

# Game Design

## High Level Concept/Design

### Working Title

#### Meat Cogito

Plays off the quote “*Cogito, ergo sum*” (Translates to “*I Think, Therefore I am*” - Rene Descartes)  
Meat refers to the being (aka the player), and Cogito derives from the philosophy of a being establishing it exists through its thinking/awareness.

### Concept statement

Meat Cogito is a narrative horror game where the player, a being of pure thought, transforms based on their perception of humanity, questioning identity, existence, and reality itself—will they become human, a monster, or break free from the illusion?

### Genre(s)

Meat Cogito is a narrative body horror game blending psychological, surreal, and philosophical horror.

### Target audience

The target audience for Meat Cogito consists of players who enjoy **narrative-driven horror experiences** with surreal, psychological, and philosophical themes. This includes fans of experimental horror games such as Mouthwashing and How a Fish is Made.

It also appeals to those who enjoy literature and philosophy, especially themes related to **René Descartes, consciousness, and identity**.

### Unique Selling Points

- **Transformation-Based Gameplay** – The player starts as a brain and gradually constructs their body based on their perception of humanity, leading to different possible forms and outcomes.
- **Philosophical Horror Rooted in Descartes' Ideology** – The game explores the nature of existence through the lens of Cogito, ergo sum, making players question what it means to be human.
- **Surreal and Psychological Horror** – Inspired by Wrong Organ games, the unsettling atmosphere blends **dreamlike visuals, abstract logic, and existential dread** to create a unique horror experience

## Player Experience and Game POV

### Who is the player?

- The player begins as a disembodied brain- a fragmented consciousness. As you progress through the story you construct your own form based on the evolving perception of what it means to be human.

### Fantasy

- The game grants the player the ability to define their own humanity, what will you become or will you break free?

### Emotions

- The player should feel existential dread, self-awareness, and unease.

### Engagement

- Mystery surrounding their existence, and the world's surreality
- Transformation surrounding the narrative choices.

## Visual and Audio Style

### Look and feel

- Surreal body horror, abstract spaces, with an art style reminiscent of Mouthwashing & Puppet Combo games.
- The world shifts between flesh and void, mirroring the players evolving form and perception.

### Audio Style

- Distorted sounds, uncanny human-like sounds, and minimalist yet unsettling music.

## Game World Fiction

### Themes:

- Descartes' philosophy (Cogito, ergo sum).
- Identity, transformation, and self-awareness.
- The horror of being and the fear of nothingness.

### Player-Relevant Narrative:

## Product Design

- The world reacts to their choices and physical changes.
- Their form dictates their perception—are they in a body, a nightmare, or a simulation?
- They must choose: **accept their existence, become something monstrous, or escape entirely.**

## Core Loops

**Perception & Choice** – The player makes choices about what "human" means.

**Transformation & Adaptation** – Their body shifts based on these choices.

**Exploration & Discovery** – The world reacts to their form and perception.

**Narrative Progression** – They uncover clues about their reality.

**Engagement:** Players are drawn in by the mystery of their form and the world's shifting nature.

**Emergent Results:**

- Different players will experience **unique transformations and endings.**
- Some will become monstrous, others will remain disembodied, and some may "awaken" from the simulation

## Objectives and Progression

**Short-Term Goals:**

- Assemble a body through choices and interactions.
- Explore and understand the world.

**Long-Term Goals:**

- Uncover the truth—what is real?
- Decide their fate—remain, transcend, or escape.

**Progression System:**

- **Choice-based evolution**—the player's body changes based on their perception of "self."
- **Narrative branches**—the world reacts differently based on their form.

## Game Systems

**Internal Systems:**

- Simulation system tracking **player thoughts, choices, and body changes.**
- Reality distortion mechanics—**the world subtly warps based on the player's perception.**

**Player-Interacting Systems:**

- Transformation system—**the body evolves through interactions.**
- Dialogue & introspection system—**player thoughts shape their reality.**
- Environmental storytelling—**clues hidden in the world rather than direct exposition.**

## Interactivity

**Moment-by-Moment Gameplay:**

- Player moves through **shifting, eerie environments.**
- Makes **decisions that alter their body and perspective.**
- Encounters entities that may be **fragments of their consciousness or illusions.**

**Player Movement:**

- **Exploration-focused** (walking, interacting, examining objects).
- Some areas may be **locked behind certain transformations.**

**Physics/Mechanics:**

- **Body changes affect movement and perception.**
- Example: A **monstrous form may cause NPCs to react differently.**