

The Awakening

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A Post-Apocalyptic game of Survival in the Pacific Northwest

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Awakening Conjunction RPG entry

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A Quick Foreword

This game was entered as part of a contest. Originally, I put forward the idea of a contest as a means of getting my butt moving, as an incentive to produce. It worked – this game is proof of that.

Forewords are a place to thank those who helped in the project, though it might seem odd for me to do so. After all, my name is the only one on the cover page, and I certainly did the lion's share of the work. However, this game would not exist without the efforts of the other designers in the contest – while there was a spirit of competition between us, it never got in the way of mutual support.

I owe a thanks to the players in my regular D&D game, who would listen to me ramble on about my design goals for way too long. Many of them put forward ideas, along the lines of “wouldn't it be cool if...” and “You have to do this...”

This game, however, is far from complete. The time limit on the competition meant that the number of skills I could enter was limited (if I had put them in, this game would be an extra twenty pages long, and well over the limit placed upon us!), the number of psychic powers even more so. Further, the rules are a bit loose in places, as I'm sure players will discover. But here's the thing – they were never meant to be tight.

This game is an experiment. Those who decide to play it for a one-shot, a mini-campaign, or even a full-fledged game will have to make their own changes to the game, and this is the way things should be. Tinker with the numbers, by all means. I know I will.

Finally, forewords are also a place for dedication, but that seems too odd for a game that is, in my opinion, still on it's way to completion. Instead, I'll end this foreword with a wish. To ENWorld Poster Reveille/Frukathka, currently in a coma, this game is for you. I look forward to hearing your thoughts/opinions on it, sometime in the near future.

The Awakening RPG

The Awakening RPG before you was designed for the Great Conjunction RPG Design Contest, begun at ENWorld (www.enworld.org) on January

1st, 2009. This is just one of the entries, and was designed with the theme of “magic” in mind. The other “Sub-themes” of the contest are also present in the game – Prophecy, an Ever-Present Threat, and Ruined Cities.

The game is based around a simplified rules set that GMs can expand upon as they please. Characters are kept simple, and can spend renewable “Adrenaline” resource tokens to activate background and individual mechanical abilities.

Unlike other RPGs, there is no out-of-game improvement of characters. Players do not spend karma to improve abilities and skills after a session ends, nor do they “level up” after accumulating enough experience points. Instead, characters improve their skills in actual play, by using them. This means that time spent playing the Awakening RPG is actually time spent *playing*, not one involving updating one's character sheet.

*“I've been chased by
Nightmare Runners before,
and they'll chase you until you
fall over from sheer
exhaustion. How do you know
when you can stop running
from them? You're on your
boat, headed back to your
enclave, and you've still got all
your limbs.”*
-EVERETT BANKS, SCAVENGER

Introduction

*“The end of the world as you
and I know it happened three
years, four months, and three
days ago. And, here's the funny
thing – nobody remembers it
happening.”*

Three years, five months, and eighteen days ago, the world stopped. Every single human being, regardless of age, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or location, fell asleep.

Some awoke, months or (more often) years later, in strange locations, their bodies covered with cuts, bruises, and scars, and their clothing ripped to shreds. Confused about their surroundings, these newly Awakened humans found themselves in an Earth they had never seen before, one of abandoned and ruined cities, and one where strange new beasts crept through the quiet streets.

These humans also found they had new, seemingly impossible powers. Some could move objects with their minds, while others had the power to control fire, walk through walls, or even fly. Others had smaller, but no less unusual, abilities – the power to sense the presence of clean water, or the ability to instantly befriend animals.

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And every awakened human was plagued by dreams that were so much more real than those that came before.

Other humans, though, were not so lucky. They never woke up from the mass sleep that descended upon humanity, and now prowl the streets of cities in packs. They, too, have psychic powers, and they use these powers to avenge themselves on the Awakened humanity they despise.

And then there are the sleepwalkers. These human beings are still lost in the dreaming, mindlessly wandering down the streets and back roads, barely eking an existence off whatever they can scavenge while their minds still dream. These sleepwalkers are protected from the nightmare runners, who inexplicably avoid bringing harm to them. Awakened humanity, for some reason, seems compelled to avoid harming or endangering sleepwalkers as well – even the most malicious human being is physically unable to hurt these oblivious wanderers.

Strange Creatures

The lands after the Awakening are home to all manner of strange beast, creatures that have physically altered since the Dreaming fell upon humanity. Psychic wolves prowl through old growth forests. Pods of Dream Whales serenade passing ships. Giant reptilian worms, easily fifty feet long, burrow beneath the streets of metropolitan Vancouver. Ghostly apparitions lurk in the reflections of broken windows. Vicious cougars grossly enlarged in size hunt lone travellers with an unusual degree of cunning. Grizzly “Spirit” bears could use their unique healing powers upon a wayward traveller... or rip his head off in two seconds - depending on the current phase of the moon.

It is a new world, and one in which humanity must once again find their place.

The Pacific Northwest

The Awakening RPG takes place in the Pacific Northwest, mainly the coastal regions of British Columbia and Washington state, although the Yukon and Alaska could easily be included as well. However, this default setting can easily be transplanted to other, more local areas should the GM so desire.

The “Prophecy”

Why did the dreaming happen? What is humanity’s purpose in the newly Awakened world? What will happen to those still slumbering? Where is God in all of this? Why do we have powers?

These are questions each Awakened human has asked at some point since their Awakening. But it is not one in which they have the answers. However, there are signs of what has come to be known as “the prophecy”, given in snippets that the careful observer can piece together.

Sleepwalkers may mumble one line of the prophecy, over and over again, while others could scrawl a line or two in chalk on a blank brick wall. Some Awakened hear a line when in that state just between being awake and sleeping, and are able to remember it upon waking up.

This prophecy has not been fully recorded, and what it foretells remains to be seen. Some say it describes the final ending of humankind, while others believe it mentions humanity’s new purpose in the world.

Some believe it is both, at the same time. Only time will tell which version is true.

The Abandoned Cities

Almost every city is abandoned, now home to the prowling gangs of Nightmare Runners that terrorize curious human explorers. Vancouver, Victoria, Surrey – all are haunted ruins that most Awakened avoid.

However, there are useful goods in the cities that humanity will need to survive. Human beings in a first-world economy have gone a long time without producing their own food and goods, and the haphazard communities that have sprung up have found themselves unable to produce enough food to survive. So, gangs of brave scavengers must brave the cities and towns to acquire goods necessary for human survival.

The cities are home to all manner of strange beast, and many scavenger gangs never return.

The Nightmare Runners

The biggest threat to humanity are the nightmare runners – twisted remnants of humanity plagued with a bestial cunning and a desire to feast upon the bones of their former kin. Making their homes primarily in the cities, this ever-present threat to Awakened Humanity seeks to overrun the existing human enclaves and destroy them.

The Enclaves

Humans have always been a social creature. The first thought of every newly-awakened human being, after the basic “where am I?” question, is “Am I alone?” Humans seek out other humans, for better or for worse.

Enclaves have formed throughout the Pacific Northwest, where bands of human cooperate to stay alive. Some enclaves are large (such as the floating “barge city”), while others are tiny (such as the dozens of gymnasiums and malls held by less than a dozen isolated souls). Some enclaves are united together, while others are fractured and unorganized.

Player Characters in All This

PCs are assumed to be newly Awakened souls, entering this new world perhaps only a month or two before play begins. In that time, they have joined an Enclave and found themselves organized into a scavenging party. Their usual goal in the game is to acquire supplies or a specific piece of equipment for their home enclave. One adventure could have the PCs searching for solar panels in the city of Kelowna (all while avoiding Climbing Nightmare Runners), while the next could have them investigating a strange radio signal coming from the north.

In any case, Player Characters are not unique heroes, or super-powered. They are, instead, average men and women trying to understand this new world, their new psychic abilities, and the larger question of humanity.

“Bet you wished you stayed
asleep, eh?”
-Bill Farmer to Claire Redmond,
After being chased by a pack of
Psychic Wolves

Basic Game Rules

The rules of the Awakening game system are based off a simple percentile system relying almost entirely upon two ten-sided dice for action resolution. This basic system is easy to understand and implement in play, and allows for character abilities to improve through actual play as opposed to an arbitrary “experience point” system. In Awakening, characters improve their skills by using them, and watch as their abilities improve – one percentage point at a time.

Skill Checks

When a character fires a gun at a pack of a Nightmare Runners, or uses his First Aid skill to patch up a nasty wound received in a knife fight in the pits of Barge City, the character must make a *Skill Check*.

Skill Checks are made by rolling percentile dice (d100) against a character’s flat chance of success. If the character rolls underneath his skill score, he succeeds.

Determining Chance of Success

A character’s base chance of success is determined by taking his *Base Skill Rating* (always 10 for starting characters), adding the related attribute modifier, and – if possible – adding the modifier from a character’s training in the indicated skill. This is the character’s *base chance of success*.

Example: Riley finds herself in the bowels of an abandoned barge’s engine room on the outskirts of Barge City, trying to escape from two thugs armed with assault rifles. The thugs are about to close in, and the only way Riley can escape is if she balances across a narrow catwalk above the engines to a safe hallway.

Luckily, Riley used to be a dance instructor before The Awakening. She used to do this sort of thing all the time on the balance bars in the gym! So, she gulps nervously and begins to inch across the catwalk...

Riley has a Base Skill Rating of 10, an Agility score of +20% (Agility being the associated skill with Acrobatics) and expert training in Acrobatics (a +30% modifier). Thus, Riley has a 60% base chance of success.

Difficulty Modifiers

Of course, not all tasks are created equal. It is far easier to drive a car down a slightly cluttered toad than it is to drive the same car up a steep incline... in the rain... at top speed... while being attacked by bloodthirsty wolves.

This is where skill difficulty comes in. The GM can set a modifier to a character’s base chance of success if he feels that the attempt is easier or more difficult than average. The modifiers are summarized below, though if the GM feels like choosing a modifier somewhere in between, that is obviously acceptable. It is probably wise, however, to keep modifiers in 10% increments, to allow for quicker math during play.

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Riley gets up and screams as bullets ricochet around her. She dashes to safety behind a bulkhead, narrowly avoiding a fall off the catwalk as she does so.

Difficulty	Modifier
Very Easy	+40%
Easy	+20%
Average	+0%
Difficult	-20%
Very Difficult	-40%

Very Easy difficulties are those that almost any skilled character can accomplish with little effort. They can usually avoid being rolled at all, and should only be bothered with in dramatic situations where failure can have a consequence. *Example:* Using Perception to notice two figures approaching you in broad daylight.

Easy difficulties are accomplished with little concentration by trained individuals, and can probably be attempted even by the unskilled. *Example:* Using Perception to notice that both figures have assault rifles slung over their shoulders.

Average difficulties are those that a trained individual will have a bit of trouble with, though should succeed at most of the time. *Example:* Noticing that one figure has his hand on his holstered sidearm, and that the other figure seems to be muttering something underneath his breath.

Tasks that are **Difficult** are probably beyond the skill level of untrained individuals, and will cause even veterans in the skill to break a sweat. *Example:* using perception to see the twitch in the gunman's wrist as he readies to draw his weapon, and hearing the second figure muttering: "Come on, Tim, just kill him and we can go home..."

Very Difficult tasks are nearly impossible even for experts in the field to achieve with any regularity. *Example:* Noticing that the first gunman is favouring his left foot and that the way he moves his hand suggests arthritis and an associated loss of Agility, and that the second gunman's eyes are beginning to slightly milk over, perhaps as a precursor to using a psychic attack.

Example: Riley moves across the narrow catwalk slowly, on all fours... and easily moves towards her safe ledge. Suddenly, the metal of the catwalk erupts into sparks as the thugs open fire on her!

She knows she can't stay out on this ledge, and so decides to run the rest of the way. The GM decides that this is a difficult task, and so applies a -20% modifier to Riley's skill roll. This means her modified chance of success is now only 40%. Riley's player rolls, and gets a 35!

Automatic Success and Failure

Regardless of skill modifiers, a character will always succeed on a roll of 01 or 02, and will always fail on a roll of 00 or 99.

Opposed Tests

So, what if someone wants to sneak past someone else? Or two individuals make a mad dash towards the same target? In this case, both characters make an *opposed test*, with the victor achieving success over the other.

Both characters make their relevant skill check (in the first example, one character's stealth check against the other's perception check; in the second, both would make an athletics check).

If one character succeeds and the other fails, then it is obvious who won the challenge. However, if both succeed on their test, whoever rolled the highest wins the challenge. Likewise, if both characters failed, whoever rolled the highest result would win.

Degree of Success

The skill system of The Awakening is typically a "Yes/no" system – either the character succeeds on a task, or fails. However, it is possible to determine a character's degree of success, though it should rarely come up in play.

If a character rolls a success on a skill check, take the roll from the "tens" die column and add 1 – this is the number of *Degrees* the character has achieved with the skill. So, a character that rolled a 42 would have 5 Degrees of Success.

Degrees of Success come into play most commonly with skill use in combat, and with Extended Tests (see below).

Extended Tests

Sometimes, it takes longer than a few seconds or minutes to attempt a skill – such as when a character is fixing an engine, or using the survival skill to find a suitable campsite. In such situations, a character must make an *Extended skill test*.

Extended skill tests can only be attempted when there is little to be lost from a failed check, beyond time. A character cannot make an extended climbing check, for example, because failure would mean he fell.

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Each test has an *interval* – a GM-determined length of time used during the skill test (usually one hour or one day). Each time a character makes a skill test, this is the amount of time the attempt consumes.

A character makes cumulative skill tests, counting each Degree of Success (see above) as one “point”. Once a character achieves a certain number of points (or decides to quit), he succeeds on his test.

Example: *Carlisle is holed up in an abandoned garage, trying to fix the engine on his old Police Cruiser. He has plenty of time, and the tools for the job, and so gets to work.*

The GM sets an interval of two hours per check, and determines that Carlisle needs 8 points to fix the car.

Carlisle’s modified chance of success is 50% (30% base skill, +10% from his repair skill, and +10% from repair’s related Intelligence attribute, against an average difficulty). On his first roll, he gets a 47, gaining Carlisle 5 points.

He fails on his second roll, and gets a 17 on his third – another 2 points. After six hours, Carlisle has accumulated 7 points – he’s almost finished fixing up that battered engine!

Attribute Checks

Sometimes, you aren’t using a skill to determine the success of an action. Sometimes, you are using one of your basic attributes – nothing more.

A character that has to use one of his attributes to determine success (either because he is attempting a task not covered by one of the skills, or – more commonly – because he is making a Body test to heal wounds) simply adds his attribute modifier to a base of 40. Thus, a character with a body of +20% would have a 60% chance of success making a body test.

Attribute checks should not be made in lieu of skill checks; even if a character lacks training in a skill, he must still use the skill to determine success.

A character can never improve his base chance of success when making an attribute check, unlike with skill checks.

The Combat Round

Most of the time, it’s fairly easy to take actions outside of combat. You have time to prepare, and

can weigh your options carefully before committing to a course. Even in life-or-death situations, such as climbing a cliff without climbing gear where a slip could mean a two-hundred foot fall, you can take time to test handholds and your footing.

Once bullets start flying and the Night Runners start snarling, though, all bets are off.

Combat takes place in *Combat Rounds*, each representing a three-second interval.

Step One: Determine Initiative

Combat is wild and hectic, with each participant making on-the-spot decisions in a highly chaotic environment. A turn-based *Initiative* (order of play) system is used within the game to facilitate game play. A turn order may seem arbitrary (and it is), but it helps maintain a sense of order in the game that would not be present in a real-life melee.

Using a deck of standard playing cards (keep the jokers in), deal out one card to each character involved in the combat. It is helpful to have a player assist in this task, to take some stress off the GM.

Jokers are the high card, followed by aces, kings, queens, and jacks, with the rest of the cards ranked in standard numerical order. If there are two cards of the same value, the cards are ranked by suit in alphabetical order; clubs are higher

than diamonds, which are higher than hearts, which are higher than spades. Black jokers are higher than red jokers.

If a character receives a joker, he gains a +10% bonus on all actions he takes until the start of his next turn.

The suit of the card you flip can grant you a bonus or penalty on psychic powers you use during your round, as indicated on the table below:

	Heart	Diamond	Spade	Club
Control	+0	+0	-10%	+10%
Metabolism	+10%	-10%	+0	+0
Sense	+0	+0	+10%	-10%
Telekinesis	-10%	+10%	+0	+0

An easy way to remember this table is to know the suit associated with each psychic skill (Control = Club, Metabolism = Heart, Sense = Spade,

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Telekinesis = Diamond). This should be fairly easy, as there are simple mnemonic devices to remember the associations (Control/Club both start with “c”, and Sense/Spade both start with “s”. Metabolism involves the body – heart, leaving Telekinesis with the remaining diamond).

If the suit for your power comes up, you get a +10% bonus on all checks with that power for the round. If the suit that is the same colour as your suit (i.e., you have a metabolism power and a diamond comes up), you have a -10% penalty on all metabolism checks for the round.

Step Two: Declare Actions

In reverse initiative order (i.e., lowest initiative total first), characters declare their basic actions for the turn. Note that there is no limit on the number of actions a character can take in a turn – but the more actions taken, the harder it is for each action to succeed (see “Taking Actions,” below). Actions need only be described in basic detail – exact targets do not need to be named, just the basic skill that will be used. For example, “I will fire my shotgun twice” is a perfectly fine declaration of action. “I will take two run actions and then throw my grenade” is also fine. “I will attack” is not acceptable, because no skill use is involved in the declaration, nor is the number of actions taken.

Step Three: Resolve Actions

In initiative order, a character resolves the first action he declared using the skill resolution rules, above. After his first action is resolved, the character with the next higher initiative resolves one action, and then the next, and so on.

Once all characters have taken their first action, this step repeats; characters who have declared multiple actions resolve the next action in their sequence. This repeats until all characters have finished their declared actions.

Example: Riley and Carlisle find themselves in an old lumber yard somewhere on the southern tip of Vancouver Island when they are attacked by three Nightmare Runners. Initiative order is as follows: Nightmare Runner #3 (King of Clubs), Nightmare Runner #2 (Six of Diamonds), Riley (Five of Diamonds), Nightmare Runner #1 (Five of Hearts), and then Carlisle.

Carlisle declares that he'll fire his shotgun once, and then use it as a club. The first Nightmare Runner is going to charge, and then use its claws once. Riley decides to run and leap behind some logs, and then fire

off her pistol twice. The two remaining Nightmare Runners will charge and attack once.

During the action resolution phase, Nightmare Runners #2 and #3 charge in. Riley then runs and leaps behind her logs. Nightmare Runner #1 then charges in. Finally, Carlisle is able to fire a shotgun blast at a Runner; he decides to target #, and kills it.

Every character has taken one of their declared actions; now they begin their second actions. Nightmare Runner #3 is dead, so it cannot take any actions. #2 makes a claw attack against Carlisle. Riley fires off a pistol round at Nightmare Runner #2 and hits (even though it's pretty close to Carlisle!) Nightmare Runner #1 gets to make its second attack. Carlisle uses his club as a weapon against Nightmare Runner #2, and scores a hit, killing the creature.

Finally, characters can take any third actions declared. Since only Riley declared a third action, she can now fire upon a Nightmare Runner of her choice.

Step Four: Repeat

Once all actions in a round have been resolved, go back to step one. Keep repeating the process until the combat is finished (usually once one side has retreated, been defeated, or surrendered).

Taking Actions

Unlike many other RPGs, characters in The Awakening are not limited in the number of actions they can take per round. However, the more actions they take, the harder it becomes to succeed at each action.

What Are Actions?

Actions are usually (but not always) skill checks that require at least a small amount of the character's attention. Firing a gun is an action; moving is an action; running is an action. However, some tasks require little in the way of concentration, and can be considered “Free” – dropping a weapon, for example, or shouting a warning to a friend.

No Triple Actions

In a single combat round, no character can take the same action more than twice. For example, a character can fire a pistol once or twice in a combat round, but cannot fire it three times. A character can move once or twice, but he cannot move three times (incidentally, a character cannot move twice, and then run twice).

A character with a pistol in each hand could conceivably fire twice with each gun, though he would suffer an off-handedness penalty (a -10%

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penalty), in addition to the usual multi-action penalty (see below).

Two Actions Per Round

A character can take two actions per round without suffering a penalty. He could, for example, move and shoot, shoot twice, climb a ladder and then run for cover, or throw a grenade and then duck for cover.

The Multi-Action Penalty

If a character decides to take more than two actions per turn, he suffers a drawback. After all, the more you attempt to do in six seconds, the more stressed and out and hurried you are. And the more likely you are to make mistakes.

For each action beyond the second, a character suffers a -10% penalty on *each* skill check made during that round.

Example: In the combat example above, Riley ran for cover and then fired her pistol twice. She has taken three actions this round, and so suffers from a -10% penalty on all checks. She will suffer that penalty on her Gymnastics check to leap over the logs, and she will suffer that penalty on both shooting attempts.

If Riley had decided to take three shots after running, she would have taken four actions, and so would suffer a -20% penalty on all checks.

Limit on Actions

If the character's multiple actions would reduce his base chance of success to 10% or lower, he cannot take an additional action. For example, a character with no training in firearms, a base skill rating of 20, and an Agility of +10 (for a total Base chance of success of 30%) could not move twice and then fire a pistol twice, as that would reduce his base chance of success to 10%. He could, however, move twice and fire his pistol once, which would reduce his base chance of success to 20%.

Preparing

If a character decides to take only one action during his round, he gains a +10% bonus on the check. He is, in essence, spending his first action to prepare his second action - whether he is aiming for a weak point, taking a breath to calm himself

before leaping over a chasm, or focusing his mind before unleashing his psychic powers.

Characters that decide to prepare their action do nothing on their first pass of the resolution phase of the round (they are preparing), and then take their prepared action on the second pass.

Example: Carlisle is having problems using his shotgun as a club against this Nightmare Runner. He decides to prepare his next melee attack. During the first pass of actions, he takes no action while he prepares - the Nightmare Runner makes an attack. On the second pass of actions, Carlisle makes his attack with a +10% bonus, and is finally able to crush in the poor soul's skull.

If a player wishes, he can have his character take an action on the first pass, and then take no other action. However, if he does so, he does not gain the +10% bonus for preparing (the character is essentially taking a "snap shot").

Actions

So, actions have been detailed. But, what exactly are the actions available to each character?

Aid Another

Instead of taking an action, you can use an action in a phase of combat to help out a companion. If you are performing an action that would assist a companion's skill check (helping him perform first aid, pulling him off a cliff face, or helping him keep a door shut from invading Nightmare Runners), you can grant an ally a bonus on his required skill check. The GM may or may not require you to make a skill check at an Easy Difficulty to see if you can grant your ally the bonus.

If you aid another, you grant an ally a +10% bonus on any one check made later in that same round.

Attack

A character can make an attack against an enemy, using a ranged weapon, a melee weapon, or his feet and fists. A character can make only two attacks her weapon a round. In theory, a character could have a weapon in each hand, and make two attacks with each, and then also kick a foe twice. But the multi-action penalty on such an action would be horrendous.

"Hey! Bullets don't come cheap, girlie. Take aim before you fire... don't just fire willy-nilly."
-EVERETT BANKS, SCAVENGER

"...Willy-Nilly?"
-CLEVER RETORT OF SUE PHILLIPS, PROTEGE.

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When an attack action is declared, the player does not need to declare which enemy he is attacking. Simply declaring the attack action (and the weapon used), is enough. The player can choose the actual target of the attack when his turn arrives.

Delay

A character can delay his action, acting later in the combat round. Essentially, the player declares he is skipping one phase of the round, to act in a later round. For example, he can fire a weapon, delay one phase, and then move in the third phase of the round.

Modify an Action

Once per round, a character can choose to modify his declared action, instead taking a different action. Doing so ends the remainder of the character's declared actions.

The character takes a -10% penalty on the check of this new action, in addition to any other penalties he would normally suffer. At the end of this action, the character cannot take any more actions during this combat round.

Example: Riley is busy trying to hold off two well-armed soldiers while Francis tries to use a crowbar to force open a warehouse door. Ducking behind a fence post, Riley's player declares that Riley will fire two rounds from her pistol, and then run to better cover behind a metal dumpster.

During the first two phases, Riley fires her pistol, missing both times. Then, at the end of the second phase, both soldiers move forward and group together. Realizing she's in trouble, Riley decides to throw a grenade, instead of running to the dumpster. She makes the attack with the grenade at a -20% penalty (-10% for the third action, and an additional -10% from the modified action). Riley doesn't get to the cover offered by the dumpster this round.

Movement

A character can move 30 feet as an action, or more if he sprints (see the *Athletics* skill description, page 21). If he takes two actions, he can move a total of 60 feet.

Out of Turn Actions

Sometimes, you have to make a check as a result of someone else's action. If, for example, you are standing on a Cliffside and someone pushes you off, you would have to make an acrobatics check to reduce falling damage.

These out of turn actions still count as an action, even though they were done outside of your turn. Make the skill check with no penalty from multiple actions; however, the out of turn action counts as an action for purposes of any further actions you take on your turn. If the out of turn action happened after you had taken all of your actions for that combat round, then the action "carries over" into the next combat round.

React

If a character spends an adrenaline point (see "Adrenaline", page 16), he can change all of his declared actions for the remainder of his round. He will suffer the usual multi-action penalties for doing so, however.

Surprise

Sometimes, you may get ambushed. Sometimes, you are just so shocked that you can do nothing but stand there, jaw agape, as the psychic wolves try to chew off your face.

When a combat starts, the GM may decide that you are surprised. This usually happens when you fail a perception check against a foe's stealth check, letting them get the sneak attack on you. Surprise almost always happens in the first round of combat.

If you are surprised, you must spend your first action of the combat round being surprised. This counts as an action for purposes of the multi-action penalty.

Until you take your first action of the round, you lose any bonus (but not penalty!) you gain from your dodge, parry, and will characteristics.

Example: Riley is walking down an abandoned city street in Richmond when she is jumped by two garishly-garbed Asian toughs. Each tough spends the first action phase rushing Riley, while Riley must spend her first action doing nothing. On the second phase, each makes a single melee attack (ignoring Riley's parry defence, as she has yet to act this round). Riley attacks on the second phase as well, though she misses. On the third phase, Riley decides to make a third attack – even though she has only actually taken one action, the first phase of surprise still counts as an action, and Riley suffers the -10% action penalty as a result.

Damage and Healing

The world of the Awakening is a dangerous one, and as characters explore abandoned cities haunted by feral creatures, they are bound to get hurt.

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Health Points

All characters have a number of health points, determined by their starting Body and Spirit attributes. Health points represent the general toughness of a character, and how much minor damage he can take before succumbing to a serious wound. A character who gets hit by a rifle, for example, could lose seven health points. This loss doesn't mean that the character has actually been hit by a rifle round; instead, it represents the character dodging the bullet, and getting a bit more tired and open to further mistakes in the process.

As characters take damage, their health points deplete; once a character reaches zero health points, he is unconscious, and dying.

At the end of a combat, all conscious characters automatically regain all health points.

A character that is reduced to zero or more health points is dying. The character is unconscious, and cannot take any actions. At the end of every combat round, the character loses 1 health point. Once the character suffers his wound value expressed as a negative, the character dies.

A character knocked to zero health points or more automatically suffers a single wound to a randomly determined location (see below), unless the character was already wounded in the attack that knocked him into the negatives.

Example: Francis gets hit by a stray rifle round, and is knocked to -3 health points. At the end of each combat round, he loses one more health point. His wound value is 7. Once his health point value is reduced to -7, Francis will die. Hopefully, one of his allies will reach him before that!

Dying

"Listen up, people of the islands! Put down your arms, and stop killing other human beings. A bullet is forever. Don't kill your fellow man. We're all in this together."
-Radio Message broadcast from an Enclave near Sidney.

hit. In other words, a character with a wound value of 5 would suffer a wound if he took five or more points of damage. The character would lose the listed number of health points, and would suffer a wound in the process.

Characters can suffer multiple wounds from one attack. The character mentioned above, for example, would suffer two wounds if hit for 11 points of damage.

Wounds and Health Points

For every wound a character takes, his maximum health point total drops by two. Note that this only applies to the maximum number of health points the character can have; it does not effect his current number of health points. What this means is that as a character accumulates wounds, the amount of damage the character can take in a single combat decreases.

Example: Francis gets jumped by an angry Grizzly bear, and gets mauled up pretty bad. The bear inflicts two wounds upon Francis' right arm. After Francis kills the bear with a lucky shotgun blast, he heals health points. Normally, he would heal to his maximum of 18; however, since he has taken two wounds, he now heals up to 14. Until he heals those two wounds, his health point maximum will be 14.

Wound Location

When a character suffers one or more wounds, roll on the table below. If the character is wearing armour, roll on the table as well. This determines where the character has been struck.

D100 Roll	Location
01-20	Arm (Right or Left)
21-35	Head
36-60	Leg (Right or Left)
61-00	Torso

Wounds

Wounds are a bit more serious than average health point depletion. These represent actual physical damage your character has suffered – he could be shot in the arm, or that club that cracked his head could result in a concussion.

All characters have a *Wound Value*, determined during character creation. This represents the amount of damage necessary for the character to take to suffer a wound, from a single

If an arm or a leg has been hit, determine which limb has been hit randomly (flip a coin!) If an area has been hit that wouldn't make sense (a character getting hit in the leg while standing behind cover, for example), then roll again.

Characters suffer ongoing penalties depending on where they've been hit, and how many wounds they have in that location, as summarized below:

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Arm, one wound: The character suffers a -10% penalty on any check that would require the use of the wounded arm. Any melee attacks using the wounded arm deal 2 less damage.

Arm, two wounds: As above, though the penalty increases to -20%, and attacks with the arm deal 4 less damage. In addition, the character suffers a -10% penalty on ALL checks made, due to the pain the character suffers.

Arm, three wounds: The character cannot use the arm in question – it is too mangled to be used in anything but the simplest manner. The character is in extreme pain, and suffers a -20% penalty on all skill checks.

Arm, four wounds: the arm is permanently damaged. In addition, the character is in blinding pain, and suffers a -30% penalty on all skill checks.

Head, one wound: The character is dazed, and suffers a -10% penalty on all skill checks.

Head, two wounds: the character is reeling from the blow, and his vision blurs. He suffers a -20% penalty on all checks made.

Head, three wounds: The character is having a hard time focusing, and finds he is fighting unconsciousness. He suffers a -30% penalty on all skill checks made, and can only take one action per round. He cannot use psychic powers.

Head, four wounds: the head is permanently damaged. The character is knocked unconscious. The character is knocked to zero health points (If he wasn't already), and is dying, losing 1 health point a round.

Leg, one wound: The character suffers a -10% penalty on any check that would require the use of the wounded leg. His speed is reduced by 5 feet.

Leg, two wounds: The character suffers a -20% penalty to all checks using the wounded leg, and his speed is reduced by 15 feet. The character cannot run or sprint. In addition, the character suffers a -10% penalty on ALL checks made, due to the pain the character suffers.

Leg, three wounds: The character cannot use the leg. He is knocked prone, and can only move about by crawling at a speed of five feet per move action. In addition, he suffers a -20% penalty on ALL checks made, due to the pain the character suffers.

Leg, four wounds: the leg is permanently damaged. In addition, the character is in blinding pain, and suffers a -30% penalty on all checks.

Torso, one wound: The character is hurt, but still able to keep going. While the character is bleeding and not doing so well, the damage isn't enough to leave a detrimental effect.

Torso, two wounds: The character is in pain, and it distracts him from everything else. He suffers a -10% penalty on all checks.

Torso, three wounds: the character is in crippling pain. He suffers a -20% penalty on all checks. He can only take one action a round, and cannot run.

Torso, four wounds: The torso is permanently damaged. The character is knocked unconscious. The character is knocked to zero health points (If he wasn't already), and is dying, losing 1 health point a round.

Torso, five wounds or more: The character is dead.

Accumulating Wounds

Characters accumulate wounds to various locations on their bodies, and these numbers stack as the location takes more damage. For example, if a character has one wound on his left arm, and takes an additional two wounds on the left arm, he now has three wounds on the arm.

Once a location has accumulated four wounds, extra damage is carried over to the character's torso.

Many wounds inflict a penalty – if a character is suffering penalties from various wounds, only use the worst penalty. Penalties do not stack (so, a character with two wounds in the left arm would only suffer a -20% penalty to attacks using that arm; the -10% general penalty would only apply to checks made that did not use the wounded arm).

Permanent Damage

If an area is determined to be permanently damaged, then the character suffers some pretty severe problems.

To begin with, the location is obviously crippled in some way – the character could have a vicious scar, an obvious limp, or a burn mark.

Secondly, the character suffers the penalty associated with one wound on the location in question; a character with a permanently damaged arm, for example, would always suffer a -10% penalty on all checks made using that arm. Note that the character only suffers the penalty; the character doesn't carry a permanent wound in that location. As such, a fully-healed character with a permanently damaged arm wouldn't suffer any

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additional penalties if he suffered a single wound in his damaged arm.

Finally, every time a character suffers a permanent wound, his health point total drops by 1.

If a character with a permanently damaged location suffers another permanent damage, his penalties increase by one step. For example, a character with 2 “permanent damages” in his right arm will suffer as if he is always suffering two wounds in that arm.

Healing Wounds

Healing wounds is a longer process than regaining health points, and usually takes a few days. Once per day, a character can make a body test (average difficulty), with any penalties from wounds applied. If the test is a success, the character can heal one wound point. He must lose the health point from the most damaged location on his body first.

Improving Skills in Play

Unlike other RPGs, Awakening does not use an out-of-play method of improving characters. There are no experience points that advance your character’s “level”, and no karma points that can be used to purchase improvements for your character in play. Instead, your character improves through the use of skills.

As you use your character’s skills, they will slowly improve - one percentage point at a time. Better yet, your character improves in play; no longer will you find yourself wasting time “levelling up” during sessions that could be better spent enjoying the game.

The Improvement Check

Whenever you make a skill check, if a “0” comes up on either die, whether or not you succeed on the check, you have a possibility to improve your skill score. After resolving the success or failure of the action in question, make an *Improvement Check*.

An improvement check is a d100 roll against your skill’s Base Skill Rating – do not include any modifiers from training or high attributes, or any other modifier.

If the check fails (i.e., it is higher than your Base Skill rating), then your base skill rating improves by 1 point. If the check succeeds, then your base skill rating remains the same.

This means that the lower your base skill rating, the easier it is to improve during play. However, once a rating begins to improve, it gets harder and harder to increase.

Only skills can improve in this manner; attributes can never be increased by Improvement Checks.

Some Caveats

There are, however, a few restrictions to improvement checks.

First, a character can never gain an Improvement check on very easy tasks.

Second, a character cannot gain an Improvement check if there’s no real penalty for failure. Using perception to notice absolutely everything about the beauty of the Pacific Northwest will not get you points (though I highly recommend you do it anyways; it’s definitely worthwhile to do).

Third, a player that is obviously just taking skill checks in the hopes of improving a skill (“Guys, don’t kill him yet! If we keep beating on him with our fists while wounded in both arms, we can deal zero damage a hit, and still get a chance to level!”), then the GM is well within his rights to declare that a skill cannot be improved.

Optional Rule: Harder or Easier Progression

The rules-as-written make improving skills relatively easy. During the start of the game, there is a 20% chance that any roll will generate a “0”, and a 90% chance that the Improvement Check will result in a skill increasing. In other words, roughly 18% of rolls a player makes will generate a 1 point increase in a skill.

This was intentional, because Awakening is a small RPG, and probably not large enough for long-term play as presented. Thus, players can play the game for a month or two, and see some significant results in their character during that time.

If you feel PCs progress too quickly as written, simply rule that an Improvement check results only when a zero comes up in the “ones” column of a skill’s percentile roll – a roll of 90 would generate

“You know, back before all this shit started, I had NEVER EVEN touched a pistol before. And now look, I’m friggin’ Robin Hood or something.”
-EVERETT BANKS, SCAVENGER

an Improvement Check, while a roll of 09 would not.

If you feel PCs do not progress enough (perhaps if you are running a “one-shot” game), then double, or even triple, the improvement to a Base Skill Rating – going up by 2 points each success, instead of 1.

Optional Rule: Other Advancement

Some players like to control their character’s advancement a bit more. In this case, the GM can attempt to introduce some other means of advancement that are not reliant upon random chance.

At the end of every four-hour session, the GM gives out “Progress Points” – one point for simply surviving the adventure, one point for good role-playing, one point for exceptional play, and one point if the group succeeded upon their main goal.

Any time a character relaxes or takes some personal time (whether he is out training, or drinking and whoring it up), then he has the opportunity to spend these progress points.

A character can spend a progress point to increase a base skill rating by 1 point.

A character can spend 5 progress points to improve an attribute by 1 point.

A character can spend 20 progress points to remove a permanent wound – the character could still have the wound, but may have adjusted to it, and it no longer truly bothers him.

A character can spend 20 progress points to improve his adrenaline maximum by 1 point. After this is done once, the cost improves to 25; each time thereafter increases the cost by a further 5 points.

A character can spend a number of progress points equal to his current health point maximum to increase this total by 2.

Note that these rules are really only guidelines, and the GM should adjust the number of points awarded per session depending on personal tastes and speed of advancement desired.

Character Creation

Creating a character for The Awakening is fast and easy, and follows seven simple steps.

Step One: Choose a Concept

The first step in creating a character is deciding upon a character concept, essentially asking yourself, who is your character?

Figure out who your character is, his strengths and weaknesses, and do your best to form an image of your character in your mind. The stronger your character concept now, the easier it is to pick out attributes and traits later on.

While you can have a broad general concept, there is another part to this step that has to be a bit more controlled.

Write down what your character’s general occupation was before the Awakening. You do not need to be specific, but there should be a general idea of what your character did before he started prowling through abandoned cities in search of leftover gear.

Second, write down some skills your character would probably have that are not necessarily going to be reflected by game rules. You could probably get away with listing three to five general skills that your character would have.

Writing down your concept is important! It indicates what your character can spend adrenaline points on during play.

Example: Jasper decides to make his first Awakening character. He decides to make a former trucker named “Biggs” who awoke in the north on an abandoned road with nothing but his “lucky” revolver and a trucker’s cap. Biggs is a tough-talking man who has served time in prison (he was charged with assaulting a drug dealer) because of his drive to always do the right thing, even if it means personal harm.

Jasper has already decided Biggs is a tough trucker, so the first part of recording this on the character sheet is simple. But he has to think of some skills his tough truck driver would be good at.

Obviously, Biggs would be a good driver, and should have a good knowledge of the road system on the land (And probably geography in general). Biggs would know a bit about smuggling, and could easily work a CB radio. Biggs would also be pretty intimidating.

Jasper would record this on his character sheet as “Concept: Truck Driver. Concept Skills: Truck Driving, Road Geography, Smuggling, CB Radio, Intimidate Others.

Step Two: Allocate Attributes

Attributes are basic traits shared by all human beings, such as strength, intelligence, agility, and personal willpower. However, not everyone is equally strong, or equally bright.

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In The Awakening, attributes are used primarily to modify a character's skill checks, though they can also determine secondary characteristics (such as toughness) of the character as well.

There are four attributes shared by all living beings in the Awakening RPG:

Body: A character's strength, relative toughness, stamina, and overall resilience. A character with a high body is effective in melee combat and can shrug off serious wounds.

Intelligence: A character's logical ability, memory, reasoning power, and knowledge base. A character with a high intelligence knows a little bit about everything and can figure out puzzles with ease – and often excels in many different skills.

Agility: a character's hand-eye coordination, reflexes, and dexterity. A character with a high agility is effective in ranged combat and can often avoid taking hits in ranged combat.

Spirit: A character's willpower and personal awareness – both internally and externally. A character with a high spirit is very perceptive and more attuned to the psychic powers that now exist in the world.

Assigning Modifiers

You have to prioritize your attributes. All attributes begin at a modifier of +0%. You have 60 points to allocate (in 5 point intervals) to the four attributes – no attribute can be lowered below 0%, and none can be raised above +30%.

A score of +10% is considered “average”, while a score of +0% is below average, but not terribly so. A score of +30% is quite noteworthy, and would easily signify a gifted individual.

A quick way to assign attribute modifiers is to have one stat remain at -0%, have one at +10%, one at +20%, and one at +30%.

Example: Jasper knows that he wants Biggs to be tough, and so spends 30 points immediately to bring Biggs' Body from 0% to +30% - the highest it can go. Since Biggs is a truck driver, he should have a decent agility, and so Jasper spends 15 more points to bring Bigg's Agility up to +15%. Jasper has 15 points remaining, and decides that Biggs has a stubborn streak to him, spending all the remaining points to bring Bigg's Spirit up to +15%. Biggs' final attributes are Body (+30%), Agility (+15%), Intelligence (+0%), and Spirit (+15%).

"What's mine is mine, and what's yours is mine as well. The sooner you remember that, the better off you'll be."
-Last words of a Mouth Raider.

Step Three: Characteristics

Characteristics are values derived from your character's attribute scores. They represent innate values that do not change (or, at least, rarely change) as your character progresses.

Dodge is your character's ability to avoid ranged attacks such as gunfire and psychic blasts. It is applied as a modifier to your enemy's ranged attack roll against you.

Parry is your character's ability to avoid and deflect melee attacks. Much like dodge, it is applied as a modifier to an enemy's melee attack rolls against you.

A character's **Health** is the amount of damage a character can take in a single combat before dying.

A character's **Wound Value** is the amount of damage needed to inflict a *wound* upon the character.

A character's **Willpower** is the character's resistance against intimidation attempts and psychic attacks. Similar to dodge and parry,

Willpower is applied as a modifier to an enemy's psychic attack rolls against you.

Determining Your Characteristic Values

All characters have characteristics, relatively static values derived from a character's attributes. Each characteristic is determined by taking the average of the two listed attributes (round down to the closest multiple of 5), and finding that result on the table below.

Dodge is determined by taking the average of the character's Agility and Intelligence.

Parry is determined by taking the average of the character's Body and Agility.

Health is determined by taking the average of the character's Body and Spirit.

A character's Wound Value is determined by taking the average of his Body and Spirit.

Willpower is determined by taking the average of the character's Spirit and Intelligence.

Average	Dodge	Parry	Health	Wound	Will
+0%	+10%	+10%	10	4	+10%
+5%	+10%	+10%	13	5	+10%
+10%	+0%	+0%	15	6	+0%
+15%	+0%	+0%	18	7	+0%
+20%	-10%	-10%	20	8	-10%
+25%	-10%	-10%	23	9	-10%
+30%	-20%	-20%	25	10	-20%

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Example: Using the table above, Jasper determines Biggs' characteristics.

He adds his Agility and Intelligence together and divides by 2, and divides by 2, getting 7, which rounds down to +5 ($0+15=15$, $15/2=7$). Using the chart, this reveals that Biggs has a dodge of +10% - he's actually pretty easy to hit!

Biggs' Parry is a bit better, as his Body (30) and Agility (15) are both decent. He gets a result of 20 after adding them together, meaning his Parry is -10%.

Using the same process, Jasper discovers that Biggs has 20 Health Points, a Wound Value of 8, and a Willpower of +10%.

Step Four: Determine Psychic Powers

All Awakened beings have some form of psychic power; it is this power that prevents them from becoming mindless savages in the form of Nightmare Runners, or hapless wanderers like the Sleepwalkers. However, the majority of human beings have relatively minor powers - some will never get sick again, while others are simply better able to perceive the nebulous nature of the dream lands.

Player characters, however, are different. Each has some power that sets him apart from the rest. These powers are determined randomly, by rolling on the following table.

D100 Roll	Power
	<i>Control Powers</i>
01-09	Drain Life
10-18	Steal Power
	<i>Metabolic Powers</i>
19-27	Fast Heal
28-36	Heal Others
37-45	Walk Through Walls
46-54	Wall Climber
	<i>Sense Powers</i>
55-63	Astral Projection
64-72	Danger Sense
	<i>Telekinetic Powers</i>
73-81	Control Fire
82-90	Levitate
91-99	Liquid Motion
00	Roll Twice on this table.

Each psychic power has an associated skill, as described on the table. You use this skill to power your psychic effects; it is recommended you assign

a major or minor skill increase to your psychic skill in the next step of character creation.

Example: Jasper rolls on the table, wondering what power his character is going to get. He rolls a 44, meaning Biggs knows the Walk Through Walls Metabolic power.

Step Five: Assign Skill Increases

In The Awakening, each character knows each skill in the game. While this may seem unrealistic, the skills of the Awakening are broad enough that it would actually make sense for any character to attempt using one.

However, that doesn't mean that each character has the same chance of success in each skill.

Players can assign Increases to skills they think their character would excel in. An Increase is a flat bonus that is always applied to the skill, except in Improvement Checks. In other words, it makes a character's skill level higher, without hurting the chance of improving a skill through game-play.

Characters don't get many skill increases to assign, however, as there really are not many skills available in the game. Should the GM expand upon the game, the number of skill increases a starting character has should also increase.

Each character gets two minor skill increases, two major skill increases, and is an expert in one skill. Skill increases cannot overlap - you cannot, for example, make a skill both a minor and a major skill.

A *minor skill* increase grants a permanent +10% bonus on the skill. It represents basic training in the area, such as a one-week first aid training course (for the First Aid skill), or a few days' of hunting with your father every other summer (for the Shooting skill).

A *Major skill* increase grants a permanent +20% bonus to the skill. A major skill increase represents a major area of training for your character, and is possibly a cornerstone of the character's career. Examples would include Paramedic training, or a police officer making frequent visits to the Firing range.

An *expert skill* increase grants a permanent +30% bonus to the skill. An expert skill means the character is just that - an expert at the skill in question. It is a knack that the character has. Expert skills grant the character an additional bonus once it improves to Skill Level 30 that non-expert characters will never gain access to. Choose your expert skill wisely. Examples of an

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expert skill include a character possessing a doctorate in medicine, or a character who has served as a frontline soldier for a standing army.

A character cannot be an expert in a psychic skill (Control, Metabolism, Sense, or Telekinesis). Psychic skills are useless if a character does not have a psychic power that relies upon that skill.

The Skill List

Acrobatics (Agility)
Athletics (Body)
Barter (Spirit)
Close Combat (Body)
First Aid (Intelligence)
Lucid Dreaming (Spirit)
Perception (Spirit)
Shooting (Agility)
Stealth (Agility)

Psychic Skills

Control (Intelligence)
Metabolism (Body)
Sense (Spirit)
Telekinesis (Agility)

Example: Jasper looks at the skill list, and starts selecting skill increases for Jasper, the tough trucker.

For minor skills, he decides that Metabolism is a good pick (since it is the base skill for his Walk Through Walls power), as well as Shooting. For major skills, Jasper selects Athletics and Perception – Biggs is a tough guy, and as a trucker, he has learned he has to stay aware while on the road. Biggs' expert skill will be Close Combat – truckers get into their fair share of barroom brawls, after all!

Just to speed up things in play, Jasper decides to write down his base chance of success for each skill (all skills will start at base skill rating 10, of course... Jasper just wants to see what each skill's rating will be once his attribute modifier and skill increase is included). This means that the chances of success for his skills are as follows:

Acrobatics: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Agi.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 25\%$

Athletics: $10 \text{ (base)} + 30 \text{ (Bod.)} + 20 \text{ (Major)} = 60\%$

Barter: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Spi.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 25\%$

Close Combat: $10 \text{ (base)} + 30 \text{ (Agi.)} + 30 \text{ (Expert)} = 70\%$

Control: $10 \text{ (base)} + 0 \text{ (Int.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 10\%$

First Aid: $10 \text{ (base)} + 0 \text{ (Int.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 10\%$

Lucid Dreaming: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Spi.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 25\%$

Metabolism: $10 \text{ (base)} + 30 \text{ (Bod.)} + 10 \text{ (Minor)} = 50\%$

Perception: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Spi.)} + 20 \text{ (Major)} = 45\%$

Sense: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Spi.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 25\%$

Shooting: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Agi.)} + 10 \text{ (Minor)} = 35\%$

Stealth: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Agi.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 25\%$

Telekinesis: $10 \text{ (base)} + 15 \text{ (Agi.)} + 0 \text{ (No Skill)} = 25\%$

So, Biggs has about a 25% base chance of success with most of his untrained skills, which seems fine to Jasper. His First Aid is horrendous, which could be bad news for Biggs' buddies, but Biggs has more than enough skill in a close fight to make up for that (a Close Combat score of 70%, the highest possible at character creation!). Biggs is also very athletic (60%), and his power with his psychic skill is definitely on it's way (50%).

Step Six: Adrenaline

All characters begin play with adrenaline points. Adrenaline points allow the character to perform feats beyond his normal limit, and give PCs a little bit more control over random events.

Each character begins play with five adrenaline points. These points can be used to power special psychic skills, or to allow special uses of specific skills. They can be used to

activate a character's background, to keep your character alive, or to grant a specific in-game benefit.

The character's adrenaline points refresh after a character has had a decent night's rest (usually at least six hours of sleep). Any leftover points are lost.

Uses of Adrenaline Points

Each skill, and most psychic powers, have a power that can only be used if a character spends an adrenaline point. This is the most common use of Adrenaline in the game. However, there are a few more options for Adrenaline point usage.

A character can spend an adrenaline point only once per round. If he wants to activate two different powers that each require an adrenaline point, well, too bad.

Any character can spend an adrenaline point to:

- 1) Gain a +10% bonus on any skill check.
- 2) Gain a +20% bonus on a concept roll.
- 3) Force an enemy to re-roll a damage roll.
- 4) Gain a re-roll.

"Sometimes, I'm amazed at what I can do once my blood gets pumping."

-Sue Phillips, Scavenger

"Yeah, once things start going bad, I can move like greased lightning. Before, I'd break a sweat climbing a flight of stairs."

-Everett Banks, Scavenger.

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GAIN A BONUS ON A Skill Check

A character can spend an adrenaline point just before making a skill check. The spending of the adrenaline point doesn't take an action (it very rarely does). The character gains a +10% bonus on that single skill check.

GAIN A BONUS ON A Concept Roll

If the character has to make an attribute check (but *never* a skill check) regarding a skill that the character would reasonably know due to his concept, he can spend an adrenaline point to gain a +20% bonus on that attribute check.

This cannot be used on skill checks – a character should probably already have training in a skill that would obviously relate to his concept.

This use of an adrenaline point explains many skill uses that would come up rarely in most play. The skills listed in step one of character creation are obvious choices for this use of adrenaline, but other uses that connect to the character's background could exist. It is, of course, up to the GM to make a final decision on whether the character would get the bonus.

Example: Biggs has to bust open a door. Jasper says "Hey, can I spend an adrenaline point to get a bonus on the roll?"

The GM would say, "You're a truck driver. How does busting open a door relate to being a truck driver?"

"Well, uh..." Jasper stutters.

"Nice Try," the GM says, grinning evilly.

Of course, if Biggs were a fire fighter (who often have to break through doors as part of their occupation), Jasper might have had a foot to stand on.

FORCE AN ENEMY TO Re-roll Damage

If you get hit by an enemy's attack, and the damage roll is truly awful, you can spend an adrenaline point to make the ally re-roll the damage (usually, just re-rolling the d10 and adding the same damage modifiers as the first roll).

The enemy re-rolls the damage, and keeps the worse result of the two.

GAIN A Re-Roll

You can also spend an adrenaline point to re-roll any check you make, though you have to keep the second result, even if it is worse.

You can only gain a re-roll in this manner once per day; you cannot spend a second adrenaline

point later on to gain a bonus on any other skill until your adrenaline pool refreshes. Of course, if you have skills that let you spend an adrenaline point to re-roll a failed roll, you can use them as many times as you have adrenaline points.

BURNING Adrenaline

In dire circumstances, you can actually "burn" a point of adrenaline to prevent your character from dying or getting permanently wounded. You must have at least one adrenaline point remaining to do this.

You tell the GM you are burning an adrenaline point when your character is either permanently wounded or would normally die. Instead, your character receives a normal wound (and the normal damage), or somehow "miraculously" survives. However, this comes with a cost – you permanently lose one adrenaline point.

Step Seven: Starting Gear

Finally, determine your character's starting gear. This is described in the Equipment chapter, page 33.

Example: Biggs has the following starting equipment: Leather Jacket and Pants, a Crowbar, a Revolver with 20 rounds, a backpack, full set of clothes, a 2L plastic water bottle, one week's worth of canned foods (Chef Boyardee and Campbell's Soup, Jasper decides), a flashlight, sleeping bag, swiss army knife, six uses of Marijuana (trucker's best friend!), Short Range Radio, and two rolls of Duct Tape.

Quick-Start Characters

If you want to get into play quickly, here are a few pre-generated PCs, ready for play.

Darren Ross, Ferry Worker

Concept: Ferry Deckhand. Skills include navigating, fire-fighting procedure, radio use, and knowledge of the inner passage of the Pacific Northwest.

Body:	+25%	Wound:	7
Intelligence:	+0%	HP:	18
Agility:	+25%	Move:	30 feet
Spirit:	+10%	Adrenaline:	5
Dodge:	+0%	Parry:	-10%
Will:	+10%		
Armour:	Leather Jacket and Pants		

Minor Skills

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Close Combat (45%)
Shooting (45%)
Major Skills:

First Aid (30%)
Control (30%)

Expert Skill:

Athletics (65%)

Psychic Power:

Steal Power

Gear: Fire Axe, Leather Jacket and Pants, Hunting Rifle, 20 rounds, a backpack, full set of clothes, a2L plastic water bottle, one week's worth of canned foods, Fishing Gear, 6 uses of Marijuana, Tent, a flashlight, sleeping bag, swiss army knife.

Description: Darren is a slacker who had dreams of being an athlete. He found himself working a decent paying ferry job, though he hated the drudgery of serving passengers on repetitive routes.

Something of a paintball fanatic, Darren found himself a decent shot with a weapon, and uses his athleticism and firing skills to good use as part of a scavenging team. He is unsure of his psychic "gift", as he is rarely able to activate it.

Molly Rose, Paramedic

Concept: Young Paramedic. Skills include driving, calming wounded people, finding shortcuts on city roads, knowing drug effects, and use of a radio.

Body:	+10%	Wound:	7
Intelligence:	+15%	HP:	18
Agility:	+15%	Move:	30 feet
Spirit:	+20%	Adrenaline:	5

Dodge: +0% Parry: +0% Will: +0%

Armour: Sports Gear (all locations but head)

Minor Skills

Barter (40%)
Lucid Dreaming (40%)

Major Skills:

Perception (50%)
Telekinesis (45%)

Expert Skill:

First Aid (55%)
Psychic Power:
Liquid Motion

Gear: Knife, Sports Gear (all locations except head), Semi-Automatic Pistol, 20 rounds, a backpack, full set of clothes, a2L plastic water bottle, one week's worth of canned foods, first aid kit, 50m of Nylon Rope, Short Range Radio, a flashlight, sleeping bag, swiss army knife.

Description: Molly is a young woman who flunked out of college and took up a career as a paramedic originally as a way to make ends meet. However, it turned out she was a damned good paramedic, and she's been doing it now for three years.

After the awakening, Molly used her powers to slink and slide into ruined buildings that few others could reach. However, she's been plagued by dreams since her own private Awakening, and is hoping to find some sort of inner peace. She carries a pistol she has looted from a sleepwalking police officer, and has taken to wearing some

mismatched hockey gear. She knows she looks silly wearing it, but it's already protected her a few times from Nightmare Runners.

Troy Robertson, Bus Driver

Concept: Bus Driver. Skills include driving, knowledge of city streets, negotiating fare, radio use, and interpreting "dangerous" human behaviour.

Body:	+10%	Wound:	7
Intelligence:	+15%	HP:	18
Agility:	+15%	Move:	30 feet
Spirit:	+20%	Adrenaline:	5

Dodge: +0% Parry: +0% Will: +0%

Armour: Leather Jacket and Pants

Minor Skills

Telekinesis (35%)
First Aid (35%)

Major Skills:

Stealth (45%)
Shooting (45%)

Expert Skill:

Barter (60%)

Awakening Conjunction RPG entry

Psychic Power:

Levitate

Gear: Crowbar, Leather Jacket and Pants, Hunting Rifle, 20 rounds, a backpack, full set of clothes, a 2L plastic water bottle, one week's worth of canned foods, Fishing Gear, Tent, Camouflage Clothing, a flashlight, sleeping bag, swiss army knife.

Description: Troy is a middle-aged bus driver who, before the Awakening, felt like he had failed in life. He sees everything since as a second chance, and has taken wholeheartedly to exploring the new world.

Troy has always been an outdoors person. He used to take off as much time as he possibly could to spend summers fishing, hunting, and camping. After the Awakening, he figured he would do just that, though he quickly learned the wilderness is much more dangerous than it used to be.

Troy has always been a skilled negotiator and has great skill at calming people down. He has turned his "people skills" into an art form since the Awakening, bartering for whatever equipment that strikes his fancy.

Skills

What follows here are the skills most likely to be used in the Awakening RPG. This does not mean that a character is limited to only these skills; a character's concept should suggest other fields of expertise and knowledge a character may have available (a lawyer would know much about the legal system, while a paramedic should probably know a bit about city routes and radio use). However, what follows are the *major* skills of the game – running, shooting, hiding, and the like.

Improving Skills in Play

You'll note that each skill has a listing of uses for each skill. For example, a character can use Acrobatics to reduce falling damage.

However, all skills have abilities that unlock as characters improve their Base Skill Rating. For example, once you get your acrobatics up to Base Skill 20, you can actually use your acrobatics to dodge blows.

These abilities are unlocked when your Base Skill Rating reaches the indicated rating; this is not

your base chance of success! Since all characters begin play with a Base Skill of 10 in all skills, these unlockable powers will not appear at the start of the game.

Expert Skills

Each character can choose one skill to be an "expert" skill. This is their area of primary training. Once you reach base skill 30, you unlock a special ability that only Experts gain access to. An expert in Acrobatics, for example, can actually use his acrobatics to avoid melee damage, and gains an increased dodge rating.

Characters cannot become an expert in any psychic skill (Control, Metabolism, Sense, or Telekinesis).

Skill Descriptions

Descriptions of the various skills follow.

Acrobatics (Agility)

The acrobatics skill represents grace, balance, and a certain mastery over motion. It can be used to avoid taking serious damage from falling, to assist in dodging blows, and to move quickly across narrow surfaces. It is a common skill among dancers, acrobatics, gymnasts, and many athletes.

Reduce Falling Damage: Whenever a character falls more than 10 feet, he can make an Acrobatics Degree of Success test (Average Difficulty, costs one action). Each degree of success reduces the total falling damage by 1 point. (Falling damage is 2 points of damage per 10 feet fallen).

Balance Across Surface: A character can move half speed over a narrow surface (less than a foot wide) by making an Acrobatics (Average Difficulty, costs one action) test. He can move at full speed across a narrow surface at a higher difficulty (Hard Difficulty, costs one action).

Skill Improvements: Acrobatics grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character can spend an adrenaline point to *Dodge Blows*. During her turn, the character spends the adrenaline point and makes an Acrobatics test (Average Difficulty, One Action) to dodge incoming ranged and melee attacks. Her Dodge rating improves by +10% until the start of her next turn. Each round thereafter, she can make another Acrobatics check (Hard Difficulty, One Action) to maintain the dodge bonus.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character can spend an adrenaline point to *Roll with the Punch* in response to a melee attack. After being hit by a melee attack (but before damage is announced), the character spends an adrenaline point and makes an Acrobatics check (Very Hard difficulty, Costs One Action). Success means the attacker has to re-roll his attack roll, and use the lower of the two results.

In addition, the character's Dodge rating improves by 5%.

Base Skill 40: The character's dodge rating improves by 5%.

The character can *Roll Out of Harm's Way*. When hit by an area attack (such as that of a grenade), the character can spend an adrenaline point to make an Acrobatics test (Hard Difficulty, Free Action). Each degree of success reduces the damage she suffers from the attack by 1.

Athletics (Body)

The Athletics skill allows the skilled character to easily move about dangerous situations. Athletics is the required skill whenever a character seeks to climb a surface, sprint, or swim. It is a common skill among soldiers, athletes, and wilderness guides, as well as any character who values mobility and physical health.

Sprint: As part of a regular move action, the character can choose to *sprint*. The character makes an athletics Degree of Success check (Average Difficulty, as part of regular move action), with each degree of success improving the character's movement by five feet. In addition, a sprinting character's speed automatically improves by 10 feet.

Thus, a character which sprints, whether or not he succeeds on his sprint check, will typically have a speed of at least 40 feet. For each degree of success scored on the test, he would move 5 feet more.

A character could spend both move actions allowed to him to sprint twice, moving at least 80 feet in that round.

Each sprint action a character takes imposes a -10% on all checks made that round (in addition to any multi-action penalty that may be suffered), with the exception of athletics checks.

Climb/Swim: A character can climb a surface (Variable difficulty, costs one move action), moving at half his normal movement rate. The

character can attempt to move at his normal movement rate, though doing so increases the difficulty by 20%.

If the character fails the check, his move action is wasted and he remains still. If he fails the check by 20 or more, he falls. (Falling characters can make an acrobatics check to reduce falling damage; falling damage is 2 points per 10 feet fallen).

Likewise, a character can swim in water (Variable difficulty, costs one move action), moving half his movement rate. Again, the character can move at his normal speed by increasing the difficulty of the check by 20%.

If the character fails the check, his move action is wasted, and the character is just treading water. If the character fails the check by 20 or more, the character begins to drown, and takes 4 points of damage (and must make a swimming check on his next round; failure means an additional 4 points of damage are suffered).

Skill Improvements: Athletics grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character can spend an adrenaline point to get *In the Zone*. The point must be spent on the character's turn; until the start of the character's next turn, he gains a +10% bonus on all Body attribute checks, and all body-

related skill checks made for the round.

In addition, the character gains one additional Health point.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character can spend an adrenaline point to *Shrug It Off*, ignoring all the minor wounds and damage accumulated in a fight. The point must be spent on the character's turn, and counts as an action. After the point is spent, the character heals 4 health points, and can make an Athletics Degree of Success test (Average difficulty, no action), with each degree counting as one more health point healed.

In addition, the character's Body attribute improves by 5%.

Body Skill 40: The character gains one additional adrenaline point usable per day.

In addition, the character gains 1 additional health point.

"You know, this is the first time
I've ever seen a traffic-free
street in Vancouver. Gotta say,
it feels nice."
- Troy Robertson, Scavenger

Barter (Spirit)

The barter skill is used to negotiate deals between two parties. It is often used in financial-type transactions; in the time of the Awakening, all of the usual currencies are valueless. Only items still have value, and that value is usually directly related to the item's usefulness in a survival situation.

A character skilled in barter has an easier time arranging trades between the junk merchants and scavengers of the world, and often has a variety of obtained goods in his backpack. Barter is a common skill among those who deal with the public or work in the sales sector – public servants, lawyers, door-to-door salesmen, and more.

Trade: When two characters seek to trade items, assign a “dollar” value to each item, related to its usefulness in the time of the Awakening and the relative scarcity of the item in question. A single day's worth of food should be considered to be worth ten “dollars”, while a single round of ammunition might be around five dollars, and a functioning assault rifle could be worth as much as two-hundred dollars.

(Note: for reasons of space, a compiled list of item values will not be found in this game. In fact, such a list will inevitably get in the way of the resourceful GM. It should not be hard to arbitrarily assign values to items as the campaign progresses)

Characters try to trade a pool of items that are roughly equal in value (for example, two days of food being traded for four rounds of ammunition). The two parties make opposed barter checks; the winning party can reduce his pool of items by 25% (for example, if the party selling the ammunition won the barter check, he would only have to trade 3 rounds of ammunition for the two days' worth of food).

Skill Improvements: Barter grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character can spend an adrenaline point as a free action to *Bluff/Feint* an opponent in order to gain a combat advantage. The character makes a Barter check as part of the action (Average Difficulty, No Action). This barter check is opposed by the target's Willpower statistic. If the bluff check succeeds, then the bluffing character gains a +10% bonus on the next melee attack against the target, and gains a +10% parry bonus against the target's attacks, until the start of the bluffing character's next turn. A character can only bluff intelligent (typically human) opponents.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character can spend an Adrenaline Point as a free action to *Always be Prepared*. The character is assumed to have, at some point earlier in the adventure, bargained or otherwise acquired a useful piece of gear. By spending an adrenaline point, the player can name an object he wishes for his character to possess that would be useful in resolving a current crisis. The GM and player discuss how difficult the object would be to obtain; everyday items have a Very Easy difficulty, while rare items (such as Rocket Launchers), would have a Very Difficult difficulty.

If the player still decides to spend the adrenaline point, he can make a Bargain check (variable difficulty, no action) against the agreed-upon difficulty. If he succeeds, then the character is considered to have the item on hand. If the check fails, then the character loses the adrenaline point and does not gain any benefit.

Example: Tracy wants to stick a rag into a gas canister and throw it at some Awakened wolves prowling around the ruins of Surrey. She has the rag, and she has the gas canister; unfortunately, she doesn't have a lighter! She chooses to spend an adrenaline point as a free action and use her Always be Prepared power to conjure up a lighter.

The GM and Tracy's player talk, and decide that a lighter is an Easy item to obtain. This gives Tracy a modified chance of success of 91% (Tracy's Base Skill is 31, her spirit is +10%, and she is an Expert in Barter for +30, plus 20% for the Easy Difficulty). Tracy's player decides to spend the point, and makes the roll – 41!

Tracy digs around in her pockets, and pulls out a lighter. She then remembers that she had picked up the lighter in Barge City in exchange for a few comic books. She lights the rag, and gets ready to roast some wolves...

Base Skill 40: The character's Willpower improves by 5%.

The character may *Fast Talk*. When targeted by a melee attack, the character can spend an adrenaline point to make a barter check (Hard difficulty, opposed by target's Willpower, costs one action). If the barter check succeeds, the target cannot make an attack against the character until the start of the character's next turn.

A character may only *Fast Talk* once during an encounter.

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Close Combat (Body)

The close combat skill is used to make melee attacks against enemies. Whether a character is armed with a club, a sword, or his fists, he is using the close combat skill to damage his foe. Close combat is a popular skill among those who regularly resort to violence – soldiers, police, and criminals.

Armed Attack: A character can make an attack with a weapon against a foe (Average difficulty, opposed by target's parry, one action). If the attack hits, the character does the weapon's listed damage. In addition, for each degree of success on the test, the character inflicts one additional point of damage against the target.

Unarmed Attack: A character can make an unarmed attack against a foe (Average difficulty, opposed by target's parry, one action). Each degree of success on the test inflicts one point of damage against the target.

Defensive Stance: A character can enter a defensive stance on his turn (costs one action). Doing so grants the character a +10% bonus to his parry score until the start of his next turn.

Attack of Opportunity: if a target moves away from you, you can spend one adrenaline point to make a free attack against the foe using whatever weapon is currently in your hand. The attack counts as an action on your next turn, and is made using all the normal modifiers.

Skill Improvements: Close Combat grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character deals one additional point of damage with all armed and unarmed attacks.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character can spend an adrenaline point to re-roll a failed close combat roll. He must keep the second result, even if it is worse.

Base Skill 40: The character's parry score increases by 5%.

Control (Intelligence)

The control skill is a new one, having arisen with the Awakening. It is used to channel Control-based psychic effects, which are usually telepathic in nature.

The control skill is used whenever the character uses a psychic power from the Control category. If the character does not have a control

power, then the control skill is effectively useless to her.

Skill Improvements: Improving control grants no bonuses in play; however, as a character's control skill improves, she unlocks new uses for each of her control powers. See the individual psychic power descriptions for details.

A character cannot be an expert in control.

First Aid (Intelligence)

First aid is used to heal your allies, binding their wounds and keeping them in the fray. It is a common skill among those who expect to see injuries, and is commonly taught in many occupations. Many different occupations could be assumed to have First Aid training: paramedics, doctors, police officers, office workers, grocery store workers, athletes, soldiers, and more.

Invigorate Ally: A character can spend an action to brush off minor scrapes and bruises (Easy difficulty if performed on self, average difficulty if performed on an ally, one action). Each degree of

success restores one health point to the wounded character, to the character's normal maximum value. A character can only be invigorated once per combat.

Heal Wounds: If a character spends at least half an hour tending to a wounded ally, the character can make a Heal Wounds test. This test is made against an Average

difficulty, or a hard difficulty if a First Aid kit is not available. If the test succeeds, then the wounded character can make two body tests to remove wounds at the end of the day, instead of the usual one. A character can only benefit from the Heal Wounds ability once every 24 hours.

Skill Improvements: First Aid grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character heals 1 additional health point when using the Invigorate Ally ability.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character can spend an adrenaline point to re-roll any First Aid check he made, though he must use the second result, even if it is worse.

When the character uses the Heal Wounds ability, the target can roll three body tests, and keep the two best results.

Base Skill 40: The character heals 1 additional health point when using the Invigorate Ally ability (for a total of 2 health points).

*The flies will feast upon...
vengeance will be... upon...
...the eaters of the dead.
-Line from the prophecy, found
written in blood of a suicide
victim.*

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When the character (equipped with a first aid kit) uses the Heal Wounds ability, the target gets a +10% bonus on the body test made.

Lucid Dreaming (Spirit)

The Lucid Dreaming skill has been known among man for centuries; however, only after the Awakening has it truly become a useful (and some would say, vital) skill among survivors.

Lucid Dreaming allows a character to control his dreams. In the time of the Awakening, dreaming plays a part of human life – and many believe that the Nightmare Runners and Sleepwalkers are souls who lack strength in their own dreamtime environs.

Indeed, both Sleepwalkers and Nightmare Runners project in the so-called “Dreamlands”, interacting with the spirits of lucid dreamers.

Awakened characters can attempt to travel the dreamlands (a imperfect reflection of the real world, where the latent emotional energy of the locale is reflected in the very terrain) in search of information and answers.

Lucid Dreaming: Any awakened character can attempt to travel the dreamlands in search of information. It is a difficult journey, and one that often inflicts discomforts upon the dreamer.

When the character decides to sleep, he can choose to Lucid Dream. He makes a lucid dreaming test (Hard difficulty), and if successful, can gain important information. However, this test should be played out in a loose-role-playing format, with the character only making the test at the end of the mini-encounter. If the GM so desires, the dreamer could even make numerous lucid dreaming tests to gain smaller pieces of information, as opposed to the large chunk of information provided by these existing rules.

The successful Lucid Dreamer can gain one of the following benefits as a result of his excursion to the dreamlands:

- 1) **Augury:** the character receives a basic premonition of events that could possibly happen within the next 24 hours – a dream that foreshadows likely futures. In Game Terms, the player can ask the GM one question that has a one-word answer (usually limited to “Yes”, or “No”, though “Maybe” could also be a possible answer). This question must be related to an action the character is thinking of taking. For example, “If we break into that abandoned electronics

boutique, will we encounter Nightmare Runners?” is an allowed question; “Is Richmond in the danger of suffering an Earthquake?” is not.

- 2) **Focus:** A character can make an attempt to channel his existing psychic skills, gaining sharp control over his powers. A successful Lucid Dreaming result grants the character a +20% bonus on all skill checks using one psychic skill (Control, Metabolism, Sense, or Telekinesis) for a 24 hour duration. Of course, the -10% penalty that applies after a Lucid Dreaming attempt still applies (meaning the net gain to the skill is +10%).
- 3) **Energy Reserve:** The successful dreamer is able to gain a better understanding of the land and possible challenges, and gains an additional adrenaline point to be used the next day.

The Price of Dreaming: A lucid dreamer must pay the price when dreaming in such a manner – it is not free. Whether successful or not in his attempt, the dreamer awakes suffering severe headaches and is distracted by lingering connections to the dreaming realm – hearing snippets from voices that are not there, experiencing phantasmal visions and scents, and remembering frightful moments from his dreaming before. As such, the dreamer suffers a -10% penalty on all skill checks for the next 24 hour period, regardless of whether he succeeded on the lucid dreaming check.

Furthermore, if the character fails in the check, he suffers from a lack of energy and confidence. The character begins that day with two fewer adrenaline points than normal.

Finally, if a character ever rolls a result of 96-00 on the skill check, make a second lucid dreaming check (average difficulty). If this second check fails, the character automatically takes 2 wounds to the head. If this second check rolls a 96-00, the character encounters a deadly psychic menace, and is forever changed by the encounter (50% chance of either dying in his sleep, or waking up with a permanent wound in the head).

Skill Improvements: Lucid Dreaming grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: When using the “Augury” option, the character can ask two questions, instead of the usual one.

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When using the “Focus” option, the character gains a bonus to two psychic skills, as opposed to just one.

When using the Energy Reserve Option, the character gains two bonus adrenaline points, as opposed to the usual one.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): If successful on his lucid dreaming check, the character ignores the usual -10% skill penalty. He still suffers the penalty if he fails the check.

The character can spend an adrenaline point during play (while awake) to temporarily view the dreamlands. This action takes the character’s entire turn (no other actions). The character can make a usual lucid dreaming test, and gains the benefit of focus or augury. When using this ability, the character will suffer the -10% skill penalty, even if he succeeds. This ability can only be used once per day.

Base Skill 40: The character can ignore the disastrous results of a 96-00 roll.

When using the “Augury” option, the character can ask three questions, instead of the usual two.

When using the “Focus” option, the character gains a bonus to all psychic skills, as opposed to just two.

When using the “Energy Reserve” option, the character gains three bonus adrenaline points, as opposed to the usual one.

Metabolism (Body)

The metabolism skill is a new one, having arisen with the Awakening. It is used to channel metabolism-based psychic effects, which are usually self-healing or biological in nature.

The metabolism skill is used whenever the character uses a psychic power from the Metabolism category. If the character does not have a metabolism power, then the metabolism skill is effectively useless to her.

Skill Improvements: Improving metabolism grants no bonuses in play; however, as a character’s metabolism skill improves, she unlocks new uses for each of her metabolism powers. See the individual psychic power descriptions for details.

A character cannot be an expert in metabolism.

Perception (Spirit)

Perception is the ability to notice one’s environment, and allows a skilled character to better see, hear, and otherwise perceive her environment. It is a common skill among many individuals, and is a near vital skill for those who would seek to scavenge among ruins.

Perception Check: Many times during the game, the GM will call for perception checks to see if characters notice a particularly important detail that may be missed.

Notice the hiding: A character can be called upon to make a perception check to notice hiding characters. In such cases, the check is an opposed one (Perception vs. Stealth).

Avoid Surprise: In an ambush situation, a character can sometimes make a perception check to notice her attackers before they spring the attack. If the character succeeds on the opposed Stealth vs. Perception check, she will be not begin the combat surprised.

Skill Improvements:

Perception grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character can spend an adrenaline point to *React to Danger*. If the character would begin play surprised as a result of a failed perception check, the character can spend a point of adrenaline to re-roll the check. She must use the second result.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character suffers only half the usual penalty for poor lighting conditions applied to skill checks.

Base Skill 40: the character’s Spirit attribute improves by +5%.

Sense (Spirit)

The Sense skill is a new one, having arisen with the Awakening. It is used to channel Sense-based psychic effects, which are often based around extra-sensory or enhanced perception.

The Sense skill is used whenever the character uses a psychic power from the Sense category. If the character does not have a Sense power, then the Sense skill is effectively useless to her.

Skill Improvements: Improving Sense grants no bonuses in play; however, as a character’s Sense skill improves, she unlocks new uses for each of her Sense powers. See the individual psychic power descriptions for details.

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A character cannot be an expert in Sense.

Shooting (Agility)

Shooting is primarily concerned with using firearms, though it also covers the use of any ranged weapon, such as a bow or crossbow. Common practitioners include police officers, soldiers, career criminals, and hunters.

Ranged Attack: A character can make an attack with a ranged weapon against a foe (variable difficulty, opposed by target's dodge, one action). If the attack hits, the character does the weapon's listed damage. In addition, for each degree of success on the test, the character inflicts one additional point of damage against the target.

The difficulty for the test depends on the range of the target. If the target is close, the attack is easy difficulty. If the target is at medium range, the attack is average difficulty. If the target is at long range, the attack is hard difficulty. And if the target is at extreme range, the attack is at very hard difficulty. Weapon ranges are given on page 34.

Cover: Sometimes, a target may be hiding behind cover. Cover increases a target's dodge rating. For each quarter of the character covered, the character gains a +10% bonus to his dodge. Thus, a character standing halfway behind a doorway, showing only half his body, would gain a +20% bonus to his dodge.

If a character has 100% cover, he cannot be hit by a ranged attack. However, if the character has very good cover (for example, only the top of his head is showing), then he gets a +40% bonus to his dodge rating.

Reloading: Unless otherwise mentioned in a item's description, it takes one action to reload a weapon.

Skill Improvements: Shooting grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character can make a *snap shot*. By spending an out of turn action, the character can fire at any target that moves from a position of cover to a position of lesser cover; for example, a target moving out from cover into the open. Unlike other out of turn actions, the character suffers any existing multi-action penalties, and suffers an additional -10% penalty for taking the snap shot.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): The character can make a *called shot*. When the character hits his target and scores a wound, he can spend an adrenaline point as a free action. When rolling the

wound location, the character can roll twice, and choose from the two results which area he has wounded.

Base Skill 40: The character deals one additional point of damage on all ranged attacks.

Stealth (Agility)

Stealth is the ability to sneak, and to use one's terrain to a personal advantage. It is nearly a required skill for any hunter, and is commonly used by many military occupations.

Sneak: A character can use stealth to sneak up unawares on a target. Many times, modifiers will be added or subtracted to the stealth check, depending on the difficulty of the terrain (it is easier to walk on grass silently than it is to move through thick underbrush) – this should be determined by the GM. If a character can attack a foe while unnoticed, the target begins play surprised, and the sneaking character gains the usual bonuses (ignoring the target's dodge, parry, and will modifiers).

When sneaking, the character must move at half normal speed – if she chooses to move at her normal speed, she suffers a -20% penalty on her stealth check.

Notice the hiding: A character can be called upon to make a perception check to notice hiding characters. In such cases, the check is an opposed one (Perception vs. Stealth).

Skill Improvements: Stealth grants the following bonuses as it improves over play:

Base Skill 20: The character can *sneak*. After making an attack roll with a ranged weapon, the character can make a stealth check (hard difficulty, no action cost) to remain hidden to her attackers.

Base Skill 30 (Experts Only): When attacking a surprised opponent, not only does the character ignore the target's dodge, parry, and Will defences, but she also gains a +10% bonus on all attacks against the surprised foe. Furthermore, she deals an additional 2 points of damage on all attacks against that target for as long as the target is surprised.

Base Skill 40: The character can sneak at her normal speed. Furthermore, she can actually sneak while running (though she suffers a -20% penalty to her stealth check when doing so).

Telekinesis (Agility)

The Telekinesis skill is a new one, having arisen with the Awakening. It is used to channel

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Telekinesis-based psychic effects, which are usually concerned with the movement of objects or the manipulation of energy.

The Telekinesis skill is used whenever the character uses a psychic power from the Telekinesis category. If the character does not have a Telekinesis power, then the Telekinesis skill is effectively useless to her.

Skill Improvements: Improving Telekinesis grants no bonuses in play; however, as a character's Telekinesis skill improves, she unlocks new uses for each of her Telekinesis powers. See the individual psychic power descriptions for details.

A character cannot be an expert in Telekinesis.

Other Skills

Not many skills have been included in this game. Many factors have contributed to this, including limited space, a looming deadline, and a personal indecision on just which skills should be focused on in the game.

However, the biggest reason more skills were not added was to give GMs a chance to develop the game on their own, to stretch out just what the Awakening RPG is about.

GMs are encouraged to add more skills to the game list, keeping in mind a few guidelines while creating new skills:

First, each skill should be broad in effect, encompassing many smaller skill sets. "Repair" would be an excellent skill; "Repair Automobiles" would not be.

Secondly, each skill should have both a use in combat, and outside of combat. If you can't think of a use out of combat (or inside a combat), maybe the skill is too specific. These uses do not have to immediately appear (barter doesn't have an in-combat use until it gets to skill level 20, for example), but they have to be there eventually.

Finally, remember that each skill improves over play, and this should be kept in mind when designing the skill. Balance the abilities upon how useful the skill is; if the skill is going to be used very often (Such as perception or shooting), then bonuses accrued from improving them should be as good as a skill that will be used less often (such as Lucid Dreaming).

All skills should have a power that can be utilized only through the spending of an adrenaline point.

Enjoy creating new skills. If you are stumped for skills that could easily be added to the game, here are a few ideas:

Animal Handling is a skill that could facilitate horseback riding (and, if the GM feels comfortable with that style of campaign, stranger animals!), as well as handling stubborn mules or training faithful canine companions.

Driving would represent moving the various vehicles of the Pacific Northwest, including the ever-present sailing vehicles. If the GM chooses to include Driving (and there is a good reason it wouldn't be added; there is definitely a shortage of fuel in the campaign), he will have to work up a vehicular combat rules set. If you go this route, try to keep it simple, in the spirit of these rules.

Navigation is a skill that can help keep PCs familiar with their location, both on land and on sea. Its only real possible combat use would be to have the skill improve Intelligence at skill level 40.

Repair is a skill used to fix machinery, jury-rig scavenged goods, and sabotage enemy gear in a firefight. Repair would make use of Extended Tests (see page 6).

Scavenge is an acquisition-based skill, involving looting through ruins to come across great pieces of junk. Much like barter, it could have applications where PCs could spend an adrenaline point to suddenly "find" a useful piece of gear.

Security involves breaking and entering, and bypassing defensive mechanisms on many modern items. It includes lock-picking, hot-wiring cars, and the like.

Survival involves foretelling the weather, knowing safe food to eat, tracking, and other outdoor skills. It could also be used to set combat ambushes.

Throwing is a skill that should probably be in the game, but space really prevented it from happening. The skill covers throwing grenades, knives, and other such weapons. If the skill is included, the GM should probably put together some grenade rules (or steal them from a trusted source!)

Skill Level 50 and Beyond

Can skills go past 40?

"This can't be happening. This can't be happening. This can't be happening. Oh, God, this can't be happening. Is this really happening?"
-Mantra of the Newly Awakened

Yeah, probably.

But this game doesn't have the time, space, or inclination to really explore that. Let's face it – The Awakening RPG is really designed more for one-shot adventures or mini-campaigns as it currently stands, and no PC in such a game is likely to see skills higher than level 40 anyways. So, as it stands, skill level 50 and beyond are not going to happen.

However, if an enterprising GM wishes to do so, 50+ skill levels are certainly possible. Remember that each odd skill level (50, 70, 90) would be an improvement that would benefit experts only, while the other skill levels (60, 80) would grant a benefit to all characters.

Psychic Powers

Every character in the Awakening has a psychic power (or more!) available to him. Those who lacked innate psychic power during the Awakening became Nightmare Runners, while those whose powers are still latent remain as Sleepwalkers (who may or may not turn into Nightmare Runners as time goes by).

Using Psychic Powers

All powers have a base skill – one of the four psychic skills. Whenever using one of your powers, you make skill checks using the base skill. As your base skill improves, you unlock additional uses of all psychic powers you possess using that power.

Gaining New Powers

PCs do not gain new psychic powers often. However, a few ways to gain access to new powers do exist.

If using Progress Points (page 13), you can spend 30 progress points to roll twice on the psychic power table, and choose one of the results for your new power.

Optionally, a character who increases his Lucid Dreaming skill to 40, whether or not he is an expert, gains one random psychic power.

In addition, psychic storms ("Drifts") occasionally sweep the land, and characters caught in such a storm (and survive) might find themselves with a new power.

Ultimately, it is up to the GM to determine when PCs gain new powers, if they ever do.

Power Descriptions

Following are a few of the powers available in the Awakening. Note that these powers are detailed fairly briefly – it is up to individual groups to decide upon specific power details. For example, if a character can walk through walls, does that mean he can fall through the floor? Does he have to jump through walls (because if he tried to step, he'd fall through the ground?) Can he make only his body incorporeal, and not his clothes? If so, could he use this power to slip out of handcuffs? Could it be used, if timed correctly, to avoid bullet fire?

These are all worthwhile questions to be asked, but it is not within the space of this game to give the answers. Besides, even were they given, it would restrict the game in an unnecessary manner. Some gamers like restricted powers (power A does this, and nothing more), while other gamers like to explore the potential of each power. Rather than restrict the game to only one such group, this game leaves such questions unanswered – it is up to you to decide upon the firm rules of each power.

Control Powers

All of these powers are keyed off the Control Psychic skill.

Drain Life

By touching an enemy, the character can actually siphon out some of the enemy's life force to regain his own.

Drain Energy: When a character hits on a Close Combat attack using his fists (or another part of his body), the character can choose to make a Drain Energy attack as a free action. This is done by making a metabolism check against a Hard Difficulty. If it is successful, then you regain a number of health points equal to half the damage you inflicted.

Skill Level 30: You deal an extra 2 points of damage on any attack that uses your drain energy power (thus, healing more).

Skill Level 30: You can *Drain Life Force* instead of the usual Drain Energy attack. If you are successful on your metabolism check, you cause the target to lose an additional 2 points of health. Instead of healing health points, you regain one point of adrenaline.

Skill Level 40: If, when using your Drain Energy attack, you inflict enough damage to cause a wound, you can spend an adrenaline point to

make a second Metabolism check (average difficulty). If you succeed, you heal one wound.

Variants: There are, of course, many different abilities a character could drain. Could it be used to drain talent? Does the drain slow or harm the target beyond the normal game effects?

Steal Power

The character can temporarily "Steal" another psychic's power with a simple touch. The character simply drains the power from another, and can use it as if it were his own.

Steal Power: If the character hits with an unarmed attack, he can spend an adrenaline point. After dealing damage as normal, the character makes a Control skill check (Average Difficulty, no action) modified by the target's Willpower. If the skill check hits, the character steals a single psychic power from the target (determined randomly, if necessary).

The character can use this power once within a thirty-second duration. If the character does not use the power within then, the ability to use the power fades away. Once the character uses the power, his skill with the power vanishes.

The target cannot use the stolen power for thirty seconds after it has been stolen, regardless of whether the character uses the power or not.

The character uses his own psychic skill scores to determine the stolen power's effects.

Skill Level 20: The character can steal the power if within five feet of a target. If he chooses to do so, however, the difficulty of the Control check is increased to Hard. It costs an action to use the power in this way, and it can only be done once per round.

Skill Level 30: The character can use a stolen power twice within thirty seconds before losing the ability to use the power.

The character can steal powers, as skill level 20, only the range increases to twenty feet.

Skill Level 40: The duration the character has to use the power increases to one minute, as does the duration the target is unable to use his power.

The character can gain a permanent +5% bonus (a flat bonus, not an increase of the character's base skill score) to one of the following skills: Metabolism, Sense, or Telekinesis. The skill must have a base skill rating lower than 40.

Metabolism Powers

All of these powers are keyed off the Metabolism psychic skill.

Fast Heal

By spending a moment's concentration, the character can heal minor wounds on his body.

Restore Health: By making a Metabolism Check (Average Difficulty, costs one action), the character can heal a small number of health points. The amount of health points healed is equal to the degree of success the character generates on the test.

Skill Level 20: The character can spend an adrenaline point to *Regenerate Wounds*. The character makes a Metabolism test (Hard Difficulty, full round action). If he succeeds, he heals one of his wounds.

Skill Level 30: When using this power to restore health points, the character heals an additional 2 health points on a successful check.

Skill Level 40: When *regenerating wounds*, the character can instead make a check to turn a permanent wound into a normal wound with a success.

Variants: This power is fairly straightforward, but it does raise some questions. Can it heal disease? Illness? Poison? Does it lengthen the character's life?

Heal Others

The character has the ability to heal others, by taking some of their wounds onto herself. The damage of another slips onto her body.

Restore Health: By making a Metabolism Check (Average Difficulty, costs one action), the character can heal a small number of health points. On a successful check, the number of health points healed is equal to the degree of success the character scored. If the character succeeds on the test, she suffers 1 health point of damage. The character can only use this abilities on others; it cannot be used on herself.

Skill Level 20: The character can spend an adrenaline point to *Regenerate Wounds*. The character makes a Metabolism test (Hard Difficulty, full round action). If she succeeds, she heals one of an ally's wounds.

Skill Level 30: When using this power to restore health points, the character heals an

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additional 2 health points on a successful check. She no longer takes damage when restoring health.

Skill Level 40: When *regenerating wounds*, the character can instead make a check to turn a permanent wound into a normal wound with a success.

Variants: This power is fairly straightforward, but it does raise some questions. Can it heal disease? Illness? Poison? Does it lengthen the character's life?

Walk Through Walls

The character has the ability to walk through walls by assuming a temporary ethereal form, but only for a brief period.

Slip Through Wall: By making a Metabolism Check (Average Difficulty, as part of a move action), the character can move through a wall less than one foot thick. This can only be done once per round. Whether or not the check is a success, the character suffers 2 points of damage due to the strain of temporary ethereality.

Move through Many Walls: If the character increases the difficulty to Hard, the character can move through multiple walls as part of his move, though no single wall can be more than one foot thick.

No Biological Barrier: When using the Walk through walls power, keep in mind that the character is unable to move through walls or barriers that are "living" – hedges, a stone wall covered in moss, or a "wall" of human soldiers. For some reason, biological forms prevent ethereal movement.

Skill Level 20: The thickness of the wall a character can move through is increased to two feet or less. The character only takes 1 point of damage when using this power.

Skill Level 30: the thickness of the wall a character can move through is increased to three feet or less. The character no longer takes damage from using this power.

Skill Level 40: the character can move through any length of wall.

Variants: This power, with extension, could be used to allow a character to slip through floors as easily as walls.

Wall Climber

The character can cause his body to cling to walls and ceilings, giving himself a "Static" charge that lets him move around and seemingly ignore gravity.

Wall Climber: By making a Metabolism Check (Average Difficulty, as part of a move action), the character can move on a wall or ceiling at half his move speed for that move action.

If the character is willing to take a bit more time, he can *Generate a Charge*. By spending an action, the character can make a Metabolism Check (Hard Difficulty). If successful, the character can climb on walls without making a check until the end of his next turn.

Skill Level 20: The character can climb on walls at his normal speed.

Skill Level 30: When Generating a charge, the duration lasts for one additional round.

Skill Level 40: The character's speed wall climbing on walls or ceiling is increased by 10 feet per move action. In essence, the character is actually *faster* while climbing.

Variants: A question could be made about the static charge the character uses to climb these walls and ceilings. Could it be used to adhere items to the character's body? Is it magnetic in some sort of way?

SENSE POWERS

All of these powers are keyed off the Sense skill.

Astral Projection

By focusing his mind, the character can make his spirit leave his body, and explore the realm around him by simultaneously touching the dream world and the physical world. The physical world becomes a shadow that the character can peer into, while the dangers of the dream world linger all around.

Project: By spending an adrenaline point, the character can make his spirit leave his body. His body falls to the ground, seemingly in a coma, while the astral form of the character can explore his environment.

Any damage done to the physical body is not felt by the astrally projecting form – if the body dies while the character is astrally projected, the character dies (the GM could also rule that the character would become a ghost).

The astral form moves about at a speed of 50 feet per move action, though it cannot run or sprint. The character can see and hear as per usual, but loses the other senses while in astral form. The astral form can move through inorganic material such as walls or vehicles with no problem, though the form cannot move through any living being (so

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it cannot move through trees or most forms of soil). The astral form is invisible to creatures solely on the physical realm.

For each minute the astral form is separated from the body, the body takes 1 health point of damage. The astral form can re-enter its body by touching it, and spending an action.

The astral form cannot use any other psychic powers it may normally have access to.

Skill Level 20: The astral form can move at a speed of 70 feet per move action.

Skill Level 30: The character's body takes 1 health point of damage for every two minutes the form is separated from the body, instead of the usual one.

Skill Level 40: It no longer costs an adrenaline point to Project.

Danger Sense

The character has a supernatural ability to detect dangerous situations just before they happen. This sense often manifests as a tingling in the neck or back of the head of the sensitive character.

Defensive Awareness: The character can focus his mind to achieve a "circle of awareness" around him that alerts him to the presence of threats before they emerge. Doing so requires a Sense check (Average Difficulty, costs one action) and the spending of a single adrenaline point. Even if the character fails the check, his defensive awareness will activate, but only until the end of the current round. Each degree of success in the check grants one additional round of the effect remaining.

While under the benefits of Defensive Awareness, the character's Dodge, Parry, and Will characteristics improve by +10% each.

Sense Ambush: If the character would normally be surprised at the start of a combat (usually by failing a perception check against a stealth check), the character can make an automatic Sense check (Average Difficulty, no action cost). If successful, the character does not begin the combat surprised.

Skill Level 20: it no longer costs an action to activate the Defensive Awareness (though it still costs an adrenaline point).

Skill Level 30: The character can make a Sense check (Hard difficulty, costs one action) to assess the potential danger of an action. If

successful, the character learns whether an intended action would be immediately (i.e., within the next five minutes) harmful to his specific person. For example, walking on a bridge that was about to collapse, or into a room filled with Nightmare Runners, would be revealed as bad ideas (though the specific reason why would not be revealed), while entering into a room that will collapse during an earthquake that will happen in the next hour would not.

Skill Level 40: The character bonuses to Dodge, Parry, and Will from the Defensive Awareness ability improve to +20% each.

Telekinetic Powers

All of these powers are keyed off the Telekinesis skill.

Control Fire

The character has the ability to make flames appear out of nowhere. A skilled character can actually cause spontaneous human combustion – which probably doesn't make him too popular at parties.

Ball of Flame: With a little bit of concentration, the character can make a ball of flame appear in his hand (Telekinesis check, Easy Difficulty, costs one action).

Hurl Flame: The character can actually hurl gouts of flame at enemies, firing these incendiary balls in a fury. Each time a character chooses to hurl a ball of flame, he takes one point of health damage (after all, fire is hot!).

The ball of flame has an accuracy of +0%, has a damage of 3+1d10, and a range of 30/70/120. The character uses his Telekinesis skill to make attacks, while targets can modify this roll with their Dodge or Will characteristic (whichever is higher). Any character within five feet of a character hit by a ball of flame takes 2 health points of "splash" damage.

Armour does not reduce the damage of a ball of flame, unless the armour is fire resistant in some way.

Skill Level 20: The ball of flame's range increases to 40/90/150. The splash damage increases to 3.

Skill Level 30: The ball of flame now deals 5+1d10 damage.

"I've got a tingling in my neck, guys. And that means either it's from that whore back in Barge City, or my Spidey-Sense. God, I hope it's from the whore..."
-Daniel Redding, Explorer

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Skill Level 40: The character can create a ball of flame in his hand without making a skill check, and can maintain it indefinitely.

The character no longer takes damage for hurling flame.

Levitate

The character can lift his body off the ground and hover in the air. She is also able to slow her body should she fall, and a skilled practitioner can actually “fly”.

Levitate: The character can lift her body (and only her body) in the air by making a Telekinesis check as part of her normal move action. For each degree of success she scores, she can raise herself 10 feet in the air. The character can only make one such telekinesis check per round.

The character can only levitate straight up or down – she cannot move laterally using this power. However, were she to levitate straight up and then use some external means of locomotion (using her hands to edge along a wall), this would be acceptable.

On the character’s first action in a round, she must take one health point of damage to maintain this power, or she will float harmlessly to the ground.

Slow Fall: By spending an adrenaline point, the character can make a Telekinesis check while falling as an out-of-turn action (average difficulty). If she succeeds, she prevents all falling damage she would have suffered, and lands on her feet harmlessly.

Skill Level 20: The character can use this power to levitate a willing ally that is within thirty feet. It follows all the usual rules, with the psychic in charge of the ally’s movement. The psychic spends an action to move the ally (the ally does not have to spend an action to move this round, though the movement still “Counts” as a move action for purposes of movement in that round).

Skill Level 30: The character can use this power to lift enemies or even inanimate objects into the air. Before making the usual roll to lift the target, the psychic must make an attack using her Telekinesis skill with the target’s Willpower as a modifier to the roll. If she succeeds, the character can make the normal levitation roll. However, each round the target is being lifted, the psychic must make another telekinesis roll (in addition to spending the health point to keep the target in the air) vs. The target’s willpower. If the psychic fails,

the target falls to the ground, possibly suffering falling damage.

Targets must be within 30 feet of the psychic for this power to be used.

Skill Level 40: The character can levitate herself (or allies, or enemies, or maybe even all at the same time!) in lateral directions, being able to move left, right, diagonal, and any other direction with this power. In a sense, the character can actually “fly”.

Liquid Motion

The character can move in a very fluid manner, warping and twisting his body as if he lacked bones to position himself exactly where necessary.

Liquid Motion: By making a Metabolism Check (Hard difficulty, costs one action), the character can achieve liquid motion. For a number of turns equal to the degree of success scored, the character gains a +10% bonus to his dodge and parry score.

Squeeze Through Cracks: By making a metabolism check (Hard difficulty, costs one action), the character can squeeze through cracks and crevices no smaller than eight inches wide.

Skill Level 20: The duration of Liquid motion increases by 1 round. The character can squeeze through cracks no smaller than six inches wide.

Skill Level 30: the duration of liquid motion increases by an additional round (for a total of two additional rounds). The character can squeeze through cracks no smaller than four inches wide.

Skill Level 40: the duration of liquid motion increases by an additional round (for a total of three additional rounds). In addition, the bonus to dodge and parry increases to +15%. The character can squeeze through cracks no smaller than two inches wide.

Variants: Again, there are many uses for this power beyond those listed. Could a character use it to become incredibly bendy? Would it help in the escaping of bonds or handcuffs? Could a character actually use it to stretch and elongate limbs?

Other Psychic Powers

Even more so than with skills, the powers listed here are only the beginning. The GM is encouraged to create new powers for her campaign. There are hundreds of potential power ideas out there for the GM to import into her game; most RPG supplements are a treasure trove of ideas.

Keep in mind that any power in The Awakening RPG should be designed with both a combat and non-combat purpose in mind. While it may seem like Control Fire is solely a combat-related spell, it could be used creatively outside of combat; likewise, Levitate is mostly a non-combat power, but it could have a combat use. This mindset should prevail when the GM designs her own powers.

A few examples of powers that could be designed include:

Chameleon, a metabolism effect that lets the character change the colour of his skin to match his surroundings. As it improves, the character becomes increasingly invisible, for longer durations.

Dominate Animals, a control effect which makes natural animals follow the commands of the psychic.

Environmental Adaptation, a metabolism power that lets the character adjust to unfriendly environments (ignore fire damage, breathe water, etc...). As the power improves, the character can adjust to more extreme terrain effects.

Precognition, a sense power that lets the character see into the future through the power of dreams. The character could ask for a few hints on upcoming events, which the GM would present to the character in a sort of 'mini-puzzle' that the character would be forced to interpret. Using this power should probably require an adrenaline point and a hard difficulty, to prevent it from being used at the start of every day. A combat use of this ability would let the character roll a precognition check at the start of the combat, and if he succeeded, gain a single re-roll once during the combat as he saw fit ("I saw that coming").

Reflect Powers, a control effect which reflects a power off the character back onto the original power-user.

Telekinesis, an obvious Telekinesis effect which could have a myriad of game uses. This one was not entered in the game solely because there were no existing encumbrance rules, and there was little time to enter them with the current deadline.

"Who knew hockey pads could be so useful?"
"Goalies, probably."

Equipment

The modern world offers much to the individual, and the world of the Awakening is not much different. The only difference is the restriction of money and cost; in the time of the Awakening, money has no true value, and many items are available for taking if the individual is a skilled scavenger.

Following is a list of basic items attainable in the Awakening game. Note that this list is far from complete; the GM is encouraged to add items from the real world (using catalogues, shopping lists, and whatever else) to add to the gear a PC can attain.

Also note that no item has a "price" value – money is effectively useless, and the relative value of an item can and will change depending on the prevailing circumstances of the campaign. During a plague of Nightmare Runners, for example, ammunition could be very valuable, while during a plague, medication will be of much more use.

PC Starting Equipment

PCs do not purchase gear in a manner similar to other RPGs. Instead, they begin play with a collection of items selected from the following lists. If it fits a character concept, the PC could begin with additional gear as necessary (consult with the GM).

Body Armour

Characters start play with a full suit of improvised armour (including helmet), Leather Jacket and Pants, or sports gear. Better armour will have to be found during play.

Melee Weapons

Characters start play with one melee weapon of their choice (excluding fists).

Firearm

Characters start play with one of the following firearms: Hunting Rifle, Semi-Automatic Pistol, or Revolver. They begin play with twenty rounds of ammunition.

Other Equipment

PCs all begin play with a backpack, a full set of clothes, a plastic water bottle, one week's worth

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of canned foods, a flashlight, a sleeping bag, and a swiss army knife. They can also choose three additional items from the following list: Binoculars, Camouflage Clothing, Duct Tape (two rolls), First Aid Kit, Fishing Gear (pole, tackle box, and net), Marijuana (enough for six uses), Military Rations (1 weeks' worth), Nylon Rope (50m), Short Range Radio (effective up to 1 kilometre), Tent (fits two).

Equipment Descriptions

Following are just a few of the items attainable in the Awakening campaign.

Body Armour

Body Armour is a useful tool for any scavenger, and one that almost all scavengers seek to gain the advantages of.

Body Armour has four stats associated with it – the ballistics rating, the impact rating, coverage, and the armour penalty.

The *Ballistics* rating is subtracted from the damage inflicted by all ballistic (i.e., firearms, though arrows would also count) attacks.

The *impact* rating is subtracted from all other forms of damage (i.e., melee attacks, blast attacks, and the like).

Coverage details the area of the body the armour covers. A character can wear only one piece of armour per body area. If an item fits “any” area, it can be placed in any available slot.

Armour Penalty reflects the weight and discomfort of wearing the armour. It is applied to all skills the character has that require movement. Typically, it applies to Acrobatics, Athletics, and Stealth checks. If a character is wearing multiple pieces of armour, the armour penalties stack.

Note that helmets also come with a *perception penalty* – a penalty to all perception checks the character makes.

Hockey Helmet: A thick plastic helmet with a see-through visor or a steel cage protecting the face. A very common item in the hockey-loving Pacific Northwest, though not the best piece of personal protection. *Ballistics:* 1. *Impact:* 3. *Coverage:* Head. *Armour Penalty:* +0%. *Perception Penalty:* -5%.

Improvised Armour: ad-hoc armour, designed by sewing pieces of metal (such as from a metal pot) on to a hardened material such as leather. *Ballistics:* 1. *Impact:* 3. *Coverage:* any

except head. *Armour Penalty:* -5% per area covered.

Improvised Helmet: ad-hoc armour, designed by sewing pieces of metal (such as from a metal pot) on to a hardened material such as leather. Common improvised helmets include metal pots with eye-holes, or other devices that are silly in appearance but offer a basic modicum of protection. *Ballistics:* 1. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* head. *Armour Penalty:* -5%. *Perception Penalty:* -10%.

Kevlar Vest: the well known, easily visible “Bullet-proof” vest. *Ballistics:* 4. *Impact:* 1. *Coverage:* Torso, both arms. *Armour Penalty:* -10%.

Leather Jacket: A thickened leather jacket, often studded with bits of metal. *Ballistics:* 0. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* Torso, both arms. *Armour Penalty:* -5%.

Leather Pants: Hardened leather pants, often used by bikers. *Ballistics:* 0. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* both legs. *Armour Penalty:* -5%.

Military Helmet: Not common anymore, though still useful for wary scavengers. *Ballistics:* 3. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* Head. *Armour Penalty:* +0%. *Perception Penalty:* -5%.

Motorcycle Helmet: It is required by British Columbia law to wear a motorcycle helmet (typically one with a visor) when riding a motorcycle. As such, these helmets are quite common, and used by many scavengers. *Ballistics:* 1. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* Head. *Armour Penalty:* +0%. *Perception Penalty:* -5%.

Patrol Vest: A light vest made of Kevlar that is commonly used by police personnel in normal circumstances, and a very common form of armour in the Awakening. *Ballistics:* 2. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* Torso. *Armour Penalty:* -5%.

Shin Guards: Hardened plastic guards used in many sports. *Ballistics:* 0. *Impact:* 1. *Coverage:* Both Legs. *Armour Penalty:* -5%. *Special:* the character deals an additional +1 damage on all kick unarmed attacks.

Sports Gear: armour designed for sports. With the prevalence of hockey in the Pacific Northwest, padded hockey armour is quite common among desperate scavengers. *Ballistics:* 0. *Impact:* 2. *Coverage:* any except head. *Armour Penalty:* +0%.

FIREARMS

Firearms are useful for most scavengers, though in the Pacific Northwest they can be hard to

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attain. Before the Awakening, Canada had strict anti-firearm legislation in place to limit the general public's access to small arms. The only type of firearm truly "common" in the Northwest is the hunting rifle, as many rural types considered hunting to be almost a national pastime. However, with the growth of gang violence in the urban centres of Vancouver and Surrey, illegal firearms such as semi-automatic pistols are becoming frighteningly common.

The skilled scavenger can find more than just pistols and hunting rifles in his explorations, however. Police stations and patrol cars often carry shotguns and semi-automatic pistols, as do armoured cars. Military centres (such as the Canadian Forces Naval Base in Esquimalt, near Victoria) have an abundance of automatic firearms, although three years after the Awakening, the base has been thoroughly looted.

Following are descriptions of some of the more common firearms in the Pacific Northwest. Note that specific brand names have been generally left out – a GM desiring more detail should feel free to modify the basic rules given here as he sees fit.

Note that, because of this, ammunition can be exchanged between different guns of the same type. A character could, for example, empty one shotgun and put the rounds in another shotgun. However, characters cannot take ammunition from one weapon type and use it in another weapon (you cannot, for example, put rounds from a Hunting Rifle into a pistol).

A few terms are introduced for each weapon description. *Accuracy* is a bonus or penalty to the skill roll a character will suffer when using the weapon. *Capacity* is the amount of rounds a weapon can hold before requiring reload. *Damage* is the base amount of damage a weapon inflicts on a hit (remember that this damage is modified by the degree of success a character makes on the Shooting test). *Range* is divided into three categories – short, medium, and long. A character shooting at short range makes an attack against easy difficulty, medium range is average difficulty, and long range is hard difficulty. *Range* is given in feet. *Reload* is how many actions it takes to eject a

clip and put in a new one. Many weapons also have special rules, in addition to the base statistics.

Assault Rifle: A long-barrelled rifle often used for automatic fire. This weapon category represents the famous AK-47, as well as other military arms used by paramilitary forces.

Accuracy: -5%. **Capacity:** 30. **Damage:** 1d10+5. **Range:** 01-60 (*Short*), 61-130 (*Medium*), 131-230 (*long*). **Reload:** 1 action.

Autofire: a character can put the assault rifle on Autofire mode. The character makes an attack against an area ten feet wide by ten feet long, hitting all enemies in that area of effect (making an attack roll against each). Each attack suffers a -20% penalty, in addition to other penalties such as from range, multiple actions, or accuracy.

Autofire counts as one action, even though it can hit multiple enemies. A character can only gain a possible Improvement check on the first attack of the series, and doesn't make an Improvement Check if he scores on further attacks. An autofire drains ten rounds of ammunition from the weapon.

Hunting Rifle: Commonly used for hunting animals, this rifle is quite common in the backwoods of the Pacific Northwest.

Accuracy: +5%. **Capacity:** 6. **Damage:** 1d10+7. **Range:** 01-100 (*Short*), 101-210 (*Medium*), 211-330 (*long*). **Reload:** It takes one action to enter three rounds into the rifle

(or two actions to fully reload).

Lever Action: Any round in which the hunting rifle is fired twice, the character suffers a -10% penalty on the second shot, due to the difficulty in fire between pulls of the lever.

Military Rifle: Much like the assault rifle, this is a long-barrelled rifle. However, the Military Rifle is not designed for autofire, but instead based around burst fire. It is also considerably more accurate (and lighter) than the Assault rifle. The most common assault rifle in the Pacific Northwest is the Canadian C7 rifle, which is a variant of the more well-known U.S. M16A1 rifle.

Accuracy: +10%. **Capacity:** 30. **Damage:** 1d10+3. **Range:** 01-70 (*Short*), 71-150 (*Medium*), 151-260 (*long*). **Reload:** 1 action.

"When the REAVERS ONCE MORE
WALK THE STREETS,
THE VERY SUN WILL DARKEN AND
CROWS WILL COVER THE LAND
THE URBAN DEMESNE HAS BECOME
THE HOME OF THOSE WHO STAYED
AWAKE AND NOW SUFFER
LET THOSE WHO WOULD REPENT,
REPENT, FOR THE END IS COMING."
-LINE FROM THE PROPHECY,
REPEATED ENDLESSLY BY A
WANDERING SLEEPWALKER.

Awakening Conjunction RPG entry

Autofire: the weapon can be used in autofire mode, just like an Assault Rifle.

Burst Fire: the weapon can be fired in Burst fire mode. The character fires off three quick shots in succession at a single target. The character makes a single attack against the target. This attack is at a -10% penalty, but increases the overall damage by +2. Burst fire uses three rounds.

Revolver: a six-round pistol with a revolving cylinder holding rounds, this pistol fires a heavier round than the semi-automatic. The most common revolver in the Pacific Northwest is the .357 magnum, the weapon of choice for “Dirty Harry”.

Accuracy: +0%. **Capacity:** 6. **Damage:** 1d10+4. **Range:** 01-20 (*Short*), 21-50 (*Medium*), 51-100 (*long*). **Reload:** 1 action to enter three rounds into the cylinder, or 2 actions to fully reload. If the character uses a speed loader, the weapon can be fully reloaded with one action.

Shotgun: A pump-action shotgun. Police forces (as well as armoured car personnel) frequently use shotguns, although Armoured Car use of “slugs” is banned in the province of British Columbia.

Accuracy: +0%. **Capacity:** 5. **Damage:** 1d10+7. **Range:** 01-15 (*Short*), 16-30 (*Medium*), 31-50 (*long*). **Reload:** 1 action.

Shot Blast: Instead of the use of a slug (stats given above) the character can use rounds filled with shot pellets that greatly increase accuracy at shorter ranges. When using a shot blast, the weapon’s range is halved, and the accuracy of the weapon increases to +20%. Damage, however, decreases by 2, to 5.

Semi-Automatic Pistol: A common sidearm among police forces, this pistol comes in many types, such as the Glock-17 or the Desert Eagle.

Accuracy: +0%. **Capacity:** 15. **Damage:** 1d10+2. **Range:** 01-25 (*Short*), 26-60 (*Medium*), 61-120 (*long*). **Reload:** 1 action.

Melee Weapons

Because of the rarity of ammunition, many scavengers rely on hand-held weapons in all but the most dangerous of combat situations. However, melee weapons are heavy, and many scavengers prefer using weapons that serve an additional purpose. Following are only the most common melee weapons used in the Awakening.

Accuracy is a bonus or penalty applied to the attack roll when using the weapon. **Damage** is the weapon’s base amount of damage – remember that a character’s degree of success will modify this number. Some weapons also have a special rule associated with the use of the weapon.

Chain: A length of chain can really, *really* hurt. They are common among the vicious gangs on the mainland. **Accuracy:** -15%. **Damage:** 1d10+4.

Crowbar: used to pry open all sorts of things, the crowbar is also vicious in a fight. **Accuracy:** +0%. **Damage:** 1d10+2.

Fire Axe: A long axe used primarily by firefighters, this axe has a hook on one end that can be used to force open doors. **Accuracy:** -10%. **Damage:** 1d10+3

Fists: Everybody can use their fists. No real bonus, there. **Accuracy:** 1d10-1%. **Damage:** 1d10-2.

Knife: represents any hand-held blade. **Accuracy:** +0%. **Damage:** 1d10

Ratchet: Used primarily for repair jobs, a Ratchet can also be dangerous in a combat situation. **Accuracy:** +0%. **Damage:** 1d10.

Spear: a stick with a point on one end, or any variation of a stick with a point on one end. Spears with sticks on both ends are not allowed. That would be crazy. **Accuracy:** +0%. **Damage:** 2d10+2. **Special:** A character can use a spear to attack a foe up to five feet away. You can throw spears.

Other Gear

Here are some additional items that characters could find useful, and associated rules for using them.

Boat: Boats are almost a necessity in the time of the Awakening if an individual wishes to travel to the hundreds of islands to be found in the Pacific Northwest. Since most safe communities are island-based, a boat is nearly a required piece of equipment.

Bicycle: Bicycles are becoming increasingly common in the time of the Awakening, due to the declining availability of gasoline.

Camouflage Clothing: A character wearing camouflage clothing is better able to hide in the appropriate environment, gaining a +10% bonus to stealth checks. Camouflage clothing covers both legs, the character’s torso, and arms. A character can wear it over armour.

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First Aid Kit: a medical kit that contains gauze, bandages, scissors, alcohol for cleaning wounds, and other healing supplies. A First Aid kit allows improved uses of the First Aid skill (see First Aid, page 23). If a character uses a first aid kit to heal health points, he heals an additional point. A first aid kit can be used ten times before it must be replaced or restocked.

Flashlight: a handheld flashlight sheds a cone of light twenty feet long and five feet wide, and is very useful among scavengers.

Marijuana: Common in the Pacific Northwest ("B.C. Bud" is the highest-quality marijuana in the world) marijuana is commonly used among scavengers. It has been discovered that smoking marijuana before making a Lucid Dreaming test grants a +10% bonus on the test. The effects of marijuana last for 2 hours, during which time the character suffers a -5% penalty on all skill checks.

Dangers of the Pacific Northwest

Following are only a few of the emerging creatures and threats in the Pacific Northwest following the Awakening. The GM is encouraged to create more to suit her campaign.

"God has forgotten us."
"He didn't forget. He found
something better to do."
"Who actually responds to
Graffiti?"
"You do."
-Found written on a wall.

Reading Creature Blocks

Creatures have a small "stat block" for the GM to use. This block details the creature's base attributes and characteristics (HP = Health Points, Wound = Wound Value, plus the creature's Dodge, will, and Parry), as well as the creature's major skill scores (the scores for other skills can be determined "on the fly" if necessary).

Remember that a negative dodge, parry, and will scores are good for the creature (as they apply to the attacker's skill check).

Following this are the creature's attack statistics, including damage and the like. Creatures can take wounds, just like player characters.

Each creature may have a special ability, which is described in the entry. Creatures also have some setting detail to give the GM possible adventure ideas.

Creatures do not make improvement checks.

Dream Whale

Body: +20% Wound: 11
Intelligence: +0% HP: 40
Agility: +0% Move(swim): 40 feet
Spirit: +20%

Dodge: +10% Parry: -10% Will: -10%

Bite (Accuracy +0%, Damage 1d10+5)

Psychic Blast (Accuracy +10%, Damage 1d10+3, targets Will, Range 50/110/190).

Skills: Athletics (50%), Close Combat (50%), Lucid Dreaming (50%), Perception (45%), Psychic Skill (any one, 45%), Stealth (65%, swimming only)

Psychic Power: Dream Whales have one psychic power of the GM's choice.

Description: Dream whales are Orca Whales

that are attuned to both the physical realm and the dreamlands. They appear to be similar to a normal orca whale in all ways, except their eyes seem to perhaps have more of a sparkle of intelligence and empathy to them.

Dream Whales swim throughout the Pacific in small pods of no more than eight individuals, following in the wakes of water craft. They communicate through wordless

song, and often sneak their presence into the dreams of nearby ship crews.

Dream Whales are nonviolent towards humans, although sometimes they can harm without meaning to. When hungry, they can project their dreams onto humans, seeing humans as they meals they hunger for. In such cases, the Whales project their dreams onto a sleeping soul, and the two make opposed Lucid Dreaming tests as the whale "hunts" the human (often finding himself in the form of a seal or large fish). If the human is successful, he awakes with no penalties. However, if the human fails, he takes 1d10+8 damage to his head – often awaking with severe headaches and the like.

For this reason, some ship crews have taken to feeding passing Orca pods, just to be safe.

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Human

While the Awakening has turned much of humanity into feral Nightmare Runners or oblivious Sleepwalkers, there is still a large number of Awakened Humans roaming the land. Congregating in easily defensible enclaves (often ruled by a powerful psychic or a charismatic warlord), these humans do their best to eke out a living.

Statistics for various human templates are given here. It is recommended that the GM also create her own to fit a specific scenario in her mind.

Cultist

Body: +0% Wound: 6
Intelligence: +10% HP: 15
Agility: +15% Move: 40 feet
Spirit: +30%
Dodge: +0% Parry: +10% Will: -10%
Hunting Rifle (Accuracy +5%, Damage 1d10+7)

Armour: None

Skills: Mind Blast (60%), Barter (50%), Shooting (45%), Lucid Dreaming (60%).

Psychic Power: 25% of cultists have one psychic power of the GM's choice. All cultists have the mind blast ability.

Mind Blast: As an action, the cultist can unleash a wave of psychic force at one target within 30 feet. The attack uses the Cultist's mind blast skill, and is modified by the target's Willpower. It has a damage of 1d10+4, and ignores any cover the target may have.

Description: Cultists form around a single charismatic leader, and often believe that the events of the Awakening are the end result of some pre-existing religious prophecy (The Rapture, the Norse Ragnarok, Mayan apocalyptic theories, a Nostradamus prediction, etc). They form religious enclaves devoted to the exploration of psychic phenomena, and often fully embrace the new world.

While usually peaceful, these cults can become a very dangerous enemy against those who interfere with their plans and interpretation of the religious state of the world.

Junker

Body: +0% Wound: 6
Intelligence: +20% HP: 15
Agility: +10% Move: 30 feet
Spirit: +20%
Dodge: +0% Parry: +10% Will: -10%
Semi-Automatic (Accuracy +0%, Damage 1d10+2)
Armour: Head – None, Torso – Leather Jacket (B:0/I:2), Arms – None, Legs – None.

Skills: Barter (50%), Perception (40%), Stealth (30%), First Aid (40%).

Psychic Power: 25% of junkers have one psychic power of the GM's choice. The remainder have some minor psychic ability that will not factor into play.

Description: Junkers are scavengers and merchants, travelling from enclave to enclave trading useful commodities pulled from the ruins. Most have a vehicle or draft animal of some sort, a collection of useful (and not-so-useful) equipment, and a fearless attitude. A large number of Junkers are marine-based, travelling the waters of the Pacific Northwest and scavenging useful machine parts.

Raider

Body: +15% Wound: 6
Intelligence: +0% HP: 15
Agility: +15% Move: 30 feet
Spirit: +10%
Dodge: +10% Parry: +0% Will: +10%
Semi-Automatic (Accuracy +0%, Damage 1d10+2)
Chain (Accuracy -15%, Damage 1d10+4)
Armour: Head – None, Torso – Leather Jacket (B:0/I:2), Arms – Leather Jacket (B:0/I:2), Legs – None.

Skills: Stealth (35%), Close Combat (45%), Shooting (35%), Athletics (35%).

Psychic Power: 25% of raiders have one psychic power of the GM's choice. The remainder have some minor psychic ability that will not factor into play.

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Description: Raiders do not seek to gain material goods through scavenging or production, but instead by taking what they want from others. They are brutal, violent people who believe that if they allow other human enclaves to exist, their own way of life will be threatened. In other words, they believe firmly in eliminating all competition for the growing scarcity of goods.

Raiders prefer to fight in close quarter combat if at all possible, and usually prefer to attack with a numerical advantage.

The stats given here are for a basic, untrained raider. There are better armed raiders out there, and better skilled ones as well, but this template can be used as a good starting place for more advanced forms of raider.

Nightmare Runner

Nightmare Runners are those poor souls who never awoke. There are two theories about the origin of Nightmare Runners.

The first (and most common) is that Nightmare Runners are simply humans who, like every human being, was caught in the Dreaming three years ago. However, Nightmare Runners lacked an innate psychic power that “ground” them to the material world, and are now possessed entities that stalk the streets.

The second theory, unsettling to most, is that Nightmare Runners remained awake during the initial events of the Awakening, and that what they witnessed destroyed their minds.

In any case, Nightmare Runners look much like humans, though often with some stressed physical feature and a predatory look in their eyes. Most are naked or barely clothed, and covered in small cuts, scrapes, and bloodstains.

Nightmare Runners congregate in the cities of the Pacific Northwest, hiding in buildings during the day (they seem to still need to sleep, and prefer to do so during daylight hours) only to emerge and hunt during the night. They prefer human prey, and are cunning enough to lay basic traps and ambushes against their targets. Nightmare Runners are far from humans in their intelligence and language capabilities, though they are still more clever than most animals.

Nightmare Runners occasionally get called “Zombies”, though they are quite different from those monsters of B-Movies. Nightmare Runners

are organic creatures, and are not “undead” or any such thing. Further, a bite from a Nightmare Runner will not turn you into one, though it’s probably a bad idea to get close enough to a Runner in any case. Further, Nightmare Runners are not shambling, mindless drones, but are instead fast (just as fast as the humans they once were), feral, and hungry.

When they move, most Nightmare Runners will screech and scream in a nonsensical fury, though some have the unsettling habit of repeating a phrase or collection of phrases they remember from their former lives.

There are numerous “breeds” throughout the Pacific Northwest, each with their own abilities and techniques. Only a few are detailed here, to give the GM ideas for other Nightmare Runner varieties.

Climber

Body:	+5%	Wound:	6
Intelligence:	-10%	HP:	15
Agility:	+15%	Move:	30 feet
Spirit:	+5%		

Dodge: +10% Parry: -10% Will: +10%
Claw Swipe (Accuracy +0%, Damage 1d10+1)

Skills: Athletics (35%), Close Combat (30%), Perception (25%), Stealth (45%)

Climb: A Climber can climb on walls and ceilings just as easily as if it were walking on the ground. However, to climb on walls, it must be using all four limbs.

Leap Attack: A Climber can jump down and attack any opponent below it less than ten feet away as a single action. The climber makes a single Claw Swipe attack, with a +20% bonus to hit and +2 damage. The Climber takes only half damage from falling when making this attack.

Nightvision: Climbers can see in the dark with no penalty. They take a -10% penalty to all checks when in daylight conditions, and can even be temporarily blinded by strong flashlights.

Torso Vulnerability: If a Climber suffers one or more wounds to the torso, it automatically dies.

Description: Climbers are mobile stalkers that hunt in medium-sized packs (perhaps ten to a

“God! What is that thing?”
-Sue Phillips.
“...hungry.”
-Everett Banks.

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dozen creatures, though some female Climbers have been spotted carrying young). They appear much like normal Nightmare Runners, only with more muscular arms and emaciated bodies that are so thin one is often able to see the moving and shifting of internal organs.

Climbers are found in interior cities, with their outermost territorial limits in the cities of Kamloops, Revelstoke, Summerland, Spokane, and Columbia Falls. The city of Kelowna is the heart of Climber territory.

Climbers prefer to use one or two fast-moving scouts to draw fire as they jump from positions of cover, hoping to lure targets close to high walls. The climbers then try to surround opponents, jumping down on their foes in waves, with each wave jumping, disengaging from the fight, and retreating up the wall while the next wave fights.

Climbers will retreat if the troop leader is killed, or if more than half their number are destroyed.

Runner			
Body:	+10%	Wound:	6
Intelligence:	-10%	HP:	15
Agility:	+10%	Move:	40 feet
Spirit:	+0%		
Dodge:	+10%	Parry:	-10%
Will:	+10%		
Bite (Accuracy +0%, Damage 1d10+3)			

Skills: Athletics (40%), Close Combat (40%), Perception (20%), Stealth (40%)

Ambush: Runners deal an extra 2 damage to any target that is surprised or that is yet to act in the combat.

Grab: A runner can make a grab attack that functions just like a bite attack. However, if it hits, it does no damage. Instead, the Runner has grabbed onto his foe, and howls and hoots. It can make bite attacks as normal in subsequent phases and rounds.

A runner gets a +10% bonus to attack an opponent grabbed by itself or another runner. A character can only free himself from a runner by making opposed Athletics checks (which cost one action on the grabbed character's part), or by killing the grabbing runner.

Nightvision: Runners can see in the dark with no penalty. They take a -10% penalty to all checks when in daylight conditions, and can even be temporarily blinded by strong flashlights.

Description: Runners are the most common of the Nightmare Runner races, and are found throughout the Pacific Northwest. They have the "typical" Runner appearance, though most Runners have feet that are covered in calluses and jagged cuts. Runners are known for leaving bloody footprints throughout their haunts.

Runners are extremely territorial, and will hunt any human foolish enough to enter the Runners' territory. Runner packs number in the dozens, though few individual hunting parties number more than fifteen or so. Runners are very aggressive towards each other, and it is not uncommon to see numerous Runner tribes involved in internecine warfare.

Runners prefer to ambush opponents, luring them into alleyways before they rush in from both sides. They charge enemies and attack smaller foes first, following some ancient predatory instinct. The first runners onto a scene will try to grab a single target, while other nearby runners will then focus their attacks on that foe.

Runners rarely flee once their bloodlust has been fired, even if they are severely wounded.

The Pacific Northwest

Following are some interesting locations found in the Pacific Northwest. Other locations can be developed by the GM as she sees fit.

It is recommended that GMs consult a good map of British Columbia while reading this section. A good map can be found here: <http://www.canada-maps.org/british-columbia/images/british-columbia-map.gif>

Enclaves

Human Enclaves are small bastions of "civilization" that seek survival in the face of the terrors of the Awakening. They are often ruled by a powerful psychic, a brutal warlord, or even a semi-democratic "council". Some have organized and work towards building a sustainable future, while others are little more than armed camps that seek to steal and scavenge the goods necessary for day-to-day survival, heedless of the future.

Each enclave could become a home base for a player-character scavenging party, should the GM so decide. Just as easily, each enclave could become a major campaign villain.

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Barge City

The largest of the Enclaves, the so-called “Barge City” is found tethered just offshore the flat plains and swamps of Delta. The community consists of two large “super” ferries (the *Coastal Renaissance*, and the *Queen of Nanaimo*), a single cruise ship (the *Emerald Princess*), and two freight ships (the *Bermuda*, and the *Princess Diana*), arranged into a horseshoe shape. Each is attached to the others by long planks and frayed rope. In the centre of this horseshoe is an artificial bay that is home to dozens of smaller power craft and sailboats.

The Barge City is home to perhaps five hundred humans, and is intended as a safe port for humanity. It is a trading haven, where merchants from around the Pacific Northwest can barter their scavenged wares. The Barge City operates its own fleet of scavenger craft, with every able-bodied man and woman between 19 and 31 years of age having to serve one month out of four in a scavenging party.

Barge City is ruled by a council of five, with each council member hoping to plot the course of the city in a different direction. Some wish for the city to become the centre of imperial power, developing a military and offering protection to vassal states, while others would prefer to see the community become a true economic power (with some form of coin-based commerce).

“THERE ARE A LOT OF ENCLAVES OUT THERE. THE SIKHS RUN TWO IN SURREY, AND THERE ARE A WHOLE BUNCH OF ASIAN GANGS IN RICHMOND. THERE’S A CULT IN VANCOUVER THAT WORSHIPS THOSE WORMS THAT CRAWL THROUGH THE SEWERS, AND A ‘FREE-RADIO’ STATION NEAR SIDNEY. I’VE EVEN HEARD OF AN ENCLAVE IN A SPORTS STADIUM IN SEATTLE! POINT IS, THEY’RE EVERYWHERE. AND NOT ALL OF THEM ARE FRIENDLY.”
-EVERETT BANKS, SCAVENGER AND EXPLORER.

Naden

Near the city of Victoria, the Esquimalt Harbour is home to the Canadian Navy’s Pacific Fleet. Three full-sized destroyers were docked here at the time of the Awakening, and they remain here still. Military folk who retained their allegiance to the navy after their individual Awakenings returned to the harbour and developed their own community, which they named “Naden” (the original name of the base, drawing back to pre-contact native origins).

The community of Naden is centred around the three warships, with most of the men living aboard one of the ships. It is military in organization, ruled by an Admiral (originally Chief, this man was originally the ranking officer in the community, and promoted himself to admiral –

later arrivals of higher rank were unable to contest the admiral’s right to leadership).

Naden’s major concern is the maintenance of warships – all three ships are fully operational, though the base has a limited reserve of fuel to power them. Like many Enclaves, Naden has troubles acquiring food, though because it was a military base, Naden’s personnel are very well-armed. It is under constant guard by trained soldiers armed with military rifles and wearing Kevlar vests.

Over 85% of the base is male, with half of the remaining female population being children. Because of this, there is a strong competition for the attention of females. Whether the soldiers of the base turn away from their training and turn to rape and raiding for female bodies, or fight their base instincts and forge a lasting society, remain to be seen.

Pender Island

The beautiful Pender Island has become home to a very ugly menace. Ruled by a powerful psychic despot named “Gustav”, the island has become the home to over a hundred vicious raiders armed with assault rifles. The few remaining original inhabitants were either murdered, or forced to work as slaves.

Gustav lives in a well-sized house near the town square, constantly powered by a gasoline generator. The backyard pool has been emptied, and Gustav has turned it into the home for three perpetually hungry wolves. Those who displease Gustav are hurled into the pool while he watches in pleasure from his balcony.

Rose Harbour

Located on the southern tip of Queen Charlotte Island, this northern Enclave is home to a group of survivalists that decided protection would come best in the most isolated of circumstances. The citizens of Rose Harbour send out scavengers, as usual, and seek to build a self-sustainable fishing community. They are very protective of their home base, hiding any reference to it on their excursions. It is a goal of all scavengers to recruit worthwhile members, and the community is slowly growing.

Saltspring Island

Before the Awakening, Saltspring Island had a reputation as a home for artists and hippies. While it has attracted these folk after the Awakening, it has in some ways strayed very far from it's roots.

The community consists of perhaps three hundred men and women, living primarily in the southern Fulford Harbour. These men and women survive by fishing, and by maintaining the small-scale farming enterprises they had running before the Awakening. Unlike many enclaves, Saltspring Island is already well on it's way to being self-sustainable.

Because of this, the islanders have a distrust of visitors. They have been raided before, and they have learned to fight off those who would take by force. The Islanders have become isolationist in outlook, and defensive of their island.

Most unique among the islanders is their belief that psychic powers are evil forces to be fought against. The "headman" (actually a middle-aged woman with a dictatorial streak) has declared that psychic individuals are not allowed on the island, that only "true" humanity can become a citizen of the island.

However, just like everywhere else, the citizens of Saltspring are Awakened humans, with the psychic power that status brings. So, each human hides their psychic powers from others, convinced they are the only ones living this lie. When another citizen manifests a psychic power, the community reacts violently, forcefully expelling this poor soul quickly – even though each person in the mob is guilty of the exact same "crime".