

Alignment Effects For the Circe Road Campaign

Background: The Circe Road campaign uses D&D 5th Edition (5E) rules (2014). The rules give, on page 122 of the *Player's Handbook*, the nine different alignments and their corresponding characteristics, one three line sentence for each. The different alignments do have some interplay with the "Ideals" that can be chosen for the different backgrounds. But, there is very little explicit in the way the game plays. For example, in 3E a "Detect Good" or "Detect Chaotic" could detect creatures of particular alignments, and spells like Forbiddance were alignment sensitive. Fifth Edition seems to have deliberately eliminated alignment as a factor in most of the game, except in a role play sense. I expect alignment to have more of a role in the Circe Road campaign. Detailing that out somewhat is the purpose of this document.

Relationships: Relationships of characters to each other, specifically for Non-Player Characters, are influenced by alignment differences. Occasionally (about every 3 months, or when there's good reason) relationship scores will be calculated for all party Non Player Characters (NPCs) toward each other party character (and perhaps some non-party characters if important enough). The scores are calculated using a dice roll (3d6 for Lawful, d20 for Chaotic, d10+d8+drnd for Neutral = dn). So, alignment (Lawful to Chaotic axis) influences the variability of this dice roll for each character towards each other. Lawful character attitudes will vary less than those of Chaotic characters. Furthermore, the roll is modified by a number of factors including the "distance" in alignment between the two characters on the alignment matrix. NG -> CG is one step. LG -> CG is two steps, as is N -> CG. LN-> CG is three steps. The modifiers are -1, -3, and -6 for 1, 2, and 3 steps. Here's the calculation for a LG character toward an opposite gender CG character with Ch +1) (and leader is +1), 3d6=10, for a party of 6. The CG character is "needed" (critical party role) and time=4 for long time (maximum) The previous relationship score was +3 (friendly) and the party success "good"=1 (done well except not much treasure)

$Dn + Ch + Ldr + algn + gndr + need + size + time + hist + good + extra = N$ (9-12->0, 13-15 +1, ...)
10 +1 +1 -3 -1 +1 +0 +4 +3 +1 - = 17 so +2 now (friendly-)

So, here we see that the 2 step difference in alignment causes a -3, somewhat of a strain, but with luck that is countered by the importance of the character's role in the party, better relationship in the past (history) and a decent leader. A 3 step difference could push a relationship score into negative territory, making "disparagement" events possible, or threats to leave the party or action against the other if the score goes below "indifferent" (-1 to +1) into "unfriendly" territory.

Romance: Occasionally a party "Romance" event will come up. Or party members may be at a tavern party for something like the Equinox or maybe just a Saturday night. This applies to NPC's, and to player characters to the extent they might be targeted by an NPC. Player characters make their own decisions. But, for example, the decision by a female party member to "entice" a male member of the party (or an interesting NPC in the tavern) comes down to a 3d6/d20/dn roll and that process too has an alignment modifier, with LG at -2, LN at -1, NG at -1, N at 0, CG at +1, CN at +2 etc. Plus, the dice to roll depends on lawful to Chaotic as earlier. Here's a sample for the LG character having W -1 toward the CG character with Ch=1 above:

Dn +Ch +W +Al +circ. +history = N (DC16 to “entice”, DC21 to “entice enthusiastically”
10 +1 +1 -2 +3 +3 = 16 so, yes, the LG W=8 girl entices the CG Ch12 man.
(circ is “circumstances, normally 1-2 but usually +2 to occasionally +5 for a party.)

The follow-up steps of “invite” and “accept” are similar with DC18 and DC20 respectively, and some additional modifiers for enticement, enthusiasm.

So, here, alignment toward LG makes characters more reluctant and towards CE less reluctant to dive into romance events and relationships. Having higher wisdom also motivates caution.

DM Discretion in other circumstances:

Most other situations where the DM will take alignment into account are not algorithmic, but ad-hock depending on the issue in play and circumstances. For example, a LN dwarf asked to do a fair treasure division will make sure that the division is mathematically correct but may fudge the details to give himself a better share, wealth in gems as opposed to gold Sovereigns, for example. On the other hand, a CG character asked to do the same task may just make six piles without too much concern for value and equity and hand them out. A good character is more likely to be fair in the distribution than an neutral or evil one. In fact, the evil character might even cheat somehow if it looked opportune.

Inter-character things like making loans to allow someone else to make a big purchase (say, of a magic item) will be governed by character self-interest, but willingness to do so will also depend to some extent on alignment. A Neutral character making generous loans probably has a particular motivation. A chaotic one might not. A lawful character is likely to keep careful track of the balance.

Alignments Summary: (From *Player’s Handbook*, simplified)

Lawful Good: Can be counted on to do the right thing as expected by society.

Neutral Good: Folk do the best they can to help others according to their needs.

Chaotic Good: Creatures act as their conscience directs, little regard for what others expect.

Lawful Neutral: Individuals act in accordance with law, tradition, or personal codes.

Neutral: Is the alignment of those who prefer to steer clear of moral questions and don’t take sides.

Chaotic Neutral: Creatures follow their whims, holding their personal freedom above all else.

Lawful Evil: Creatures methodically take what they want within the limits of a code of tradition, loyalty, or order.

Neutral Evil: Is the alignment of those who do whatever they can get away with, without compassion or qualms.

Chaotic Evil: creatures act with arbitrary violence, spurred by their greed, hatred, or bloodlust.

Note: It is assumed that player characters are not going to be Evil. That simply doesn’t work if played according to their alignment. Furthermore, NPC’s in a party being evil won’t work in the long run either. But it is possible that some NPC may be a “ringer” portrayed as having a neutral or good alignment when the character is actually evil. The “Detect Alignment” spell or “Detect Evil” of earlier editions used to make it possible to detect such characters unless they were carrying an “Undetectable Alignment” amulet or something similar to defeat those spells.