

THE PLACE TAG HERE INTERN



To create your character, choose one **tag**. Create a **name** for your character and fill out their **demographics** and **description**. Assign your **stats** and pick two **specialties**. Pick two **moves** from the list in this playbook and decide on your current **addiction**. You have a starting **reputation (Rep)** of -1. Once everyone had created a character work out connections (**Cxn**).

TAGS Chose one tag for your intern:

- ☐ **Genius** – During character creation, select an additional specialty.
- ☐ **New** – Tell the other players to subtract 1 from any Cxn they assign you at the start of the game. The first time you would gain Rep, gain an additional +1Rep
- ☐ **Optimistic** – When you *show compassion* to a patient, you may always take a weak hit instead of rolling.

STATS

Assign -1, 0, 0 and +1 to your stats in any order.

BRAINS	GUTS
HEART	NERVE

You have a starting Reputation (Rep) of -1.

REP

SPECIALTIES & MOVES

Pick two specialties (see page 21). You may push (1) in situations that involve your specialties. Pick two character moves from the following list:

- ☐ **Harsh Lessons:** When another character bothers to belittle, humiliate, or ridicule you, you may push (1) on your next roll.
- ☐ **Overconfident:** You may always push (1) when you *feign competence*, but if you miss you also suffer a condition (MC's choice) in addition to any other consequences.
- ☐ **Advisor:** At the start of each session, choose a theater (medical, social, or personal) and one other player character you want as an advisor. Tell that character they act as if they have Cxn+3 with you in that theater for this session. At the end of the session, they gain +1Reputation if they helped you succeed in that theater.
Theater:_____ Advisor:_____
- ☐ **Idealistic:** If you miss while *showing compassion*, you can take 1-stress to turn it into a weak hit (7-9 result).
- ☐ **Book Smart:** Pick a specialty; when you use that specialty outside its usual theater you may push (2); when you use that specialty inside its usual theater, you push (-1).
Specialty:_____

Fold here – Inner Fold – Fold here – Inner Fold

STRESS TRACK

FAIR ☐☐☐ | **SERIOUS** [PUSH -1] ☐☐ | **CRITICAL** [PUSH -2] ☐

CONDITIONS
TIER 1

CONDITIONS
TIER 2

CONDITIONS
TIER 3

CONNECTIONS

After filling out the rest of your playbook, go around and introduce all the characters. List everyone else's name as each player introduces their character, then go around again for Cxn.

On your turn, ask 1, 2, or all 3:

► Which one of you seems to have it in for me?

For that character, write Cxn-2.

► Which one of you has been willing to mentor me?

For that character, write Cxn+3.

► Which one of you feels pity for me?

For that character, write Cxn+1.

For everyone else write Cxn=0; you don't know how everything fits together yet.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

At the end, choose one of the characters with the lowest Cxn on your sheet.

Ask that player, "What is my nickname?"

ADDICTIONS

► I'm addicted to...

(You always push (-1) on basic moves when acting against your addictions)

CXN

SPECIALTIES

PERKS/BENEFITS	NOTES 
---------------------------	---

The Ward: Acute Care Edition is copyright Magpie Games @2017. Find out more at magpiegames.com/theward

You know what they call
the fellow who finishes
last in his medical school
graduating class?
They call him 'Doctor.'
—Abe Lemons



NAME:	
Description:	
Emergency Contact:	Relationship:
Next of Kin:	Relationship:
Marital status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced	
Race: ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Native American ☐ White ☐ Other:	
Ethnicity:	
Age: ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44	
Hair:	Eyes:
Corrective Lenses?: ☐ yes ☐ no	
Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other:	

DEMOGRAPHICS
Fill out your demographics:

THE PLACE TAG HERE NURSE



To create your character, choose one **tag**. Create a **name** for your character and fill out their **demographics** and **description**. Assign your **stats** and pick two **specialties**. Pick two **moves** from the list in this playbook and decide on your current **addiction**. You have a starting **reputation (Rep)** of -1. Once everyone had created a character work out connections (**Cxn**).

TAGS Chose one tag for your nurse:

- ☐ **Cynical** – When you *show contempt* towards your peers you may always take a weak hit instead of rolling.
- ☐ **Old** – Cross out the first box of your stress track and treat it as if it wasn't there. Once per session you can call on your years of experience to make any roll a strong hit instead of rolling.
- ☐ **Optimistic** – When you *show compassion* to a patient, you may always take a weak hit instead of rolling.

STATS

Assign -1, 0, 0 and +1 to your stats in any order.

BRAINS	GUTS
HEART	NERVE

You have a starting Reputation (Rep) of +1.

REP

SPECIALTIES & MOVES

Pick two specialties (page 21). You may push (1) in situations that involve your specialties. Pick two character moves from the following list:

- ☐ **Working a Double:** At the start of each session, roll+guts. On a 10+, hold 2. On a 7-9, hold 1. Spend your hold to be present in any scene. On a miss, the MC holds 1 and may spend it to place you in any scene, suffering from a condition.
- ☐ **Move Aside:** When you *show contempt* in the medical theater and hit, you may ask an extra question; other characters can't ask you questions.
- ☐ **Nightingale:** When you *show compassion* in any theater and get a hit, you may ask an additional question (not limited to the list).
- ☐ **Thankless Job:** When another player character *sticks a hand in* to help you, they get 1 Perk if you succeed.
- ☐ **Seen It All:** +1 Guts (max +3).

Fold here – Inner Fold – Fold here – Inner Fold

STRESS TRACK

FAIR ☐☐☐ | **SERIOUS** [PUSH -1] ☐☐ | **CRITICAL** [PUSH -2] ☐

CONDITIONS

TIER 1

CONDITIONS

TIER 2

CONDITIONS

TIER 3

CONNECTIONS

After filling out the rest of your playbook, go around and introduce all the characters. List everyone else's name as each player introduces their character, then go around again for Cxn.

On your turn, ask 1, 2, or all 3:

► Which one of you has caused me the most amount of extra work?

For that character, write Cxn+2.

► Which one of you looks overconfident to me?

For that character, write Cxn-1

► Which one of you had a thing for me?

For that character, write Cxn-1

For everyone else write Cxn+1. You've seen it all and you're here to help.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

At the end, choose one of the characters with the lowest Cxn on your sheet. Ask that player, "What is my nickname?"

ADDICTIONS

► I'm addicted to...

(You always push (-1) on basic moves when acting against your addictions)

CXN

SPECIALTIES

PERKS/BENEFITS

NOTES



The Ward: Acute Care Edition is copyright Magpie Games @2017. Find out more at magpiegames.com/theward

Nursing is not for everyone. It takes a very strong, intelligent, and compassionate person to take on the ills of the world with passion and purpose and work to maintain the health and well-being of the planet. No wonder we're exhausted at the end of the day! —Donna Wilk Cardillo



NAME:	
GENDER: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other:	
HAIR:	EYES:
CORRECTIVE LENSES?: ☐ yes ☐ no	
AGE: ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+	
RACE: ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Native American ☐ White ☐ Other:	
ETHNICITY:	
MARITAL STATUS: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced	
NEXT OF KIN:	
RELATIONSHIP:	
EMERGENCY CONTACT:	
RELATIONSHIP:	
DESCRIPTION:	
NICKNAME:	

DEMOGRAPHICS
Fill out your demographics:

THE PLACE TAG HERE RESIDENT



To create your character, choose one **tag**. Create a **name** for your character and fill out their **demographics** and **description**. Assign your **stats** and pick two **specialties**. Pick two **moves** from the list in this playbook and decide on your current **addiction**. You have a starting **reputation (Rep)** of -1. Once everyone had created a character work out connections (**Cxn**).

TAGS Chose one tag for your resident:

- ☐ **Arrogant** – The first time you would lose Reputation during a session, ignore the loss.
- ☐ **New** – Tell the other players to subtract 1 from any Cxn they assign you at the start of the game. The first time you would gain Rep, gain an additional +1Rep.
- ☐ **Young** – Take -1 to your starting Reputation score; ignore the first instance of stress you suffer each session.

STATS

Assign -1, 0, 0 and +1 to your stats in any order.

BRAINS	GUTS
HEART	NERVE

You have a starting Reputation (Rep) of +1.

REP

SPECIALTIES & MOVES

Pick two specialties (page 21). You may push (1) in situations that involve your specialties. Pick two character moves from the following list:

- ☐ **White Coat**: When you *feign competence* in the medical theater, your patients always trust you, even on a miss.
- ☐ **Black Art**: When a patient dies in your care, you get +1 Guts (max +3).
- ☐ **Winning Bedside Manner**: +1 Heart (max +3).
- ☐ **Taking Up Golf**: When you blow off a responsibility or duty you should normally perform, clear 1-Stress. Tell the MC which character has to pick up your slack; they mark 1-Stress.
- ☐ **Career-Minded**: In social situations, you push (1) with your betters and always push (-1) with those below you (discuss with the MC if the situation is unclear).

Fold here – Inner Fold – Fold here – Inner Fold

STRESS TRACK

FAIR ☐☐☐ | **SERIOUS** [PUSH -1] ☐☐ | **CRITICAL** [PUSH -2] ☐

CONDITIONS

TIER 1

CONDITIONS

TIER 2

CONDITIONS

TIER 3

CONNECTIONS

After filling out the rest of your playbook, go around and introduce all the characters. List everyone else's name as each player introduces their character, then go around again for Cxn.

On your turn, ask 1, 2, or all 3:

► Which of you looks the healthiest?

For that character, write Cxn-1.

► Which one of you has been feeling under the weather?

For that character, write Cxn+2.

► Which one of you should I consider a rival?

For that character, write Cxn+2.

For everyone else write Cxn+1. You know how things stand.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

At the end, choose one of the characters with the lowest Cxn on your sheet. Ask that player, "What is my nickname?"

ADDICTIONS

► I'm addicted to...

(You always push (-1) on basic moves when acting against your addictions)

CXN

SPECIALTIES

PERKS/BENEFITS	NOTES 
---------------------------	---

The Ward: Acute Care Edition is copyright Magpie Games @2017. Find out more at magpiegames.com/theward

A doctor must work
eighteen hours a day and
seven days a week. If you
cannot console yourself
to this, get out of the
profession.
—Martin H. Fischer



NICKNAME:	
Description:	
Emergency Contact:	Relationship:
Next of Kin:	Relationship:
Marital status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced	
Race: ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Native American ☐ White ☐ Other:	
Age: ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54	
Hair:	Eyes:
Corrective Lenses?: ☐ yes ☐ no	
Name: ☐ Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other:	

DEMOGRAPHICS
Fill out your demographics:

THE PLACE TAG HERE SPECIALIST



To create your character, choose one **tag**. Create a **name** for your character and fill out their **demographics** and **description**. Assign your **stats** and pick two **specialties**. Pick two **moves** from the list in this playbook and decide on your current **addiction**. You have a starting **reputation (Rep)** of -1. Once everyone had created a character work out connections (**Cxn**).

TAGS Chose one tag for your specialist:

- ☐ **Arrogant** – The first time you would lose Reputation during a session, ignore the loss.
- ☐ **Genius** – During character creation, select an additional specialty.
- ☐ **Old** – Cross out the first box of your stress track and treat it as if it wasn't there. Once per session you can call on your years of experience to make any roll a strong hit instead of rolling.

STATS

Assign -1, 0, 0 and +1 to your stats in any order.

BRAINS	GUTS
HEART	NERVE

You have a starting Reputation (Rep) of +2.

REP

SPECIALTIES & MOVES

Pick two specialties (page 21). You may push (1) in situations that involve your specialties. You get **Focused**. Pick one other character move from the list:

- ☒ **Focused**: When making rolls associated with your specialty, you push (2) instead of push (1).
- ☐ **Top in Your Field**: Your Reputation can never go below -2 because of your actions in the medical theater; if you would be forced to drop your Reputation to -3, mark 1-Stress instead. Personal and social actions can still drop it to -3 or worse.
- ☐ **Got it Where it Counts**: +1 Brains (max +3).
- ☐ **Work Hard, Play Hard**: When you **blow off steam** by indulging a particularly dangerous or nasty vice, remove an additional 1-stress, even on a miss.
- ☐ **Don't Play a Player**: If a character **feigns competence** in your presence, they push (-2) on the roll unless they choose to owe you.

Fold here – Inner Fold – Fold here – Inner Fold

STRESS TRACK

FAIR ☐☐☐ | **SERIOUS** [PUSH -1] ☐☐ | **CRITICAL** [PUSH -2] ☐

CONDITIONS
TIER 1

CONDITIONS
TIER 2

CONDITIONS
TIER 3

CONNECTIONS

After filling out the rest of your playbook, go around and introduce all the characters. List everyone else's name as each player introduces their character, then go around again for Cxn.

On your turn, ask 1, 2, or all 3:

► Which one of you have I worked with in another facility?

For that character, write Cxn+2.

► Which one of you doesn't seem to be living up to your full potential?

For that character, write Cxn-1.

► Which one of you do I secretly admire or envy?

For that character, write Cxn+1.

For everyone else write Cxn=0. You've got it covered.

On the others' turns, answer their questions as you like.

At the end, choose one of the characters with the lowest Cxn on your sheet. Ask that player, "What is my nickname?"

ADDICTIONS

► I'm addicted to...

(You always push (-1) on basic moves when acting against your addictions)

CXN

SPECIALTIES

PERKS/BENEFITS	NOTES 
---------------------------	---

The Ward: Acute Care Edition is copyright Magpie Games @2017. Find out more at magpiegames.com/theward

Medicine is my lawful
wife and literature my
mistress; when I get tired
of one, I spend the night
with the other.
—Anton Chekhov



NICKNAME:	
Description:	
Emergency Contact:	Relationship:
Next of Kin:	Relationship:
Marital status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced	
Race: ☐ Asian ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Native American ☐ White ☐ Other:	
Ethnicity:	
Age: ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+	
Hair:	Eyes:
Corrective Lenses?: ☐ yes ☐ no	
Name: Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other:	

DEMOGRAPHICS
Fill out your demographics:

BASIC MOVES



ACT PROFESSIONALLY

When you try to **act professionally** or maintain your composure in a difficult or dangerous situation, roll+guts:

HIT (7+): You keep it together.

STRONG HIT (10+): Both

WEAK HIT (7-9): Choose one:

- ▶ Reduce any stress inflicted by the situation by 1.
- ▶ You don't show any weakness.

MISS (6-): Miss: The MC will tell you what happens.

DISPLAY EXPERTISE

When you **display expertise** about a problem at hand, roll+brains:

HIT (7+): You've got this; the MC will tell you an interesting fact about the current situation.

STRONG HIT (10+): Ask the MC one or two follow-up questions.

WEAK HIT (7-9): You fumble, hesitate, or stall: the MC can offer you an ugly choice, an unforeseen complication, or an unpleasant side-effect.

MISS (6-): The MC will tell you what happens.

FEIGN COMPETENCE

When you **feign competence, lie, or bluff** in the face of a difficult or dangerous situation, roll+nerve:

STRONG HIT (10+): You maintain your cloak of competence; choose one person you definitely convince or gain some new insight into the current problem.

WEAK HIT (7-9): You fool some of the people around you; choose one person you definitely deceive and the MC will choose one person who is definitely not taken in.

MISS (6-): The MC will tell you what happens.

STICK YOUR HAND IN

When you **stick your hand into** someone else's situation roll+Cxn:

STRONG HIT (10+): You push (2) on their roll. If they hit, they choose one:

- ▶ They owe you.
- ▶ You get +1Cxn with them.

If they miss, they choose one:

- ▶ They don't blame you.
- ▶ You get -1Cxn with them.

WEAK HIT (7-9): You push (1) on their roll and your influence is noted, for good or bad.

MISS (6-): The MC will tell you what happens.

SHOW COMPASSION OR CONTEMPT

If you **show compassion, concern, or care** towards someone in need, roll+heart:

HIT (7+): You connect with them.

STRONG HIT (10+): Ask up to three questions from the list below.

WEAK HIT (7-9): Ask up to two questions from the list below. They may ask one of you as well.

- ▶ What's really troubling your character?
- ▶ How can I help your character?
- ▶ Where is your character vulnerable?
- ▶ What would your character like me to do?

MISS (6-): The MC will tell you what happens.

If you **show contempt, disdain, or indifference** towards someone in need, roll+heart:

HIT (9-): You cut them open and look inside.

MISS (10+): The MC will tell you what happens.

WEAK HIT (7-9): Ask one question from the list below. They may ask one of you as well.

STRONG HIT (6-): Ask up to two questions from the list below.

- ▶ How could I get your character to _____?
- ▶ Where is your character vulnerable?
- ▶ Are you telling the truth?

ASSERT YOUR AUTHORITY

When you **assert your authority, give an order, or tell someone what to do** in the face of resistance, roll+Rep. If towards a PC, you may roll+Cxn instead:

For NPCs ▼

STRONG HIT (10+): They attempt to do what you want, to the best of their ability.

WEAK HIT (7-9): They'll attempt to do what you want after you pick one:

- ▶ You agree to help them, now or later.
- ▶ You take 1-Stress.

MISS (6-): The MC will tell you what happens.

For PCs ▼

STRONG HIT (10+): If they do it, they gain 1 Perk. If they don't do it, they mark 1-Stress

WEAK HIT (7-9): If they do it, you owe them. If they don't do it, you both mark 1-Stress

MISS (6-): The MC will tell you what happens.

AUXILLARY MOVES



BLOW OFF STEAM

When you do something to **blow off steam**, wager 0-3 stress and roll+stress wagered:

MISS (10+): Things blow up instead. The MC will tell you how.

WEAK HIT (7-9): You catch a break, but there are complications; reduce your stress by one.

STRONG HIT (6-): You gain real relief or respite; reduce your stress by the amount wagered.

SLEEP WITH SOMEONE

When you **sleep with someone** you're emotionally invested in, ask the following questions and roll+total:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| ▶ Are both your Cxns positive? | Take +1 |
| ▶ Do you work in different departments? | Take +1 |
| ▶ Has this happened before? | Take +1 |
| ▶ Is one of you subordinate to the other? | Take -1 |
| ▶ Are either of you suffering a serious condition? | Take -1 |
| ▶ Are either of you suffering a critical condition? | Take -2 |

The other player may ask, "Is this going anywhere?"

Yes: +1 / **No:** -1 / **Hesitation:** -2

STRONG HIT (10+): It's very good; pick two from the following list.

WEAK HIT (7-9): It's good; You each pick one from the following list:

- ▶ You both remove one stress.
- ▶ You feel you owe them.
- ▶ You get +1Cxn with them.
- ▶ They get +1Cxn with you.

MISS (6-): Not good. They choose one from below:

- ▶ You get -1Cxn with them.
- ▶ You take 1-Stress.

PLAYER AGENDA

You're here to play the game, and you'll enjoy it most by playing your characters following the agendas below:

- ▶ Play your character like they're a real person.
- ▶ Share your character's secrets freely with the other players.
- ▶ Embrace trouble and failure.

This certainly doesn't mean your character will find this fun, but if you keep these concepts in mind, I think you—the player—will find the story much more interesting.

PERKS

Perks are the "experience points" of **THE WARD**; you earn them from mistakes and successes alike.

GAINING PERKS

The first time you miss a roll in a situation, you gain one Perk. Every miss after the first one doesn't generate Perks for your character. When a new situation arises, you'll have a chance to earn more.

You can also gain Perks at the end of a session. In the Post-Op phase, ask each member of the group the following questions:

- ▶ Was I successful in all three theaters this session?
- ▶ Did I save a life or triumph over my addictions?
- ▶ Was my nickname used more than once by others?

Gain 1 Perk for each question answered "yes."

SPENDING PERKS

At any time after getting a Perk you may spend it, 1-for-1, for push (1) on a roll.

In addition to spending Perks for push, you may also spend Perks for the following during Post-Op:

- ▶ **2 Perks:** Gain a favor from an NPC (player's choice).
- ▶ **3 Perks:** Gain a tangible Benefit useful in a specific theater, usable in the next session. Work with the MC to determine something suitable for your character.
- ▶ **5 Perks:** Gain +1Reputation. If this would set your Reputation to +4, reset it to +1 and take an advancement.

Any unspent Perks are lost when the session is over (after Post-Op).

BENEFITS

A benefit is a specific object, resource, or circumstance that allows you to push (1) when its use is fictionally appropriate. They are usually applicable to a specific theater or specialty and provide their boost for a single session. This is the "gear" of **THE WARD**.

Here are some examples:

- ▶ My med school stethoscope (Personal)
- ▶ An "understanding" with your spouse (Personal)
- ▶ Upcoming vacation (Personal)
- ▶ Kick-ass gaming console (Social)
- ▶ New sports car (Social)
- ▶ Dirt on the Chief of Medicine (Social)
- ▶ Advance information on a new surgical procedure (Medical)
- ▶ Tablet with up-to-date pharmacological database (Medical)
- ▶ Very competent lab assistant (Medical)

A benefit is only of use for a single session, but can be used as many times as narratively appropriate. After the session, benefits don't disappear, but they do lose their mechanical advantage.

THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES



AGENDA

- ▶ Make the world of **THE WARD** seem believable.
- ▶ Make the player characters' lives unstable in multiple theaters.
- ▶ Play to find out what happens.

ALWAYS SAY

- ▶ What the principles demand.
- ▶ What the rules demand.
- ▶ What your prep demands.
- ▶ What honesty demands.

THE PRINCIPLES

- ▶ Walk the tightrope between life and death.
- ▶ Address yourself to the characters, not the players.
- ▶ Make your move, but misdirect.
- ▶ Make your move, but never speak its name.
- ▶ Worsen anything left untreated.
- ▶ Name everyone, make everyone human.
- ▶ Show that everyone's addicted to something.
- ▶ Challenge the characters' humanity.
- ▶ Ask provocative questions and build on the answers.
- ▶ Be a fan of the players' characters.
- ▶ Think offscreen too.
- ▶ Sometimes, ask for a second opinion.

YOUR MOVES

- ▶ Put a life in the balance.
- ▶ Increase the pressure.
- ▶ Scramble or sever a connection.
- ▶ Impose or worsen a condition.
- ▶ Change theatres.
- ▶ Reveal immediate or dire complications.
- ▶ Reveal trouble in the wings.
- ▶ Tarnish their reputation.
- ▶ Inflict stress.
- ▶ Offer or call in a favor.
- ▶ Feed or call on someone's addictions.
- ▶ Tell them the possible consequences and ask.
- ▶ Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost.
- ▶ Turn their move back on them.
- ▶ After every move ask: "What do you do?"

A FEW MORE THINGS TO DO

- ▶ Make connections like crazy.
- ▶ Turn questions back on the asker or over to the group at large.
- ▶ Feel free to ask for advice.
- ▶ Digress occasionally.
- ▶ Go around the table.
- ▶ Take breaks and take your time.

CONDITIONS

- ▶ **Tier 1** conditions are simply cues for the MC and players to work with and have no direct mechanical effect.
- ▶ **Tier 2** conditions push (-1) on all appropriate PC moves in appropriate situations and, when present on NPCs, may be used by the MC to push (1) on the rolls of any PCs dealing with the NPCs in appropriate situations.
- ▶ **Tier 3** conditions push (-2) on all appropriate PC's moves and allow the MC to make an MC move involving the afflicted NPC in any appropriate situation.

Conditions can only be removed by PC action, though they may be alleviated through lesser means. Anything left untreated is only going to get worse. The actual death of a character, whether PC or NPC, can only occur if a Tier 3 "Dying" result worsens; use it freely for NPCs, but with utmost care for PCs.

Each time a tier is cleared of stress, the player may also remove a condition.

SAMPLE CONDITIONS

Fair (Tier 1)	Serious (Tier 2)	Critical (Tier 3)	Terminal
Sick/Hurt	Very Sick/Hurt	Dying	DEAD
Frustrated	Angry	Enraged	
Nervous	Scared	Terrified	
Tipsy	Drunk	Passed Out	
Mistrusted	Disgraced	Pariah	

USE IT OR LOSE IT

If your stress track is filled and you can't (or won't) take any more conditions then you're in pretty bad shape. The next time you suffer stress, you must pick one from the following two options:

When you **use it**—seeking solace or respite in a new behavior, habit or obsession—gain another addiction, owe that addiction a favor, and clear 3-stress.

When you **lose it**—venting your spleen, letting loose in public, or acting self-destructively—suffer -2 Rep and clear your stress track. Note that there are serious possible repercussions if your Rep ever drops below -3

STRESS

Stress is part and parcel of being a medical professional; dealing with the turmoil of the daily medical grind may be the most important thing one can do to stay sane. Stress is **THE WARD's** version of "hit points," for lack of a better term; the more stress you suffer, the worse off you are.

SAMPLE STRESS

Here are some sample stress values for various occurrences:

1-STRESS

Being mocked by your peers
Giving or receiving bad news
Poor night's sleep
Being confronted by a patient or subordinate (publicly)
Being confronted by a peer (privately)
Being part of a team that loses a patient
Taking a second shift

2-STRESS

Being dressed down by a superior (privately)
Giving or receiving very bad news
No night's sleep
Being confronted by a peer (publicly)
Being directly responsible for the loss of a patient

3-STRESS

Being dressed down by a superior (publicly)
Losing a loved one

PCs record their stress on their **stress track**. NPCs that take stress suffer a **condition** (MC's choice) instead.

SETTINGS, SCENES, AND SITUATIONS

- ▶ **Settings** – These are the broad, physical places or locations in the fiction, such as "The Hospital" or "The Emergency Room" or "Stella's Bar" or "Home." Scenes and situations occur within settings; many settings belong to a specific theater (see page 37).
- ▶ **Scenes** – These encompass localized areas of possible conflict within a setting and include all the different characters, locations, and details surrounding the PCs. The theater they belong to can change quite quickly. Examples might be "The break room, with Dr. Walters and Dr. Samarsin having some kind of argument" or "the service elevator as the power goes out."
- ▶ **Situations** – These are all the various troubles and challenges the PCs face in scenes, the real meat of the fiction. Most of the time, your job as the MC is to introduce a situation into a scene that compels the characters to take action.

THEATERS

The action in **THE WARD** can take place in three broad theaters: **medical**, **social**, and **personal**.

- ▶ **Medical** – encompasses situations involving helping patients, doing rounds, performing official duties in a hospital or clinic, and other professional activities.
- ▶ **Social** – covers situations not directly related to medicine like drinking at the bar or discovering how the chief of staff got their nickname.
- ▶ **Personal** – involves situations centered on a PC's internal life, intimate relationships, family, and people with close ties.

These theaters can rapidly shift and blur into each other, but should be distinct enough so that the players always know where they are, i.e. a bar with friends vs a funeral for family vs another round on their night shift. Of course, they've only got two hands to hold on to all three theaters, so they best learn to juggle.

Every NPC, scene, and situation should fall into one of these theaters, though the particular theater may change at times. Demarcate those changes. Make players aware when they are crossing a boundary by emphasizing the look and feel of each theater as they enter or leave it.

STATUS

Knowing the hierarchy during a crisis situation can be a matter of life and death. You need to know who's in charge, who's responsible, and who can be blamed when things go wrong. That pecking order can change when theaters change, for the good or ill of all involved. The relationships of characters generally fall into one of these three groupings:

- ▶ **Superiors** – those above you hierarchically, academically, socially, or in other ways, and in the position to use that against you.
- ▶ **Peers** – your equals, colleagues, good friends, and those who stand at the same level as you in their field.
- ▶ **Patients/Subordinates** – those you either tend to or can compel to take action when you give them instructions.

WORK-UP—NIGHT SHIFT



Ask these questions as the players are creating their characters: Start with Location, allowing the players to discuss their answers before finalizing them. Move on to Personal, each player should provide answers to all four questions as they pertain to their character. Once the players have completed their characters and worked out their connections ask the Situation questions, ponder their answers as people get comfortable, wait before you ask the last question, then dive in!

LOCATION

- ▶ Where is your hospital located?
- ▶ How big is the facility?
- ▶ What is it well known for?
- ▶ What does it currently lack that it normally has?
- ▶ What is always in short supply?
- ▶ What is a black mark on its reputation?

PERSONAL

- ▶ Who do you hope doesn't come through those doors tonight?
- ▶ What personal commitment are you avoiding by volunteering for this shift?
- ▶ Who are you sorry to see in the break room?
- ▶ Whose name are you glad to see on the active duty roster?

SITUATION

- ▶ What time of night is it and what's the phase of the moon?
- ▶ What's been the main complaint about the weather?
- ▶ What just happened that got everyone's attention?

Wait for it...

- ▶ Where are you... right NOW?

NOTES

THE PLAYERS CHARACTERS

THE NPCS



NAME / NICKNAME	DESCRIPTION / CONDITIONS	CONNECTED TO / ADDICTED TO	OTHER NOTES

Night Shift is a simple standard one-shot scenario work-up for The Ward that can be used to introduce new players to the game, as well as a springboard for a longer campaign. Players will create the facility their characters work at, problems ready to burst forth, and a slew of NPCs for you to indulge it. Don't go easy on them, they chose to be here.