STEVEN SAYLOR: Hello. In this module, we're going to be looking at the specific accessibility barriers that we commonly see when it comes to video games. I'm going to show some best practices on how to be able to utilize them and some good examples. I don't want to necessarily show any bad examples of games because I don't want to necessarily call specific games out. Not just to protect the developers or anything like that at all. It's more of just I want to be able to show you what should be or can be a standard for accessibility that is done extremely well in hopes that, basically, you'll be able to see that and be like, "Oh, I can emulate this when I'm developing games or when I'm looking at games from an accessibility standpoint." We're going to be starting off with the game, The Last of Us Part II. It's developed by Naughty Dog for Sony on the PlayStation platform. Full disclosure, I was one of the consultants on The Last of Us Part II. Essentially, I was brought in, as well as seven other accessibility consultants, to help develop and provide feedback for some of the accessibility

features that you see in the game. There are over 60-plus

accessibility options in this game. And the reason why we're looking

at The Last of Us Part II is mostly from that standpoint, in that the

reason why that 60-plus accessibility options is worth calling out is

because it is the first time that we've ever really had a game of this

magnitude and of this size actually have accessibility as a major part

of the development process, and also a major part of how the game

can be played. If you don't know what The Last of Us Part II is... Just

to kind of give you a bit of a brief history, The Last of Us Part II is a

sequel to the 2013 game called The Last of Us. It was originally

released on the PlayStation 3, and then was remastered for the

PlayStation 4 when that came out within that same year. It is

considered one of the best games of that generation. So that means

that of the PlayStation 4 and the PlayStation 3 generation of

consoles, it has been considered the best game of that generation. It

revolves around the story of Joel, in 20 years past the post-

apocalyptic virus that has turned people into what they commonly

call as Clickers. To put it in sort of a colloquial term or at least a pop

culture reference, basically, it turns people into zombies. And Joel,

basically, has been fighting the... basically, trying to stay alive in this

sort of post-apocalyptic world where martial law is in place, and you

can't really trust anybody, and you're just trying to survive. Well, Joel

encounters a girl, a teenage girl named Ellie. And Ellie supposedly got

bit by one of these Clickers, and does not turn, does not become

infected. So she supposedly has a cure inside her that can be used to

be able to hopefully cure this disease. Sound a little bit familiar? I

know, I get it. But this was 2013. This is kind of like the zombie

apocalypse sort of storybook. It's just this is how it was sort of

created. And, essentially, you are now tasked to protect Ellie as both

of you trek across the country in order to find a group called the

Fireflies, to try to be able to get access to this cure. Well, The Last of

Us Part II takes place a couple years after the events of The Last of Us

Part I where, instead of playing as Joel, you're actually playing as

Ellie, 18-slash-19-year-old Ellie, and you are basically... I won't spoil it

but, essentially, you kind of are on a bit of a revenge type quest that

leads you to many different places, and this was a game that was

highly anticipated. Again, because the first game was a game of the

generation, this game is probably like, to again put it in pop culture

reference, the anticipation for this game was essentially the anticipation that people had for the Avengers movies when they come out. That's how big of a deal this actually is. So, what was great about this game was that, not only was it one of the most highly anticipated games and won so many game-of-the-year awards last year, when it was released in 2020, but it actually had probably the best and is the most accessible game that we have had to date, as of this recording. This sort of sets a tentpole within the accessibility community where, essentially... If you took a look at the history of accessibility module that I did, essentially, you would know that, over the past 10 years, this is sort of like that tentpole moment where it was everything that led up to, for accessibility, up to The Last of Us Part II, and now we're going to be in the after of Last of Us Part II. This doesn't mean that now accessibility is solved. This doesn't mean that accessibility is now, "Okay, we're done. We're great." The Last of Us Part II proves that, okay, we are now at the end of the beginning instead of at the end of accessibility. It means that, basically, we're just getting started and we have so much more still to go. But this is a great example to be able look at and see what it is that Naughty Dog

did right, what Sony allowed them to be able to do, and what sort of

features can be used for accessibility and allow players from all

different sides of the spectrum for disability can be able to play this

game. I've heard from so many different people who have played this

game, who have different disabilities. They actually have been able

to not only play this game but enjoy it and actually complete the

game. That is also rare in the disability community because there is

not a lot of games that we can play that we can actually can be able

to finish from beginning to end, whereas this game is one of those

games that can allow you to do that. I'm just going to give you a

quick look in the accessibility menu for this game before we jump

into the modules for the individual disability types. So I'm going to

take a look at that right now. Now, I'm actually in the options menu

right now. I'm sort of in an encounter that I'll actually be using to

showcase several accessibility options when we get into those

modules, but I'm going to take a look at the options. Now, you may

be able to get to this at any given point, whether it's the beginning of

the game or before you even launch into the game. Or, when you're

in the game itself, you can just hit the options button on the

controller, and it'll take you to the settings menu. Now, if you go into

the options and scroll all the way to the bottom, you'll see the

accessibility menu. And in there, there are several submenus of

accessibility for everything from alternative controls, magnification

and visual aids, motion sickness, navigation and traversal, text-to-

speech and audio cues, as well as combat accessibility. Now, actually,

I have the gameplay muted right now so you're just hearing my voice.

The reason why I'm doing that is because there actually is an

accessibility feature that is running literally right now in the

background, but you can't hear it because I have it muted, is that

there is actually a text-to-speech narrator that reads out every single

piece of text that is in the game. I'll go into more detail on that when

we get to the visual disability module, but that's the reason why

you're not hearing any audio sound effects for this particular intro.

But I do want to be able to call out one thing. So, as you can see in

this submenu, there is so many different options. Unfortunately, I

will not be able to go through every single accessibility option that is

in this game because, literally, this could be a whole master class of

just going through each individual option that is in the settings menu.

But I'm only going to be highlighting just a few for this particular

course, just to kind of give you a quick look into accessibility when

done right in a game. Even still... Now, that's just in the accessibility

menu. If you go into other settings menu here, if I go into the audio,

you can see there are even more settings you can be able to adjust

based upon whatever works best for you that is not necessarily just

in the accessibility menu. So, again, you can customize this game to

however you wish, and whatever makes you feel comfortable. And

there are going to be settings in here that people are going to

probably find, years to come, that they didn't even realize that was

there. That's how in-depth and how much customization Naughty

Dog gave the players to be able to customize the game so that it'll

allow players to be able to play the game and be able to not only play

it, but enjoy it and complete it. Now, I'm going to actually go back

into the accessibility menu here, and I just want to call out one

particular thing in general. Now, I actually have to hide my camera

just for a second. But essentially, if you see the bottom right-hand

corner, there is a button for presets. If I hit on that on the controller,

it'll actually bring up three preset options you can be able to turn on

or off. Now, this actually loads as soon as you get into the game

itself, so you actually can be able to enable all of these before the

game even starts. And what's amazing about this is that, because

there are so many options in the game, it would take forever for

anyone who has a visual disability or a deaf or hard-of-hearing

disability or a motor disability to be able to go through and enable

them all. So what Naughty Dog did was actually create three presets

that will actually enable all of the accessibility settings that they sort

of feel would be best suited for that individual disability type, and it

will enable it so that you can just jump into the game, pretty much

right away, without having to tweak all of the settings, as you just

saw, that are available in the game. You can be able to apply vision

accessibility preset, apply hearing accessibility preset, and apply a

motor accessibility preset. And there are... And it actually shows the

list of all of the accessibility options that will be enabled if you turn

these presets on before you even start the game. But again, you can

actually be able to enable this even when you're in the game. If you

find that, oh, you know what? There's something... Like, I can't seem

to get this sort of thing right, or I can't be able to tweak this. I'm just

going to enable this preset, and I'm good to go, and it'll enable

everything that Naughty Dog has categorized as an accessibility

option. So that is just how in-depth and how much there actually is in

the game. So that is, again, a brief overview of The Last of Us. We'll

be touching on individual options, and I'll showcase a few of them,

and sort of what are the common accessibility barriers that are in

video games from each disability type. We're going to be going over

those today using The Last of Us Part II as kind of the good example

of how to be able to enable these options in a game. So that is it for

this particular introduction, and I'll see you in the next video.