Attack
an immersive anxiety experience

Attack is a VR project that aims to create a visually immersive translation of obsessive thoughts in a clinically anxious mind during an anxiety attack through interactive typography, aiming to expand understanding, education, and empathy of the struggles surrounding anxiety disorders. Common anxiety disorders cause racing thoughts of worry, fear, self-deprecation, and negativity. Anxious thoughts are typically obsessive and intrusive, and when anxious thoughts race in one’s mind, it can cause an anxiety attack.

My scene includes typical anxious thoughts moving quickly across the scene like racing thoughts do in one’s mind, starting with an empty scene listing some common triggers of anxiety. The thoughts are sparse in number, but as time goes by they will appear more frequently and finally consume the scene, mimicking the overwhelming feeling of the climax of an anxiety attack. To translate these racing and uncontrollable thoughts typographically, the type varies in size and is layered across the scene with bright colors and varying opacities. Camera effects distort and blur the type, creating a disorienting atmosphere. Audio supplements the scene with heartbeat sounds and disorienting noises that intensify as the scene progresses, further immersing the viewer into an anxious headspace.
Beginning of the anxiety attack before and after collision, showing the stretching and pulling of the type.

The scenes interactions are collision-based so upon colliding with certain thoughts, the type will distort and move more quickly out of vision. This is a visual representation of one trying to push thoughts away from their mind in order to calm down, which was achieved through C# scripting.

Ultimately, the purpose of my project is to let those without anxiety disorders step into an anxious mind during an anxiety attack in order to better understand the struggles of people with clinical anxiety, and it’s personal to myself and my own struggles with multiple anxiety disorders.

References

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