

WITCHCRAFT

Mystery Codex FAQ

Q: I'm not real clear on the wording of the Beat Skin Power (see Mystery Codex, p. 166) in one respect: Can the Disciple transform into any of the acceptable animals, or only cockroaches. Basically, can a Disciple of the Flesh assume a variety of forms, or does he pick one and stick with it?

A: Disciples can assume any animal form, as long as it is some sort of vermin (dogs is the upper scale). Unlike the Vampyre Greater Shifting Power (see Mystery Codex, p. 103), the shape does not change the character's attributes.

Q: Let's say a character dies, goes to the Threshold and decides he needs to come back, be it as a Ghost, Relentless Dead, Vampyre or Phantasm. How should this be handled? Is it simpler to remake the character from scratch and just adhere to his pre-existing abilities as closely as possible? Or is there another method for converting an existing character into an Undead?

A: The character would gain one of the ghostly or undead character packages (depending on the circumstances). They would have to be paid for; since these are Qualities and not powers, the cost would be the same as during character creation. A way to defray those costs would be to eliminate some existing Social Qualities (assuming the character is declared dead), or to gain Drawbacks (mental Drawbacks, Adversaries and Secrets would all be appropriate).

Q: Page 86 states that a Phantasm cannot regain the Essence spent on an Incarnation until it is abandoned. Can a Phantasm regain the 15 Essence Points spent to extend the body's existence by one hour while still Incarnated?

A: No, the Phantasm cannot. As it says later on page 87, "since a Phantasm cannot regain the Essence spent in creating her body until she abandons it, sooner or later she must relinquish her physical existence." In other words, the Phantasm can continue to extend her body's existence as long as she has Essence to spend, but she cannot regain any of this Essence until she returns to her insubstantial form. Sooner or later, she will run out of Essence and must lose the Incarnation.

Q: The Breakfall combat move indicates that it decreases the multiplier of falling damage. Thus, it prevents damage from most Judo Throws and Trips. But neither of those combat moves have multipliers. How does that work?

A: Good question, we should have covered that. Falling damage has a multiplier equal to the number of yards (meters) fallen. That multiplier is affected by Breakfall Success Levels. For Judo Throws, Trips or any other applicable move that has a multiplier of 1, each Breakfall Success Level subtracts from the total damage caused.

Q: If someone is playing an older Phantasm PC and they take the Age Quality, does the extra Essence go to their Energy Essence or Vital Essence? Also, are Phantasms able to purchase levels of the Increased Essence Quality in addition to their option of spending 1 character point for 2 points of both Energy and Vital Essence?

A. The Age Quality bonus should be split 50-50 between the two Essence Pools. Phantasms (or any other Spirit Character Type) cannot take advantage of the Increased Essence Quality. Their special ability to buy 2 Energy and 2 Vital Essence for 1 character point entirely replaces that Quality. In theory, a

character could have normal levels of Extra Essence (which would be considered part of the character's base Essence Pool as a human, and then modified as per the rules in *Mystery Codex*, p. 63). Such a purchase during character generation would have to be justified, perhaps on the assumption the character was a Gifted with that extra essence before death, but then the character would also have to buy Gifted and at least one Gifted power in addition to the Essence. After character generation, extra Essence can only be gained through Evolution.

Q. Reading the rules about increasing skills in play, it looks like it's actually cheaper at a certain point to increase some of the powers than the skill associated with it (assuming I'm understanding the way the table on page 44 interacts with the note on page 45 works at all). For example, Seer Strength goes up linearly; if you bought Mindhands Strength from 4 to 5, it'd cost you 6 points. But the Art, being a skill, goes up progressively, would actually cost 9 to go from 4 to 5.

A. The Art levels follow the chart for Art, on p. 44. Just because it works as a skill does not mean you get charged twice. The box on p. 45 refers to mundane skills. This means that Metaphysics are more expensive than regular skills in the beginning, but cheaper when the regular skills reach higher levels.

Q. How exactly does the power Evolution work?

A. Supernatural beings do not remain the same over the course of Eternity. Like all other living things, they change, grow or decay. Spirits, Vampyres and certain other supernatural beings slowly gain power by absorbing Essence given to them or taken from other living things (but not ambient Essence, which is useful but not "nourishing"). Very old beings may increase their power tenfold over the course of centuries in this manner.

Draining Essence from living things for purposes of evolution is a painful or harrowing experience for the target. The "deeper" level of Essence is hoarded and slowly absorbed into the supernatural creature (it is considered "spent" as soon as it is gathered).

When acquiring Essence, a being must designate whether it is for evolution or not. If so, the victim recovers that Essence in a much slower manner. Normal humans regain such Essence at the rate of 1 point per week; those with Essence Channeling regain it at that level per week. For each 20 points of "evolution-designated" Essence that has been gathered by a spirit, the spirit's Vital and Energy Essence Pools increase by 1. For each 50 points of such Essence collected by a Vampyre, the creature's Essence Pool is increased by 1. Specifics on other beings will be covered by future *WitchCraft* supplements.

Q. Under the Storm Dragons, it says that they receive a bonus of +1 to two physical stats because of their intense training, but it may not exceed 6 (*Mystery Codex*, p. 24). Is this like the bonus to other characters in that it adds straight up, or is this just a bonus of +1 character point. In other words, if I spend 5 points on Strength and then add my +1 bonus to it, does it become a 6, or do I require 2 more character points to buy it up to a 6?

A. The bonus stacks up after the normal attribute points are used up, just as with Phantasms (*Mystery Codex*, p. 85), Vampyres (p. 97), etc. In other words, it is a whole level increase, not an additional character point for Attributes. In your example, the bonus would raise the attribute to 6. The only limitation is that the attribute cannot be raised above the racial maximum (6 for humans).