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CONTENT WARNING: CHARM, MANIPULATION, AND MIND CONTROL

Some of the psionic powers in this supplement allow player characters and NPCs to charm, manipulate, and directly control the actions of other creatures. Utilize [safety tools](#) to ensure everyone at your table has a good time, and eliminate or change powers that would make the game less fun for anyone in your gaming group.

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INTRODUCTION

CHARACTERS WITH EXTRAORDINARY MENTAL POWERS not derived from prayer or magic feature in many of our favorite stories. Think of Eleven from *Stranger Things*, or Professor X or Jean Grey from the X-Men. Some of Stephen King's stories, including *The Dead Zone* and *Firestarter*, feature pyrokinetics or telekinetics. Characters with psychic powers can be found in *ThunderCats* and *Star Wars*, and in children's stories like *Matilda*. Even Galadriel in *The Lord of the Rings* exhibits telepathic powers.

One common blanket term for this phenomenon is **psionics**—and in this product, we reimagine that psionic archetype in the context of a high fantasy world. We assume (though the campaign you play in might have different assumptions) that psionics are, by definition, rare. Otherwise, why haven't we seen them in the game before?

Sages in our fantasy worlds would have a technical term for these kinds of powers—metaphysics, which might more rarely be known as psionics. One issue, though, is that “psionics” can sound a bit like science fiction. We don't normally refer to the human beings in a fantasy RPG as *Homo sapiens*. So we imagine that the people in our fantasy world would use more natural phrases to describe this phenomenon, which they don't really understand. They might refer to someone who uses these powers as “having a rare talent,” or “possessed of a special talent.” Over time, they'd start calling someone who uses these powers “a talent.” And something that started as a vague and broad description of a mysterious power becomes the actual name for it.

—Matt Colville



PSIONICS

psi·on·ics *The ability to affect physical change in the world or yourself through the power of thought alone.*

TALENTS AND OTHER CREATURES WITH VAST MENTAL might can manifest psionic powers through force of will. Heroes who wield these gifts use only their thoughts and bodily energy to hurl objects through the air, send telepathic messages, manipulate time, and reshape the world around them.

This section details the rules for using powers for player characters. The GM has a lot of plates to spin, so psionic monsters and NPCs (detailed later in this supplement) follow simpler rules, while the rules for characters are more versatile, more customizable, and more complex.



CORE MECHANIC

The basic premise of the talent is that as long as you can stand the strain, you can keep manifesting powers. Talents don't use spell slots. Manifesting a power is as simple as rolling a die. The more effective the power, the higher you need to roll, but theoretically, your character could manifest powers all day if you're very, very lucky.

As long as you keep rolling high, you can keep manifesting freely. But rolling low means that although you manifest your powers, you also accumulate strain. At first, this is little more than a nuisance, but eventually, strain can have serious ramifications. In fact, enough strain can kill a talent, so it's always up to the talent to decide how to deal with it. How desperate is the situation? How badly do you need to succeed? How much are you willing to sacrifice to save your friends—or the world?

The power is in your hands.

NEW ACTION: MANIFEST A POWER

Talents and other creatures manifest psionic powers and can use them to great effect in combat. To that end, this supplement introduces a new action option for creatures with access to psionic powers: Manifest a Power.

Each power has a manifestation time, which specifies whether the manifester must use an action, a reaction, minutes, or even hours to manifest the power. Manifesting a power is therefore not necessarily an action, but most powers have a manifestation time of 1 action.

Any effect that ends as the result of casting a spell, such as the *invisibility* or *sanctuary* spells, also ends if you manifest a power in the same way. If you wear armor you lack proficiency with, you can't manifest powers because the armor's bulk is a mental distraction.

Psionics are powers of the mind. As such, any effect that affects a creature's mind to prevent that creature from taking the Cast a Spell action also prevents them from taking the Manifest a Power action. This includes effects such as the barbarian's Rage feature and the *feblemind* spell. The GM has the final say in which specific effects prevent a talent from manifesting a power.

WHAT IS A POWER?

A power is a specific psionic effect created by energy drawn out of the manifester's body. A power is an incredible tool that can solve problems, harm enemies, or protect and aid you and your allies, but it can also drain your life energy. The stronger the power, the more energy it can take from you. Every power has an order from 1 to 6. The higher a power's order, the more difficult it is to learn and use.

NOT MAGIC

Powers aren't magical. Effects and spells that affect or interact with magic, including *antimagic field*, *counterspell*, *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, *globe of invulnerability*, and *identify*, have no effect on psionic powers or psionic items. Likewise, effects that affect or interact with powers don't affect spells, magic items, or other magical effects. One possible exception to this rule is allowing psionics and magic to overcome the same damage resistances. See the "Supernatural and Mundane" sidebar for details.

MANIFESTING POWERS

Many psionic creatures have a number of times each day that they can manifest a specific power, and regain all their uses of a power when they finish a long rest. Talents can theoretically manifest an unlimited number of powers each day, but as they do, they risk gaining strain. For more information about how talents manifest powers, see "The Talent" section in this supplement.

READY A POWER

To use the Ready action with a power, the power must have a manifestation time of 1 action. When the trigger for the readied power occurs, you use your reaction to manifest it and make a manifestation test for the power (see the "Class Features" section below). If you take damage while you are readying a power, you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw as if you were concentrating on the power, or it fails (see "Concentration").

MANIFESTATION ABILITY

Every creature that can manifest one or more psionic powers has a manifestation ability. For talents, this ability is Intelligence, but other creatures might use Constitution, Wisdom, or Charisma.

SAVING THROWS

Many powers specify that a target can make a saving throw to avoid some or all of the power's effects. The power specifies the ability that the target uses for the save and what happens on a success or failure.

The DC to resist one of your psionic powers equals 8 + your manifestation ability modifier + your proficiency bonus + any special modifiers.

SAVE-ENDS EFFECTS

On a failed saving throw, some powers impose a debilitating effect for an extended duration. But sometimes a target can retry their saving throw and

potentially end the effect early. In such situations, the power specifies "save ends at end of turn." Whenever this phrase appears, it means any creature affected by the power can repeat the saving throw on each of their turns, ending the effect on themselves early on a success.

SUPERNATURAL AND MUNDANE

"Supernatural" is a new game term that describes an effect or item that is either magical or psionic. For instance, a creature might have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from attacks that aren't supernatural. This means that as long as an attack comes from a spell, power, magic weapon, or psionic weapon, it overcomes the creature's damage resistances. If an attack, item, or effect isn't magical or psionic, it is referred to as "mundane."

This language was created after the core rules, *Strongholds & Followers*, *Kingdoms & Warfare*, and multiple issues of *ARCADIA*. Many creatures in these products are immune or resistant to bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage from nonmagical attacks. Though psionics aren't magic, the GM can decide that the damage dealt by powers counts as magic for the purpose of overcoming these creatures' damage immunities and resistances. Similarly, the GM can rule that creatures with the Magic Resistance or Limited Magic Immunity trait have advantage on saving throws against powers and psionic effects.

ATTACK ROLLS

Some powers require the manifester to make an attack roll to determine whether the power's effect hits the intended target. Your attack modifier with a power attack equals your manifestation ability modifier + your proficiency bonus.

COMBINING POWER EFFECTS

The effects of different powers add together while the durations of those powers overlap. The effects of the same power used multiple times on the same target don't combine, however. Instead, the most potent effect—such as the highest bonus—from those powers applies while their durations overlap, or the most recent effect applies if the powers are equally potent and their durations overlap.

NO MULTIPLES OF THE SAME POWER

You can't have multiple manifestations of the same power active at once. Powers with a duration of instantaneous that have ongoing effects after being manifested are an exception, and can be manifested again while the effects of an earlier manifestation are ongoing.

PHYSICAL DISPLAYS

Some powers talk about the manifester emitting a burst of energy, a beam of light, or some other physical display of psionic power. When you manifest a power that has such a display, you can choose how you direct it from your body. For example, a beam of psionic energy might flash from your outstretched hand, spring from your forehead, or erupt from your glowing eyes, as you determine.

POWER DETAILS

Powers follow the same rules as spells when it comes to range, targets, and areas of effect. Unlike spells, powers don't have components and can't be manifested as rituals. They also use special rules for concentration (see below).

POWER ORDER

Each power has an order from 1 to 6. A power of 1st order might let you hurl little objects through the air or produce small jets of flame out of nothing, while 6th-order powers allow you to bring down buildings or create a fiery vortex!

INCREASED ORDER

A power might let you increase its order to increase its effectiveness, allowing you to target more creatures, do more damage, extend the power's duration, and more. You choose to make this increase before you manifest the power, and can increase any power to a maximum of 6th order when you do so. Whenever the rules make reference to a power's order, that always means the order the power is manifested at, including any order increase, rather than the power's baseline order with no increases.

Some powers have multiple options for increasing their order. You can use more than one increased order option for a power at the same time, to a total maximum of 6th order.

POWER SPECIALTY

Every power falls under one of the following categories, known as specialties:

Chronopathy powers allow you to view future and past events, and to manipulate time to aid allies and hinder foes.

Metamorphosis powers allow you to strengthen and manipulate your body and the bodies of others, allowing for the performance of preternatural exploits.

Pyrokinesis powers allow you to create and manipulate fire by interacting with the potential energy found in all things.

Resopathy powers allow you to manipulate matter and space to create, alter, or displace your environment and the creatures and objects in it.

Telekinesis powers allow you to physically manipulate creatures and objects.

Telepathy powers allow you to communicate with, read, and influence the minds of other creatures.

1ST-ORDER POWERS

Powers of the 1st order are simple, and most creatures that can manifest them do so at will. They are similar to cantrips in many ways, and do not require a manifestation test or impose strain like higher-order powers. However, talents can gain strain by maintaining concentration on 1st-order powers (see "Strain to Maintain" in "The Talent").

DURATION

A power's duration is the length of time it remains active after you manifest it. When you manifest a power with a duration longer than instantaneous, it remains active for the specified duration. (Instantaneous powers work just like instantaneous spells, in that they affect the world only for an instant even if they produce an effect that lingers in the world.) You can choose to end any of your current active powers at any point on your turn without using an action. If you become incapacitated or die, all of your current active powers end immediately.

CONCENTRATION

Like spells, many powers require you to maintain concentration to keep their effects active. Unlike with spells, though, you can simultaneously maintain concentration on a number of powers equal to your proficiency bonus. However, you can't concentrate on a power and a spell or other effect at the same time.

If you take damage while maintaining concentration on multiple powers, you make one Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration. On a failure, all the powers you are concentrating on end, but a talent can take strain to keep these powers active (see "Strain to Maintain" in "The Talent").

MANIFESTATION TIME

Most manifestations require a single action to attempt to manifest, but some require a bonus action, a reaction, or much more time to manifest.

BONUS ACTION

You must use a bonus action to attempt to manifest the power, provided that you haven't already taken a bonus action this turn. You can't cast a spell or manifest another power during the same turn, except for a cantrip with a casting time of 1 action or a 1st-order power with a manifestation time of 1 action. Similarly, if you cast a spell with a casting time of 1 bonus action, you can't manifest a power during the same turn, except for a 1st-order power with a manifestation time of 1 action.

REACTIONS

A power whose manifestation time is a reaction is manifested in response to some event. If you can attempt to manifest a power as a reaction, the power description tells you exactly when you can do so.

SIGHT AND MANIFESTING

Many powers and talent class features rely on a creature being able to see a target. However, a strict interpretation of this rule is prohibitive to any player who wants to play a blind or visually impaired hero. This supplement uses the standard language found in the core rules regarding sight, but the GM can determine that a hero can use a different sense, even a supernatural one, in place of sight when it comes to powers, features, and traits.

LONGER MANIFESTATION TIMES

Certain powers require minutes or even hours to attempt to manifest. When you manifest such a power, you must spend your action each turn manifesting the power until its manifestation time is complete. If you fail to do so, the power fails. If you take damage while you are readying a power, you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw as if you were concentrating on the power, or it fails (see "Concentration").

