplayers as their characters "rank up" by building their relationship with an NPC.

Experience: One simple way to reward PCs for engaging is to give an experience value to ranking up. Table 4 presents some sample values that, when combined with a Slow advancement, can lead to advancement about halfway between the normal rates for Slow and Standard experience advancement (dependent on the PCs' level of interaction with relationships). The GM should choose whether to divide this experience evenly among all PCs to keep it balanced

or to give Relationship XP to individual PCs to reward engagement. In either case, the NPC should earn an equal amount of experience as well for the advancing relationship—this will naturally keep the PCs' favorite NPCs a little higher in level than the rest, ready to bring along for adventures.

Boons: Each NPC has a particular set of boons that they grant to PCs who reach certain ranks with them, tied to the NPC's abilities and personality. When designing your own boons, use the existing boons as guides for balance. As a rule of thumb, a boon at rank 7 should allow the PC to choose one of two skills that fit well with the NPC and become specialized in the chosen skill (it becomes a class skill or the PC gains a +1 bonus, whichever is more beneficial), and it should grant an additional benefit involving the NPC, situational, and half the power of a feat or less. A rank 10 boon should double the bonuses of any campaign traits the PC has with that NPC and grant a more powerful ability.

Participation: Sometimes the players want to bring along NPCs to help them on their adventures. Each NPC has a rank at which they will usually agree to come along as well as a rank at which they will agree to become a cohort for that PC (typically ranks 4 and 7). If an NPC comes along but is not a cohort, they will typically receive a share of experience and treasure. If the PCs routinely bring along plenty of NPCs, it may be a good idea to increase the challenge level of the opposition (the Advanced template on monsters, one extra class level on named NPCs, and multiplying by 1.5 on multiple minions is a simple way to adjust for 6 characters instead of 4).

Romance: Each NPC has a certain rank above which they might be receptive to romance, although NPCs have different ideas about intimacy and relationships. Entering a long-term relationship generally improves your affinity by one step, while breaking up typically removes that benefit and reduces your affinity by an additional step.

Redemption: The Relationship system in this book represents a great way to measure the long-term process of redemption so that it feels like a challenging and gradual process. There are plans to include redemption paths for several evil NPCs that might join the party in the Far Eastern Adventure Path and beyond.

TABLE 4: RELATIONSHIP XP

RANK ACHIEVED	XP REWARD
1	135
2	67
3	135
4	800 (<i>800 extra for first Rank 4 breakthrough</i>)
5	400
6	800
7	4800 (<i>4800 extra for first Rank 7 breakthrough</i>)
8	2400
9	4800
10	28800 (<i>28800 extra for first Rank 10 breakthrough</i>)

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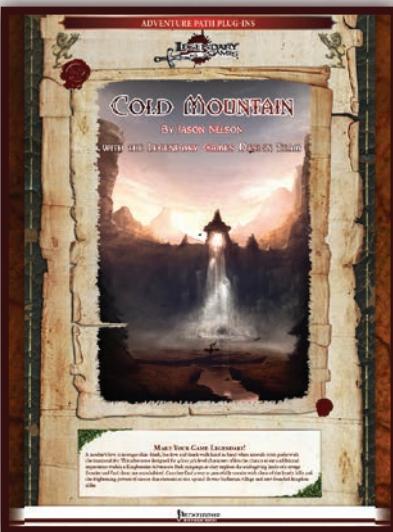
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IS YOUR CAMPAIGN LEGENDARY?

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