Vanishing Point (GDD)

# 1. Core Concept

* Title (Working Title): Vanishing Point
* Genre: Narrative-driven, psychological mystery, isometric adventure
* Theme: Melancholy, dreamlike, unsettling, introspective
* Setting: A small, isolated mountain town with disappearing people
* Core Mystery: The world is a dream, and the protagonist is in a coma
* Key Influences: *Disco Elysium* (dialogue, exploration), *Twin Peaks*, *Life is Strange* (eerie small town), *Lindlar* (location)
* Mood & Tone: Dark, dreamlike, subtly surreal

# 2. Story & Narrative

## 2.1 Premise

* The protagonist is investigating disappearances in a quiet mountain town.
* Strange, surreal events begin to occur. Hint at a deeper mystery.
* Over time, the player realizes the world is a dream formed by a comatose mind.
* Fantasy elements represent fears, regrets, and hopes of the dreamer.
* Choices affect the town and its inhabitants, shaping the dreamer’s psyche.

## 2.2 The Player Character

* Background: Recently hospitalized, memory hazy.
* Role: Investigator or outsider trying to make sense of the town.
* Personality: Defined by player choices (similar to Disco Elysium’s internal monologue).
* Motivation: Driven by curiosity, a personal stake, or an external force.

## 2.3 Key Characters & Their Symbolism

* The Dreamer: The comatose person shaping the world.
* Town Inhabitants: Each represents a memory, fear, or hope.
* Antagonistic Force: Could be a shadowy presence, a doctor, or an entity representing death or despair. *[TODO: Add more on how this force interacts with the player]*
* Missing People: Do they represent lost memories, fading hope, or something else?

## 2.4 Story Progression

* Act 1: Establish the town, disappearances, and protagonist’s search for answers.
* Act 2: Reality starts shifting—fantasy elements become more prominent.
* Act 3: The player pieces together the truth, but the ending varies based on choices.
* *[TODO: Add more branching paths or possible twists]*

# 3. Gameplay Mechanics

## 3.1 Exploration & Interaction

* Isometric movement
* Freeform dialogue system with branching choices
* Interactive objects with environmental storytelling

## 3.2 Dialogue System

* Inspired by *Disco Elysium* (internal thoughts, branching responses)
* Choices affect character relationships and town perception
* Possible “inner voice” mechanic (representing subconscious) *[TODO: Add more on how choices shape the dream world]*

## 3.3 Choice & Consequence

* Player decisions shape the town (e.g., buildings change, people vanish, time loops occur)
* Dialogue affects NPCs and their fates
* Multiple endings based on psychological state *[TODO: Define specific possible endings]*

## 3.4 Fantasy Elements & Dream Logic

* Objects, locations, and people shift based on the dreamer’s psyche
* Supernatural occurrences (time dilation, repeated conversations, impossible architecture)
* Town is both familiar and alien to the player

# 4. Art & Aesthetic

* Style: Dark, moody, stylized low-poly or painterly 3D
* Color Palette: Muted, cool tones, occasional warm highlights for emotional moments
* Lighting: Soft and atmospheric, with heavy shadows and fog
* UI: Minimalist, diegetic where possible (i.e., no obvious menus, in-world clues)
* *[TODO: Add more references or specific inspirations]*

# 5. Technical Implementation

## 5.1 Engine & Tools

* Engine: Custom-built using ThreeJS
* Language: TypeScript
* Rendering: Isometric projection with 2D models
* Packaging the web tech: Electron (Chromium + Node.js)
* Map Editor: [Tiled](http://www.mapeditor.org/)
* Dialogue Editor: Custom engine edited with a custom tool or TBD

## 5.2 AI & NPC Behavior

* NPCs follow schedules, but schedules shift as the dream becomes unstable
* Certain NPCs may vanish depending on choices *[TODO: Add more on procedural behaviors or scripted events]*

# 6. Audio & Music

* Sound Design: Subtle, ambient, occasional distorted reality effects
* Music: Melancholic, piano or synth-heavy, possibly reactive to choices
* Voice Acting: Sparse, used mainly in black-screen intermissions for hospital dialogue

# 7. User Interface & UX

* Minimalist UI: No intrusive HUD, use environmental cues
* Dialogue System: Branching, text-heavy but intuitive
* Inventory/Notes System: If needed, a diegetic approach (e.g., protagonist sketches or journals clues) *[TODO: Decide if a notebook/log system is necessary]*

# 8. Development Roadmap

## 8.1 Pre-Production

Concept & Narrative Framework  
 Basic Gameplay & Interaction Prototyping

## 8.2 Alpha Build

Core mechanics implemented (movement, dialogue, exploration)  
 Art style prototypes  
 First playable segment with interactive NPCs

## 8.3 Beta Build

Full narrative flow from start to finish  
 Polish on art, animations, and effects  
 Music and sound design pass

## 8.4 Final Release

Final bug fixes, optimization  
 Voice and sound finalization  
 Marketing & distribution planning