One-page design document

*Home Isolation - A Self-Isolation management game*

##### **Game Identity / Mantra:**

Interactive ‘Stay in the Room’ game, about managing personal wellbeing. In having to decide if it’s acceptable to go outside, at risk of catching the (pandemic) virus. Or staying indoors, at the risk to mental health.

##### **Design Pillars:**

Interactive. Health. Management / Choice.

##### **Genre/Story/Mechanics Summary:**

The game features an interactive room that explores the mechanics to staying safe in the advent of the coronavirus pandemic, while still staying safe in mental health. This often requires not just staying active in home, but also going outside, with due precautions taken before and after going outside.

##### **Features:**

* Ability to “go outside” to gather supplies and exercise, but at the potential risk of getting infected. Interactions to migrate risks of infection, before and after going outside.
* Ability to stay indoors to mitigate the risk, but at the possible/likely expense of mental health. Interactions with set objects to maintain mental health within the house.
* Long term hypotenuse of infection, especially when still interacting with new objects without due cleaning, or waiting for the virus to “die” out (up to 3 days at most.) Along with simplified, hypothetical long term effects of mental health, shown through gameplay.

##### **Interface:**

Mouse to rotate, zoom and interact with objects that affect the player’s mental health. Mental Health, and Condition HUD statuses used to mark the players condition, and if they’re infected.

##### **Art Style:**

Realist, under a low-poly lens. Mood and Genre for the art under the “Escape the Room” genre/theme.

##### **Music/Sound:**

Ambient genre audio to set a ‘neutral’ atmospheric tone, with key “tool” sounds for interactions, that should invoke a sense of “using” those objects in real time to the player themselves. Ideally, all sounds used should also be subtitled.

##### **Development Roadmap / Launch Criteria:**

**Platform:** Windows OS, Browser (WebGL)  
**Audience:** 12+, Educational/Art (Psychology, and “Historical”)

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| --- | --- |
| **Milestone 1:** Documents drafted - 7/11/20 **Milestone 1b:** Documents refined - **13**/11/20 **Milestone 2:** Framework drafted - 20/11/20 | **Milestone 3:** Prototype refined - 27/11/20 **Milestone 3b:** Feedback Acted on - **4**/12/20 **Project Deadline:** 7~9/12/2020, 5:00pm |

Full, Design Document (per PowerPoint)

* **A Brief Description**

Interactive ‘Stay in the Room’ game, about managing personal wellbeing. In having to decide if it’s acceptable to go outside, at risk of catching the (pandemic) virus. Or staying indoors, at the risk to mental health.

* + ***Design Philosophy***

The three pillars of design are “Interactive, Health & Management/Choice”. Interactive, in a lens similar to adventure games, and interactive fiction. Health, in a lens of managing one’s physical and mental health. And management/choice, in how the player acts to pursue/cope in game.

* **Common Questions**
  + ***What is this game about?***

An interactive story, that simulates daily life within a community in lockdown, over a looming pandemic. With the gameplay reflecting tactics on staying safe, and healthy while coping with the lockdown measures in the long term.

* + ***Why create it? / So What?***

Because in a serious game lens, I feel that having a game reflecting the current times and state we’re in, would be of historical interest for what it was like to be in the year 2020.

* + ***Where does the game take place?***

In an arbitrary, western home, under a “single person” house, instead of family. The nature should be generic, so it could fit within as broad an audience as possible, along with containing as many interactable objects within a singular room, that would reflect an average household.

* + ***What do I control?***

The ‘viewpoint’ of “the player”, or resident. Who can interact with their own environment to cope with lockdown measures dealing with COVID-19, or go outside to recover, at the potential risk of infection.

* + ***What is the main focus?***

Living healthily and coping within a lockdown, while not succumbing to either the pandemic itself by being too active outside, or arbitrary depression by staying indoors to an excessive degree.

* **Art Direction**

“Low-Poly Realism”. Mood and Genre for the room and objects to be made under the “Escape the Room” genre/theme. In particular, the ‘art style’ of the buildings themselves would have to fit within a “local” (western) design. Generally under public/council housing.

* + **Sketches**

**<Look at Storyboards, for hypothetical layouts of the objects within a singular/multiple rooms.>**

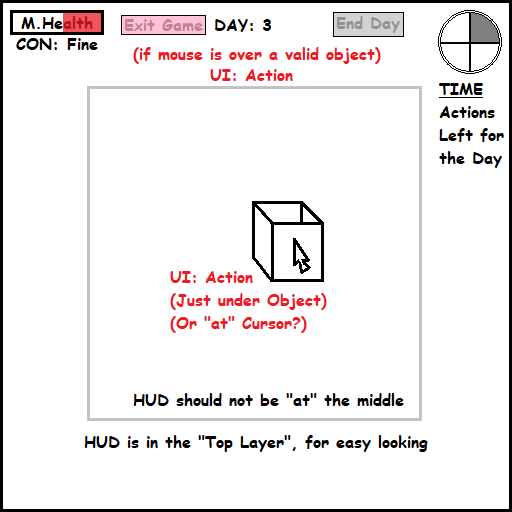
* + **Art Examples (Moodboard)**

**<Look at Mood Board, for better Visual Examples; under “Storyboard Diorama”>**

* **User Interface**
  + **UI and Menus**

The **Main Menu** should be relatively simple, in Titles, GUI and buttons positioned in the middle. With between three-to-four options to “**Play Game, Instructions, Quit Game**” alongside “**Credits**”, if any assets are outsourced from other creators, even if it’s under creative commons.

**Gameplay,** Gameplay however, consists of the following storyboard sketch;



HUD should be positioned within a single “top bar”, that should show the player’s current condition and “mental health” at the left, alongside the button to exit the game early. “Time left” for the day at the right, that’s also near an “end day” to refresh the turns (at the subtle drain of mental health). And lastly, there should be a light indicator of the amount of time passed, in the HUD. Along with additional, subtle GUI display for when a mouse hovers over an interactable object.

**Ending Screen** should display the following GUI icons, at the end of a gameplay session.

**<END CONDITION, DESCRIPTION>**

**DAYS IN LOCKDOWN: <\_\_\_>**

**[PLAY AGAIN]**

**[QUIT GAME]**

Describing ‘how’ the game ended, along with how long the game is played. Before showing two options to “**Play Again**”, or “**Quit Game**”. “Play Again” Should relaunch the gameplay at the beginning, while “Quit Game” would need confirmation, before closing down the game itself.

* **Music & Sound Effects**

Ambient genre audio to set a ‘neutral’ atmospheric tone, with key “tool” sounds for interactions, that should invoke a sense of “using” those objects in real time to the player themselves. Ideally, all sounds used should also be subtitled, with what the player did upon interacting with the object itself.

**Minimum List of Audio**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Audio Element (Name)** | **When to Play? (And for how long?)** |
| “Main\_BGM” (Atmospheric) | During main gameplay (endless loop) |
| “Click” sound (interaction action) | If an interaction effect is triggered (once) |

* **Gameplay**
  + **Gameplay walkthrough (Storyboard)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

*\*Storyboard sketches, of minimum and maximum interactions and rooms/scenes, within gameplay.*

The game should go under a loop, of having a limited amount of interactions to maintain mental health, before ending the day by interacting with a “bed”, or at the end day button. Every day, mental health will decrease, which will lower less; if the player has gone outside, or had some sort of social communication the previous day (even if it’s through a phone, or through multiplayer games).

This should last, until a “random” amount of turns have passed (for ‘demo’ purposes, between 1-to-2 months, projectively.) Or if the player “loses” by losing all of their mental health, or on getting severely ill for going outside too often.

* + **Length of Play**

During gameplay, no more than between 5-10 minutes at minimum.

In-game, span of time should be over a course of a “Week” at minimum, for small scale testing. Ideally, should last “up” to a month, or a “as long as arbitrary” possible, until the player ultimately succumbs to either mental health or physical ailment. Or when an ‘arbitrary’ lockdown is eventually lifted, in-game.

* **Required Assets, Minimum**
  + **Models**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Model (Or Animation) / (Format)** | **Associated with What Game Object/Feature?** |
| Wall Objects & Textures | The Room (under “terrain”) |
| Window | Terrain, under a “real life” Simulation |
| Door | Outside Mental Health recovery (Interaction wise) |
| Sofa (“Bed”) | Sleep, Next Day (interaction/time skip feature) |
| “Other Objects” | Mental Health Recovery (Interaction wise) |
| Chair, Table, Carpet, TV and Phone | Minimum objects, for a “realist” house-room |

No animations required, “outside” of UI Display/response, or highlighted glow effects.

* **Appendix**
  + **Game Object List**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

*\*Storyboard sketches, of minimum and maximum interactions, within gameplay.*

Rough checklist, for every interactable game object. If multiple rooms are supported, tables should be divided to list the total amount of interactable objects within each room; from “Living Room” and “Bedroom”, to “Kitchen” and “Hallway”.

Below is a “sample game object” list of the “Absolute Minimum” Objects needed for interaction, for the Prototype. This list will likely be expanded during development, as more models are outsourced or created, and then implemented in-game.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Game Object (Name)** | **Intended Interaction** |
| Door | Outside Interaction, Possible Health Risk |
| Sofa (“Bed”) | Sleep, Next Day (interaction/time skip feature) |
| “Other Objects” | Mental Health Recovery, interaction wise |
| Chair, Table, Carpet, TV and Phone | Minimum objects, for a “realist” house-room |

* + **UI Object List**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **UI Object (Name, + Variable)** | **Function, “What does it Show”** |
| Mental Health Bar (Float) | As a “HUD Bar”, shows how much mental health the player has |
| Condition (String Array) | In a text display, shows if the player is “Fine”, or “Ill/Infected” |
| Quit Game (Button) | Upon clicking, confirmation should display over if the player wants to exit the game itself, mid-gameplay. |
| Time (Int, GUI “slots”) | Should visually display the amount of “actions/time” the player has left, before they have to “sleep/end day” |
| Day: # (Int value, on counter) | How much turns have passed, within the lockdown (gameplay) |
| End Day (Button) | Ends the day through the button, instead of by a “bed” object, for easier convenience. |
| UI\_Text (Text, “Over Mouse”) | Show’s the interactable objects name, if cursor is over an interactable object. |

For Audio assets, look at the **Music & Sound Effects** section for the minimum amount required in-game.

**Self-Reflection**

To be done fully with reference from the development log, once the project itself is completed. Under the Process Journal. This is to take into account not only the course of the project during each milestone, but also note on how I responded to the provided feedback within my testing group.

**User Feedback**

**>“Session #1”**

Comment notes, Don’t waste time in document talking on stuff “easy to do”. Concentrate on talking about the concepts had, hard challenges faced, and how those challenges were overcome or dodged, or along with what was gotten/learnt out of the project. (Conclusion.)

Do think critically on the work done in the Design Document. Treat the conclusion as a (sort of) Abstract of the entire document itself (design wise.)

**Detailed Self-Reflection, User Feedback & Conclusion, is within the Process Journal**

**Conclusion?**

The detailed conclusions are to be written within the Process journal.

Stage #1. The biggest challenge was thinking both on the lens of adding what was in the bullet point to text, while keeping a razor sharp lens of the “absolute minimum” documented.

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##### **Appendix**

**“Diorama Storyboard”, 3 Pages For Level Design Sketches and Art Direction**

**Gameplay Ideas (for the 2/4 week crunch, Serious Game lens).**

Key Notes on “Serious Interactive 3D Game” (“Diorama”?)

“Discuss/Present/Provide Information on a relevant topic” “Provide at least one game loop”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Idea / Genre** | **Description / Serious Theme** | **Code Time** | **Design Time** | **Art Time** | **Desire** | **Rating** |
| “Self-Isolation Simulator” | Manage staying indoors, while avoiding suffering from depression. A “take” on “long term Lockdown”.  A balance between mental health, and safety management in pandemics.  Going out =/= Risk of ailment/death end. Staying out, makes the risk to others, far higher? | C+ (just if/when, stat bars, and meta actions is all.) | 1 ‘level’ (P.T Degree, horror- game) | B+  (need art to shine) | **Could?** | B |
| “3D Card Game” >Cultist Simulator- like gameplay? | Management, Homeless. Limited homes, and if “out” for too long, risk dying/disappearing.  Boon-like? In a “reality” of a housing crisis lens, with people as “pieces” to save, or discard. Give/take, mix with a Corona pandemic undertone, on limited charity & care in theme. | B+ (need some feature twiddle to work good. Time & actions more so) | 1 ‘loop’ (need timed events, looped resets, and new events to alter state of play itself.)  + Effort if including a Corvid element in the mix here. | D (art can be simple) | **Would** | C |
| “Third Idea” |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Research (This page) > Initial Concept (The Ideas!)

Design Doc (detail! Of chosen idea) > Design Sketches (Storyboard)

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Prototype (“Jam” Quality) > Testing (early bird test?)

Asset Creation (Or outsourcing of detailed assets) > Assembly (Add/include assets in game)

Testing (Then evaluation/upload, final test wise.)

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**VISUALISE IT! (By Pictures, ideally. Not words, alone.)**

**>Storyboards, before prototyping. Do the Must’s first, then do (the rest) ‘em!**