

STRESS

Battle can be tough, and things get tight on the nerves after being in the business too long.

STRESS SKILL

In addition to the standard 5eS skills, the character gains a skill called Stress, based on Heroism. They may have proficiency in it depending on their background.

A character has a Stress Score, which has a maximum equal to the character's Heroism score. Every time an especially stressful event occurs, as judged by the DM, they may have to make a Stress check or have to reduce the score on a fail.

A long rest with at least 1 [comfort](#) increases the Stress Score by 1.

STRESS AT ZERO

If Stress Score is at zero the character could suffer a mental break. Each turn spent in combat or a similar stressful situation, the player must roll a Sanity check against a DC of 10. Success and failure works similarly to a death saving throw in that a single result has no effect, but rolling three successes or failures will mean either recovery or madness.

- **Success.** Roll three successes, the character 'stabilises' and stops the checks, but must resume sanity throws should they receive damage or suffer an especially stressful event, making a Sanity check as above.
- **Failure.** Roll three failures and the character suffers a mental break.
- **Critical Success.** The character immediately counts as having three successes and their Stress Score increases by their Stress modifier, minimum of 1.
- **Critical failure.** The character immediately counts as having three failures and suffers a mental break.

INTERCEPTING A MENTAL BREAK.

A character at zero Stress can be saved and led to recovery by any of the following:

- Increasing their Stress Score, such as by drinking alcohol.
- Receiving a mind-altering spell effect, such as Calm Emotions.
- Another character can attempt a pep talk to snap the character out of it using a social skill, such as persuasion, intimidation, diplomacy, or simply good roleplay!

MENTAL BREAK

When a character suffers a mental break, they suffer one level of exhaustion and roll a d100 on the Short-Term Mental Affliction table below. The character suffers from these effects for 1d10 minutes. Once they recover, their Stress Score increases to 1.

BOLSTERING COURAGE

Stress can be managed more effectively by performing calming actions during any rest such as:

- Drinking Alcohol.
- Praying to a patron deity.
- Witnessing a Bard's performance.

- Petting a friendly familiar, pet or animal companion.
- Meditating with a Monk.

Doing so will grant **advantage** to the next Stress check the character is required to make, and increases their Stress Score by 1.

SHORT-TERM MENTAL AFFLICTION d100 Effect

- 01- The character is **paranoid** and will not accept any assistance from their allies. They are always unwilling for the purposes of spellcasting.
- 21- The character becomes **selfish** and can only perform actions that will immediately benefit themselves.
- 31- The character sees the worst in their allies and becomes **abusive**. Any communication must include an intimidation check against the ally.
- 41- The character becomes **masochistic** and will make efforts to recklessly engage the nearest enemy in melee. All melee attacks against the character have advantage.
- 51- The character becomes **irrational** and must pass a DC 10 Sanity check to perform any action. If failed, they must do the exact opposite of what they intended.
- 61- The character becomes **fearful** and will make every effort to escape the situation regardless of their own safety or reputation. They can make a DC 15 Bravery check at the start of each minute, ending the affliction on a success.
- 71- The character feels **hopeless** and can only act with instruction from others.
- 81- The character feels intense **remorse** and suffers hallucinations related to a deep regret or loss in their life.
- 91- The character begins **speaking in tongues** and is incapable of speech for the purposes of communication and spellcasting.
- 100

OPTIONAL RULE: LONG-TERM EFFECTS

If a character has a Stress score that is lower than 5 for extended periods of time, they may start to suffer from more ongoing conditions. At DM's discretion, the player should roll a Sanity check. If failed, roll on the Long-Term Madness table (pg 260 DMG).

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