Meta-System

At the moment Asylum’s system is still pretty fast and loose but we do have expected values that all powers are meant to approximate.

# Impact

As Impact is our generic metric for progress, every power has the potential to generate impact, even if it normally doesn’t get a roll. The guidelines for such improvised actions are shared with the Narrator and players. Generally they roll with a base modifier of +4 vs. a standard difficulty of 8. This puts the power on par with most mundane skill rolls. We leave it partly to the Narrator to determine if this improvisation of powers is worthy of being an “exploit.”

Consequently, your powers should have an expected impact of about 8 or 9, depending on how optimized the characters are. We generally also throw in a status condition for flavor and variation. Manifest powers using “Focus” should probably generate the equivalent of 11-12 impact to justify the expenditure of Energy, but often we substitute an ongoing condition or tier 2 condition instead of the bonus impact. The intention here is to put Manifest powers on par with using a covert power or burning Energy to turn an action into an “exploit.”

# Exploits

Occasionally a player has a brilliant solution or finds an especially creative tactic that takes advantage of the situation. Assuming there’s still a chance that this tactic could fail then the proposed action should be considered an “exploit” and be given the “exploit die.” You roll the exploit die with your normal roll and take whichever you prefer. That’s pretty darn powerful, so we try to make sure it comes at an Energy cost and Narrator approval.

However, exploits are not entirely in the domain of the Narrator. Conditions can often be “exploited” to gain the exploit die for an action. Doing so generally ends the condition if it is ongoing or sustained.

# Conditions

Powers in Asylum have a endless variety of ways to influence the game, but it’s useful to codify some of the most common effects and conditions for ease of use. Often a power’s effects might be a special combination of these conditions.

Of course, not all conditions are created equal, and for that reason we group our conditions into multiple tiers. Tier 2 is generally better than Tier 1, and you’ll notice that some Tier 1 conditions are even subsumed into Tier 2 conditions.

## Tier 1 Adverse Conditions

Hindered: Hindered characters are generally restrained or slowed so that they can move at only half their normal speed. This means that they take a minor disadvantage on all Might and Agility based rolls and need to use a Complex Action to move into nearby zones.

Prone

Stunned

Hindered

Halted

## Tier 2 Adverse Conditions

Weakened

Confused

Blinded

## Tier 1 Positive Conditions

Concealed

Covered

Inspired

Armor

Resistance (Specific)

## Tier 2 Positive Conditions

Ethereal

Hidden

Resistance (Categorical)

Since impact is so central to revolving scenes and conflicts, it’s important that the ability to generate Tier 1 effects shouldn’t be at the expense of Impact. That is why so many of our powers use simple actions or generate Impact comparable to a skill roll.

### Hindered

Hindered characters have had their movements obstructed so that they move slower. Athletics and Close Combat rolls generally suffer a minor disadvantage, and moving farther than your reach requires a complex action. The hindered condition can be exploited by any physical attack or attempt to outmaneuver the target.

### Prone

A prone character is lying down or stooped close to the ground. Prone characters are also generally considered both **Hindered** and **Concealed**. You can become prone as a free action on your turn, and can end prone as a simple action to stand up.

### Halted

A halted character is held in place and cannot leave her immediate location. The character still has a simple action, but may not use that action to walk, crawl, or spring. The halted condition can be exploited by any physical attack or attempt to outmaneuver the target.

### Stunned

A stunned character is so physically or emotionally traumatized that they have become briefly less coordinated. Stunned characters begin their turn with only a single complex action. The stunned condition can be exploited by any attack or attempt to distract or deceive the target.

### Weakened

A weakened character is physically fatigued and exhausted the point of impairment. Weakened characters receive a minor disadvantage on all rolls involving Might or Agility. What’s more, such rolls only generate half the impact, if they succeed. The weakened condition can be exploited by any physical attack or attempt to outmaneuver or restrain the target.

### Confused

A confused character is mentally impaired and incapable of clear thought. Confused characters receive a minor disadvantage on all rolls involving Wits, Intuition, or Presence What’s more, such rolls only generate half the impact, if they succeed. The confused condition can be exploited by any mental attack or attempt to distract or manipulate the target.

### Blinded

A blinded character cannot see and perceive her surroundings clearly. Blinded characters receive a major disadvantage on all skills that require sight, including most attacks. When in an uncertain environment, moving farther than a Close distance in a single turn causes a blinded character to fall prone. The blinded condition can be exploited by any physical attack and attempts to hide from or outmaneuver the target.

### Concealed

A concealed character is not easy to see.

# Zones and Ranges

To better facilitate “Theater of the Mind” gameplay, the Impact system handles scenes using abstract zones and ranges. The ranges are adjacent, reach, close, near, and far. Realistically, these ranges translate into approximate distances. The zones are tight, small, large, and wide. The Narrator is encouraged to define the environment of his scenes in these terms. Most of the time the different zones of a scene are all within close range of each other so that characters can move between them with a single simple action.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Range | Distance |
| Adjacent | Within 1 yd |
| Reach | Varies (~1 yd) |
| Close (or close by) | Within 5 yd |
| Near (or nearby) | Within 20 yd |
| Far | +20 yd |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Zone | Area |
| Tight | ~5 sq ft  Fits 1 person  Ex: A Closet |
| Small | ~30 sq ft/1 yd radius  Fits around 4 people  Ex: A Car |
| Large | ~700 sq ft/5 yd radius  Fits about 9 people  Ex: A living room |
| Wide | ~12,000 sq ft/20 yd radius  Fits dozens of people  Ex: A house |