TRANSCENDENCE

Week 8

OPENING

Greetings! As discussed in our feedback last week, this week team Transcendence brainstormed new ways to eliminate the distinct sections of education and gameplay in our project. After consulting with our resident professional game design guru, Jesse Schell of Schell Games, we brainstormed a new game design that uses education to fuel/affect gameplay rather than obstructing it. Subsequently we discussed our action plan for realizing the idea in playable form so that we can conduct a suitable playtest before our mid-semester presentations.

BREAKDOWN

We spent the first half of the week discussing multiple ideas before settling on a platform/collection game design that will require players to give their attention to identifying components of the cognitive triangle (thoughts, feelings, and behaviors) in order to progress through the game. We believe this design will greatly strengthen the educational component of our project by making it part of the fun.

BRIEFING

Challenges we faced this week included: deciding whether to amend our current game design based on user and faculty feedback or generate a new design, generating new designs that fulfill client goals yet don't involve concepts that fall outside of client constraints, and coming up with new designs that utilize as much of the assets we've already created as possible while requiring the least amount of new assets to be created.

Deciding whether or not to revisit our brainstorming phase ultimately came down to a decision on whether we felt our project's current design was the most effective way to achieve our client goals as well as our personal project goals.

We felt that if users experienced boredom during the most crucial parts of the game in which the dialogue is meant to teach them about the cognitive triangle, then we needed to come up with a design that incorporates the education into what we observed as their favorite part of the game: chasing Monkey.

With regard to generating game designs that fit our constraints, we spent significant time throwing out ideas, identifying ways in which they don't meet our needs, discussing whether the gameplay's metaphor obfuscates or even contradicts our educational message, and determining any possible ways that the game world could evoke detrimental emotions from traumatized patients that would experience it. We iterated and refined our idea to the point that we can now use our next playtest to verify our hypothesis.

Lastly, in order to address internal concerns of efficiency and project timeline expectations/deadlines, we deliberated on what assets could be preserved in our new game design, if the story would need to be adjusted and how to communicate it within this new gameplay, and what/how many art and sound assets would need to be generated for the new idea. By examining our internal work efficiency records over this semester, we planned out the amount of assets we can realistically generate and how we can execute them (specifically the art animation) within the game.

CLOSING

This next week will be dedicated to prototyping our new design in order to conduct an appropriate playtest as soon as possible. We will be looking to expand our test user size and demographic by playtesting with nearby school students within our age demographic. Once again we are team Transcendence. Until next week!