Concept Summary – “Fragments”

The main character in Fragments is a single being shattered into three emotional states after an internal breakdown triggered by constant pressure and overstimulation. These states, Fear (Square), Anger (Triangle), and Joy (Circle), represent fragments of the self fighting to reunite and regain control of the whole identity.

In the context of the game, these emotional fragments must battle their way through corrupted environments, defeating enemies that represent stressors, intrusive thoughts, and toxic influences. Their goal: ascend a hostile, distorted mental landscape to confront the “boss”, the ego that split them apart. The deeper they go, the more the world visually and psychologically unravels.

The character is motivated by a desire to restore balance, not to eliminate emotions, but to reintegrate them into a functioning self.

Interview Integration:

The interview I conducted (a self-interview) revealed that I often separate emotions when under pressure. I visualized myself as three conflicting states, which directly inspired the trio’s design. For instance:

- Fear tends to freeze or withdraw (reflected in the Square’s slow, cautious movement),
- Anger charges ahead recklessly (Triangle’s attack-based abilities),
- Joy overcompensates through distraction or denial (Circle’s high-speed dodging, but weaker combat).

This personal insight helped define not only their abilities but how they interact with the world and each other. I wanted the player to feel the conflict of having

all these emotions compete, but realize that winning means using them together.

Creative Process:

Initially, I sketched basic shape-based characters, but they felt too abstract. Through experimentation, I added more robotic and humanoid features that still reflected the core shape. For example, Anger's body is made of hard-edged armor, while Joy has light, hovering limbs. (I never got to complete Joy because of the character amount constraints)

I developed each state to have unique combat styles and emotional "filters" that distort the environment (e.g., Joy sees the world brighter, but enemies are harder to spot). This layered how players engage with environments based on emotional perspective, an idea sparked by my psychology research on attentional guidance and affordances.

Final Mini-Game Concept:

Fragments is a 3rd person, level-based game where players switch between the three emotional states to overcome enemy types and environmental puzzles. Each level represents a deeper layer of the fractured mind, with environments becoming more unstable the closer the player gets to the central "core." The final boss is a towering shell of the original self, cold, numb, and isolated. Reuniting requires all three emotional forms to work together in a climactic team-based battle. (Similar to fire boy and water girl).