

Khitomer Conference 2021

How to Play: Telepaths

Host: Kathryn Burke ([Theta Fleet](#))

Room Two • Session 6

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:01:15 PM

Waves First, please hold your questions and comments until the end. I'm visually impaired and don't want to miss any of them. I often lose them when I'm doing a copy/paste presentation.

Sometimes, my Discord likes to scroll up, too. 😞

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 3:01:20 PM



[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:01:47 PM

I'm Kathryn Burke and I've been playing telepaths for almost a decade and I've developed a specific way to play them that I prefer.

There are many ways to play telepaths, both canon and non-canon. Even canon contradicts itself from season to season and series to series. I've come up with what I feel is a more plausible approach. My "method" was formed from watching the various TV shows and movies, and playing with a variety of telepathic characters on sims. This is what I believe makes the most sense, and still allows you to have fun.

As with many abilities, not all telepaths have the same level of telepathy. All can communicate mentally with other telepaths, but beyond that, there is a wide range of strengths and abilities. Most telepaths can read surface thoughts without much effort. Anything deeper takes time and concentration. It is not something every telepath is capable of. Mental deep dives are frowned on by most cultures.

Empaths can feel emotions coming from others but do not have telepathic abilities except with other telepaths.

Limited Telepaths can read surface thoughts, but are incapable of delving deeper into someone's mind. They can speak telepathically with other telepaths.

Telepaths can read surface thoughts and, with training, effort and concentration, read deeper. They will not read most of what is in a person's head.

Strong Telepaths are both empaths and telepaths. Like other telepaths, they can read surface thoughts and, with training and practice, read deeper. They feel strong emotions.

Most telepaths will not force themselves on others, nor will they pry on others inner thoughts. Not without a very good reason and proper authority. They are incapable of reading more than a small portion of someone's mind as there is far too much information there.

Some people like to use the Telepathic Moral Laws from Babylon 5, but that is not the law in Trek. However, some of the rules can be fun to use.

Picking up surface thoughts is like being in a large room full of people. You hear the noise of many people, but unless someone shouts, nothing jumps out at you without training and concentration. Training can help you block those thoughts and make them more like white noise or background noise, but they are ever-present.

I don't know about you, but I have a hard time hearing the people near me if there's enough noise in the room. Think of telepathy the same way.

If a telepath is in a small group, it's possible to pick up strong thoughts from the public mind or surface thoughts. Private thoughts will not be picked up at random.

You'll get more snippets of thought.

I have a CO character who is a telepath. Once, a player's character was pacing outside her ready room thinking, "please don't b in, please don't be in, please don't be in." When that character entered, the CO asked why she didn't want the captain to be in. She didn't pick up on why, she just got the strong mental shout.

I have seen players who have their telepath walk into a room and know what every person is thinking. That's neither possible nor plausible. It also takes away the other player's right to decide how they want to play their character and what they want others to know.

If someone is thinking hard, or repeating something over and over in concentration, it is the same as a mental shout and will be picked up by telepaths in the near vicinity. Think of the last time you were at a dance or large party. You basically block out the chatter, unless someone yells. Then your attention focuses on that person and what's going on. Think of mental white noise the same way.

I apologize if I'm going too fast. I'll slow down a bit. 😊

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:12:46 PM

I once saw an example provided (for a fantasy setting, but could also work in Star Trek) where someone would be having a bad day and someone else would have been hassling them, leading this person to angrily think, "Oh, I'm gonna kill him!" A nearby telepath/empath could pick up on just the thought itself (along with the burst of anger), but would take it out of context and think that someone nearby is actually planning on killing someone else, even though that's not actually the case.

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:13:28 PM

Doing fine I just want to respect your process before I comment. 😊

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 3:13:32 PM

Just holding my questions until the go ahead 😊

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:13:32 PM

Exactly!

If someone is thinking hard, or repeating something over and over in concentration, it is the same as a mental shout and will be picked up by telepaths in the near vicinity. Think of the last time you were at a dance or large party. You basically block out the chatter, unless someone yells. Then your attention focuses on that person and what's going on. Think of mental white noise the same way.

Telepaths do not have a long range for their telepathy. Empaths and telepaths cannot feel emotion or read thoughts over long distances. Thoughts and feelings don't transmit that way. Nor can you sense thoughts and feelings from another ship. It may be possible to pick up emotion over long-distance communication, if the emotions are strong, but not thoughts.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:14:27 PM

CHARLIE! Please tell me all about telepaths. I had no idea you were presenting!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:15:23 PM

But if you do something like this, use it with caution. Just because Troi did it once doesn't mean it'll work on a sim. I prefer to err on the side of plausibility.

Vance: LOL

There are exceptions. If a lot of people on the ship have the same emotion or thoughts, then they combine to make it possible to be picked up from a distance. As in Classic Trek where Spock knew that a ship full of Vulcans had been destroyed. It was the combined minds crying out together that reached the Vulcan. If you are bonded to someone, you can feel their mind from a greater range, as from a ship orbiting the planet and the planet below. On rare occasions, someone on the other end of a comm link will be experiencing or feeling strong emotions. Those may, on occasion, be felt by an empath or strong telepath.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:16:49 PM

[@NinjaDuck](#) What is your opinion on counsellors use telepathy/empathic abilities in session? Any ethical concerns?

This has come up for me before

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:17:22 PM

In one episode of Classic Trek, Spock was able to "suggest" to another person that she should untie his hands. This took a great deal of effort. He did not do this often. And the person he "persuaded" was not of a high intelligence. Simple things like "unlock the door" and "set down the keys" can be done. "Kill the guard" cannot. These must be simple suggestions given to someone who is used to taking orders or is passive. They require great, uninterrupted, concentration and are rarely used.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:18:18 PM

I would certainly think that their society would have a certain set standard of ethics that they would have to always abide by to be considered "good, upstanding" citizens, and not just during counseling sessions.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:18:22 PM

Vance, yes. Counselors still have to respect the patient's privacy. Surface thoughts/emotions can be picked up, but no counselor, especially a telepathic one, should feel free to invade someone's privacy, even telepathically.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:19:02 PM

For me, I've always used the rule of placing an OOC tag in the post asking the other player if it okay that I read a thought a certain way

Avoided so many conflicts in the past

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:19:15 PM

Think of hypnosis. A therapist can hypnotize a patient, but won't do it without the patient's knowledge and consent.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:19:32 PM

Yes, as @NinjaDuck said, it's better to err on the side of caution.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:19:41 PM

Yes.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:19:51 PM

Hypnosis does not work unless the person is highly suggestible, empirically proven

Just as a note 😊

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:20:06 PM

Consent of the character *and the player*. Playing a telepath sets up requirements for more communication, not less.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:20:14 PM

Vulcans have a different form of telepathy. They are touch telepaths. They do not communicate mentally unless it is with their bond mate. A mind meld is a physical link between the Vulcan and another person/entity. This requires physical touch. It allows a limited, yet deep, probe of another mind. The Vulcan will be able to get a great deal of input in a short time, but will not know everything about that person in an instant—or ever. There is simply too much data in the mind for that sort of transferral and it takes a long time.

Terrie 2/20/2021, 3:20:17 PM

Another trick would be to ask the other player OOC "What are you broadcasting at the moment?"

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:20:27 PM

agreed @KyleB, best way to say it there

Exactly, I would do something like that or OOC: "To me it seems like your character is anxious, would you mind if I note that?"

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:21:06 PM

Agreed. More communication and ask first. 😊

However, a Vulcan can implant suggestions and can force their mind onto another person. This, too, is only used in extreme circumstances, and for most Vulcans would be anathema. There has to be a good reason and the proper authority authorizing it. Basically, it should be vital and there is no other way to get the information.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:21:40 PM

Unless you have excellent repore like @NinjaDuck and I

We just say stuff and edit as we go lol

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:22:07 PM

Yup. I've been writing with Vance for years. 😊

Okay, if I miss a comment/question, repeat it at the end of the presentation. Thanks!

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:22:30 PM

Yes it takes a long time to develop that kind of writing relationship

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:22:42 PM

A Vulcan mind meld can be traumatic - see Star Trek VI, where Spock had to mind meld with Valeris to get needed information.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:22:44 PM

Forcing ones mind/will on another is frowned upon. It can be considered mental rape and is not authorized without special permission and under extreme circumstances. This should not be used lightly and under the CO's direction.

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:23:03 PM

To me, playing a telepath is setting up situations that a player has the opportunity to reveal a plot point that might not otherwise be easy. So the telepath can become a plot springboard. Otherwise, playing a telepath is never a license to thumbv through someone's bio or even their character's stray thoughts. Like Kathryn said, treat it as white noise. I use, for my character, as she senses "mental fireflies" in the background- an awareness of consciousness, but that is all. If someone wants her to sense something plot wise, only then, IC, does she "notice."

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:23:09 PM

Vulcans are the only known touch telepaths. As their form of telepathy is more limited than a general telepaths, it is also more powerful and more carefully controlled. Vulcans go through intensive training on how to control their emotions and how to use a mind-meld.

KyleB, that's a good point.

[TF] Equisrider 2/20/2021, 3:23:44 PM

"The Undiscovered Country". Spock forcibly extracted information out of his protegee, leaving her trembling and scarred.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:24:00 PM

And someone can also block out Vulcans if sufficiently trained. We've seen Gul Dukat do it.

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:24:02 PM

honestly I look back on that as a cringe moment. That was mental rape.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:24:08 PM

There is no canonical support for Romulans to be telepaths or touch-telepaths.

Reman, however, can be telepathic, although this is also considered by some to be non-canonical.

[SC] Reece 2/20/2021, 3:24:44 PM

not exactly Spock's finest hour...

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:24:53 PM

Like Vulcans, telepaths can go through training to learn to control their thoughts, to not project them to others and to basically put up a mental shield. This makes it more difficult for other telepaths to read their thoughts. It also makes it harder for the telepaths to accidentally pick up anything deeper than loud surface thoughts.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:25:03 PM

Even Deanna Troi was able to "plant a thought" but it looked like it took a lot out of her

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:25:08 PM

Agreed, we have seen zero evidence that Romulans practice any Vulcan-like telepathy/mind meld.

[TF] Equisrider 2/20/2021, 3:25:21 PM

He was under duress and had no choice. As @NinjaDuck said, Extreme circumstances.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:25:28 PM

Agreed, I've never seen it

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:25:40 PM

Body language: Just like every other species, a telepath can learn to read body language and facial expressions. You don't always need to be a telepath to tell how someone feels or, at times, what they are thinking. Counsellors, diplomats, and occasionally intel officers are trained to read people.

Telepaths and telepathy should be played with care. Things to avoid: Reading minds from a distance Being able to tell exactly who is on a ship that is just within sensor range Sending out one's mind/thoughts to find or locate others Knowing what everyone in the room is thinking just by walking into the room. (It would be a jumble of surface thoughts and be therefore too chaotic to really differentiate, just like conversation in a room full of people.) This tends to make your character a Mary Sue.

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:26:11 PM

Presumably they have *some* physiological ability that is untapped because they don't compartmentalize their minds quite like Vulcans. But they are the same species.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:27:02 PM

The one problem is that in a lot of ways we just don't know enough about Romulans to say one way or the other.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:27:10 PM

Yes. Same species, but they developed differently over time, and that was definitely because of Surak.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:27:14 PM

At least in canon.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:27:24 PM

I would think a telepath could read physiological responses, but their effectiveness would be based on how much they use their abilities. Think of it like a sense, usually one only increases at the cost of another

If you don't practice reading people, then you are likely not very good at it

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:27:58 PM

Godmodding (using your abilities to control others, to manipulate the situation or to keep others from participating) is not allowed on most sims. No player has the right to tell other players how they will respond to what their character does or what their character may reveal.

I have seen other people do the things listed here.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:28:18 PM

I have also witnessed that

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:28:24 PM

Other species may have telepathic abilities as well. Telepaths are not limited to Vulcans, Betazoids, and Reman. As with all species, these characters should be written and played plausibly. They should have both strengths and weaknesses. Like all other characters, telepaths can be fun, if used in moderation. Sometimes it is the limitations that can be more fun to play.

I've heard players complain about telepaths because they can easily become too powerful if you're not careful.

I've had friends complain that a telepath walked into a room and immediately know what everyone was thinking. The player didn't have the option to say no. And the player didn't get to say what the character was thinking. Even when the friend said no, the player of the telepath refused to listen.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:29:23 PM

Another one I run into a lot is 1/2 betazoids playing like they are full-blooded

1/2 betazoids are severely limited beyond surface empathy

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:29:40 PM

Yes, like my earlier example of picking up someone thinking "I'm gonna kill him!" but not having enough ability to know what context it's being thought in.

Lia 2/20/2021, 3:29:40 PM

I invented a species with telepathic abilities called the Ojnas, and I have two on different sims.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:30:10 PM

If this happens, it is up to the CO/Gamemaster to step in. This type of godmodding should not be permitted. It does a disservice to the other players and will drive people away from the sim. It is also disrespectful.

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 3:30:17 PM

I'm so turned off by how so many others play empaths and telepaths that when I joined one sim as a Betazoid, and found out there were 5 others I nearly didn't join it. However, thankfully, that sim handles empaths/telepaths well and Auronella "guards her secret."

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:31:02 PM

Basically to play a Betazoid, you should be agreeing on a stricter social contract of conduct than what is required of others.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:31:18 PM

With 1/2 betazoids, usually any resistance by a person is enough to mask their thoughts. It's with full betazoids a person would need training to resist intense concentration

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:31:32 PM

I actually tend to avoid playing telepaths/empaths as PCs because it tends to be more work to keep things realistic than I feel it's worth.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:31:35 PM

In another situation, a telepath told a character exactly what they were thinking--without asking first. That made the other player upset because the player of the telepath was basically writing for the other character and that is frowned on in most places. You always ask first and take no for an answer. Be respectful. On another sim, a telepath "outed" two characters who had planned a path to a relationship. Just because they've written something in another post or in their bio does not give you the right to make it public in-character knowledge.

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:32:02 PM

YYYYYIKES!

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:32:02 PM

Yes never breach the 4th wall 😊

in any direction

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:32:13 PM

As Amanda Rose said, respect the privacy of other characters and players.

I cannot state this enough. Always ask first. Ask if it's okay. Ask what the character may be thinking, and what can be picked up on. As I said before, it'll generally be surface thoughts or public mind and strong thoughts that are basically mental shouts. Sometimes, you can work with the other player to help develop character or to put either or both characters in an awkward situation.

So, how does this pertain to running a sim? Players come up with character concepts and set them out in a bio, but it's up to the COs to make sure they don't abuse the privilege. Because playing a telepath is a privilege. They are characters with extra abilities and need to not go overboard.

As a CO/GM, make sure your rules are clear about not writing for other characters.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:33:45 PM

Do not be afraid of asking questions is my huge thing! People fear being ridiculed or something. We are a great community!

Don't be afraid to ask in OOC if something is ok

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:34:48 PM

Absolutely use OOC and PM/DM. Be clear and polite.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:34:49 PM

Yes, we roleplay in large part to interact with others. If we didn't do that, we might as well write solo stories and place them on FanFiction.net or some similar place.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:35:12 PM

Exactly!

Give telepaths a chance to use their abilities. Every now and then, you can put something in the story that prevents a telepath from using their abilities. This can be like another character going blind or deaf. It's the loss of one of their senses, or someone is using their telepathy to haunt their dreams. It was done in TNG to Troi. Let the player explore the darker side of being a telepath.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:35:46 PM

I love exploring the darker side of simming LOL

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:35:58 PM

Maybe you can let the telepath "hear" something in a crowded room, or on the promenade. The telepath won't know who said it, or what it referenced, but it could hint at a problem to come.

Most of the time, simming is not about being the strongest, most powerful character, it's about character interactions, solving the puzzle or problem in the mission. It's about cooperation, and for that, it's important to focus on plausibility over power. Ultimately, when playing a telepath, don't take the most extreme things you've seen in a Star Trek episode. Take the more reasonable one and see how you can use it as both a strength and a weakness.

With my telepaths, they tend to short circuit when their emotions are involved. Their own strong emotions will override their telepathic abilities and they won't be able to read other people until they calm down. To me, it makes them more plausible and more relatable.

It's also more fun to write.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:37:54 PM

I had one character with strong abilities, but if she ever used them it would almost kill her

Headaches, brain bleeds, etc...

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:38:33 PM

Yup. Telepathy should be both a strength and a weakness.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:38:38 PM

There was one episode of TNG where the crew carried some passengers who were "historical telepaths" and who used their abilities to help people recover memories, but one of them went on a sort of "telepathic rape" among some of the crew.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:38:51 PM

It also makes sense to me because when I'm emotional, I don't reason as well as I should. So why not a telepath not senses as well as they should?

So, my characters often do, too.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:39:15 PM

Wow, that is some seriously dark stuff

I mean I could see the analogy for sure

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:39:49 PM

Vance plays some seriously dark moments.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:40:10 PM

@NinjaDuck SHHH don't give them my secrets LOL

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:40:13 PM

As a CO, I've given players of telepathic characters things they could pick up on, and I've occasionally told them they could not pick up on something. I want all players to feel like they're a part of a team. I don't want any to think I'm letting another character dictate what they do or how they respond. Be proactive, not reactive. Once the players know you want plausibility over superpowers, they'll cooperate.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:40:15 PM

I would think that telepathy/empathy would be like any other ability (think music, as an example, or drawing) - some people are going to be better than others at it.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:40:28 PM

Alexandra Vance has been through the worst kind of things!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:40:38 PM

You're not taking away a telepath's abilities by restricting their access to thoughts. No one ability should be able to control another character. If you keep it plausible by limiting what can be picked up, you can generally help everyone be more comfortable around telepaths.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:40:38 PM

Like how is she not dead?

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:41:04 PM

Be aware of the sensibilities of the other players. Just because you can doesn't mean you should.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:41:06 PM

Oh that's an interesting strategy, help the other player by offering cues!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:41:40 PM

That goes for all characters. Every species has strengths and weaknesses. Learn to play on the weaknesses as well as the strengths to have a more well-rounded character and to have some fun.

I personally have more fun playing a flawed character. Or playing a character's weaknesses.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:42:16 PM

Aye

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:42:41 PM

Because many of my characters come from an academic background, they're smart. But they aren't as social as others. They spent more time studying and so are awkward in social situations. They don't like parties.

Telepaths can experience sensory overload in a large crowd if they aren't familiar with it.

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:42:41 PM

@NinjaDuck I agree completely

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:43:06 PM

I don't just avoid parties, but I find ways to show my character as a fish out of water. Or I'll have her find something she can do, or a small group to talk to.

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:43:24 PM

Having a character that feels more relatable, in their characteristics and over all personalized, is what makes writing fun imo

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:43:29 PM

I think it is all about finding a realistic balance

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:43:37 PM

Example:

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:43:52 PM

Likely someone who spent their entire high school studying would not be very extroverted

Possible but not plausible

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:44:13 PM

Once I had a conversation with several other characters in the corridor outside the party and never went inside.

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:44:42 PM

Ah, but were they introverted because they studied, or did they study because they were introverted?

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:44:43 PM

Telepathy should be both a strength and a weakness. Just because you can pick up someone's thoughts doesn't mean you'll get the context, or even know what they're thinking about. You'll only get a snippet. Have you ever walked past some people in conversation and hear a phrase? It's like that. Sometimes it can be alarming or entertaining, but you really have no idea what the conversation was about. A telepath won't get more than a flash of thought, an image, an emotion, or a fraction of whatever may be in their public mind. Or, what they're actively thinking about. Even if it's what they want to eat, or that they need to tie their shoelace.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:45:04 PM

Reverse causation is wonderful isn't it?

Reminder 2/20/2021, 3:45:07 PM

This is your 15-minute warning

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:45:44 PM

Perhaps view it as walking into a conversation you have only heard half of?

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:45:45 PM

Gregory: both. I believe that, in general, a high IQ means a lower EQ.

If you think the player of a telepath is staking unfair advantage, politely ask them to change the tag in an OOC. Most people will be happy to work with you. Especially if you offer an alternative. If not, go to the CO and ask for help. Be polite and be nice. That solves a lot of problems before they start.

It's up to the CO or XO to step in and resolve the problem if the player won't work with you. But generally, just asking politely is enough.

Put clear rules on your sim about player conduct and about being cooperative in your joint stories. That will help people know what to expect on your sim.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:46:58 PM

Agreed, I think IQ and EQ negatively correlate.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:47:01 PM

Ultimately, I'm not saying you have to have hard rules. Rules can be bent or twisted a bit from time to time. COs should be open-minded and willing to work with creative

ideas. Be reasonable with your telepaths and their ability and you'll find that they can be a lot of fun to play—and to play with.

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:47:10 PM

One of My OCs on the Star Army site, started as an in atmo pilot on a gunship, a two seat gunship meant for transporting troops on the ground. His fiancée was the gunner for the ship. They took flak, she died and he forced a landing which buried her part of the cockpit. Almost killing him, and killing her. But it took place 100km from his hometown. So it is a constant mental fight back and forth. So he requested transfer to become a fighter pilot. Again as an example of flawed characters.

Terrie 2/20/2021, 3:47:25 PM

The number one rule: Does it make it fun for everyone?

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:47:43 PM

Rule #2: Don't write for other players, no matter how well-intentioned you might be!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:47:58 PM

A quick note about telepathy. It doesn't just have to be words. You can send images, emotions, etc. TV uses words because it's easier, but if you could just send someone a concept, telepathically, it would be so much easier.

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:47:59 PM

Without their consent of course.

Terrie 2/20/2021, 3:48:01 PM

Well, that would violate the number one rule, so....

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:48:16 PM

Also fair

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:48:32 PM

Finally, mIne is NOT the only way to play telepaths. It may not even be the best, but it's the one I like and works for me and the people I write with.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:48:37 PM

I notice very few people write telepaths picking up on images or emotions

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 3:48:43 PM

I know that @NinjaDuck's characters get to hear a certain one of my character's "thoughts" all the time. 🐼

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:48:43 PM

Generally it is thoughts only
but thoughts need context

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:48:49 PM

Okay, any questions I missed? Or comments you still want to make?

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:49:43 PM

Excellent presentation as always @NinjaDuck 🙌

I'm glad I showed up

[SA] Thekrimsonwulf 2/20/2021, 3:49:52 PM

A great conversation!

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:49:52 PM

Yes, very good!

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 3:50:09 PM

Thank you @NinjaDuck 😊 very insightful

[SC] KyleB 2/20/2021, 3:50:16 PM

Thank you. 😊

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:50:29 PM

Sorry I missed some of the comments. I tried to keep up. 😊

Thank you all for your participation.

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 3:51:20 PM

Actually gave me an idea for my Betazoid who basically blocks out all of her telepathic ability. Since alcohol makes you lose control I think I'll start playing her less able to tune out the background noise, especially now that she's spending some time on Betazed where telepathic communication happens more openly.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:51:45 PM

With any betazoids I played, real alcohol made her abilities chaotic

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:51:46 PM

That could be interesting.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:51:57 PM

She could not block out noises or focus

It just sounded like rooms full of mumbling and distorted white noise

[PF] Gregory 2/20/2021, 3:52:39 PM

I remember Troi in "First Contact" after she got drunk with Cochrane.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:53:06 PM

I'm mostly blind. When I go into a noisy place, I can neither see nor hear. It really messes with my ability to get around and to think.

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 3:53:10 PM

My char is very weak telepathically, so I don't think she'd be able to hear people on the ship through walls and such, especially since the Captain's Quarters is on another deck from the rest. But in a crowded bar... now... that's interesting.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:53:13 PM

Sensory overload.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:53:22 PM

Ouch!

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:54:08 PM

Yup. I tend to avoid large crowds and lots of noise.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:54:38 PM

I just do that anyways LOL

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:54:45 PM

Okay, we're gonna be kicked out of here shortly. I'm going to jump into overflow two if anyone wants to keep chatting.

Reminder 2/20/2021, 3:55:06 PM

This is your 5-minute warning. Consider moving the conversation to the appropriate overflow room.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:55:58 PM

Again thank you @NinjaDuck

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 3:56:16 PM

Thank you, and I'd love to ask some more questions in [#overflow-two](#) [@NinjaDuck](#)

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 3:55:49 PM

Love B plots

Must have B plots

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:56:44 PM

I can no brain.

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 3:56:45 PM

[@NinjaDuck](#) one thing I wanted to ask, how do you handle people that resist telepathic 'intrusion'? How capable are non-telepathic beings at doing that? Is it just a matter of thinking about pink elephants really hard?

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 3:57:17 PM

I know that on Faltan Station, which I now run, we had someone that would read everyone and I had them sent to the brig. 😊

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:57:19 PM

I ran longer than expected. Thanks for asking. 😊

Beautiful Night 2/20/2021, 3:57:25 PM

some do it inherently. Breen and Ferengi spring to mind

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:57:37 PM

It can be. Or mathematical equations.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:57:46 PM

[@RottenEmu](#) For me, I have always gone with the rule that non-telepaths would require some sort of training to resist a telepath (depending if they themselves were full or 1/2 race)

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:58:16 PM

Or scientific formulae.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 3:58:35 PM

So your normal joe could not likely resist the telepathic intrusion of a full-blooded telepath whom has trained their entire life

Otherwise SFI would be screwed LOL

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 3:58:58 PM

The book "A Wrinkle in Time" used that. Thinking of math or stuff.

Higher intellect has a better chance of blocking minor telepathy. But you need to be really careful to not take away someone's right to determine what their character divulges or can be made to do.

[OF] Cam 2/20/2021, 4:00:01 PM

I wonder if a non-telepath could become sensitive to being 'touched' by telepathy

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 4:00:19 PM

Telepath allergies?

[OF] Cam 2/20/2021, 4:00:23 PM

someone who had had a traumatic or forced experience with it

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:00:24 PM

It's possible.

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 4:00:41 PM

ah, more PTSD kind of response

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:00:45 PM

One thing to remember is if you force your telepathy on someone, it can be considered telepathic rape.

[OF] Cam 2/20/2021, 4:00:45 PM

yes

that was basically the question. Someone who had experienced that

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:01:41 PM

Someone who had been telepathically raped could go into PTSD if any telepath "touches" them, even innocently.

Could be interesting to play.

[OF] Cam 2/20/2021, 4:02:12 PM

b/c in general the concept seems to be that a regular human would not know if someone read their surface thoughts

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 4:02:18 PM

Inherently, do you think people could feel telepaths snooping around in their brains? Or if they were just picking up surface thoughts would that not register for a non-telepath?

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 4:02:26 PM

@NinjaDuck I feel we might have to bring in the tea video for telepaths

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 4:02:33 PM

haha same question I guess

[OF] Cam 2/20/2021, 4:02:44 PM

yes lol GMTA

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:02:51 PM

Emu, if it's a light touch and just a passing surface thought, no. It wouldn't be noticed or felt.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 4:02:54 PM

I feel even a regular person could sense someone is intruding in their mind

Like actively looking deep for something

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:03:17 PM

And if you work with the other player, you could get a random thought that may be totally insignificant or be something that could lead to a post later.

[OF] Emu - Fawkes/Loki/Acad 2/20/2021, 4:03:21 PM

I always play people feeling some sort 'tingle', kind of like that feeling if you think someone is watching you

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 4:03:40 PM

I once used where the "link" opened a two-way gateway

so if someone dug too deep or spent too long the other person would begin to see fragments of the telepaths thoughts

so it created that danger element

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:04:15 PM

That feeling of being "watched" could definitely work. I like it.

Vance, I like that, too.

Alexandra_Vance 2/20/2021, 4:05:27 PM

So you ran the danger of having someone know your secrets or overload their mind with information

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:05:40 PM

On one of my sims, a player has a Ferengi character that was turned human by a Q. He's now having to deal with bleeding his thoughts to every telepath in the room.

[OF] Cam 2/20/2021, 4:05:52 PM

I always felt it would be like sensing someone reading over your shoulder

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:05:54 PM

He's not used to being vulnerable that way.

He'll soon be turned back and have to deal with the adjustment.

Cam, that's a good way to look at it, too.

Maybe it's different for different people. Some feel a tingle, feel like someone's watching them, or looking over their shoulder. All good ideas.

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 4:11:15 PM

His Betazoid girlfriend will still be there for her soon to be back to Ferengi boyfriend. Sigh

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:11:43 PM

And he'll still love her. She just won't be able to read him as well. 😊

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 4:12:13 PM

Not that she ever used that with him. You know how Auronella is about privacy and using her abilities....

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:12:34 PM

Yes. 😊

And she can learn to give good oo machs. Or however it's spelled. 😊

Beautiful Night 2/20/2021, 4:13:52 PM

oo mox

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:14:02 PM

Thanks!

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 4:17:42 PM

She knows oomox

IT is in her history.

[TF] Kathryn Burke 2/20/2021, 4:27:14 PM

I should re-read that. I read it when you joined the sim, but not since.

[RPGW] Amanda Rose 2/20/2021, 4:48:59 PM

No worries. She's dealt with way too many Ferengi