

Jedi Counseling 114

Contextual Healing

Gary M. Sarli

Welcome to the 114th installment of "Jedi Counseling," our regular column in which we answer your rules questions about the **Star Wars Miniatures Game** and the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game**. If you have a question, send it in through the link at the end of this column, and check back here for the official answer.



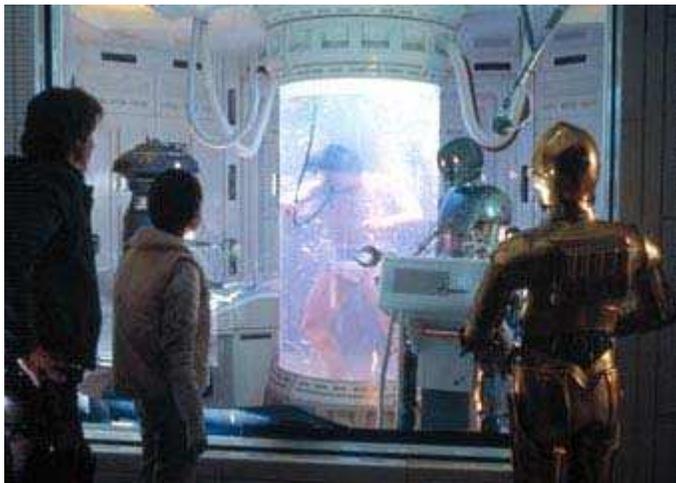
Star Wars Roleplaying Game Saga Edition

Q: My gaming group plays **D&D** 4th Edition in addition to *Saga Edition*, and one thing we've noticed is that **D&D** heroes are able to "get back in the fight" a little more easily than *Star Wars* heroes, thanks to having so many healing surges. Although I like the realism of heroes being unable to instantly bounce back from terrible injuries, it can interfere with the flow of the adventure if the heroes have to stop and rest.

On the flip side, if a group has two Force-using heroes and both have *vital transfer*, they can spring back to full strength in a matter of minutes. Because of this difference in between-encounter healing, I find that an adventure with perfect pacing for one group might be far too fast (or too slow) for another. Any suggestions?

A: Let's look at the current situation to see how it matches the needs of your game. First, any group of heroes can get back into the fight at least once during the day. With each getting the benefits of second wind and almost everyone having access to a medpac, they can get back into decent shape pretty quickly even in the middle of a fight. The problem comes up, then, if the heroes get into a series of fights (or a few big fights) that deal damage far beyond the amount that can be healed easily.

In that case, there are two other options in the existing rules: surgery and the Force. Surgery is pretty slow, requiring 1 hour normally (and still requiring 10 minutes with Surgical Expertise). On top of that, it can be risky if you don't have a very skilled surgeon, and you have to keep a surgery kit handy. Still, there's no limit to how often you can attempt it, so there's a good chance you'll get the heroes back into shape as long as you have a few hours between encounters.



If you don't have that much time (or if you don't have someone with a high Treat Injury modifier), the other existing option is to use a Force power, most often *vital transfer*. Not only can this be used in the middle of a fight, but you can recharge the power repeatedly simply by resting for 1 minute. The downside is that a single Force-user will run out of juice pretty fast, since he or she takes damage equal to half that healed (or use Force Points to avoid the damage, but those are limited). Don't forget that you can't use *vital transfer* on yourself, per the latest errata and clarifications.

If you have *two* such Force-users, though, you run into the other problem you mentioned. Since they heal damage faster than they take it, they can heal the entire group and each other if they have a few minutes to rest.

If any of this doesn't work for your preferred gaming style, I can offer you a few suggestions. However -- and I can't emphasize this enough -- **don't make any changes unless you, as the GM, have run into trouble with**

the existing rules. Be careful and conservative in introducing any or all of the following ideas, adding them on a trial basis (at most one or two at a time) to see how they feel for your game and your group's shared image of *Star Wars*. If anything doesn't fit right, don't hesitate to change it back!

Now, on to the suggestions: First, you might consider using the following optional rule, which also appears in [The Gem of Alderaan](#), the eighth **Dawn of Defiance** adventure. It bridges the gap between first aid (quick, but only usable once per day) and surgery (slow but usable repeatedly), providing a way to benefit from medpacs more than once per day, albeit with some serious risks. Your heroes might want to acquire some FastFlesh medpacs (page 54, *Threats of the Galaxy*) if they plan to use this option regularly:

Optional Rule: Old Wounds

The following is a new use of the Treat Injury skill.

Critical Care (Trained Only; requires a medpac and surgery kit): You can attempt to use multiple medpacs on a creature in a 24-hour period. This requires one minute, and it expends the contents of one medpac. If you succeed on a DC 20 Treat Injury check, the creature regains a number of hit points equal to its character level, plus 1 hit point for every point by which your check result exceeds the DC. You take a –5 penalty to your Treat Injury check for every previous attempt at critical care in the last 24 hours, even if that attempt was unsuccessful.

If you fail the Treat Injury check, the creature overdoses on the medicines in the medpac, causing it to take damage equal to its damage threshold. If this would reduce the creature to 0 hit points, it dies unless it can spend a Force Point to save itself.

You can attempt to perform critical care on yourself, but you take a –5 penalty on your Treat Injury check.

Second, you could make second winds available more often. One possibility is to import something like the healing surges used in **D&D** 4th edition, giving characters access to more than one second wind. The following variant is scaled back quite a bit from its **D&D** counterpart to better match the flavor of *Star Wars*:

Variant Rule: Multiple Second Winds

Instead of having one second wind per day, every heroic character can catch a second wind a number of times per day equal to 1 + [class bonus to Fortitude Defense] + [Constitution modifier], with a minimum of 1. Any ability that would add an extra second wind (such as the Extra Second Wind feat or the Tough as Nails talent) instead adds a number of second winds equal to this base number. As always, you can catch a second wind no more than once in a single encounter.

The above variant rule can be used together with or separately from the following optional rule, which makes second wind available more often, but at a significant cost:

Optional Rule: The Edge of Exhaustion

If you have already used your second wind(s) for the day, you can catch another second wind by voluntarily moving –1 persistent step down the condition track. The persistent condition remains until you've had surgery performed on you or until you get eight consecutive, uninterrupted hours of rest.

Finally, you might scale back the benefits of *vital transfer* so that groups with multiple Force-users aren't quite so far ahead of the rest. (This is particularly useful if you implement either of the second wind rules above.) You might want to use either or both of the following variant rules:

Variant Rule: Vital Sacrifice

A character that uses the *vital transfer* power to heal another character cannot benefit from the use of *vital transfer* in the same 24-hour period.

Variant Rule: Vital Limits

A character can benefit from *vital transfer* only once in a 24-hour period, but you can use a Force Point to overcome this restriction when you activate *vital transfer*. (Since you can spend only one Force Point per round, you cannot also spend a Force Point to avoid taking damage from the use of *vital transfer*.)

If you use one or more of these rules, the heroes will be a lot more resilient, bouncing back quickly between

fighters. Don't be afraid to increase the tempo of the adventure to keep up, but ease into it over a few sessions as you get a feel for the right pacing.

Q: Does the Equilibrium talent move you to the top of the condition track, or does it remove persistent conditions (such as from poison, disease, or serious injury)?

A: Equilibrium does both of these, removing all persistent conditions *and* moving you to the top of the condition track.

Q: Condition track penalties reduce all your defense scores. Do they also reduce your damage threshold, since it is derived from your Fortitude Defense?

A: Yes. Although the effect is indirect, any modifiers that change your Fortitude Defense also change your damage threshold by an equal amount because its underlying "starting value" has changed.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: Can Overwhelming Force allow a non-targeted attack, such as an attack of opportunity or Lightsaber Sweep, to be made against a character with Diplomat? For example, if a Caamasi Noble moves out of a square adjacent to Lord Vader, could Vader activate Overwhelming Force to make an attack of opportunity against it?

A: Yes. When a character's Diplomat ability is active (that is, when a non-Diplomat character is in line of sight), it stops an enemy from doing two different things: That character cannot be targeted, and that character cannot be attacked. When a character activates Overwhelming Force, "its attacks (or damage from its attacks) cannot be prevented or redirected this turn." That sidesteps the "no attacks" part of the Diplomat ability, but not the "no targeting" part.



However, attacks of opportunity "do not use the targeting rules," according to the glossary. Therefore, the "no targeting" aspect never comes into play, so Overwhelming Force will allow an attack of opportunity against a character with Diplomat.

The same is true of any other non-targeted attack, such as Lightsaber Sweep. (Such attacks would normally be prevented, of course, but Overwhelming Force sidesteps that restriction.)

Q: Wouldn't that open up an awful lot of rules to being overridden by Overwhelming Force? For example, Flight prevents attacks of opportunity, but wouldn't Overwhelming Force be able to ignore this restriction that prevents its attack from occurring? The same goes for Force Leap, which also prevents attacks of opportunity.

A: No and no. I can see how it might be confusing, but there are subtle differences at work here because neither of these abilities "prevent" the attack itself. Instead, they essentially redefine the preconditions under which an attack of opportunity can occur rather than preventing the attack itself.

A character with Flight "ignores enemy characters . . . when moving." An attack of opportunity is provoked if "an enemy moves out of a square adjacent to a character." Since the moving character ignores enemies while

moving, this condition is never fulfilled and the attack of opportunity is never provoked. Thus, the attack isn't "prevented" so much as it was never eligible to occur in the first place. (The clause at the end of the attack of opportunity glossary entry is simply pointing out this effect.)

Force Leap has the same effect even though it phrases it a bit differently, specifically pointing out that the character can move through enemies and "does not provoke attacks of opportunity." This produces the same result as a character that can "ignore enemy characters when moving," as in the case of Flight. (The definition of Flight doesn't use the "provoke" phrasing, but the FAQ does: "Because [characters with Flight] ignore enemy characters while moving, they do not provoke attacks of opportunity.")

If the distinction between preventing an attack and an attack never being possible is still unclear, consider this: Does Melee Attack "prevent" that character's attacks against nonadjacent enemies? No! The enemy being adjacent is a *prerequisite* for making such an attack, so attacks against nonadjacent enemies simply aren't possible to begin with. As such, Overwhelming Force won't sidestep the restrictions of Melee Attack.

Taking the analogy a step further, does the lack of line of sight "prevent" an attack against an enemy? Again, no: Line of sight is a prerequisite for making an attack in the first place, so Overwhelming Force won't allow you to bypass this requirement.

Q: All right, but now that definition of Flight is giving me second thoughts about other abilities. If a character with Flight ignores enemies when moving, how would Strafe Attack be possible? Wouldn't each enemy be treated as if it didn't exist while the character with Strafe Attack moved? How can you attack an enemy that doesn't "exist"?

A: Good question, but no: Strafe Attack (and any similar ability) continues to work normally. In the case of Strafe Attack, the ability's definition specifically describes who the character with Flight attacks and when, so the rule text overrides the general rules of Flight and makes the question moot.

Even if this were not the case, the "ignores enemy characters" clause comes into play only "when moving," the specific moment that the character is moving from one square to another. When not actually moving from square to square, the Flight ability doesn't apply. Given this, consider the phrasing of Strafe Attack: "Roll each attack *just before* this character enters that enemy's space." It occurs just before movement takes place, so Flight isn't actually having an effect in that moment.

The same would apply if a character with Galloping Attack somehow acquires Flight (such as by use of the Tow Cable ability). Since it only ignores enemies in the moment it moves from square to square, the character with Galloping Attack can still identify adjacent enemies as it occupies each square, attacking them accordingly.

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About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance editor, developer, and designer whose credits include the *Saga Edition* core rulebook, *Clone Wars Campaign Guide*, *Scum & Villainy*, and the *Dawn of Defiance* adventure path. When not making games, he operates his store, GMSarli Games (a shop specializing in nonrandom miniatures packs designed for the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game** and **Dungeons & Dragons**).

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