

Herbs and Dreams (working title)

"Herbs and Dreams" is a psychedelic narrative game drawing inspiration from the N64 classic, LSD Dream Emulator.

Game Concept:

Our central concept revolves around the profound significance of dreams in indigenous societies, where they are far from the trivial banalities we often perceive them to be. Here, dreams bear spiritual meaning and serve as invaluable tools for divination, healing, problem-solving, and understanding the world. Among these societies, there exist individuals with the extraordinary gift of dream interpretation, often religious leaders or those considered spiritually gifted. Their role is twofold: to master the art of dreaming with intent - sometimes through the use of herbs and other natural extracts -, guiding their visions toward the needs of the community, and to employ their dreamscapes to influence decision-making - predicting wars, natural disasters, diagnosing illnesses, and more.

In our game, you step into the shoes of one such gifted individual - the sole dreamer of your village, bearing both the prestige and responsibility that comes from that. Your journey begins as the enigmatic "Page" - the village's spiritual guide whose dreams have now fallen silent - teaches you about your role and about the use of different sacred herbs. These herbs, with their unique properties and combinations, offer the ability to access different dream worlds with shifting aesthetics, puzzles, dialogues, and, most importantly, the cryptic and surreal experience of the LSD-inspired dreamscapes. The player's quest is to master these herbs, unlocking the secrets they hold within, and employing them effectively to solve the many quests presented by the villagers.

Gameplaywise,, I think the herbs can alter the the dream world in three ways:

- Alter the dreamworld **as a whole**
- Change **elements** in the dream world
- Give you different **abilities** in the dream

You can combine one of each type in order to "find" what you're looking for (for example, one herb gets you to a dream world that has something hidden in a tall platform, you'd need to have used the herb that gets you the "high jump" ability).

Within the game's framework, you alternate between two realms: the "real" world of the village, where interactions with the Page and other villagers occur, where you can find new herbs, maybe play some minigames. The other realm are the ever changing dream worlds, which should take center stage in our development, each offering its

own unique aesthetics and narrative elements that serve as the epicenter of the gameplay experience.

Beyond the game concept, I think we should embrace a development philosophy that prioritizes the process over the end result. Let our approach be one of collaborative evolution, where every team member's contribution is valued and the exchange of ideas is encouraged. Let's use Discord to track progress, share insights, and collectively shape the game's trajectory. A repository of references should inspire our aesthetics and narrative direction. As we move forward, we can establish goals and adjust them as needed.

Game Name: Herbs and Dreams (working title)

Main Concept: Delve into the profound significance of dreams, as experienced in indigenous societies, where dreams hold spiritual, divinatory, and problem-solving importance. Step into the shoes of a unique character in the village, the sole individual who has the ability to dream with intention and meaning, using sacred herbs.

Gameplay: Navigate between two distinct realms, the "real" village and the fantastical dreamscapes. You interact with characters and receive different quests in the real world, and then use different herbs to shape the dream world in ways that will help you with these quests.

Narrative: Philosophical and enigmatic, something like Pathologic 2 but less gritty and more psychedelic.

Art and Aesthetics: PS1 style... What more?

Music: More natural sounds for the village, more artificial sounds for the dreams. Maybe herbs change the music too.