

Double Exposure, Inc. presents

The Double Exposure Conflict Resolution System Version 1.0 - November 1, 2005

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Introduction

In 1994, Double Exposure announced the creation of a new concept in gaming and gaming conventions: The Avatar System. A new convention called DREAMATION was born, and scheduled for January of 1995. This convention would form the annual basis of the Avatar System, and would begin a live role playing game of epic proportions. The rules allowed for character creation and facilitated a complex game which continued after DREAMATION was over. The game was a hit with players, and both DREAMATION and the Avatar System became well known as an extra-special experience on the East Coast.

What is less known (or remembered) is that Double Exposure has been around since 1987, developing live role playing games all along. The basis of the Avatar System, now released in its third edition, is a Conflict Resolution System which saw its roots in 1988 with the game "Double Exposure", run at Lunacon, a science fiction convention. The system has been perfected through numerous redesigns, and now, 17 years later, I am proud to release it as a stand-alone LARP Conflict Resolution System (CRS).

Why am I doing this? First, this CRS is very mature, and has been tested in literally thousands of different ways over the years. It is thoroughly flexible and can fit into just about any setting. Second, it has already been adopted in many different ways which have nothing to do with the Avatar System; therefore, I decided that it was time to officially release it into the public domain so that anyone who wants to write a Live Role Playing Game can have an engine to basically slap into place and concentrate on their story and plot rather than how people will be beating each other up.

Lastly, I feel that this CRS is one of the biggest contributions that Double Exposure has made to the Gaming Industry, and it is time that I officially "gave" it to the Industry as a permanent resource.

Anyone who is familiar with the Avatar System will recognize the engine immediately, but it is presented here as an independent entity. This CRS is designed to allow for physical and mental combat, and contains a set of permanent stats which can be applied to characters within a LARP. The Avatar System allows players to grow and increase their stats; obviously, the CRS is designed as a one-shot system so that the process of "character creation" is completely removed and instead the raw stats are placed into the hands of the writer of the game. Obviously, if the writer decides to adapt the CRS for a multi-game campaign, he can decide how stats might increase over the course of time.

If you are writing a political LARP which contains little or no conflict (i.e. it is completely resolved by words), then this CRS does not apply to you. But if you intend to allow your players to resolve conflicts with any weapons (even fists), then you need to have some sort of mechanism for showing the combat skill level of each player (even

if it just how strong they are), and that's where this CRS comes into play. As you will see, it is extremely generic and you can modify it for any genre, any setting, and any type of characters.

While reading these rules, please note that I refer to characters as "male" purely for simplicity and consistency. Whenever you read "him", "he", "his", etc., just substitute "him or her", "he or she", "his or hers", etc.

Primary Stats

There are eight Primary Stats in the Conflict Resolution System, representing the makeup of a player or non-player character. This section is ENTIRELY OPTIONAL - basically it allows each character in your game to be fully fleshed out instead of just represented.

There are two reasons why you might decide to use the Primary Stats:

1) Your game contains more than just combat, and you will need to give players situations in which other types of challenges exist, for example, how high they can jump, how smooth they can talk, how fast they can run. While the Secondary Stats give you a basis for Conflict Resolution, the Primary Stats allow you to individualize each character's actual makeup - answering questions like "I know he's a good fighter, but is that because he is very fast, or because he's very strong?"

2) Your game is very long or will take place over the course of several sessions. In this case, it behooves you put a lot more detail into the characterization so that your players not only know exactly what makes them unique, but also shows them (if given the opportunity) where they need improvement.

If your game is short and you do not need to provide this level of detail, then skip this section and go right to the "Secondary Stats" section, which has every number you need to actually run conflict resolution.

Energy (ENE): A measure of the character's non-material "essence". This stat can apply to any one or more special abilities that you are writing into your game. For example, if your game has magic, then ENE can apply to the raw ability of a character to make or cast spells. If your game is spiritual, ENE might apply to the amount of "karma" a character has. The possibilities are endless.

Strength (STR): A measure of how physically strong the character is. How much he can lift, how much he can push, how hard he punches, etc.

Intelligence (INT): A measure of how much knowledge the character has accumulated, and how much he can remember. INT is also used to calculate resistance to suggestion by virtue of knowledge (for example the disbelief of an illusion), and it helps to determine how well he is able to use your mind to affect things around you.

Cunning (CUN): A measure of how well the character applies common sense in his decision making and how wise or "street smart" he is. While INT shows how much knowledge he has, CUN shows how well he can use that knowledge to his advantage.

Agility (AGI): A measure of how fast and dexterous the character is. AGI is used to calculate how quickly the character can get out of the way of an incoming attack and how fast he can react to the situation around him. AGI is also a measure of raw agility, such as the ability to perform very complex maneuvers.

Constitution (CON): A measure of how physically tough the character is. CON is used to calculate how much damage he can take before he collapses, as well as how much punishment he can undergo before being significantly weakened.

Charm (CHA): A measure of how physically and mentally attractive the character is, and how well he can influence other characters around him. It also represents his willpower in the face of tough mental or even physical challenges.

Luck (LUC): A measure of how lucky the character is, and how often chance seems to favor him. As LUC is raised, it has a direct effect on the random occurrences inherent in every Action the character takes.

Secondary Stats

In this section, I present the seven "Secondary Stats"; which for many small games are all that is necessary to actually resolve conflict. If you have decided to include the Primary Stats in your game, then you can use the calculations shown below to work out the Secondary Stats. If you have decided that the Primary Stats are not necessary, then ignore the calculations and just present each character with these stats, which are the only numbers actually used in conflict resolution.

Note that in the following calculations, the results are TRUNCATED, not rounded. In other words, if a result comes to 7.5, it will become 7, not 8.

Offensive Rating (OR): This is a measure both of how well the character can hit a target and with how much force he can hit that target. It is calculated with the following formula: $((STR/2) + (AGI/8) + 1)$.

Defensive Rating (DR): This Stat has two purposes. First, it measures the character's ability to dodge an incoming attack and to withstand some of it. Second, it is a measure of how accurately he can hit a target with a Long Range attack. It is calculated with the following formula: $((AGI/2) + (STR/8) + (CUN/4) + 1)$.

MIND: This Stat is a measure of mental willpower and thought, and serves as both an offensive and defensive stat. It is calculated with the following formula: $((CHA/2) + (INT/3) + (CUN/6) + 1)$. You might decide to use MIND as an indication of a character's current mental state - for example, if your game has zombies, a zombie's MIND would probably be 0.

LIFE: This Stat determines how much damage a character can withstand before he "dies", or falls unconscious, or however you wish to define the effect. A character will invoke this effect when his LIFE Stat reaches 0. You as the writer of your game must determine what a 0 LIFE actually means. Perhaps the character is actually taken out of the game; perhaps he is unconscious for a specified amount of time. Perhaps he actually dies, but is brought back to life a few minutes later. As long as it does not reach 0, LIFE is automatically replenished to its maximum 10 minutes after either the last Combat or the last time ANY LIFE has been affected. For more information on how Combat affects LIFE, see the Combat Section. It is calculated with the following formula: $(CON*2)$.

Initiative (IN): The main purpose of this Stat is to determine precedence when a character is involved in an action with one or more other characters. It is crucial in helping to sort out large melees and other group-related actions, but it is also used whenever the question of "who goes first" comes up. It is calculated with the following formula: $((CUN/4) + (AGI/8))$.

Energy Manifestation (EM): This stat is the amount of energy the character has available for the use of whatever special effects are in your game. If your game takes place in a purely human, terran setting, then you may decide that there is no need at all for this stat, and you can drop it. EM is automatically replenished to its maximum 10 minutes after either the last Combat or the last time ANY EM has been affected. For more information on how Combat affects EM, see the Combat Section. It is calculated with the following formula: $((ENE/3) + Level)$.

Luck Bonus (LB): This Stat shows how many extra 10's the character is allowed to add to his Action Cards (explained later). Since Action Cards are used for most random occurrences, the Luck Bonus can affect many things that a character does. It is calculated with the following formula: $(LUC/6)$. You may decide that you want all of your characters to have an equal amount of luck while they resolve conflict, and if that's the case, this stat can also be ignored.

Action Cards

Most random occurrences in the CRS are handled by a set of "Action Cards" (ACs) which each character should carry with him at all times. Note that carrying a small deck of cards is an elegant way to get a random number, and certainly in a live action setting, beats having to kneel down or find a flat surface to roll one or more dice. Random occurrences are involved in every conflict, to represent the fact that there is no "sure thing", even in a game. The standard "AC Deck" consists of 10 normal playing cards, Ace through 10 (suits

are irrelevant). For future reference, any 10, face card or Joker is considered to be a "10" in the AC Deck.

Any time that a random occurrence is called for, a character will be asked for an "AC Pick" which simply means that a card must be chosen from his AC Deck, and revealed immediately. Sometimes a random occurrence will call for more than one AC Pick at a time. It is protocol (and easier) if a player fans his AC Deck (face down) for the character whom he is targeting or defending against and allow him to pick card(s).

Any time an AC Pick is called for, there are two results which are constant. First, an Ace is an automatic "fumble", which has a different result depending on how the AC Deck is being used. Any time an Ace is chosen in any way, it immediately nullifies the entire AC Pick and reduces the result to 0. If this occurs in a situation OTHER than a Defensive Draw, it nullifies (reduces to 0) the TOTAL result being calculated INCLUDING all modifiers - if a calculation is "AC Pick" plus 6, a result of Ace + 6 = 0!. For example, if an Ace is chosen in an attempt to punch another character, the punch will simply MISS altogether. As a further example, if a large effect calls for three cards to be chosen and added together, if any one of the three cards is an Ace, the net effect of the calculation is 0.

Any time an Ace is chosen in a Defensive Draw, it will force an exclusive single card draw, which will then be SUBTRACTED from all other remaining defensive numbers (note that modifiers will still remain in effect before the subtraction) to come up with a final Defensive Calculation. For the purposes of this calculation, two special rules apply: A) The Ace will remain out of the deck for this special draw ONLY and will be placed back into the deck as soon as the draw is finished, for the continuation of the round as per normal rules (to follow). B) Any 10 drawn in this special draw will count as 0. If there are no cards left in the AC Deck for this draw, the entire Defensive Calculation will become 0 automatically, just like any other situation.

The second constant involves 10s; depending on the character's LB, there may be more than one 10 in the deck. Any time a 10 is chosen, another card MUST be chosen and added to the result, even if the random occurrence only calls for one card. The 10 MUST be removed from the deck before the bonus card is chosen. The result of the random occurrence is the sum of all cards chosen.

There are four things to keep in mind when using the 10's bonus rule. First, if a second 10 is chosen (I'll explain this in a moment), then indeed it is also set aside and another card MUST be chosen and added to the result. You may end up repeating this process as many times as there are 10s in your deck. Second, if an Ace is chosen at ANY time, it sets the ENTIRE result to 0, just as if it were the only card chosen. Third, if a random occurrence calls for more than one card to be chosen, ANY 10s chosen will force an additional card, and all cards will be added to the result (unless an Ace is chosen). Fourth, if you and another character need to make simultaneous AC Picks (such as an Offensive Calculation vs. a Defensive Calculation, explained later), the character who has INITIATED the Action which called for the draw will always finish picking first (and making all of the decisions about how many cards to draw) BEFORE the other player does. This also goes for a multiple target scenario, but in the case of several players needing to make decisions together, established Initiative (explained later) or a new Initiative draw is in order.

If LB is used, for every point of LB the character has, he adds one additional 10 to his AC Deck. In the interest of using a deck of playing cards efficiently among four characters, it is suggested that you use face cards or Jokers to symbolize additional 10s. Note that LB not only increases the chance that a more significant result will occur, it also decreases the chance of a total failure (drawing an Ace).

Combat

Although combat in this CRS has been simplified drastically from other gaming systems, there are a LOT of things which can make it very complex. I must take a moment to explain that everything you are about to read is to be considered a framework for combat. There are so many rules here that are stretched or otherwise broken that it is hard to imagine any round of combat actually proceeding exactly as it is described below. So we will state now that in absence of any contradicting rules, this is the framework to be used, but

any additional information which is present in your game which contradicts anything shown below will take precedence!

The key to understanding combat in this CRS is that all of the following rules assume that a character can hit another character with a basic Physical attack (be it fist, pseudopod, leg, whatever), and that there is a base chance to hit (plus a random element) and a base amount of damage (plus a random element) that will be done, assuming no additional modifiers at all. The reason the following steps are necessary is because there are a LOT of modifiers which can be added into the sequence, and this is especially true when you have more than two combatants.

In order to properly represent real-world circumstances, there are several situations in which a character is able to "Surprise" another character. ALL Mental Actions and Long Range Actions (see below) fall into this category, as well as special effects you may decide to add into your game. Surprise Actions can be used ONCE on a character or group of characters without a Combat declaration, unless that character or group is already in a Combat (in which case, the attacker must join the combat and draw Initiative in the NEXT round in order to affect it). Whether or not they are successful, the target(s) retains all knowledge of the Action (even after its effects are finished, unless otherwise noted), and can initiate a normal Combat immediately after, if he is able to.

ANY Long Range Action can be made by Surprise; the exact circumstances of this are as follows (note that these rules can also be applied to ANY Surprise Actions):

- 1) The target must NOT already be involved in a Combat (as noted above).
- 2) The target must actually NOT know that the Long Range attacker is anywhere near him and about to attack. Now it should be obvious that this rule is subject to misunderstanding, therefore it is the burden of the attacker to PROVE that the target did not know of his presence, and the best way to do so is with the use of a neutral third party (like a GM), who also assists in this rule. Mental Actions are exempt from this condition.
- 3) Someone who is neutral and not in character (it does not necessarily have to be a GM) can notify the target that he has been attacked at Long Range.
- 4) The resolution of the attack follows all normal rules and the target gets all of the defense he is entitled to.

Only ONE Surprise Action by ONE character may be made in a given situation before a Combat must be declared, no matter what the circumstances are. If more than one character wants to Surprise an unsuspecting character, then an Initiative draw will be done to see who will perform the one and only Surprise Action.

The following rules govern ALL Combat:

A Combat begins with a simple declaration of intent to use an Action. Once this happens, the intended target(s) must oblige the declaring character with a game response (they cannot just run away out of character).

Once a Combat is established, it proceeds in "rounds", which consist of a series of steps. The very first thing to be done as soon as a Combat is established is to determine how much EM and LIFE each Combatant has. Each character who is involved in the Combat must make a note of his remaining EM and his remaining LIFE. The beginning of Combat is considered to be an effect to both EM and LIFE and therefore the 10-minute counter is immediately reset without replenishing either.

Any EM which is used DURING the Combat will be replenished 10 minutes from the end of the Combat (or, if it is necessary, the end of the grace period). Any LIFE which is lost DURING the Combat will be replenished 10 minutes from the end of the Combat UNLESS the character dies during the Combat.

Whenever any AC Pick is made (NOT including the Initiative draw), any card OTHER THAN AN ACE which is drawn will be removed from the target's AC Deck until the entire round is over (all cards are replaced during the Clean Up step). In this way, a powerful

character who is being faced by multiple assailants can be worn down by numbers (each card removed from the deck makes a drawn Ace more likely).

The actual length of time of a round in game time is determined to be the amount of time it takes to sort everything out. In other words, there is no specific amount of game time that a round takes.

If a character wishes to enter a Combat after the first round has begun, he may do so at the beginning of the NEXT round (ONLY). He may NOT enter closer than 6' to any other Combatant (in other words, he must enter at Long Range until he (or someone else) is able to change his positioning. He must make a normal Initiative draw just like all of the other Combatants at the appropriate time. Note that there is NO WAY of surprising any character who is already involved in a Combat.

The following steps must be followed in order for EACH round of combat:

Step 1 - Establish Combatants: Each person who will be performing an Action during this round must announce his intention to do so now. Note that players do NOT need to say WHAT they are doing, only that they will be doing something. Also, any combatants who are Taking a Blow (explained later) for another character as determined in the previous round should declare their intention to continue in that capacity during this round (they will NOT do anything further this round other than ensuring that the character they are Taking a Blow for will not be attacked). At this time, if ALL potential combatants decide to end the combat, it is ended, and all wounds are healed (except actual deaths). Once established, Combatants may NOT move from the spot they were in when the round begins.

Each Combatant's Range Status is determined at the beginning of each Round, and is no more specific than 5' increments (usually that is good enough to settle disputes, and no distance measurement in the System is more specific than 5' increments). Any Combatant who is 5' or closer to a character is in Short Range of the character. Any Combatant who is greater than 5' from a character is in Long Range of the character. A character may be Short Range to some characters and Long Range to others. I will discuss the difference in a few paragraphs.

Step 2 - Establish Additional Rules: I expect that you as the writer of the game will be adding Items, Powers, Skills, and other effects to the game. This is the place where whatever mechanism you have set up will take place. For example, if your game includes swords, it is here that each Combatant must show what type of sword he is using and what it will do if it has any special abilities. Likewise, if you allow your characters to have some sort of armor, they must now state what they are wearing and what it does for them.

Step 3 - Establish Defensive Stances: Each Combatant involved in the round can declare that they are taking a Defensive Stance for this round (only). This doubles their base DR for the rest of the round, and prohibits them from taking any Action at all for the rest of the round.

Step 4 - Determine Initiative: Each Combatant (as established in step 1) determines his Initiative result for the round using the following calculation: (IN + AC Pick). This will establish the order of Combat for this round (only). If there are enough Combatants that it will be difficult to remember who goes first, it is suggested that you write down the order of combat. Any ties in the Initiative calculation should be broken by a single AC Pick (do not add IN to tiebreaking draws). Continue with single AC Picks until all ties are broken. All Cards drawn during the Initiative step are returned to the AC Deck; all subsequent draws will remain pulled from the deck until the end of the round.

Step 5 - Perform Actions: Each Combatant (as established in step 1) will now, in order of determined Initiative, announce and perform a single Action. This Action may be one of the basic maneuvers shown in the next section, or it may be the use of some special Item, Skill or Power that you have given to them. Note that each Combatant does NOT need to reveal what he will be doing until it is his turn to Act.

At this time, we will discuss Long Range Actions. Note that your game MIGHT NOT HAVE Long Range Actions. For example, your characters might be in a single room during the entire game, or they might not have anything to actually USE in a Long Range Action (such as guns). But assuming you have SOME mechanism for allowing characters to hit each other from a distance, these are the rules to use.

As long as a Combatant has a valid Long Range target (defined as any Combatant who is more than 5' away from him), he may use a Long Range Action (if he has one available). By doing so, he will HALVE his DR (rounded up) for the remainder of the round for all subsequent calculations which involve it. This effect is CUMULATIVE for the remainder of the round (should the combatant have a second opportunity to use his Long Range weapon during the same round), but is reset at the beginning of the next round.

Long Range Actions have a range of line of sight. When a Combatant is targeted by a Long Range Action, a "Melee Check" must be performed. A Combatant is determined to currently be in a Melee if A) He has attacked any other Combatant with a Short Range attack during the very last Action he was eligible to take or B) He has been attacked by any other Combatant with a Short Range attack SINCE the very last Action he was eligible to take.

If a Combatant uses a Long Range Action directly on another Combatant who is involved in a Melee, there is a chance that he will hit someone else involved in that particular Melee. A Combatant is considered to be a part of the Melee if he is currently involved in either part A or B of the Melee Check as defined above (for example, if the target is attacking one character and being attacked by a third, all three are considered to be in his Melee). Once the Action is declared, a random draw must be made to see WHO is actually targeted by the Action. This is on a one-to-one basis, so if there are three Combatants involved in the melee, there is a one in three chance (draw from three cards or some other random number generator) of hitting any one of them. Once the drawn target is established, the Action MUST be performed, even if it will target someone whom the Combatant does not want to target.

Step 6 - Determine Reactions: Part of your supplemental information may be the use of Reactions; perhaps you allow your characters a chance to negate an Action as if it had not even been used. This is the place where any such Reactions would be announced and used, possibly with a random draw to use them. After all Reactions are resolved, the initial Action will be resolved.

Step 7 - Clean Up and Establish Next Round: During this step, any loose ends from the round will be cleaned up and finished, and it will be determined whether the combat will continue or not. If there are at least two Combatants still in the Combat and at least one of them who wishes to continue the combat, it MUST continue. If there is only one Combatant left, the combat immediately ends or enters the grace period. Note that while there are ways to escape combat (for example, Fleeing, explained in the next section), simply refusing to enter a combat is NOT one of them. If a character wishes to attack another character, it must be in the combat structure (whether or not the attacked character is fighting back). All effects which last until the end of the current round will stop at the beginning of this step. All Cards pulled from the AC Deck are returned to the Deck at this time, ready for the next round (if necessary).

At the end of Combat, ANY Combatant has the ability to declare a free "Flee" Action (explained in the next section), which will take effect without contest. If he does so, all the rules of Flee apply as if he had fled during the Combat. If he does not choose to Flee, he is subject to being attacked as normal. He must declare his intention to Flee immediately at the first opportunity, and must be given a chance to do so before any new Combat is initiated. Note that no Surprise attacks may be made by anyone who was in the Combat he has just finished, and no Surprise attacks may be made by other characters until he has been given the chance to Flee.

Combat Actions

The following Actions are the basic maneuvers that may be performed during the Action step of Combat (Step 5 above). When it is a character's turn to perform an Action, he may perform one of the following basic maneuvers, or he may instead use something else that you have provided for him (such as an Item, a Skill or a

Power). However, he is limited to ONE Action during each round of combat (unless specifically directed by something that contradicts this rule).

Short Range Combat: In order to use a Short Range Action, the Combatant must be 5' or less from his intended target. The Combatant declares HOW he is attacking his target. He has the ability to declare that he is using something to supplement his attack, subject to the available resources you have given to him.

Now the Combatant calculates his Offense. The calculation is (1 AC Pick + OR + modifiers). As previously noted, if the AC Pick contains an Ace, this entire calculation will equal 0 (regardless of modifiers).

The Combatant is not obligated to add his entire OR to the attack. He may "pull his punch" by adding as much of his calculated OR (defined as the OR which is available to him as a result of adding in all modifiers) as he wants to (but he must add at least 1 point). In the case of most defined Weapons, pulling your punch might mean he is (for example) targeting a leg instead of a torso, etc. Note that he MUST announce how much of his OR he is using BEFORE the AC Pick.

Once the Combatant's Offense is calculated, it is time for the target to calculate his Defense. First, he declares whatever resources which will be helping to supplement the Defense. Now the target calculates his Defense. The calculation is (1 AC Pick + DR + modifiers). As previously noted, if the AC Pick contains an Ace, a special draw is required which will subtract from the calculation (see rules for "Action Cards", above).

Now the Offense is compared to the Defense. If the Defense equals or exceeds the Offense, the attack misses and does no damage, and the Action is over. If the Offense exceeds the Defense, then the attack hits. The target's LIFE is thus decreased by the point difference between the Offense and Defense (i.e. 15 Offense vs. 10 Defense = 5 points of damage). If the target's LIFE is still above 0, he is "wounded", but may continue the combat. The Action is now over.

Long Range Combat: All Long Range Combat works exactly the way Short Range Combat works, with one exception: Instead of using OR, the Combatant uses DR in the Offense calculation. As above, the Combatant may add as little or as much of his DR as he wants to the attack calculation, unless the Item, Skill or Power he is using for the Long Range Attack specifically states otherwise. Remember that the Combatant's DR is HALVED (rounded up) for all subsequent calculations for the remainder of the round, cumulatively.

In order to use a Long Range Action, the intended target must be greater than 5' away.

Taking a Blow: A character may elect to "jump into the path" of an attack directed at another character, if he is in Short Range of the target. This Action takes effect immediately, so any further attacks in the current round will be affected. However, the character taking this Action may carry it over (declared in step 1) and continue it into the next round. The character who is Taking a Blow can perform no other Actions (it is assumed that all of his concentration is going towards protecting another character). The character who is being thus protected will continue to be protected IF and ONLY IF he does not take any Action other than Flee (explained later). At the point where the protected character takes any Action other than Flee, he is no longer considered to be protected by the character who is Taking a Blow, and if the protecting character wants to continue protecting him, he must re-establish Taking a Blow with the character during his next Action step. Note that the use of the Flee Action is optional in this situation; the character being protected may very well just sit there and do nothing.

Taking a Blow may not be combined with any other Action (such as Defensive Stance or Flee). It has NO effect on Mental Attacks directed at the protected character (although a character who was going to Mentally attack the protected character may decide to attack the character who is Taking a Blow instead). Further, this Action can NOT be used as a Reaction; the protecting character MUST announce his intention to Take a Blow during HIS Action (as determined by Initiative), so he cannot protect a character from an attack during a faster character's Action.

A character may NOT Take a Blow if he is involved in a melee which does not include the character he wants to protect, even if he is within 5' of that character.

Fleeing Combat: A character may declare a Flee Action, in which he attempts to escape from the current combat. The character calculates his chance to Flee in the following manner: (1 AC Pick + DR + modifiers). Any other character who is involved in the combat may now challenge the Fleeing character by calculating his chance to Catch: (1 AC Pick + DR + modifiers). If ANY single character's Catch calculation exceeds the Fleeing character's Flee calculation, the Fleeing character has FAILED, and must continue in the current combat.

If the Fleeing character's Flee calculation equals or exceeds ALL challenging character's Catch calculations, then he has successfully Fled the Combat. In this case, the Fleeing character cannot remain in the presence (visual range) of any of the remaining Combatants during the remainder of the Combat. Further, he may not become a Combatant in any combat for a period of time (to be determined by the scope of the game) from the time he Fled (he may neither attack nor be attacked, but may continue to perform non-combat-related actions in the game). The character who has Fled cannot be the target or initiator of any Surprise Actions during this time, and he cannot point a Weapon at or makes any threatening gestures at anyone during the time period, and may not interact IN ANY WAY with any of the Combatants he Fled from.

Special Note: Although in most cases any command given to an character via one of the Mental Skills must fall within the framework of the rules (i.e. a character cannot be commanded to attack if it is not his turn to do so in a combat), a special exception is made for the command to Flee, IF AND ONLY IF anyone who might stop the character from Fleeing immediately declares that he will NOT attempt to stop the character from Fleeing. Under this circumstance, a character can be commanded to immediately leave a combat and begin his Flee time.

Charge: Any Combatant may Charge to a new position on the battlefield as an Action, as long as there is currently no hostile Combatant within 5' of him (defined as any Combatant who is still ABLE to affect him with a Short Range Action and who states his hostility and therefore his objection to the character using a Charge). The result of the Charge must be determined in advance, and is determined in 5' increments (for the purposes of a Charge maneuver, actual distance traveled does NOT influence the result or the timing). When Charging to a new position, he will simply declare generally where he wants to end up, based on common sense placement of other Combatants. For example, he might say "I am closing to within 15 feet of Player A, which puts me 20 feet away from Player B" - if there is a dispute about actual range, it should be resolved by applying common sense to prior calculations, or in the case of an unresolved dispute, by random draw.

Once a character has established where he is Charging, any other Combatant whose VERY last Action (either in the current combat or outside of combat; for example, a Surprise attack) was a Long Range Action specifically directed AT the Charging character (group effects do not qualify) gets a "free" Action at Long Range, directed ONLY at this target (it cannot be a group effect). If a character chooses to use a free Action, and it is a second Long Range Attack in the same round, it will further halve his DR for subsequent calculations. Regardless of the actual Action, it is calculated normally as if the player had done it on his Turn, including loss of played cards.

A Charge maneuver counts as an Action, so the Charging character cannot take any other Action during that round of combat, unless special circumstances permit. Note that you are NOT allowed to use a Charge Maneuver if you are currently involved in a melee.

Mental Combat

This section of the CRS may be entirely skipped. You may decide to use the MIND stat purely to compare strength of wills among your characters. But if you decide to use Mental Combat in your game, then these rules will give you a basic framework for how to incorporate them in. Obviously, depending on the level of mysticism in your game, you might want to add additional Powers which will enable your characters to do more damage and/or have more control over each other.

A Mental Attack works much like a Physical Attack, with the following exceptions:

1) There is no differentiation between Short Range and Long Range.

2) The Offensive Mental calculation is: (1 AC Pick + MIND + modifiers), and the Defensive Mental calculation is: (1 AC Pick + MIND + modifiers). Although MIND is being used instead of OR and DR, the effect is the same - if the Offensive Mental calculation exceeds the Defensive Mental calculation, the target's LIFE is reduced by the difference.

3) A Mental Action cannot be taken against any opponent with a MIND Stat of 0, even if the 0 is temporary.

4) All Mental Actions may be used as Surprise Actions, according to the rules of Surprise Actions. However, Mental Surprise Actions are unique in that they can NEVER be predicted.

A character may use any Mental Action during his Action step, but the calculation is always the same - if the Offensive Mental calculation exceeds the Defensive Mental calculation then the Action is successful, otherwise it has failed.

Mental Actions require line of sight to the target, but there are some which can be directed at any character (usually a GM or some other third party is needed to play these). This type of Action is the exception to the Flee rules; if a character has a Mental Action which can affect any character regardless of his location, he may use it even against an character who has successfully Fled Combat.

Note that whenever a character is using a Mental Action, he has control of how much of his MIND Stat he is using, with a minimum of 1. MIND is not naturally degraded, so a decision to use all of his MIND does not affect the next Mental action he performs.

Here are some basic Mental Actions, which can be performed by normal human terrans in any setting. You can of course supplement these with more powerful Actions based on the setting of your game.

Suggestion. A character can use a Mental Action on a single target which, if successful, will allow the character to suggest to the target that he perform (or not perform) ONE particular game-related Action in the next ten minutes should not be executed. He may convey this concept through any form of communication which the target will understand (i.e. verbal, hand gestures, telepathy, etc.). If the Suggestion works, the target must either perform the specified Action to the best of his ability, or if the Suggestion was to NOT do something, he may choose to perform a different Action or no Action at all. In this case, read "different" as significantly changing the outcome (i.e. choosing a different target, not just using a knife instead of a sword to attack). Usable only once per round during combat, or once per minute outside of combat.

Intimidation. A character can use a Mental Action (at a -5 MIND penalty) on another character or group of characters which can stop them from performing any Action during their turn. A character might do this specifically to help another character escape, or even just to buy time. To use this Action, the character must state WHO he is attempting to Intimidate. If successful, any other characters which are affected by it must bypass their NEXT Action. In addition, they will NOT be allowed to attempt to stop a Fleeing character during this round of Combat. Each character must defend against the Intimidation individually.

Coercion. A character can use a Mental Action (at a -10 MIND penalty) on another character which, if successful, will allow the character to coerce the target into doing one (strictly defined) service for a period of ten minutes. He may convey this concept through any form of communication which the target will understand (i.e. verbal, hand gestures, telepathy, etc.). This service cannot be in any way directly harmful to the target (i.e. plunging a knife into his chest), but may be indirectly harmful (i.e. having the target provoke a more powerful foe into a combat). The command is given at the time of invocation of the Skill. The effects of the coercion will last for 10 minutes (outside of combat) or until the end of the combat. A target may NOT be re-coerced to perform the same type of action twice in one hour.

Integrating Additional Game Mechanics

The preceding chapters have given you enough of a framework to write a complete game without any further thought towards game mechanics. But of course, as the writer of the game, you can now decide what other resources you want your characters to have. For example, if you are writing a game of Cowboys and Indians, you may decide that the Cowboys will have guns and the Indians will have bows and arrows. How do you add these elements to the game?

As the writer of the Avatar System, I would direct you to look at the complete set of rules from which this CRS was derived. It will help you to shape the direction of the resources you want to supply to your players. But the following information is a definitive guide to integrating your own ideas into the framework of the CRS.

Items: Even the simplest Item must have a purpose. For example, would a Combatant who is holding a sword be able to inflict more damage than one who is using his fists? To reflect that, give him a card which has two basic pieces of information on it: "Sword" as the name of the Item, and "+5 OR" as its special ability. Now any time he uses the sword in Combat, he will add 5 to his OR - unless of course he loses the sword! Likewise, if one of your characters is wearing armor, he might gain +5 DR - unless he removes the armor and gives it to someone else. Make your Items as simple or as complex as you'd like, but be consistent. If a Pistol gives a +5 Offensive DR bonus, then a machine gun will probably give at least a +15. And you should specify whether a given Item will work at Short Range, Long Range or both.

Skills: You might decide that some of your characters have special Skills that they can use in Combat - for example, one might be very fast, and can always Flee a Combat successfully, or move freely on the battlefield without using a Charge Action. You might decide that one character has an affinity for swords, so a sword in HIS hand will give him a +15 OR bonus while the same sword in someone else's hand will only give a +5. Whatever Skills you want to put into place for your game should simply make use of the framework which is presented in the CRS - for example, there is no need to define a whole new attribute for a character who knows Martial Arts - just give him a bonus OR when he is not holding anything in his hands!

Powers: If your game has magic, or advanced technology, or mysticism, or superpowers, or even cartoon elements, you are probably going to want to define Powers for your characters. To do this, you tap the EM stat - this gives you a measure of how powerful each character is. For example, if you are using magic in your game, and you define a fire dart (which can hit a single target) and a fireball (which can hit multiple targets "harder"), then give numerical EM requirements for each: The fire dart might be 5 points and the fireball might be 10 - if a character has 20 EM, he might be able to cast 4 fire darts or 2 fireballs before he has to replenish his EM. Most Powers will have their own numerical calculations for damage as well. For example, magic usually ignores armor, and it is impossible to dodge a magically guided effect. So that fire dart might do (1 AC Pick + EM) to a single target, while the fireball might do (2 AC Picks + EM) to multiple targets. In this case, the caster might be able to put more than the minimum (5) points of EM into the fire dart to make it more powerful, but of course limiting the number of times he can cast.

The Double Exposure Combat Resolution System allows for an infinite number of variations. The stats are basic and were already designed for multiple genres. Your game might include a magic forcefield fending off a technological laser beam - this is all accounted for in this framework.

I hope that you find this CRS to be inspirational and effective for your game(s). Feel free to modify time periods as you see fit, and to add as many special resources as you'd like - you will find that the basic stats will stand up to even the most complex of situations.

An Example of Conflict Resolution

Here is an example of how the CRS works, so that you get an idea of the system in practice. Let's assume that three of your characters are in a bar - Fred, Mary and John. The setting is completely Terran, so they have no EM stat. Here are the stats that they have been given:

Fred: OR 8, DR 12, MIND 4, LIFE 20, IN 4, LB 1
Mary: OR 2, DR 6, MIND 12, LIFE 8, IN 3, LB 0
John: OR 6, DR 6, MIND 7, LIFE 10, IN 2, LB 2

Now, Fred and John get into an argument, and Fred declares that he is going to punch John. Combat begins immediately. Even though Mary is standing there, she is currently just an observer unless she specifically says she is entering the Combat as well. She does not.

Fred and John both pull Initiative - Fred pulls a 6 and John pulls a 3. Fred's Initiative calculation is $4 + 6 = 10$, and John's Initiative calculation is $2 + 3 = 5$. Fred goes first. Both Fred and John put the Initiative cards back in their AC Decks.

Fred declares that his Action will be punching John. He now draws a single card from his AC Deck. He draws an 8. He adds this to his OR, for a total of 16.

John now draws a single card from his AC Deck. He draws a 6. He adds this to his DR, for a total of 12. The punch hits by 4 points, and John now takes 4 points of damage. His LIFE total is now 6. If you're wondering why a punch can take a target down to almost half his LIFE, note that any conflict is "representative" of a series of punches and dodges. So this one punch represents a series of blows which knocked Fred down by 4 LIFE points. The 8 and the 6 are set aside from their respective AC Decks for the remainder of the round.

Now John gets to Act, and he decides to punch back. He draws a single card from his AC Deck, and it is a 10. He now draws a second card, and it is a 7. He adds both cards to his OR, for a total of 23.

Fred now draws a single card from his AC Deck. He draws a 9. He adds this to his DR, for a total of 21. John's punch hits - barely, by 2 points. So Fred is now wounded for 2 points. Both Combatants clean up and replace all cards to their AC Decks, and square off again. At this point, Mary says "Stop!" but they pay her no heed. So she declares that she is entering the Combat, which she does at the start of the next round.

All three characters pull Initiative - Fred pulls a 2, John pulls a 7 and Mary pulls a 4. Fred's Initiative calculation is 6, John's is 9 and Mary's is 7. So John will go first. All three replace the cards to their AC Decks.

John tries again to punch Fred. He draws a single card from his AC Deck, and it is a 10. He now draws a second card, and it is an Ace. His entire calculation is now turned to 0!

Fred does not need to draw for defense - the punch has automatically missed.

But before he can punch back and maybe finish John off, it is Mary's turn to act. And she declares that she is using a Suggestion on Fred - that he not hit John. She pulls a single card from her AC Deck. She draws an 8. She adds this to her MIND, for a total of 20.

Fred now draws a single card from AC Deck. He draws a 9. Fred adds this to his MIND, for a total of 13. The Suggestion is successful. Mary tells Fred (verbally) that if he does not stop fighting, she will continue to overwhelm him mentally until John does enough damage to knock him unconscious. Fred grudgingly agrees, and John agrees as well to end the Combat.

With all three Combatants agreeing to end the Combat, it ends immediately. All damage done will be healed in ten minutes. Note that if Mary had not interceded, Fred would have eventually knocked John unconscious!