

Alternative States of Being - Beyond Life

In Rhelm, your fundamental Nature (Essence, Void, or Sevitan) defines your connection to cosmic forces, but your **State of Being** determines how you physically exist and interact with the world on the most basic level. While most beings are **Living** – sustained by biological processes, healing naturally or through conventional means, vulnerable to poison and disease – Rhelm's unique metaphysics allows for other, equally valid states of existence. These can be chosen at character creation or achieved through specific, often demanding, transformations later in life.

The Undead State: Life Inverted

- **What It Means:**

Forget notions of inherent evil often associated with undeath in other worlds. In Rhelm, becoming Undead represents a fundamental **inversion** of your connection to life and decay energies. You are not just a reanimated corpse; you are a being sustained by the very forces that break down the living.

- **How It Feels:**

Decay nourishes you; poison can mend your wounds. Entropy becomes a source of strength. Conversely, the radiant energy associated with pure life, often used for healing the living, becomes agonizingly harmful to you. You are freed from the needs of the flesh – hunger, thirst, sleep, even breathing become irrelevant – granting extraordinary resilience. You might feel detached from the cycles of growth and bloom that define the living world, finding refuge instead within stillness, shadow, and the slow, inevitable breakdown of matter.

- **Narrative Potential:**

This state offers unique survival advantages, especially in toxic and decaying environments or against foes relying on poison and disease. However, undeath often brings social stigma; many societies fear or misunderstand the Undead, and centers of life energy (like Spirit Tribe territories) can be dangerous. Playing an Undead character involves exploring themes of alienation, resilience, finding strength in decay, and navigating a world often hostile to your very existence. It synergizes naturally with Decay Tribe or Void philosophies but can be adopted by any Nature willing to undergo the transformation.

The Synthetic State: Crafted Existence

- **What It Means:**

Synthetics represent a unique fusion of magical crafting and consciousness, occupying a space neither truly alive nor truly dead. Your original consciousness is transferred into an artificial vessel, meticulously crafted from specialized synth resin and infused with magic. Your existence is defined not by biology, but by the materials you choose to embody and the energy you absorb.

- **How It Feels:**

You are free from biological needs like food, water, air, and sleep, and immune to poison and disease. However, you lack natural regeneration. Your energy comes directly from the ambient **Aether** (magical particles) in the environment, which is more potent near the Essence Tree and weaker near the Void Vents, or by directly siphoning energy from other sources – including living, undead, or even other synthetic beings. Your resilience and physical form depend on the **materials** you integrate into your body; you might embody the strength of stone, the flexibility of certain woods, or the conductivity of metal, swapping these traits as needed but requiring access to those materials to repair yourself. You might perceive the world more analytically, less encumbered by emotion, your existence tied to energy flow and material integrity.

- **Narrative Potential:**

Synthetics offer unparalleled adaptability to hostile environments and immunity to biological threats. The core gameplay revolves around strategic energy management and material acquisition. Socially, you might face prejudice, be mistaken for a simple construct, or grapple with questions of identity and what it means to be "real". You could explore themes of artificiality, consciousness, detachment, and the relationship between body and self. It's also possible to undergo **Partial Synthetic Integration**, replacing only specific body parts, creating a unique blend of biological and artificial existence with its own set of challenges and benefits.

Choosing Your State:

Whether Living, Undead, or Synthetic, your State of Being fundamentally shapes your experience in Rhelm. Each offers unique strengths, weaknesses, and rich roleplaying opportunities, allowing you to explore existence from vastly different perspectives within this mutable reality.