

WOLFJAM

2024



THE WIZARDS OF AI

PRESENT:

**EmoFusion: “Where emotions come
together and combine powers to progress”**
An interactive co-op puzzle/adventure game



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Introduction

For our Wolfjam 2024 hackathon in the spirit of promoting collaboration and celebrating the power of connection, we have developed a prototype of a deeply cooperative emotional 2D puzzle-adventure game that reinforces connecting with your peers or broader gaming community by having a combination of empathy echo and emotional resonance in which both players must work together to balance their external (empathy echo) and internal (emotional resonance) emotions. The game takes place in a surreal environment where players are deemed as “Emotion Weavers” and they are tasked with using their emotional abilities and work together to solve the puzzle. Each puzzle level contains an “empathy” meter which dictates whether the empathy is low or high based on the character’s emotional response in solving the puzzle.

Empathy Theory

“Empathy is an *emotional response (affective)*, dependent upon the interaction between *trait capacities* and *state influences*. Empathic processes are automatically elicited but are also shaped by *top-down control* processes. The resulting emotion is similar to one’s perception (directly experienced or imagined) and *understanding (cognitive empathy)* of the *stimulus emotion*, with recognition that the source of the emotion *is not one’s own.*”¹

We chose to have empathy be the center of our game because we strongly feel that the basis to have connection is showing and having empathy towards others. Which is how we landed on the idea of developing an interactive game that will show how we people feel and how we act when we are feeling those emotions. The game aims to have each player use their emotional ability or power to work together and solve a puzzle, hence having the users or **players learn how to be empathetic towards each other to move forward to the next level. If they fail to balance each other’s emotions, one player randomly loses control for 5 seconds and if the other player fails to revive the game, GAME OVER!**

¹ Chang-Arana et al., “Under the Umbrella: Components of Empathy in Psychology and Design.”

❖ Game Setting:

The game is set in “Empathylia,” a realm where emotions are the essence of existence. After a mysterious “fracture,” Empathylia’s emotional balance collapsed, creating zones of extreme emotion and trapping its inhabitants in endless loops of joy, sadness and anger.

- **Game Plot:**

Players are two "Emotion Weavers" tasked by the ancient "Heartforge" to heal Empathylia. However, they soon discover that their own emotional resonance is critical to the world's survival. As they repair emotional balance, they must confront their own self and reconcile differences between their emotional perspectives.

- **Main Scene:** Tutorial: Showing the abilities and introducing the characters
- **Level 1 Scene:** “The Land of Joy and Sadness:” Players can use their emotions (Joy and Sadness) to work together and resolve a challenge. Based on their actions the empathy meter increases or decreases. One player randomly loses control if the empathy meter turns 0 for one of the emotions

❖ Game Characteristics

- **Game Name:** EmoFusion: *“Where emotions come together and combine powers to progress.”*
- **Logo Concept:** Combined colors of joy, sadness, anger and empathy.



- **Main Elements:**

- **Emotions as Symbols:** Represent the main emotions (Joy, Anger, Sadness, Fear, etc.) as stylized icons or abstract symbols. These could be represented with colors, shapes, or elements (like a heart for love, a flame for anger, a droplet for sadness, etc.).
 - **Fusion of Powers:** Emphasize the idea of fusion, where these emotions come together. You could show these symbols merging or swirling together in a glowing, ethereal form.
 - **Magical Land (Empathylia):** To represent Empathylia, we used a “dreamscape” with mystical elements such as soft glowing lights, swirling clouds, enchanted trees, or magical artifacts.
 - **Typography:** The title "EmoFusion" is the centerpiece, with an enchanting font that gives off a mystical or magical vibe. The subtitle "Where emotions combine powers to progress" is in a smaller, simpler font beneath the main title to keep the focus on the name. Featuring “The Magical Land of Empathylia” since that is the dreamscape of the game.
- **Genre:** Co-op Puzzle/Adventure interactive game.
 - **Concept:** Have two players, two different emotions ***connect and collaborate with each other, understand their emotional abilities aka “powers” and work together*** in the magical land of Empathylia to fix the fracture and resolve emotional conflicts.
 - **Color palette:** Each character, tutorial and level in the game was chosen based on the color psychology explanation from the Mental Health America which states that color psychology determined that our mood is directly impacted by color. Colors influence our mood and behavior².
 - For EmoFusion, we incorporated the following:
 1. **Red** symbolizes the emotion of anger
 2. **Blue** symbolizes the emotion of sadness
 3. **Yellow** symbolizes the emotion of joy

² Mental Health America, “How Do Colors in My Home Change My Mood? Color Psychology Explained.”

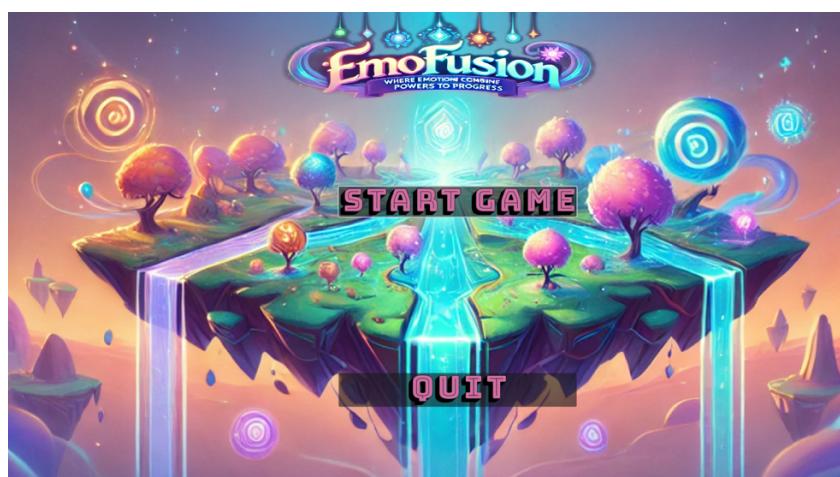
4. **Purple** symbolizes the emotion of fear
5. **Green** symbolizes the emotion of empathy.

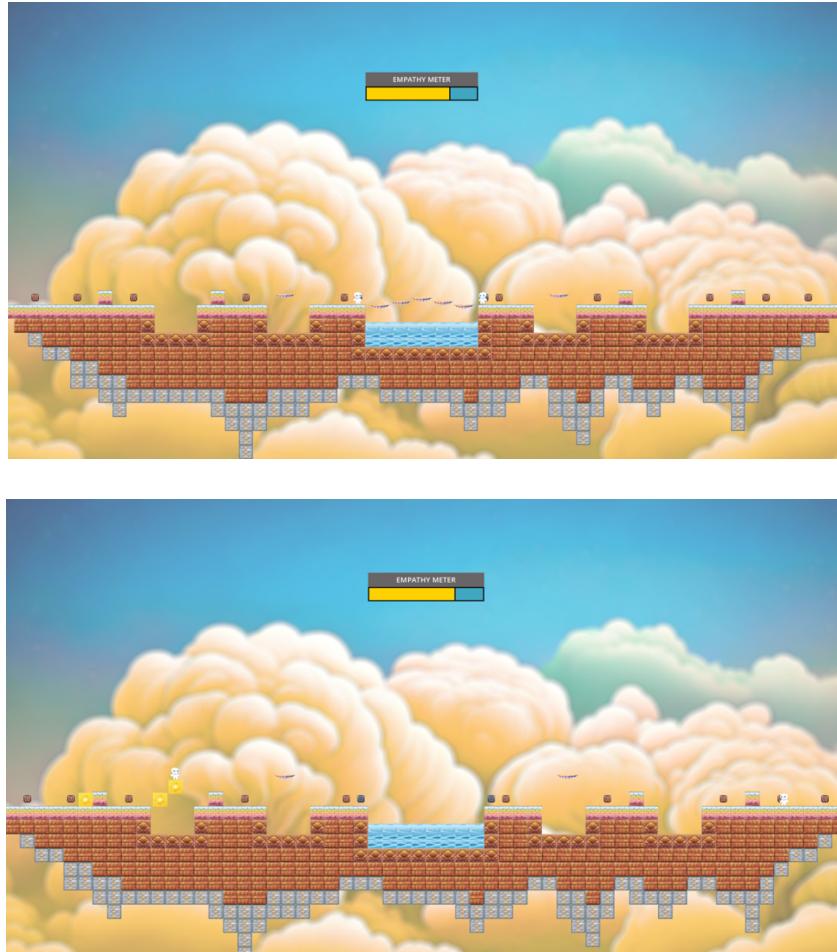
****Characters and their colors and emotional abilities:**

Emotion	Emotional Ability aka “Powers”	Character Color
Joy	Build bridges	Yellow: triggers feelings of happiness
Sadness	Creates body of water	Blue: triggers meditation and relaxation
Anger	Breaks blocks	Red: triggers emotions of passion, strength and power

❖ Game Visual and Audio Design

- **Art Style:** Dreamlike, watercolor-inspired landscapes that shift dynamically with emotional states. Pastel colors and cartoonish aesthetics were used.
- **Music:** Using AI to generate motion-driven dynamic soundtrack that layers instruments and themes based on the dominant emotion. Players hear distinct tones based on their chosen roles, which harmonize as they achieve resonance.





GoDot environment showing empathy meter in Tutorial.

❖ Assets and Environments:

The assets were created using Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.

The environment was created using GoDot game engine.

❖ Key Narrative:

- **Act 1: Awakening:**

Players learn to control their abilities and establish their Empathy Link. They explore the Neutral Zone, meeting NPCs who introduce the concept of emotional imbalances.

- **Act 2: Exploration:**

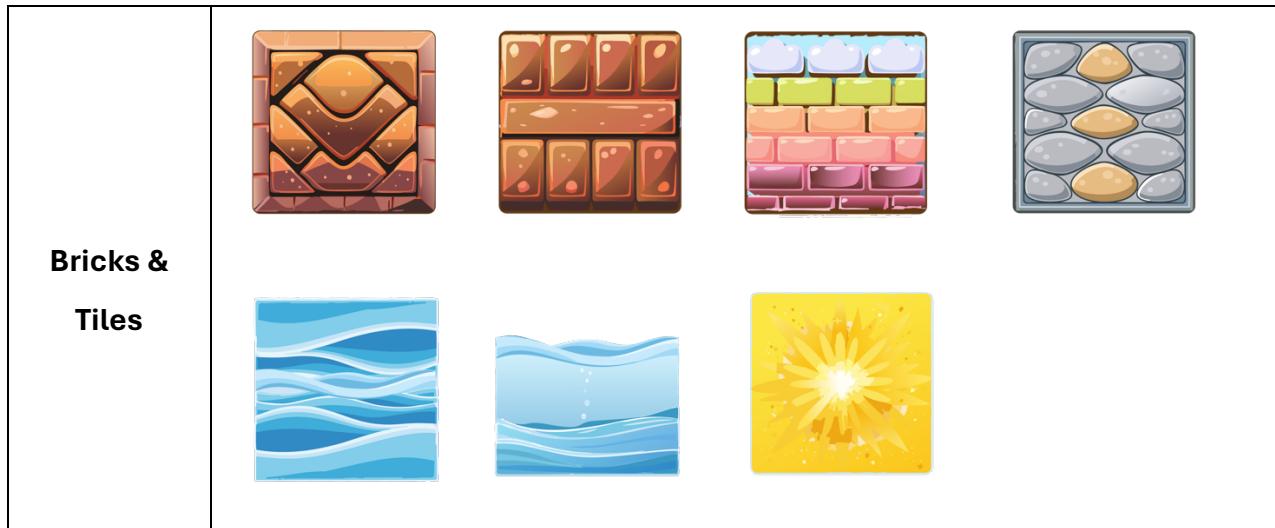
Players venture into emotional zones, each tied to a specific extreme:

1. **“The Land of Joy & Sadness”:** Illusions, puzzles.
2. **“The Inferno of Anger & Sadness”:** Chaotic, destructible environments.
3. **“The Desert of Sadness & Anger”:** Sparse, lonely puzzles that test patience.

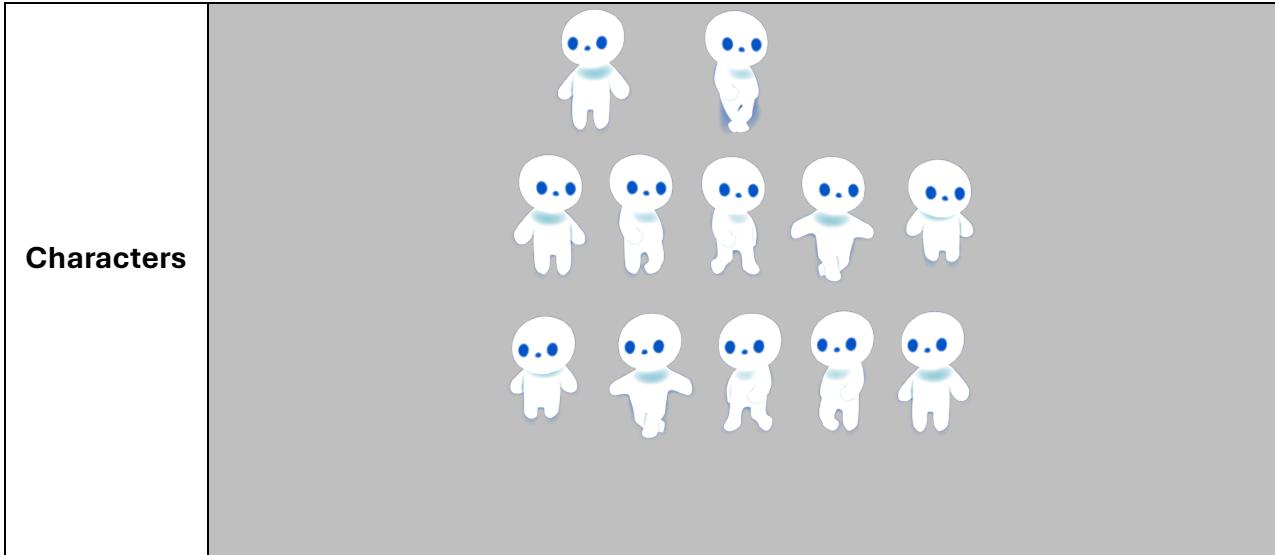
- **Act 3: Convergence:**

As players heal the zones, they uncover a greater truth: the Fracture was caused by the Heartforge itself, torn apart by its inability to reconcile its own emotions. To restore Empathylia, players must enter the Heartforge and resolve emotional traumas while confronting a final, corrupted emotional force.

❖ Game Assets



Platform	
Start Buttons	START GAME QUIT
Background 1	
Background 2	



❖ Gameplay Mechanics

- **Emotional Roles:** Each player embodies an emotion (e.g., Joy, Sadness, Anger)..
- **Emotion Influence:** If a player embodies "Anger," they might gain strength in breaking obstacles but risk destabilizing NPCs with their intensity.
- **Empathy Meter:** Players must monitor their own emotional harmony. Overloading on one emotion (e.g., too much Sadness) weakens their abilities and risks creating "Emotional Storms" that destabilize the environment.

❖ Future Implementations:

Link Challenges:

Certain puzzles require synchronized inputs or rhythm-based actions to reflect emotional harmony. If players drift too far emotionally (e.g., one overly Joyful, the other consumed by Fear), their Empathy Meter weakens, reducing their effectiveness.

Emotional Zones

Zones dominated by a single emotion (e.g., a Fearful Forest) require players to use combined abilities to restore balance.

Balancing a zone unlocks new pathways, restores beauty to the environment, and triggers story events.

Emotional Gameplay Loops

Emotional Echoes

Each NPC's backstory is tied to their emotional state. Players must explore their memories (manifested as mini-dungeons or dreamlike puzzles) to uncover what triggered their imbalance.

Example: An NPC trapped in Anger may require players to explore a "Memory Echo" of their betrayal. Players must soothe their rage by resonating with their pain and introducing Joy or Forgiveness.

Resonance Puzzles

Environmental puzzles require players to channel specific emotions together.

Example Puzzle: In the Fear Zone, a bridge appears when one player channels Courage (Joy + Anger) while the other suppresses Fear. Misalignment may cause the bridge to collapse.

Empathy Link Trials:

Certain story beats force players to confront their differences. These trials present moral or emotional dilemmas where players' decisions affect the strength of their bond.

Example Trial: Save an NPC consumed by Sadness at great personal cost or leave them to conserve energy for the final confrontation.

Endgame and Replayability:

The state of the world depends on how well players balanced emotions, zones, and their own emotional resonance. Outcomes range from restoring harmony to fragmenting the world further.

Replay Value: Different player roles and decisions encourage multiple playthroughs.

Multiplayer: multiple players with multiple emotions

References

- Chang-Arana, Álvaro M., Antti Surma-aho, Katja Hölttä-Otto, and Mikko Sams. “Under the Umbrella: Components of Empathy in Psychology and Design.” *Design Science* 8 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1017/dsj.2022.13>.
- Mental Health America. “How Do Colors in My Home Change My Mood? Color Psychology Explained.” Mental Health America, 2023. <https://mhanational.org/surroundings/color-psychology-explained>.