

Weekly Wonders

Index of Insanity

New Madnesses

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PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE



*Necromancers
of the Northwest*

Credits

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Introduction

In many ways, the prospect of suffering from madness and insanity, of losing touch with reality, struggling for control of ourselves, is even more terrifying than the prospect of grievous physical injury. Madnesses were first introduced to Pathfinder in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide*, and were expanded upon in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Horror Adventures*. While these books provide a great framework for handling insanity in the game, there are a wide variety of mental illnesses, both real and from fantasy media, that have yet to be touched. This book expands the realm of madnesses with 10 new flavorful madnesses.

Recovery Bonuses

Madness is a harrowing thing to experience, and for many, it will be something they struggle with for the rest of their lives. For those who are able to work through their issues and resolve them, however, they can be better grounded and centered by the experience. Each of the madnesses in this book grants a small permanent bonus to those who experience and recover from them, as outlined in the madness's individual entry.

New Madnesses

The following madnesses are presented in alphabetical order.

AGORAPHOBIA

Type lesser madness; **Save** Will DC 16; **Onset** 1d8 days

EFFECT

See text.

Dormancy Effect None

DESCRIPTION

A character afflicted with agoraphobia becomes obsessed with a particular place, unable to bear leaving its presence, causing her to become trapped inside a building or similarly defined space, unable to ever join the wider world. Unlike many forms of madness, a character's ability to function and think is largely unaffected by her agoraphobia; instead, her inability to leave the place where she feels safe makes her a prisoner of her own mind, paralyzed by an irrational fear of the outside world. While agoraphobia typically affects people after some tragedy or other trauma, often taking hold of them in their own homes, this madness can also seize upon the device of obsession or interest, drawing an individual to a location to which they feel a strong connection, and, as the madness sets in, making her feel compelled to remain in that place for a variety of contrived reasons. For example, agoraphobia might strike those examining haunted manors or ancient ruins, drawing even cautious and rational people into their grip. While affected by this madness, the individual is drawn uncontrollably to a particular location (usually the place in which the madness was first encountered, though other locations are possible, as deemed appropriate by the GM). Once there, the afflicted character loses any desire to leave ever again. Her madness causes her to believe herself to be unable, or perhaps just unwilling, to leave the chosen location, requiring a successful Will save with a DC equal to this madness's DC to do so. Recovering from agoraphobia while within the location the character is bound to is impossible.

Sidebar: Blackouts

During a blackout, or similar episode, an important part of the maddening effects is that the character remembers and perceives none of the events while so affected. While it may increase the drama of such moments to excuse a player from the table during such incidents, or to have the GM seize control of their character, such actions can have unintended social consequences and may prevent some players from fully enjoying the game. It is recommended that players and GMs discuss how to handle such things when these effects are first encountered.

When a character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +2 bonus on saving throws made to resist spells and effects that would restrict her movement.

BLACKOUT RAGE

Type greater madness; **Save** Will DC 22; **Onset** 1 day

EFFECT

-4 penalty to Wisdom- and Intelligence-based checks

Dormancy Effect -4 on concentration checks

DESCRIPTION

A character afflicted by blackout rage is the victim of a mental break that causes her to lose all impulse control, being overcome with a blind, unstoppable rage and bloodlust. While most of the time her symptoms are outwardly unapparent, inwardly she finds it ever more difficult to concentrate, losing focus on the tasks in front of her as thoughts of overwhelming anger creep into her mind. Worse, however, are the episodes of blackout rage that occasionally overcome her in moments of stress. During these periods, an afflicted character loses all cognitive function, unable to control her actions or even perceive her surroundings. During this time, however, her body is not idle, instead driven by rage to lash out in anger and fear. Whenever an afflicted character enters a stressful situation such as combat, she must make a Will save against this madness's DC. If she succeeds, she may act normally until the next time she enters a stressful situation. If she fails, she flies into a blind rage; unable to control her actions, she attacks the source of stress with abandon for 1 minute. During this time, if the source of her stress is slain or destroyed, her anger is not be quieted, but instead lashes out at another creature or object, and the afflicted character must succeed on another Will save against the DC of this madness or attack this new target with reckless abandon. The new target is chosen by the GM. While attacking in this way, the afflicted character uses whatever means are available to her to sate her rage, attacking with a held weapon or casting her most powerful spells. Her exact actions may be out of her hands, as the rage blocks out her instinctual ability to think, possibly causing a wizard who had spells remaining to attack a dragon with his spellbook, for example. Regardless of what transpires during the course of this episode, the afflicted character cannot recall any details about what transpired during her blackout.

When an afflicted character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +2 competence bonus on saving throws against emotion effects.

CRAWLING PAIN

Type greater madness; **Save** Will DC 20; **Onset** 1d4 days

EFFECT

-4 penalty to Wisdom, and the afflicted character is sickened
Dormancy Effect None

DESCRIPTION

The afflicted character feels the crawling of insects under her skin, sharply biting and tearing their way through her flesh. She may occasionally see them swarming over everything in sight or crawling over her body in an inexhaustible wave of primal and alien hunger. This madness affects a character in episodes triggered by physical contact. Most of the time, the crawling sensation is minor, and though troubling, it is easily ignored, as the afflicted character feels a tiny form skitter across her leg or bite into a finger or toe. Whenever she is touched by another creature, including suffering damage from a natural attack or unarmed strike, or being targeted by a touch spell, as well as other normal contact, an episode is triggered and the afflicted character suffers the effects of this madness for 1 hour. During this time, if she is touched again, the episode becomes much worse, and, unable to deal with the rush of crawling pain exploding before her eyes, she becomes nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

When a character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent immunity to pain effects.

DARK OBSESSION

Type lesser madness; **Save** Will DC 16; **Onset** 1d8 days

EFFECT

-8 penalty to Charisma (minimum 1), -2 penalty on Will saves

Dormancy Effect None

DESCRIPTION

A character afflicted with a dark obsession has an overwhelming obsession with a single individual, and her need for the individual is such that she cannot function without him. The nature of her madness, however, also makes her cripplingly unable to function while in the presence of the object of her obsession, causing frustration, withdrawal, and even violent tendencies. During the onset period, when an afflicted character meets someone for the first time, she must make a Will save against the DC of this madness. If she fails, that person becomes the object of her obsession and no further saves need to be made during this time. If she meets no new characters or succeeds on all these saves during the onset period of this madness, the afflicted character becomes obsessed with the first living creature she encounters when the onset period ends, with no saving throw.

She longs to be near to the object of her obsession, and can't help but try to be in his presence as much as possible. So long as she is still in the onset period, the afflicted character feels a strong subconscious connection to the individual and is more likely to want to seek him out. When the madness fully sets in, this subconscious connection becomes an overpowering compulsion. The afflicted character must do her best to spend at least an hour in the company of the object of her desire every 24 hours. While in the presence of the object of her desire, she suffers a -2 penalty to her Wisdom score, and a further -2 penalty on Will saving throws. This penalty is doubled against spells and effects originating from the object of her desire. If the afflicted character goes 24 hours without spending at least an hour in the presence of the object of

her desire, she becomes a craven shell of her former self, becoming dark and withdrawn as she obsesses over the object of her desire. While in this wretched state, it is virtually impossible to relate to the afflicted character and frightening to stay in her presence, causing her to suffer a -8 penalty to her Charisma score until she re-enters the presence of the object of her desire. If the object of her desire is present while she is trying to recover from this madness, she suffers a -4 penalty on the saving throw to recover.

When an afflicted character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +1 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

DWARF GREED

Type greater madness; **Save** Will DC 20; **Onset** 1d4 months

EFFECT

-4 penalty to Wisdom and Charisma; see text
Dormancy Effect -2 Charisma

DESCRIPTION

Despite its name, this madness is not relegated to dwarves, and is in fact less common, though greatly feared, among their kind. This madness presents as an almost supernatural need and intense irrational desire and attachment to material wealth. Commonly, this presents as both a general greed, as well as an obsession with a particular object, or, in rare cases, collection of objects. This madness goes well beyond a mere desire for material wealth, acting more like an unshakable addiction. In addition to compromising an afflicted creature's judgment and altering her demeanor in unpalatable ways, her desire to acquire more wealth is itself a hindrance that makes life a challenge. Whenever an afflicted character has the opportunity to acquire more material wealth, whether by honest labor, or by thievery or even murder, she must take it. If forced to split treasure with her companions, she must also try to claim as large a portion as possible, even committing acts of violence or guile to get a little bit more. Additionally, each day that she does not acquire wealth equal to at least 10 gp per character level, she suffers 1 point of Wisdom and Charisma damage. Finally, each day an afflicted character must spend at least 30 minutes per character level gazing on and caressing some representation of her acquired wealth, whether a large gem, a chest of treasure, or even a vault of gold coins. Should this representation of her fortune be taken from her, she must spend this time actively trying to recover it instead.

When an afflicted character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +4 bonus on Appraise checks and Sense Motive checks.



FALSE POSSESSION

Type greater madness; **Save** Will DC 20; **Onset** 1d12 days

EFFECT

-8 penalty on Will saves, -10 penalty on concentration checks; must make concentration checks to cast spells with thought or emotion components

Dormancy Effect -2 penalty on concentration checks

DESCRIPTION

A character with this affliction believes herself to be the home of another entity, which speaks to her and has some influence over her actions. Meeting somewhere between a hallucination and a dissociated personality, this madness usually manifests in characters who have witnessed a possession or who were affected by a magical effect that controlled their mind for a long period. An afflicted character can't shake the feeling that there is a powerful presence within her that might take over at any time. The presence seems to speak with her, commanding her to do things she knows to be wrong or outside her code of ethics. These might be things that she secretly wishes to do, or which would make life easier for her, or they might be vile and dangerous, designed to inflict torment.

The exact nature of the affliction varies from individual to individual. In any case, while so afflicted, it is nearly impossible to concentrate, as when an afflicted character tries to gather her thoughts, the "possessing entity" grows much stronger. Whenever an afflicted character fail a concentration check by 10 or more while under the effects of this madness, she must make an additional saving throw against the DC of this madness, and keep track of any failures. If she fails 5 or more of these saving throws, she gains the dissociated

identity madness, as well as retaining this madness, with the disassociated identity being the possessing entity, which nearly always works against the character's best interests. If the individual is affected by a *protection from evil* or similar spell matching the alignment of the entity she believes to be possessing her, she does not suffer the ill effects of this madness so long as the effects persist.

A character that recovers from this madness gains a permanent +2 competence bonus on saving throws made to resist attempts to possess her.

INSOMNIA

Type lesser madness; **Save** Will DC 18; **Onset** 1 week

EFFECT

The character cannot get to sleep

Dormancy Effect None

DESCRIPTION

Insomnia prevents you from getting to sleep; while in some cases, this can be caused by some physical malady, in this instance the character's own mind prevents her from finding rest, as she is gripped by the thought that terrible things will surely befall her and those she cares about should she fall asleep, or perhaps even close her eyes. She is so concerned with remaining awake and alert that she finds it nearly impossible to rationalize sleep as being more important than being awake. In order to go to sleep willingly, an afflicted character must succeed on a Will save against the DC of this madness. If she fails, she cannot go to sleep, except through the intercession of some magical or supernatural ability that would cause her to do so.

When a character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +1 resistance bonus on saving throws against sleep effects.

MAGICAL ADDICTION

Type lesser madness; **Save** Will DC 18; **Onset** 1 day

EFFECT

-4 penalty on saving throws against spells, and may become sickened (see text)

Dormancy Effect -1 penalty on saves against spells

DESCRIPTION

An individual with a magical addiction needs magic to course through her like a junkie needs drugs. She begins to sweat and shake when she is not surrounded by magic. She needs the exhilaration of casting, craving the touch of the arcane and the blessing of the divine just to feel alive. Her willingness to open herself to the idealized force of magic makes her vulnerable to its potent touch. But worse, when denied that same touch, an afflicted character become broken down and wretched, sweating, off balance, and sick beyond imagining. Whenever an afflicted character goes an hour without either casting a spell or being the target of a spell, she becomes sickened until she either casts a spell or is the target of a spell. A character cannot recover from this madness while under the effects of spell or spell-like ability.

When a character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +1 competence bonus on saving throws against spells.

UNNATURAL LUSTS

Type lesser madness; **Save** Will DC 17; **Onset** 1d6 days

EFFECT

-2 penalty on Intelligence-, Wisdom-, and Charisma-based skill and ability checks.

Dormancy Effect None

DESCRIPTION

A character with this madness develops a romantic obsession with the alien, incompatible, and often dangerous. The exact nature of this compulsion varies from individual to individual, but nearly always is related in some way to the trauma that caused this madness in the first place. The subject might be a particular creature or creature type, such as aboleths or oozes, or it might be a non-living force, such as fire or stone, or could fall in some other category, like plants. When an afflicted character encounters the object of her lust, she must succeed on a Will save against the DC of this madness + the target's Charisma modifier (if applicable). If she fails, in addition to the normal effects of the madness, she becomes charmed by the target, as with the spell *charm person*. In addition to the normal effects of this charm, she must seek to have intimate contact with the subject at the earliest opportunity. What qualifies as intimate contact will vary from individual to individual, and might require a hug, a kiss, or some other action. After obtaining this contact, the charm is broken and the afflicted character cannot be charmed by the same creature or object in the way again. An individual cannot recover from this madness in the presence of one of the subjects of her unnatural lust.

When a character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +1 competence bonus on Will saves against charm effects.

WENDIGO SICKNESS

Type greater madness; **Save** Will DC 22; **Onset** 1d4 weeks

EFFECT

-8 penalty on Charisma-based skill checks, -4 penalty on Will saves, possible -2 penalty to all ability scores; see text
Dormancy Effect -2 Charisma

DESCRIPTION

An individual with this madness suffers from a hunger for human flesh that cannot be denied. This hunger begins slowly and grows to overwhelm the character. Often this madness is contracted after exposure to cannibalism, whether first-hand as a participant, or second-hand, as a direct witness to such an act. Whether the character was a willing participant, unaware of her involvement, or even a mere observer, she cannot help but to develop a fascination with devouring the flesh of intelligent humanoids, particularly members of her own race. This morbid curiosity turns to hunger, as fascination becomes fantasy, and every moment of the individual's life becomes a struggle against her own desire to give in and eat human flesh. She becomes consciously aware of the fact that doing so (or perhaps doing so again) will forever alter her, and even after the onset period, this madness does not take its full effects until the afflicted character consumes the flesh of an intelligent humanoid (though she still possesses this hunger and suffers a -2 penalty to Charisma until the madness is removed). After an afflicted character consumes humanoid flesh, her mind twists as she becomes lost in the desire to eat it again. No other food tastes right, and though it can sate her, she has no desire for it: even on the verge of starvation, her only thoughts are to eat humanoid flesh. She becomes a repellent monster, lost to hunger, during this period, but the effects are worse when she denies her hunger. Whenever she goes 24 hours without eating at least a pound of humanoid flesh, an afflicted character suffers a -2 penalty to all her ability scores. An individual cannot recover from this madness if she has consumed human flesh within the last week. If a character attempts to recover from this madness before she has consumed humanoid flesh, she gains a +4 bonus on Will saves to recover from the madness, but every time she fails the saving throw by 5 or more, she must make a new Will save against this madness's DC or consume the nearest humanoid flesh, possibly her own, at the earliest opportunity.

When a character recovers from this madness, she gains a permanent +1 resistance bonus on all Will saves and a permanent +4 resistance bonus on saving throws against ingested poisons, diseases, and drugs.

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Weekly Wonders

Maladies of the Mind

Madnesses, a new affliction introduced in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide*, and refined in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Horror Adventures*, provide a way for GMs to assault a character's sanity and self-control, in addition to the more physical threats that many adventurers face. There are many kinds of madness, however, and those books sampled only a few. This book presents 10 new madnesses to inflict upon player characters, including the following:

- **Blackout rage**, which drives characters to fits of uncontrollable violence that they do not recall.
- **Crawling pain**, a phantom sensation of crawling insects beneath the skin.
- **Dwarf greed**, an all-consuming lust for material wealth.
- **Insomnia**, driving characters to remain awake far beyond their body's limitations.
- **Wendigo sickness**, a powerful compulsion to consume the flesh of sentient creatures.
- ...and many more.