

dead<sup>inside</sup>

# Imago Deck

A Freebie Supplement for

Dead Inside:

The Roleplaying Game of  
Loss and Redemption



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# Imago Deck

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The *Imago Deck* is a collection of cards that can be used to enhance your gaming sessions, whether you're playing the *Dead Inside* RPG or another roleplaying game. This PDF contains two pages of rules and suggestions, along with ten pages of card text. The card pages break down this way:

- Four pages of the Imago Deck proper (Imagos, 1 Soul Point card, 2 Upshifts, and 2 Downshifts).
- One page of Damage Rank and Failure Rank cards (see below, *Diceless DI*).
- One page of "Character Sheet" cards.
- One page of Quality Cards.
- One page of Upshifts and Downshifts (see below, *Diceless DI*).
- One page of Soul Point cards.
- One page of Virtue & Vice cards.
- One page of card backs.

## PRINTING OPTIONS

Simply print out the pages with cards on heavy paper stock, cut along the gray lines, and shuffle them together. Alternately, the cards can be printed on pre-scored business card forms. Another option is to print them out on label sheets and stick them to index cards.

## How TO USE

There are four major ways to use the Imago Deck in a roleplaying game:

1. *Imago Deck Proper*: To allow the players to control or influence elements of the game that are normally outside the scope of what their PCs can effect.
2. *Diceless DI*: To replace dice in the central *DI* mechanics.
3. *Idea Mine*: To help spark GM creativity in coming up with Scenes and Virtue & Vice Checks.
4. *Handy Handouts*: Just a neat way to keep track of PC information.

### Imago Deck Proper

Players can use the cards in the Imago Deck to affect any character – or even elements of the setting – to make things easier, harder, more interesting, or more fun during a session. The Imago Deck allows players to take a share in the narrative power of the game... provided they have the right cards, can give a good rationalization for the card's use in that situation, and can convince the GM that the rationalization is cool.

## SHIFT OR FIAT?

NOTE - Before starting to use the Imago Deck, the GM should determine if he wants card-play to be on the *Shift* or *Fiat* level, and tell the players which they're using. *Shift* level simply means that if the card is played in a relevant fashion, it can provide an applicable Upshift or Downshift; if the card isn't relevant, it simply has no effect. *Fiat* level means that when the card is played in a relevant fashion, the stated effect just occurs.

Let's take an example to show the difference between the two. Say a PC has been caught parking in a handicapped space by a cop, and has gotten into an altercation. Luckily, the player has the *Father: Authority* card in his hand, and plays it to influence the argument with the police officer, saying "Listen, I have a *right* to be here!" If cards are being used at the Shift level, the card could provide an Upshift to whatever Quality the PC is using for the argument (if the GM accepts the play). If cards are being used at the Fiat level, the player could instantly win the argument: in the cop's eyes, he does have the Authority to park there (again, if the GM accepts the play).

Each player gets three cards at the beginning of a session. They may play them at any time, stating how the card effect is relevant. If the GM accepts the explanation and incorporates the idea (modifying it to fit the Scenario better, if necessary), the player gets to draw a new card. If the GM chooses not to incorporate the player's idea, the card is simply discarded, and the player does not draw a new one.

But how does this work in practice?

Relevance is what's important here: each card has an Effect listed under the controlling Imago's name. Depending upon how generous a GM wants to be with evaluating an Effect, the Imago Deck can be very powerful. For example, a player may attempt to play the *Family: Hidden Connections* card to "discover" a secret tunnel between the master bedroom and library of the mansion. Some GMs will feel that's a perfectly kosher use of the card, while other GMs will veto it, feeling that the intent is aimed at hidden connections between characters rather than locations. Do whatever is *most fun* for your group. For what it's worth, "loose interpretations" can make cards much more useful.

The basic Imago Deck consists of the first four card pages (35 Imago cards, 1 Soul Point, 2 Upshifts, and 2 Downshifts). Some GMs may want to add in the Virtue & Vice cards, additional Soul Points, more Shifts, etc. It's really up to how your group decides to use them.

## THE IMAGO CARDS

Imago	Effect
Anima/us	Cause Desire
Anima/us	Form Relationship
Anima/us	Break Relationship
Anima/us	Understand Relationship
Child	Innocence
Child	Salvation
Child	Pity
Child	Abandonment
Family	Hidden Connections
Family	Social Structure
Family	Place of Safety
Father	Belonging
Father	Authority
Father	Prohibition
Mother	Nurture
Mother	Support
Mother	Permission
Nemesis	Thwart
Nemesis	Reversal
Shadow	Survival
Shadow	Appetite
Shadow	Creation
Shadow	Play
Shadow	Curiosity
Syzygy	Know Desire
Syzygy	Weakness into Strength
Syzygy	Strength into Weakness
The Voice	Yes or No?
The Voice	What Must Be Done
Trickster	Weigh the Risks
Trickster	Follow the Rules
Trickster	Break the Rules
Wise Old	Wisdom
Wise Old	Answers
Wise Old	Questions

- At least two more copies of the Upshift/Downshift card page should be printed out. The Imago and Virtue & Vice cards can also be used at the GM's option, to break up the monotony of just shifts.
- Each player gets five cards at the start of the game; the GM also gets five.
- The players or GM can play up to two cards per turn, either as an action or a reaction, to temporarily change a relevant Quality Rank of any character or a relevant Difficulty Rank of any part of the setting. A Good [+2] climber could play an Upshift on himself to temporarily become an Expert [+4] Climber, and thus able to scale a Good [+2] wall. Or, he could play a Downshift on the Difficulty Rank of the wall, temporarily degrading it to Average [0], and thus below his climber Rank.
- Players draw new cards (sufficient to fill their hand to five) at the beginning of a new Scene.
- GMs must play (or discard) *all* of their cards before drawing new ones.
- Conflict situations are resolved by comparing Quality Ranks. Damage or Failure Ranks applied to an unsuccessful defender are equal to the difference between Ranks after being modified by cards. Thus:
  - *Attacker's Rank is lower than defender's Rank:* No Damage or Failure Ranks accrued.
  - *Attacker's Rank is equal to defender's Rank:* One Damage or Failure Rank accrued by attacker and defender.
  - *Attacker's Rank is one Rank higher than defender's Rank:* One Damage or Failure Rank accrued by defender.
  - *Attacker's Rank is two Ranks higher than defender's Rank:* Two Damage or Failure Ranks accrued by defender; and so forth.

### Idea Mine

If pressed for ideas on how to utilize Imagos or central conflicts for Scenes, inspiration is just three draws away. The GM should shuffle the Imago Deck and draw three cards, then try to explain how the three Effects interrelate. For example, *Trickster: Break the Rules*, *Wise Old: Answers*, and *Father: Prohibition* could spark the concept of a *Kobayashi Maru*-esque adventure where the only way to correctly find the solution to a problem is to “think outside the box.” For another GM, those three cards will probably inspire a different type of adventure – like a powerful authority figure coming down hard on a seditious rebel, a la Harlan Ellison's short story “Repent Harlequin,” said the Ticktockman.”

### Handy Handouts

As an alternative to a character sheet, the PC cards, Quality cards, and Soul Point cards can be used to provide a more tactile way to have a character's information right at hand. For example, instead of the GM saying “Add a Soul Point to your Pool,” he can give a Soul Point card directly to the player.

### Diceless DI

The Imago Deck can also be used to play *DI* without dice. A few quick rules modifications are needed:

- **Everything is a simple situation.** That means that a Good [+2] climber cannot normally climb a Good [+2] wall without help.
- **Cards are played at the Shift level.**



**Anima/us**

Cause Desire



**Anima/us**

Form Relationship



**Anima/us**

Break Relationship



**Anima/us**

Understand Relationship



**Child**

Innocence



**Child**

Salvation



**Child**

Pity



**Child**

Abandonment



**Family**

Hidden Connections



**Family**

Social Structure



**Family**  
Place of Safety



**Father**  
Belonging



**Father**  
Authority



**Father**  
Prohibition



**Mother**  
Nurture



**Mother**  
Support



**Mother**  
Permission



**Nemesis**  
Thwart



**Nemesis**  
Reversal



**Shadow**  
Survival



## **Shadow**

Appetite



## **Shadow**

Creation



## **Shadow**

Play



## **Shadow**

Curiosity



## **Syzygy**

Know Desire



## **Syzygy**

Strength into Weakness



## **Syzygy**

Weakness into Strength



## **The Voice**

Yes or No?



## **The Voice**

What Must Be Done



## **Trickster**

Weigh the Risks



**Trickster**  
Follow the Rules



**Trickster**  
Break the Rules



**Wise Old**  
Wisdom



**Wise Old**  
Answers



**Wise Old**  
Questions



**Soul Point**



**Upshift**



**Upshift**



**Downshift**



**Downshift**



**Damage  
Rank**



**Failure  
Rank**



**Damage  
Rank**



**Failure  
Rank**



**Damage  
Rank**



**Failure  
Rank**



**Damage  
Rank**



**Failure  
Rank**



**Damage  
Rank**



**Failure  
Rank**





**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Personality**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Personality**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Backstory**

**Virtue**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Vice**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Backstory**

**Virtue**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Vice**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Soul Loss**

**Discovery**



**Soul Loss**

**Discovery**



**Miscellany**



**Miscellany**



**Master [+6]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Master [+6]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Expert [+4]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Expert [+4]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Good [+2]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Good [+2]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Average [0]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Average [0]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Poor [-2]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Poor [-2]**

\_\_\_\_\_



**Upshift**



**Downshift**



**Upshift**



**Downshift**



**Upshift**



**Downshift**



**Upshift**



**Downshift**



**Upshift**



**Downshift**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Soul Point**



**Virtue**  
Integrity



**Virtue**  
Hope



**Virtue**  
Fortitude



**Virtue**  
Generosity



**Virtue**  
Courtesy



**Vice**  
Hypocrisy



**Vice**  
Despair



**Vice**  
Cowardice

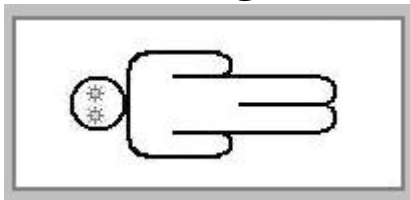


**Vice**  
Avarice



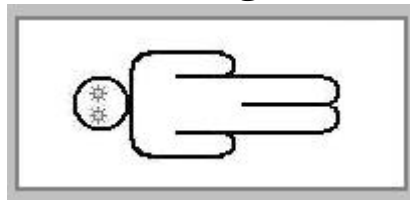
**Vice**  
Cruelty

Imago



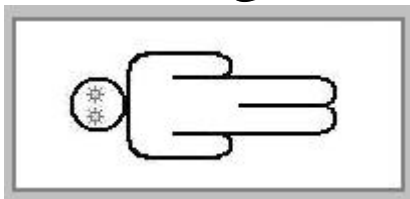
Deck

Imago



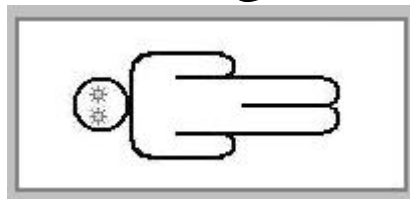
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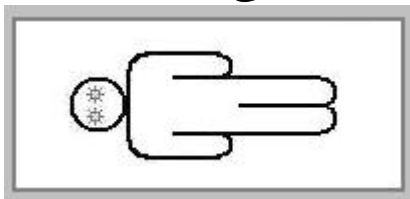
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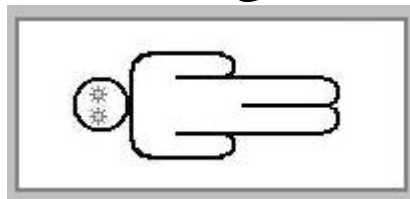
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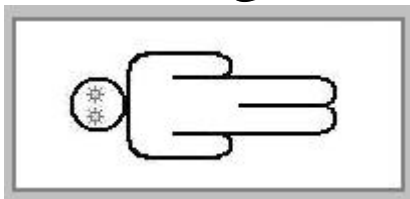
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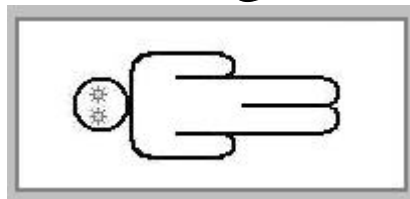
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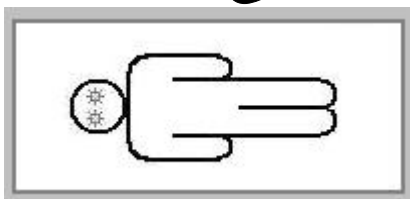
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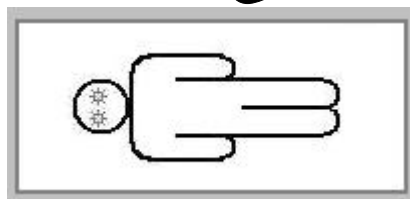
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Imago



Deck

Imago



Deck