

What you need to play...

- 3 to 6 players (4 or 5 works best)
- 4 White, 4 Black and 4 Red Tokens per player
- A miniature or figurine for each player (and one for the pilgrim)
- Plenty of Trait Cards
- The Mandala of all Things
- A Magic Eight Ball
- Pencils and scrap paper to keep track of stories.

The Issues and Bonds of Samsara

Love: To be bound to someone by emotional bonds
 Lust: To desire someone or something above all others
 Fear: To have a flight response from someone or something
 Hate: To have a fight response toward someone or something
 Anger: To have lessened control over ones emotions or desires
 Greed: To desire the possession of all things

All pilgrims arrive at the cave with one of these issues in their lives. They come seeking the wisdom of the Bodhisattvas to purge the issue, and thus gain a step closer to becoming one with their Buddha nature.

Set Up

Each Player is given a folded rule sheet, a blank trait card, a figurine and nine tokens (three white, three black and three red). In the middle of them all is a board representing the mandala of all things, the magic eight ball, a figurine representing the pilgrim, a pile of pilgrim types, a pile of trait cards, and an additional number of tokens of each colour equal to the number of players.

Each player fills in three of the trait cards with a character quirk and issue each; one of these is kept and the remainder form a separate pile at the centre of the table. Each player then places their figurine on the blue ring of the board to represent their current state of mind (this will change during play). If two players want the same location, there is nothing to stop this.

A random player takes on the role of the auspicious bodhisattva.

Play Begins

Helping a pilgrim requires three steps.

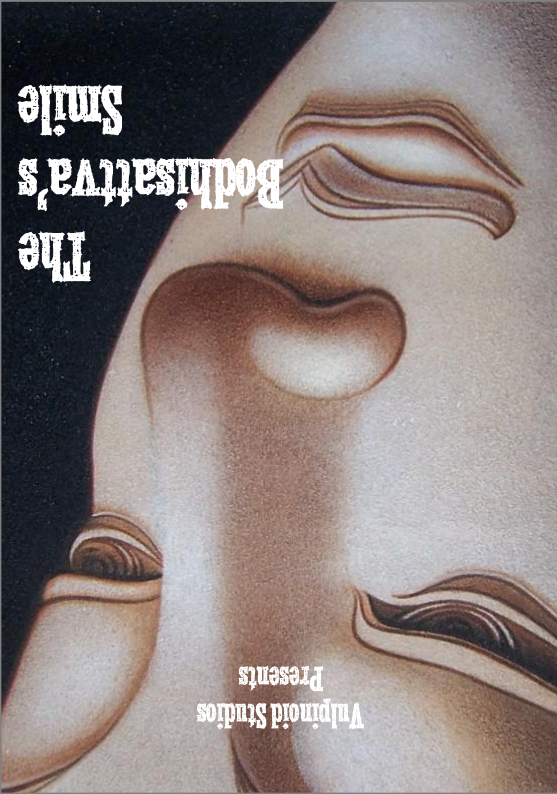
1. Hearing the pilgrim's story

- A single card is revealed to set the tone for the Pilgrim's story. This card describes the appearance of a mannerism of the Pilgrim. The pilgrim is placed on the red ring of the board (as defined by their card). The Bodhisattvas have a few moments to ponder this.
 - One by one (starting with the auspicious Bodhisattva and proceeding clockwise), the Circle asks the pilgrim to relate their story.
 - Each Bodhisattva may ask a single question with a "yes/no" answer to clarify the events of the story. The magic eight ball is consulted to determine the pilgrim's initial answer.
 - The Other Bodhisattvas may spend their tokens to change the pilgrim's answers. If they spend a white token, this is considered an "And"; in this case, they may add something positive to the pilgrim's answer. If they spend a black token, this is considered a "But"; in this case, they may add something negative to the answer. Any tokens used by players are placed in the centre of the table. The finally modified answer becomes an undeniable truth in this pilgrim's story.
 - The next Bodhisattva in the circle asks a question.
 - Once each Bodhisattva has had a question answered, the circle have time to ponder the nature of the pilgrim's story. If more white tokens have been used to modify the pilgrim's story,

move the pilgrim a step closer to the centre of all things. If more black tokens have been used, move the pilgrim a step away from the centre.

2. Understanding the pilgrim's real problem

- Each player may bid for the right to mentor the pilgrim through their problems. To do this, each player holds out a closed hand containing a number of tokens. The player holding the most tokens takes on the role of the Enlightened Bodhisattva, while the player holding the second highest number of tokens takes on the role of the Pilgrim. If there is a tie, the Bodhisattva who is closest to the pilgrim on the board wins (the auspicious Bodhisattva chooses who takes what role if there is still a tie).
 - The player taking on the role of the Pilgrim draws a pair of trait cards to explain the problems in the pilgrim's life and the quirks they manifest. The player should not reveal their pilgrim's problems, those are for the Enlightened Bodhisattva to determine. The Enlightened Bodhisattva and the Pilgrim try to work through the problem; while this occurs the other players portray the evils of the world, they work toward thwarting the pilgrim's release from their problems.
 - Overcoming the pilgrim's problem requires the Enlightened Bodhisattva to ask the pilgrim a series of questions. The bodhisattva holds a closed fist with one of their tokens in it, as they ask the pilgrim a question about the past. The pilgrim holds a closed fist as they answer the question. Any other player may hold a token in a closed fist (but they neither ask nor answer questions at this stage).



Vulpinoid Studios
Presents

The
Bodhisattvas
Smile

This game can be played as a simple series of individual tales about individuals seeking enlightenment, but it can be a complete world building experience as well. Places described in one pilgrim's tale can be expanded with the descriptions of another, events that seemed important in one pilgrim's story might occur as cursory incidents in the next pilgrim's quest. As an incentive to build up the world this way, the Auspicious Bodhisattva might award another player a random token from the centre of the table if they feel the continuity of the outside world was been maintained (this may be done once per pilgrim and should be awarded to the player who created the best piece of worldbuilding).

question: "Have I avoided a Parajika offence?"; A positive response from the ball allows them to retain their position on the mandala; a negative response allows the player on the right to move the bodhisattva's piece by one space left, right, or outward in the direction of the pilgrim's last place on the mandala; a non-committal answer allows the player to move their bodhisattva's piece by one space left, right, or outward in the direction of the pilgrim's last place on the mandala. c. Once the pilgrim has completed their visit with the Bodhisattvas, any tokens at the centre of the table are shuffled together and randomly distributed equally among the Bodhisattvas and the Pilgrim write a new trait card each and shuffle them into the pile. The next pilgrim arrives, and the next player to the left takes on the role of the Auspicious Bodhisattva.

pilgrim's movement in this fashion, move clockwise around the group. Completely resolve one interruption before moving to the next. f. Once all interruptions have resolved, compare tokens again, then move the pilgrim. g. The Pilgrim overcomes their issue if they reach the centre of the mandala; they attempt to gain enlightenment if they are forced off the edge of the board, or if they run out of tokens before the centre is reached. As long as the pilgrim is not in one of these situations and there are still tokens available, the Enlightened Bodhisattva continues in their quest to guide the pilgrim to enlightenment. h. Once all interruptions have resolved, compare tokens again, then move the pilgrim. i. The pilgrim reaches the centre of all things, their player consults the magic eight ball with a single question: "Do I achieve nirvana?" On a positive answer, Nirvana is reached and the pilgrim leaves the game; on a negative answer, the pilgrim returns to the world. on a non-committal answer, the pilgrim may spend a remaining token (if they have any) to gain one more piece of advice from the Enlightened Bodhisattva and may consult the eight ball again. If the pilgrim achieved Nirvana, the Enlightened Bodhisattva may move their piece a single space in any direction on the mandala of all things (they may even choose to gain enlightenment at the centre and leave the game). j. If the pilgrim did not reach the center of all things, they go back into the world. The Enlightened Bodhisattva has an existential crisis. They must consult the magic eight ball with the

3. Resolving the pilgrim's problem

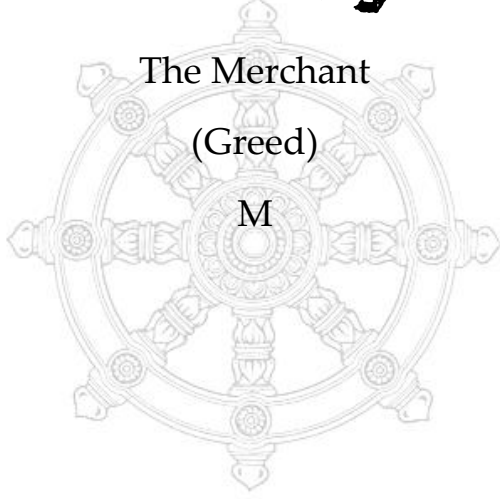
All pilgrims have two trait cards describing a personality quirk and an issue in their lives. Bodhisattvas are more enlightened and this makes them more disconnected from the bonds of samsara, they start play with only a single quirk. If the pilgrim adds a sentence to the pilgrim's story, if the Enlightened Bodhisattva receives the new token, they may stand firm in their ideals by instantly replacing their token with a token from their pool matching the original colour, or the offering player transforms the advice in some way with new thoughts and perspectives. If more than one player wants to interrupt the

Lu Fuling

The Merchant

(Greed)

M



Keeton

The Visitor from Afar

(Fear)

M

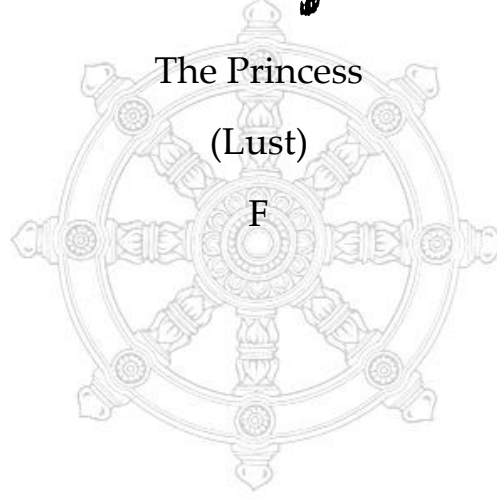


Wei Ji

The Princess

(Lust)

F

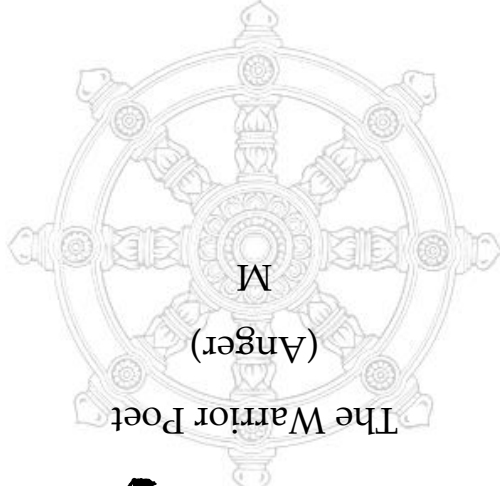
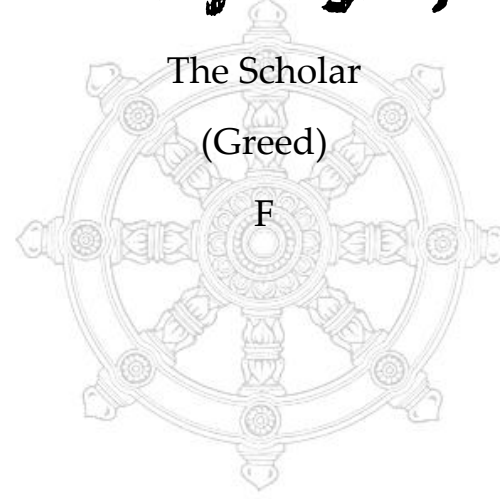


Ban Jiangnu,

The Scholar

(Greed)

F

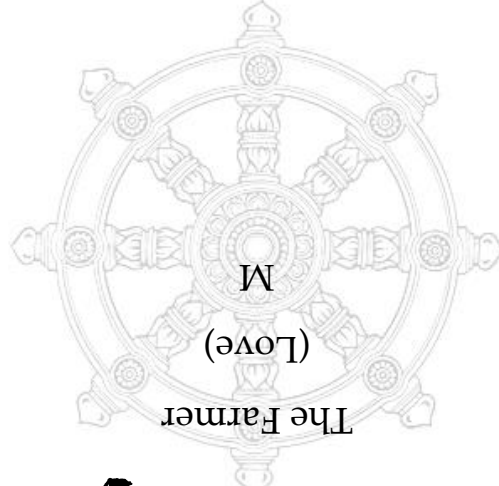


M

(Anger)

The Warrior Poet

Guo Kang

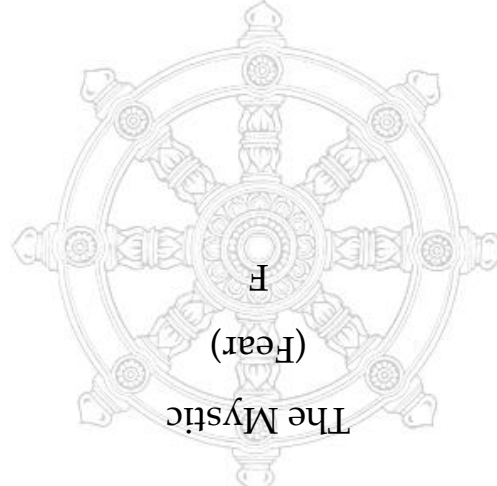


M

(Love)

The Farmer

Chen Sheng



F

(Fear)

The Mystic

Dou Huo



M

(Hate)

The Military General

Shang Jizi

Fa Tian

The Craftsman

(Love)

M

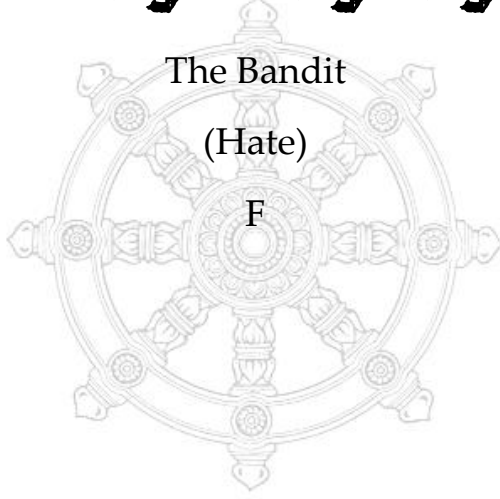


Wang Shengtong

The Bandit

(Hate)

F

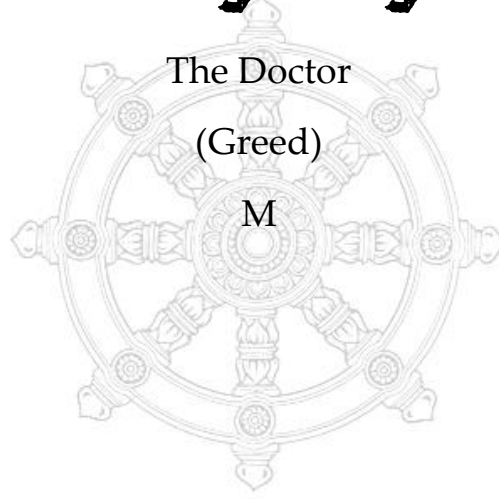


Meng Yang

The Doctor

(Greed)

M

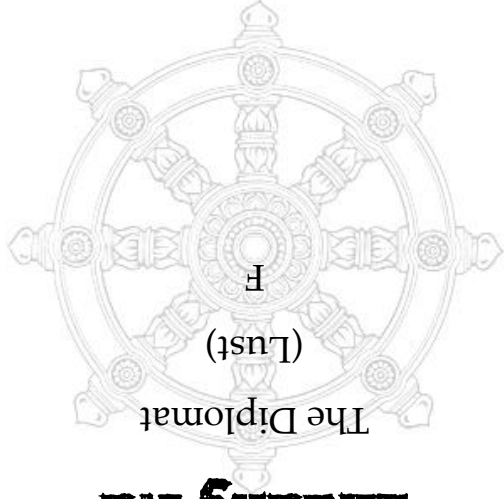
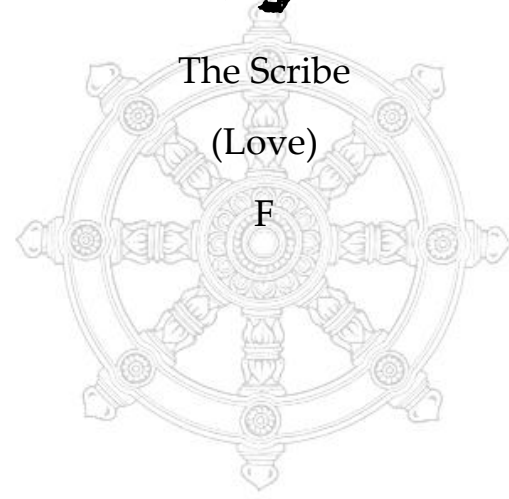


Geng Ai

The Scribe

(Love)

F



F

(Lust)

The Diplomat

Zhuang Na



F

(Fear)

The Fisher

Xing Cui



F

(Anger)

The Cook

Shen Chan



F

(Anger)

The Revolutionary

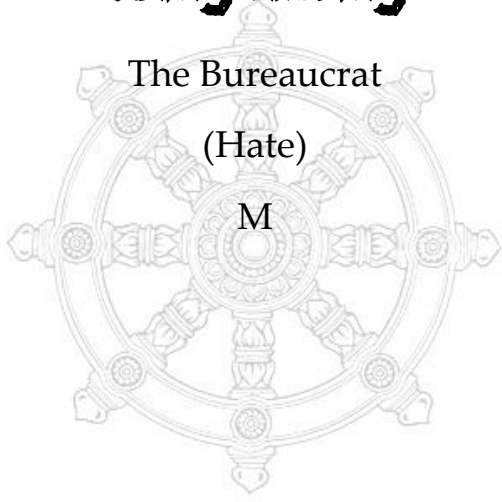
Que Hong

Sang Meng

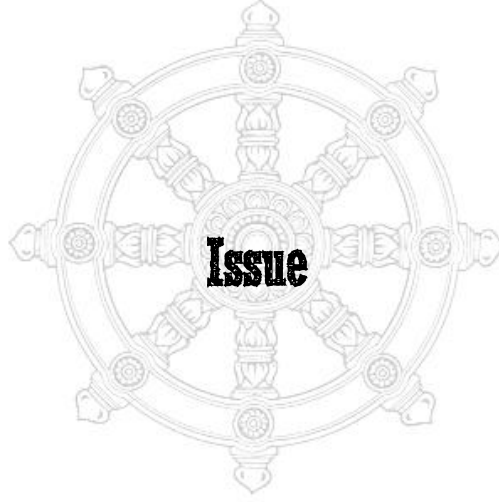
The Bureaucrat

(Hate)

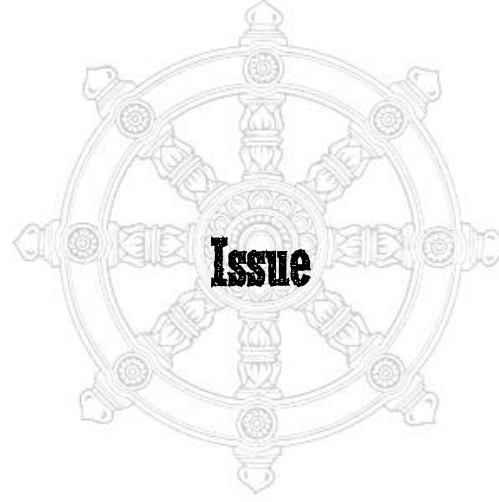
M



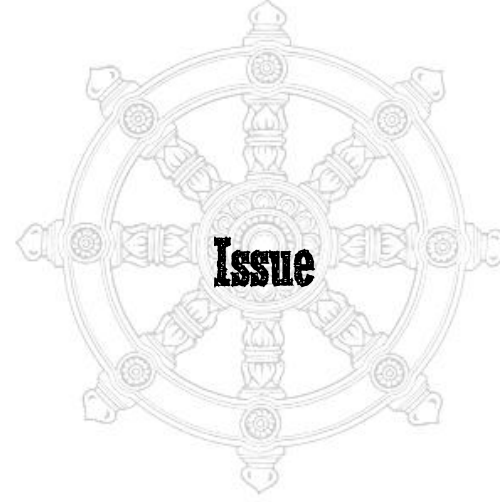
Trait



Trait

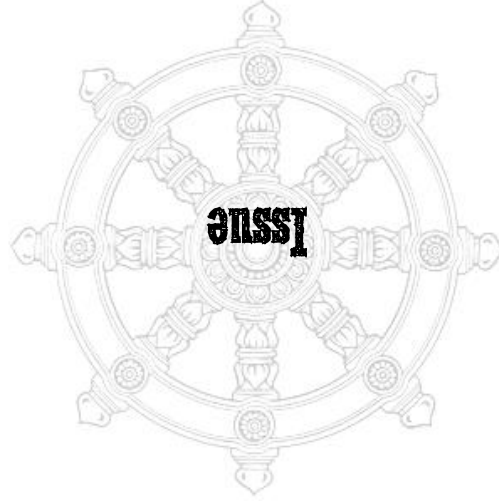


Trait



Nie Hui

Issue



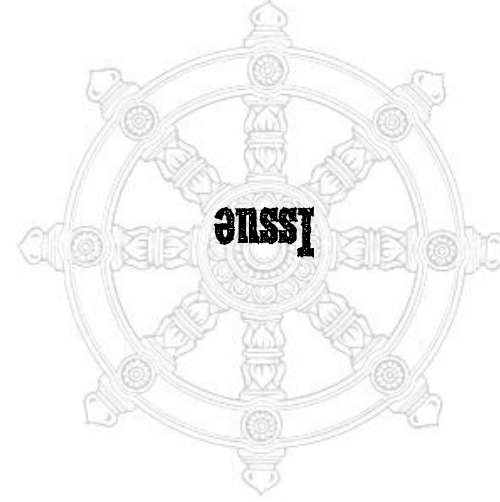
Trait

Issue



Trait

Issue



Trait