Grapple Doc

V1.6

Date	Version	Author	Changes
6.28.12	1.6	Glenn G	• minor tweaks after implementation meeting to clarify things

Grapple Design

According to the design of the game and the show as an intended whole, the player should fear a group of Walkers. Even a small group should be approached with caution; however, currently a skilled player can easily dispense a large group of Walkers with little fear of getting over run. Grapple is the missing piece to Walker combat to achieve this. Consequently this design is deliberately harsh on the player to achieve our target number of 3-5 Walkers being lethal to the player.

How is the Grapple loop initiated?

- a slow, well telegraphed attack from the Walkers themselves – a lunging grab that a player can side step if they are aware
- with each repeated hits hit from the same Walker, the chance to initiate a grapple is increased
- planned events set up by an LD, I.E. the Lunger. Note: since grapple will be far harsher now, these event will need to be planned so that a player being careful will not immediately get over run by other Walkers in the area, unless they are running around training a bunch of Walkers .
- something to test is a grabble if a player tries to run through a group of Walkers trying to muscle their way through

What happens when a player is grappled?

- the player automatically rotate to face their attacker (player is now immobile)
- the player puts out their left hand (or forearm - animators choice) onto the chest of the Walker to slow the progress of the Walker coming in to bite them
- the Walker will slowly move in for the bite. The player is trying to resist but with each passing second it is coming closer and closer with its mouth opening wider and wider with that sense of eager anticipation of that first juicy bite of living flesh
  - o this is one animation that should take about 2-3 seconds. 1 second for the player react to the grab, then the move in an bite animation takes 2-3 seconds - however this will be a variable animation based on the time needed.
- the camera swings wildly where the targeting redicle is off center screen
- the player weapon in their right hand will be replaced by a hunting knife that they pull out. Note: as nice as it would be for us to be able to use the current weapon the player is using for this mechanic of the game, the amount of animation work would be too much give the time
- during this immobile time other Walkers can join in the grapple by forming a queue behind the primary grabbing Walker (see the grapple queue section in this document)
  - o animation note – these Walkers in the grapple queue should look like they are reaching over and around the primary walker the player is dealing with

So once grappled, how can the player defend themselves?

The player now has 2 choices to defend themselves, which they can swap between either option as long as long as they have time before the Walker bites them.

- o **Brunt force Walker beat down**

- The gameplay purpose of the Walker beat down is it should take longer than a execution maneuver and make more noise with the struggle, but be simpler to perform
- a beat down designed to mirror a frantic panicked stabbing.
- The RB shove/melee button is used with a on screen representation 1:1 panicked frantic stabbing around the head and neck of the Walker with every push of the button (actually it won't be 1:1, but it should feel as close as we can)
  - with every punch stab the walker reacts or should get a cut in the stabbing area
- after repeated blows (6 ish?) the player is able to get a killing blow to the Walker and it drops to the ground dead
- if this is the last Walker in the queue, normal control is returned to the player, if not the camera shifts to the next one

  o **Execution maneuver**
  - The gameplay purpose of the Execution maneuver is to be a more skilled form of hand to hand combat which (when preformed correctly) is faster and silent when compared to the beat down
  - to pull off a execution maneuver the player must guide the wildly swing weapon redicle to the Walkers head and press the weapon attack button (trigger)
    - the on screen representation is the pay out of a a single gory successful kill stab (stab in eye, ear, etc would be nice to get kill variation based on where on the head the cursor is)
  - a player missing with their kill shot will have to reset in order to try again with a miss animation resulting in a time penalty
  - if this is the last Walker in the queue, normal control is returned to the player, if not the camera shifts to the next one

Grapple queue

The purpose of the grapple queue is a "line" of walker waiting to grab the player like when Grimes gets 3 walkers on top of him in the show. It also serves as a physical representation of how many Walkers on the player. If too many queue up, the player is overwhelmed and die. To prevent the player from getting in an infinite grapple queue the grapple queue will need to get progressively harder. With each consequent Walker to move front in the queue, the camera redicle swing will get a little more wilder and harder to control, as well as the player will have less time to perform either a beat down or execution maneuver. This will naturally result in the death of the player.

- when grappled, only Walkers in view will be able to queue up in an attempt to overrun the player - let's start with just over the front view angle of the play for testing.
- queued Walkers will stand behind the one the player is actually dealing with and need to be obviously reaching for the player as well.
- Walkers out of view may attempt to wander into view or wait till the situation has been dealt with before returning to normal A.I. behavior
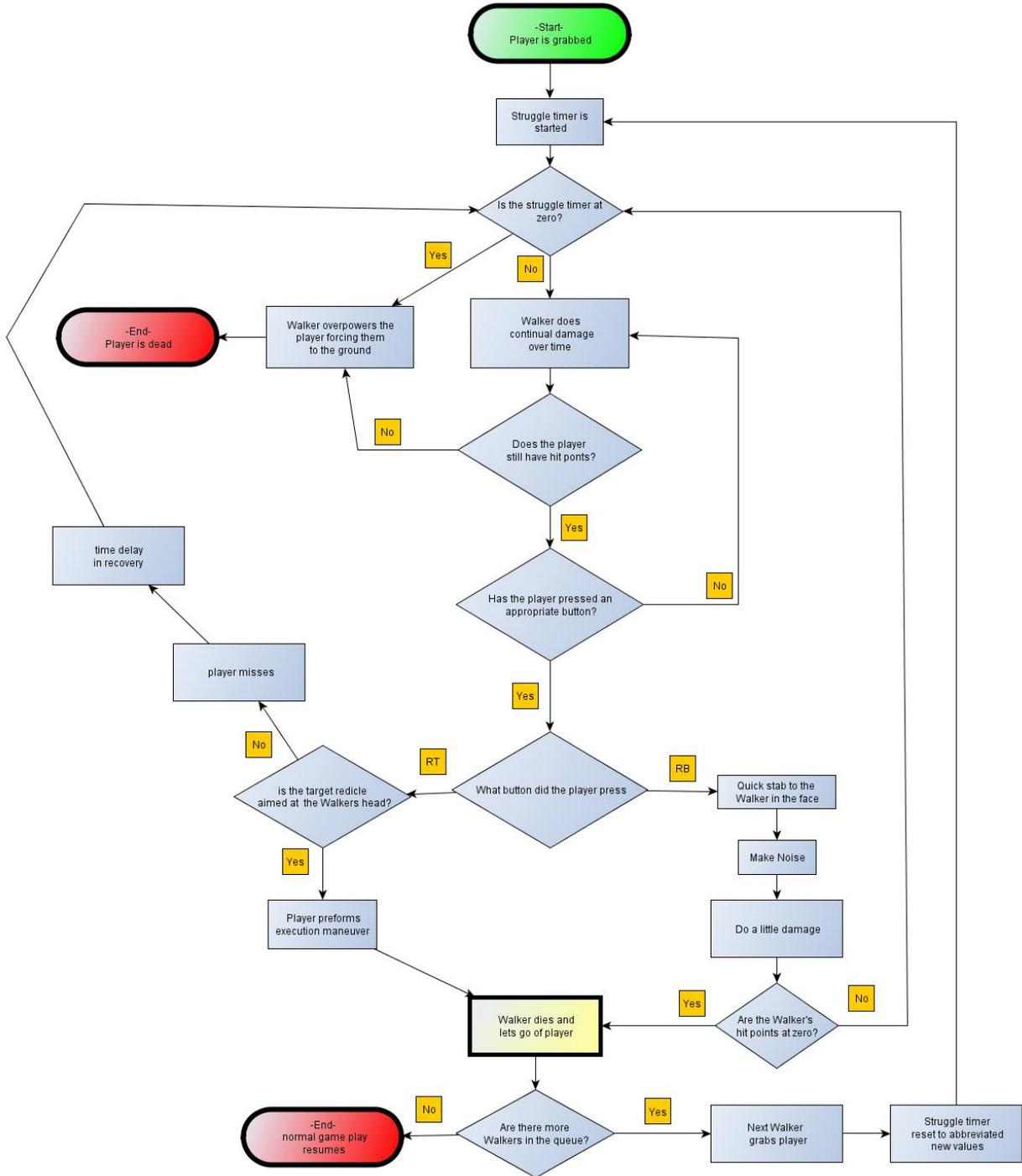
- when a player kills one Walker they must immediately deal with the next in the queue - this should be as seamless of a transition as possible
- when a fourth Walker successfully joins the queue the player is overwhelmed and falls backwards to their death animation

Failing the grapple mini game

Failing the grapple mini game results in the death of the player. This happens by either the player not killing the grappling Walker(s) in the time allotted, or 3 Walkers queue up into the grapple queue. Since the Walker queue adds to the challenge of each subsequence Walker, the following table should be referenced for target numbers of how many Walkers an active player should be able to get through before getting over run.

walker 1 grapple time line

| grab | struggle | | fail |

player
reaction
time

| aim............ | execute |

| beat down hit x6 | | execute |

walker 2 grapple time line

| grab | struggle | fail |

player
reaction
time

| aim............ | execute |

| beat down hit x6 | | execute |

walker 3 grapple time line

| grab | struggle | fail |

player
reaction
time

| aim............ | execute |

| beat down hit x6 | | execute |

walker 4 grapple time line

| grab | struggle | fail |

player
reaction
time

| aim............ | execute |

| beat down hit x6 | | ☹ |

walker 5 grapple time line

| grab | struggle | fail |

player
reaction
time

| aim............ | ☹ |

| beat down hit x6 | ☹ |

Grapple Flow Chart

-Start-
Player is grabbed

Struggle timer is started

Is the struggle timer at zero?

Yes → No

Yes: Walker overpowers the player forcing them to the ground

No: Walker does continual damage over time

Walker overpowers the player forcing them to the ground → **-End-** Player is dead

Does the player still have hit ponts?

No → Walker overpowers the player forcing them to the ground

Yes ↓

Has the player pressed an appropriate button?

No → Walker does continual damage over time

Yes ↓

What button did the player press

RT ← → RB

RB: Quick stab to the Walker in the face → Make Noise → Do a little damage

RT: is the target redicle aimed at the Walkers head?

No → player misses → time delay in recovery

Yes → Player preforms execution maneuver

Walker dies and lets go of player

Are the Walker's hit points at zero?

Yes → Walker dies and lets go of player

No → Walker does continual damage over time

Are there more Walkers in the queue?

No → **-End-** normal game play resumes

Yes → Next Walker grabs player → Struggle timer reset to abbreviated new values

Implementation plan

Given the time we have to implement before vertical slice, I know it sounds backwards but a backward implantation of grapple is recommended.

- first pass on grapple design
  - o one Walker grapples with the player and the player pushing back as the Walker leans in and bites them - near final animation
  - o player has one button press to execute the walker (no gameplay or aiming) and stop the process of the grapple animation - near final animation and FX
- second pass (in order of implementation)
  - o implement execution maneuver mini game
  - o implement beat down minigame
    - ▪ determine time to kill Walkers
  - o implement walker queue (represented by current grapple animation and numbers for other walkers)
    - ▪ determine how many Walkers can queue before the player fails
- third pass
  - o polish art and animation
    - ▪ other walkers in queue animation
  - o final gameplay balance
    - ▪ polish frequency of grapple in game