A CHARACTER ENGINE FOR FIASCO

Some people are just trouble, all their lives. –Trouble Quote from Pop Culture

A Game add-on by Good Idea Games

Version 1.0 Beta

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ELEVATOR PITCH

SOAPS! is an add-on for FIASCO that allows characters to return to future FIASCO games while retaining important details such as their Needs, Relationships, Locations, Accomplishments and Regrets.

As few as two players can use play SOAPS! to engage in rich multi-character role-play. Rather than playing one character for the full game, in each scene the Director assigns characters from the Stable.

SOAPS! drives character development by allowing players to add experiences and change traits on their character sheet, permanently recording each character's perceived relationships and needs. The system rewards the perpetuation of drama between characters, giving the game it's "soap-opera" feel.

SOAPS! characters are played by different people every scene, which encourages players to take dramatic risks they might otherwise shy away from.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

A FIASCO Playset.

A printable SOAPS! character sheet for each character in the story.

A pad of sticky-notes.

Bold Pens. You can't erase history.

HOW TO PLAY

SOAPS! Starts out just like FIASCO normally does. Be sure to pick a FIASO playset that interests you, because you and your friends are going to return to those ill-fated people several times. Then roll your dice, and take turns defining the characters and conflicts in the world. Players should use the normal set-up process described in FIASCO, and refrain from writing on the character sheets until the set-up is complete.

Once everyone is satisfied with the set-up, you can start making characters. If you have existing characters in this playset, check to see if any of them can fit into the roles and relationships described. Otherwise, new characters should be created.

Use your SOAPS! character sheet to record each character's traits. Traits are recorded in pen onto sticky notes, and affixed to the sheet. Returning characters may have existing traits changed at this point, or more sticky notes added to their sheet to describe new traits.

These characters are then placed in the Stable, a small pool of characters relevant to the story being told. Not all characters from the playset will be in every Stable.

FIASCO then plays as normal. A Director is chosen, and they cast the first scene, describing the location, setting up the conflict and assigning characters to players around the table. Characters that are not in the Stable can be used as supporting roles if appropriate. Supporting characters may also develop after the scene, if appropriate.

After each scene, players may develop their characters by adding or changing a single sticky note on their character sheet.

Like FIASCO, SOAPS! does not use dice or hit points to keep characters safe. If a character is killed during the course of a story, they will die. A group is free to decide themselves what that means, whether dead characters are allowed to return, and if character development is still possible for them.

CREATING A CHARACTER

Pop-culture quote

Once the Set-Up is complete, players write down the details of the story onto sticky notes and affix them to the appropriate boxes on their character sheets. *If an existing character is returning, the set-up may change some of their existing traits.*

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are handled exactly as they are in vanilla FIASCO. In SOAPS! each partner in the relationship gets a sticky that names the other, and provides a description of the relationship as perceived by that character. This goes in the **Relationships box** on the character sheet.

NEEDS

In SOAPS! each character with a need (as determined in the Set-up) gets a sticky note describing that need placed in their **Needs box**. As the game plays out, Needs may change and new ones can be introduced. Please note, Needs are different from goals. A Need is a compulsion that drives a character's every scene. A goal is just something that the character wants to accomplish. Goals belong in the Notes section.

OBJECTS

If a character is in possession of an important object, write the label "OBJECT" on a sticky, describe it, and affix it to the **Notes box** on the character sheet.

LOCATIONS

Ties to a location are also recorded in the **Notes box** of the character sheet. Write the label "LOCATION" on a sticky, and describe the character's relationship with the site. These can change, and may or may not persist between games.

REGRETS

Regrets are mistakes that characters have a hard time dealing with. New characters *may* have one regret. Write it down on a sticky, and affix it to the **Regrets box** on their sheet. This trait may change during the course of the games as characters face (and overcome) their regrets, and earn new ones.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Accomplishments are the hardest thing to come by in SOAPS! You can only earn an Accomplishment when a Need is met. When a Need is met, the sticky note is moved to the **Accomplishments box** on the character sheet. It will remain there unless it is somehow undone.

REPUTATIONS AND RUMORS

Characters may start the game with a reputation. This is a brief description of how other characters see them. Other players are allowed to change your reputation by spreading rumors. These details are just guidelines for play, and may not be relevant to the characters interacting in a scene.

APPEARANCE

This describes how the character looks and dresses. New sticky notes can be added to the **Appearance box** between scenes.

NOTES

The Notes Box fills in all the other information about your character that is worth remembering, but not a defined trait listed above. This can include snippets of back story, character motivation for the current story, and goals to accomplish. Notes should be labeled as appropriate, to help players sort and organize them. Some example labels include: Goal, Backstory, Object, Location.

DEVELOPING CHARACTER

Pop-culture quote about pain

Change is gradual. As characters in SOAPS! are introduced to new games and players, the only thing that can be known for sure is what is written on a character's sticky notes. These are the permanent log of the important experiences that shaped who that character is.

At the end of every scene, players may make the following changes to the character(s) they played:

An existing sticky note may be changed based on the events that just took place.

OR

A new sticky note may be added to define a new Need, Relationship, Regret, Appearance or a Note of any sort to further define the character.

OR

A new sticky note may be added to the Rumors box on another character.

AND

If a character fulfills a need, the sticky may be *moved* to the **Accomplishments box.** If a character permanently fails to meet their Need or fails to accomplish an important goal, the sticky may be *moved* to the Accomplishments or Regrets box.

At the end of a story, the following changes happen to each character that was part of the story:

If a Need is unfulfilled, it is moved to the **Regrets box** on the character sheet. It is no longer a compulsion for that character, unless a future set-up brings it back.

Objects retained will no longer be the subject of conflict unless the set-up brings them back into the spotlight. Cross out the label "Object," but the sticky should stay in the **Notes box**.

If a location changed dramatically, for example a sun-bleached fireworks stand may have exploded, the related sticky notes should reflect that change.

A NOTE ON STICKY NOTES

Notes cannot be removed from a character sheet. If they are no longer relevant, they remain, but are crossed out. You cannot erase history. This includes objects that trade ownership. The character will always remember that they once had an important object.

Appearance sticky notes can be added or changed for free by the Director at the **start** of each scene. They may also be changed by a player after a scene, but it counts as their single change.

Accomplishments cannot be added directly to the sheet, they must be Needs that were satisfied through game play.

If a sticky note is going to be part of a stack, try writing in the bottom 2/3 of the note. That will allow easier reading.