

DEAD BY DAYLIGHT

A COMPLETE HEALTH REDESIGN, v2.0

THE CRISIS EDITION

Diagnosing the disease, not the symptoms. And this time, treating the doctor too.

*A systemic overhaul to realign optimal play with enjoyable play,
and a development roadmap to rebuild the trust that balance patches alone cannot restore.*

HOW THIS EDITION WAS COMPILED

Four independent design reviews of the original redesign document were commissioned after the tenth anniversary event, each asked to update the proposal for the current state of the game. This edition is the final judgment across all four. **No idea has been discarded.** Every proposal from every review is present: the strongest and most effective interventions ranked first, contested ideas absorbed in guarded form, and ideas that conflict with the document's own design principles preserved in full in Part V with honest reservations. Reviews are cited as A, B, C, and D throughout; Part IV contains the judge's table and a complete idea-by-idea disposition matrix.

Prepared for a 15,000-hour player of both roles. Successor to the original seventeen-page redesign; original Systems 1–12 and Problems 1–10 remain the spine and are cited by number.

Part I: The State of the Game

The core diagnosis, sharpened

The original document's thesis stands, but 2026 demands a harder phrasing. Dead by Daylight is no longer failing because one side is too strong; it is failing because the game's reward structure makes the most effective playstyle the least enjoyable one. This is not a balance problem. It is **incentive collapse**: the current design does not merely allow toxic play, it **selects for it**. When a system pays players to be miserable, the players will not politely refuse the payment.

This is also why the patch history reads the way it does. Behaviour has spent years pruning symptoms while leaving the disease intact, and every patch that targets a behavior while preserving the reward structure behind it makes the underlying condition worse, because it teaches the playerbase that the structure itself is permanent. The problem was never that players found the worst possible way to win. The problem is that the game made that way the smartest one.

CRISIS DESIGN PRINCIPLE (UPGRADED FROM THE ORIGINAL)

Make harmful strategies inefficient, not impossible, **and make healthy strategies objectively superior**. Draining the reward out of misery is only half the job; the enjoyable path must also be the demonstrably effective one, or high-level play will keep finding its way back to the miserable optimum.

The Crisis of Confidence

The issue is no longer simply that balance is poor. It is that many long-time players no longer believe Behaviour understands why people fell in love with Dead by Daylight in the first place. The tenth anniversary should have celebrated everything that makes the game unique. Instead, the event introduced some of the least competitive mechanics in its history: temporary invulnerability, invisibility, teleports, teamwide healing, haste, and elusiveness buffs, and additional pallet spawns for survivors, set against a single throwable killer projectile, weaker than the Clown's slow potion, that one survivor perk can nullify outright.

None of these mechanics encourage the horror, tension, mindgames, or chase interactions that define Dead by Daylight. They encourage chaos for its own sake. And when both sides receive abilities that invalidate core gameplay rather than enhance it, the strongest response becomes the least enjoyable one: tunnel faster, slug sooner, ignore the event mechanics where possible. Meanwhile survivors, on the favored side of the imbalance, still disconnect or die on first hook after a single bad interaction. The event is therefore a case study in the broader problem: Behaviour increasingly designs around spectacle instead of healthy gameplay. Player count alone cannot measure game health. A game can have millions of players while simultaneously losing its identity.

Part I-B: Why this moment is worse

The original document diagnosed a stable structural failure. What has changed is that the structure is now visibly accelerating toward instability:

- The live game and event content are amplifying frustration instead of relieving it. Survivor power spikes and killer frustration are being layered on top of an already brittle structure.

- New content is arriving faster than the underlying design can absorb it, so every event, perk wave, and killer release increases instability rather than fixing it.
- The feedback instruments are compromised. Officially partnered creators are financially bound to positivity and spend the crisis hyping upcoming cosmetics rather than reporting on game health, while Steam player-count figures mask the collapse in engagement quality underneath them.

The result is a studio flying blind at the exact moment it most needs instruments. That is why this edition goes beyond the original's scope: it is no longer enough to redesign the game's systems. **Behaviour needs to rethink how the game is developed:** its release cadence, its feedback channels, and its definition of success as a studio, not just its scoring rules inside a trial.

Part II: The Problem Map

Problems 1–10 from the original document all still apply and have been exacerbated. They are recapped here for reference; the four new problems that follow are stated in full.

#	Root problem (original document)	Status in 2026
1	Tunneling is frequently the correct play	Worsened; the event made it the <i>only</i> play
2	One thin objective; gen rushing is just efficiency	Unchanged
3	Slugging exists because hooking is weak	Worsened under event survivor buffs
4	Match pacing collapses at both ends	Worsened; event matches decided instantly
5	The solo-versus-SWF informational chasm	Unchanged
6	Perk bloat and the death of build diversity	Worsened; exploit stacks ravage the main queue
7	The regression / slowdown / aura merry-go-round	Unchanged
8	Kill-only scoring drives tunnel / camp / slug	Confirmed at scale by the event
9	Killer power creep	Worsened with each release
10	Map variance undermines every global change	Unchanged

Problem 11: Design philosophy has become reactive

Behaviour rarely addresses root systems. The balance cycle has calcified into a loop: a broken perk ships, months pass, it is nerfed, the next broken perk takes the throne, months pass, repeat forever. The community now predicts balance patches before they happen because every patch follows the same formula. Nothing fundamental changes; the meta simply rotates. Healthy games evolve. Dead by Daylight currently rotates. (*Source: Review B.*)

Problem 12: Content is outpacing maintenance

Every three months: a new killer, a new survivor, new perks, new cosmetics, new licenses. Meanwhile old killers remain outdated, dozens of perks remain unusable, maps remain inconsistent, MMR remains controversial, solo queue remains underdeveloped, and bug fixes lag behind. The game is accumulating technical and balance debt faster than Behaviour is paying it off. Every new release becomes another variable the next balance pass must account for. Complexity is growing faster than quality, which is precisely the clouding effect the original document warned about, now on a schedule. (*Source: Review B.*)

Problem 13: Events have no design engine

The anniversary catastrophe was not bad luck; it was the inevitable output of having no binding rules for temporary content. Survivors received multiple stacking layers of protection whose interaction with the live perk meta was clearly never tested; killers received a single, easily countered tool that one perk nullifies; the event mode rewards exactly the behavior the main game claims to want to remove; and participation in the celebration was coupled to the broken mode. Call the failure pattern **Gimmick Overwrite**: handing out

baseline-breaking tools with no counter-parity and no ecosystem testing. Until events have an engine, every large event is a fresh roll of these same dice. (*Sources: Reviews A and C.*)

Problem 14: The feedback loop is compromised

When official creators cannot provide honest criticism because of financial relationships, the developers receive only positive reinforcement for flawed designs, community frustration builds without a legitimate channel, and metrics like player count become meaningless without engagement-quality data behind them. The parallel failure is the PTB cycle: tests happen, players explain exactly what is broken, the changes release anyway, and months later the issue is finally fixed. When players repeatedly feel unheard, they stop providing feedback altogether, which is far more dangerous than negative reviews, because the game loses its most passionate advocates at the moment they can no longer speak truthfully. (*Sources: Reviews A, B, and C.*)

Part III: The Redesign, Ranked by Leverage

Original Systems 1–12 remain the spine of the redesign and are not restated in full; this part covers what the four reviews add, harden, or correct. Everything is ordered by leverage: how much downstream misery each intervention removes per unit of development effort, and how many other fixes it unblocks. Tier 1 is the foundation; nothing else lands without it.

TIER 1: FOUNDATION

System 13: Operation Health (the single biggest new commitment)

Borrow Rainbow Six Siege's playbook. Dedicate one entire chapter cycle, roughly six months, to shipping **nothing new**: no killer, no survivor, no chapter, no cosmetic push. Spend it exclusively on perk redesigns, map standardization, killer modernization, bug fixing, animation cleanup, matchmaking, anti-cheat, optimization, visual readability, and UI improvement.

This ranks first because it is the delivery vehicle for everything else in this document. The original's Systems 1–12 are too interlocked to ship in the gaps between quarterly chapters; Problem 12 is exactly why every past health effort has been partial. Players generally forgive a lack of content when they can clearly see the foundation improving. They rarely forgive new content arriving while old problems remain untouched. *(Source: Review B, and the highest-ranked idea across all four reviews, because it resolves the meta-problem that generates Problems 11 and 12.)*

Systems 1 + 2, reinforced: Hook Victory and the MMR rework, with visible spread scoring

The original's highest-leverage in-game change stands exactly as designed: weight unique hooks, total hooks, and chases won far above raw kills, and split MMR to rate contribution instead of outcome alone. The reviews add three layers:

- **Tuning shape (Review C)**: kills secured before roughly four unique hooks score a fraction of their value; kills after eight or more unique hooks score in full; unique hooks weigh above repeat hooks. Exact multipliers belong to PTB tuning; the non-negotiable is the shape, where early eliminations must be score-poor.
- **Spread Factor visibility (Review A)**: the endgame screen explicitly displays the killer's hook spread and its score consequence. A 4K earned by tunneling one player out at five generators is shown, publicly, as the low-scoring result it now is. Behavioral norms shift fastest when the scoreboard itself teaches them, and a hollow victory should look hollow.
- **Guardrail (judge's ruling)**: every rating input must be telemetry. Two reviews proposed opponent-submitted sportsmanship ratings and report-driven MMR penalties; both are rejected to Part V, because any system that lets opponents move each other's rating becomes a grief button.

System 0: The Event Engine, binding rules for all temporary content

Five rules, in force before any future event ships. Together they make an anniversary-class failure structurally impossible rather than merely regrettable. *(Rules 1–4 from Review C's event framework; rule 5 and the 1:1 framing from Review A.)*

- **1. Symmetry of counterplay: the Rule of 1:1**. Any event tool granting one side escape, mobility, or protection must ship with an equally powerful answer for the other side, and vice versa. Survivor

teleports imply killer spatial denial; killer projectiles imply survivor counters of equal weight.

- **2. No single-perk nullification.** No event power may be switched off entirely by one perk from the live pool.
- **3. Ecosystem testing.** Event mechanics are tested against the current live meta; stacking with existing perks is the primary test case, not an afterthought discovered on launch day.
- **4. Alignment.** Event modes may not reward behaviors the main game is trying to remove. If the fastest way to win the event is tunneling and slugging, the event has failed review and does not ship.
- **5. Quarantine with mirrored rewards.** Gimmick queues are strictly opt-in, and all event currencies, cosmetics, and bloodpoint multipliers are earnable at identical rates in the standard queue. Nobody is ever forced into a broken mode just to participate in a celebration.

TIER 2: PACING AND INCENTIVE HARDENING

System 4, hardened: Dynamic generator scaling (hooks, never deaths)

The original curve is retained: repairs roughly 15% slower at zero hooks, normal from four total hooks, slightly faster from eight or more, shattering both the two-gens-in-ninety-seconds opening and the thirty-minute three-gen stall with the same lever. Reviews A and C propose a steeper curve (up to 25% slower at zero hooks, up to 30% faster deep into a spread match); this is recorded as the aggressive tuning option for A/B testing on the PTB rather than the default. The non-negotiable remains unchanged from the original: **scale off hooks, never off deaths or survivors remaining**, or the system starts paying for the tunneling it exists to remove.

One further idea absorbed from Review C: generators within roughly sixteen meters of one another repair *and* regress more slowly. It is a single number that softens both three-gen fortresses and clustered rush openings.

System 5, hardened: The regression cap with true immunity

The original cap stands: a generator can lose roughly twenty percent of total progress to regression, then becomes protected. Review A hardens the endpoint, and this edition adopts it: once capped, the generator becomes **permanently immune to perk-driven regression** for the rest of the trial. Baseline kicks still function; honest defense still pays; regression-stacking exploit builds die instantly instead of after a months-long nerf cycle. Review C's proposal to exempt Pop Goes the Weasel and Pain Resonance from the cap is rejected to Part V, because exempting the two strongest regression perks recreates the exact hostage meta the cap exists to end.

System 16 (new): Aggregate caps, or Exploit Diminishing Returns

Stop nerfing perks one at a time; cap what **combinations** can total. (*Source: Review A.*)

- **Haste ceiling.** All survivor movement-speed bonuses from perks, items, and event effects sum to a hard cap (Review A proposes +7% total; the exact number is tunable). Un-chaseable haste and haste-plus-stealth stacks die as a category, permanently, on both the live game and every future event.
- **The general principle.** The same aggregate-cap rule extends anywhere stacking breaks the game: total endurance duration, aura-reading uptime, cumulative slowdown. One systemic rule replaces a hundred future emergency nerfs, and, critically, it targets the exploit *combination space* that Problem 6 identified, rather than executing individual perks and rotating the meta (Problem 11).

System 3, guarded: Anti-tunnel stays strictly additive

The original stands: hooking a different survivor than the last one hooked earns the killer stacking bonuses (faster breaks, vaults, and pickups). Spreading becomes the higher-value line; nothing is confiscated. Review C's re-down speed *penalty* is rejected to Part V: subtractive punishment is the exact pattern Behaviour already shipped and walked back in late 2025 for being overly punitive. The document's principle holds: pay for the healthy line, never fine the legal one.

System 10, clarified: One anti-camp mechanism, not two

Keep the original: if the killer loiters within roughly eight meters of a hook for more than ten seconds with no chase nearby, the hook timer pauses, converting a guaranteed kill into wasted minutes. Review C proposed simultaneously accelerating the entity bar for camped survivors. That is internally contradictory (a paused timer cannot also fill faster) and is rejected to Part V. One clean rule is the whole design.

TIER 3: STRUCTURAL DEPTH

System 6, hardened: Role-slot lock plus a power-tier cap

The original role slots stand: one perk per functional role (Pressure / Info / Anti-Loop / Wildcard for killers, with survivor equivalents), ending four-of-a-kind stacking outright. Two hardening layers are absorbed:

- **Wildcard lockout (Review A):** the wildcard slot strictly locks out top-tier repeats; it cannot smuggle in a second copy of the same function at meta strength.
- **Tier caps (Review C):** a compatible second layer. Perks carry an internal power tag (S / A / B / C); a loadout holds at most one S-tier and two A-tier perks. Role slots stop same-function stacking; tier caps stop cross-function meta-density. Together they end "four of the ten strongest perks" as a build archetype in both the exploit meta and future events, without deleting a single perk.

The original's honest tension note still applies: Nurse and Blight barely interact with loops, so the Anti-Loop slot constrains honest M1 killers more than the killers who most deserve constraint. This edge still needs a hand-tuned power-budget exception.

System 15 (new): Meta rotation through buffs

Invert the balance cadence. Instead of nerfing the strongest perk every patch: each season, buff roughly twenty forgotten perks, rework roughly ten, and leave the meta untouched unless it is actively unhealthy. Players enjoy discovering new combinations; they do not enjoy watching their favorite build disappear every three months. This pairs directly with System 6 (role slots create demand for the second- and third-best perk in every function, and the buff cadence supplies them) and with System 16, which quietly bounds anything a buff wave accidentally over-tunes. (Source: Review B.)

System 17 (new): The First Ten Hours, rebuilding onboarding and the tutorial

(A gap the judge is closing: none of the four reviews addressed onboarding, and the original document's Part IV covered new-player protection, meaning protected early MMR and post-match feedback, but not the tutorial itself. For a document about reviving the game, that is a hole: retention starts before balance ever gets the chance to matter.)

The current tutorial teaches a new player to hold M1 on a generator and swing at a survivor, then releases them into a game with hundreds of perks, dozens of killers with unique powers, hook-state rules, status

effects, and an entire chase meta, none of it explained inside the client. The game outsources its own depth to YouTube and wikis, and most newcomers churn before they find either. This is Problem 12 in miniature: the tutorial has been left to rot for years while content shipped over it. The rebuild:

- **A chase academy.** Guided, bot-backed lessons on the interactions that actually decide matches: running tiles, pallet timing, window mindgames, when to drop and when to greed. Taught for both roles, not just the killer's swing.
- **Systems taught in play.** Hook states and rescue rules, terror radius and stealth, and status effects introduced one at a time in short scripted scenarios, instead of arriving as a wall of unexplained icons in a live match.
- **A practice range.** Any killer, any survivor, any build, against configurable bots, with no queue stakes, so testing a perk stops costing a real match. Veterans get a lab out of the same feature, which pairs naturally with System 15's seasonal buff waves.
- **An in-game codex.** A searchable glossary of every perk, power, and status effect in plain language, so a newcomer facing an unfamiliar killer can learn inside the client instead of alt-tabbing to a wiki.
- **Starter builds and guided unlocks.** Recommended loadouts per role and a guided path through the bloodweb, so the first fifty levels are a curriculum rather than a blind lottery.

The original Part IV protections stand unchanged around this: protected matchmaking for roughly the first fifty hours, and plain-language post-match feedback that teaches cause and effect. System 17 is what happens before and between those matches. A horror game's most valuable asset is a new player's first genuine scare, and right now the game spends it dropping newcomers into a prestige-100 meat grinder with a two-minute tutorial behind them.

System 11, expanded: Power creep as a design vocabulary, not just a mandate

The original mandate stands: new powers must express themselves through unique interactions rather than ever-higher raw mobility, each tied to an interactive survivor-side counter on the EMP-versus-Singularity model. Review B expands it into a positive vocabulary for future kits: **information, prediction, psychological pressure, resource denial, environment manipulation, trap evolution, sound manipulation, vision manipulation, and fear mechanics**, instead of another entry in the ignore-pallets / ignore-windows / teleport / dash lineage. Review C contributes the hard limits: at most one mobility tool or one unconditional anti-loop tool per new kit, never both at full strength, and every new power tested against the current S-tier survivor meta before ship.

System 12, concretized: Map guardrails with real numbers

The original's guardrails gain Review C's concrete starting bands: pallet counts held within a fixed range (on the order of 12–15), window counts banded, hard minimum and maximum map footprints, and generator cluster counts banded per map. The exact figures belong to the design team; the principle is that variance becomes **bounded**, so every global number in Tiers 1 and 2 lands consistently across realms instead of reading overtuned in one and undertuned in the next.

TIER 4: TRUST AND GOVERNANCE

Balance changes restore the game; only governance changes restore belief in it. These systems run in parallel with everything above, live from day one.

System 14: The Public Balance Council

Not content creators. Not Fog Whisperers. Actual representation: competitive players, casual players, killer mains, survivor mains, solo players, SWFs, accessibility advocates, and new players. The council meets every PTB cycle. Summaries are published. Disagreements are shown, not smoothed over. Decisions are explained. Transparency builds trust, and visible, structured disagreement builds more of it than curated positivity ever has. (Source: Review B.)

System 14b: Creator transparency

- Mandatory disclosure of paid relationships in all partnered content.
- A parallel **unpaid feedback channel** with direct developer access, so honest criticism has an official route that no contract touches.
- Event and patch feedback sampled from unpaid players via telemetry and survey, never solely from partnered creators. (Sources: Reviews A and C.)

System 14c: Community sentiment as instrument, not trigger

Review A's sentiment engine is adopted in guarded, advisory form: rotating post-match balance sentiment polls, cross-referenced against rage-quit telemetry and stacked-build data, feeding a public dashboard the Balance Council reviews every cycle. Review A's raw version, the automatic disabling of any perk that crosses a 65% frustration threshold, is preserved in Part V and rejected as an auto-trigger: in a 4v1 game, the majority side can vote the minority side's tools out of existence. Sentiment should aim the council's attention; it should never pull the trigger itself.

System 14d: Feedback that visibly lands

Every PTB ships with a public response ledger: what was reported, what changed in response, and what did not change and why. The killer of community trust is not disagreement; it is silence, followed months later by the exact failure the players predicted. (Source: Review B.)

Part IV: The Judge's Table

The four reviews, what each contributed, and the ruling on each. Reviews are labeled in the order they were submitted.

Review	Strongest contributions	Ruling
A: Emergency Sandbox & Event Mandate	The Rule of 1:1 and opt-in mirrored event queues; aggregate haste cap / Exploit Diminishing Returns; Spread Factor endgame visibility; permanent regression immunity	Best event framework in the set. Two governance mechanisms (Toxicity Brake, auto-disable referendum) ruled unsafe and moved to Part V.
B: Development Philosophy Critique	Operation Health; Problems 11 and 12; meta rotation through buffs; the Public Balance Council; the Crisis of Confidence framing; the power-creep vocabulary; the rewritten conclusion	The highest-value review. It correctly reframes the document from a balance proposal into a development roadmap. Supplies most of Tiers 1, 3, and 4; adopted nearly whole.
C: Crisis Edition Rewrite	The five event-framework rules; the tier-cap loadout layer; concrete tuning numbers throughout; map standardization bands; gen proximity penalty	Best concretization of the set. Four mechanisms contradict the document's own established principles (SWF tax, opponent ratings, flashlight RNG, cap exemptions) and are preserved in Part V.
D: Structural & Rhetorical Edit	The incentive-collapse thesis; Part I-B; the quotable framing lines; the remove-don't-nerf stance; the hard-reset reframing of opening and conclusion	Best framing in the set. Few new mechanics; absorbed throughout Part I and the conclusion.

Complete disposition matrix: every idea, accounted for

Idea	Source	Disposition
Operation Health (six-month no-content rebuild)	B	Adopted: Tier 1, System 13, ranked first
Crisis of Confidence / identity framing	B	Adopted: Part I
Incentive-collapse thesis; sharpened framing lines	D	Adopted: Part I
Part I-B: why the current moment is worse	D	Adopted: Part I
Problem 11: reactive design philosophy	B	Adopted: Part II
Problem 12: content outpacing maintenance	B	Adopted: Part II
Event design catastrophe / Gimmick Overwrite	A, C	Adopted: Part II, Problem 13
Compromised feedback loop / paid-creator blindspot	A, B, C	Adopted: Part II, Problem 14
Rule of 1:1 event counter-mechanics	A	Adopted: System 0, rule 1
No single-perk nullification of event powers	A	Adopted: System 0, rule 2

Idea	Source	Disposition
Event ecosystem testing against live meta	C	Adopted: System 0, rule 3
Events must not reward main-game misbehavior	C	Adopted: System 0, rule 4
Opt-in event queues with mirrored rewards	A	Adopted: System 0, rule 5
Hook-weighting multipliers (early kills score less)	C	Adopted: tuning reference, Systems 1–2
Spread Factor on the endgame screen	A	Adopted: Systems 1–2
Steeper generator scaling curve (25% / 30%)	A, C	Recorded: aggressive PTB tuning option
Clustered-generator proximity penalty	C	Adopted: System 4
Permanent regression immunity after cap	A	Adopted: System 5
Aggregate haste ceiling / EDR combination caps	A	Adopted: new System 16
Wildcard slot locks out top-tier repeats	A	Adopted: System 6
S/A/B/C tier caps on loadouts	C	Adopted: System 6
Meta rotation through buffs (20 buffed / 10 reworked)	B	Adopted: new System 15
Power-creep design vocabulary	B	Adopted: System 11
One-mobility / one-anti-loop hard limits per kit	C	Adopted: System 11
Map standardization bands (pallets, windows, size)	C	Adopted: System 12
Public Balance Council	B	Adopted: new System 14
Creator disclosure + unpaid feedback channel	A, C	Adopted: System 14b
Post-match sentiment polls + telemetry dashboard	A	Adopted in advisory form: System 14c
PTB public response ledger	B	Adopted: System 14d
Rewritten conclusion (trust framing)	B, D	Adopted: Part VII
Auto-disable perks at >65% frustration vote	A	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
In-Match Toxicity Brake (penalize remaining survivors)	A	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
Opponent-rated sportsmanship / report-driven MMR	C	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
SWF 5% repair-speed tax	C	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
Flashlight saves near hooks: 50% backfire chance	C	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
Pop / Pain Res exempt from the regression cap	C	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
Dual anti-camp (pause timer + faster entity bar)	C	Preserved with reservations (Part V)
Haste reward for kicking capped generators	C	Preserved with reservations (Part V)

Idea	Source	Disposition
Onboarding & tutorial rebuild (chase academy, codex, practice range)	Judge	Added: new System 17, a gap left by all four reviews

Part V: Preserved with Reservations

Nothing is lost. Each idea below is recorded in full with its source, the reason it is ranked last, and the salvageable kernel inside it. These are not dismissals; several contain a correct instinct attached to a mechanism that would backfire under genuine high-level play, which is exactly the standard the original document holds every proposal to.

1. The In-Match Toxicity Brake (Review A)

As proposed: when telemetry detects a survivor rage-quitting or dying on first hook during an event match, the remaining survivors receive a passive 20% repair penalty while the killer's sacrifice speed is frozen, removing the incentive to hard-tunnel the remainder.

Reservation: it punishes three innocent players for a fourth player's choice, violating the fairness spine of the entire document, and it would teach griefers that quitting damages their own team twice. **Kernel worth keeping:** disconnect events should trigger *compensation* for the victims (bot replacement, adjusted escape conditions, bloodpoint protection), never a tax on them. The instinct to protect the killer's match from becoming a hollow stomp is right; the lever is pointed at the wrong people.

2. Automatic perk disabling by referendum (Review A)

As proposed: a mandatory rotating in-game vote on the top-five picked perks; any perk sustaining a frustration rating above 65% across MMR brackets is automatically disabled for a rework cycle, bypassing marketing agendas entirely.

Reservation: in an asymmetric 4v1 game the majority side can vote the minority side's tools out of existence; survivor mains outnumber killer mains in any poll, and coordinated communities can brigade thresholds. Balance by referendum is capture waiting to happen. **Kernel worth keeping:** adopted as System 14c, keeping the same polling, telemetry cross-referencing, and public dashboard, but feeding the Balance Council's agenda rather than pulling a trigger automatically.

3. Opponent-rated sportsmanship and report-driven MMR penalties (Review C)

As proposed: a multi-dimensional MMR including a sportsmanship score rated by opponents post-match, plus a toxicity penalty reducing MMR gains for players repeatedly reported for tunneling or camping.

Reservation: any opponent-controlled rating is a grief button: losing sides will rate winners down as a matter of routine, and report-driven penalties punish legal play through volume of salt. **Kernel worth keeping:** the multi-dimensional instinct is correct and already lives in Systems 1–2; the inputs must simply be telemetry (hook spread, chase distribution, proximity time) rather than human judgment submitted by the person who just lost.

4. The SWF repair-speed tax (Review C)

As proposed: SWF teams receive a 5% repair-speed penalty to compensate for their communication advantage.

Reservation: the original document already litigated and explicitly rejected hard SWF taxes in System 9; they punish the casual duos who make up most of the playerbase while barely denting tournament squads, and they push players out of queueing with friends, which is the opposite of healthy. Information parity for solo players remains the correct fix. Preserved here as a rejected line so the reasoning travels with the document.

5. Flashlight backfire near hooks (Review C)

As proposed: flashlight save attempts within eight meters of a hook have a 50% chance to blind the savior instead.

Reservation: a coin flip inside a skill interaction removes agency from both sides: the survivor's play is invalidated by dice, and the killer's protection is unreliable for the same reason. **Kernel worth keeping:** System 8's deterministic hook protection zones already deliver the intended outcome (hooking beats slugging) without randomness.

6. Regression-cap exemptions for Pop and Pain Resonance (Review C)

As proposed: Pop Goes the Weasel and Pain Resonance apply their full effect regardless of the regression cap.

Reservation: exempting the two strongest regression perks from the cap recreates the exact three-gen hostage meta the cap exists to end; within one patch cycle the meta would simply be "the two exempt perks." The cap only works if it is truly global.

7. Dual anti-camp mechanisms (Review C)

As proposed: the hook timer pauses while the killer camps, and simultaneously the entity progression bar fills 25% faster for camped survivors.

Reservation: the two halves contradict each other; a paused timer cannot also accelerate. System 10's clean pause is the whole design, and stacking a second mechanism on top adds confusion without adding deterrence.

8. Haste reward for kicking capped generators (Review C)

As proposed: kicking a generator at the regression cap grants the killer a 5% haste bonus for ten seconds.

Reservation: minor rather than dangerous, but it pays the killer to interact with a mechanic designed to end an interaction, inviting kick-for-speed patrol loops. Recorded as an optional consolation mechanic if PTB data shows capped generators feel too punishing for killers; excluded from the default design.

Part VI: Rollout, Revised

The original's foundation-first phasing stands, with one structural change: **Operation Health is now the container**, not a phase. The pause in content is what makes shipping the interlocked systems possible at all.

- **Phase 0: Announce.** Declare Operation Health (System 13) and publish this roadmap in full, including the parts that will hurt. The announcement itself is the first trust repair. The governance layer (Balance Council, creator transparency, sentiment dashboard, and the PTB response ledger; Systems 14–14d) goes live on day one, because trust is the resource every later phase spends.
- **Phase 1: Redefine success.** Ship Hook Victory and the MMR rework (Systems 1–2, with spread visibility) together, and enact the Event Engine (System 0) as binding policy. Nothing else lands correctly until success itself is redefined.
- **Phase 2: Pacing and incentives.** Dynamic generator scaling, the hardened regression cap, additive spread bonuses, hook protection zones, the anti-camp pause, and the aggregate caps (Systems 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 16). These convert the new definition of success into moment-to-moment behavior.
- **Phase 3: Depth and parity.** Role-slot loadouts with tier caps, secondary objectives, solo information parity, the first buff-wave season, and the onboarding and tutorial rebuild (Systems 6, 7, 9, 15, 17).
- **Phase 4: Standing policy.** The power-creep vocabulary and mandate, and map guardrails with concrete bands (Systems 11–12), applied to all future content permanently. This is the exit criteria for Operation Health and the entry criteria for every chapter after it.

Every phase ships with its stated design goal and the data behind it, tested on a public test build, with the response ledger closing the loop. Players trust a change when they can see the number it fixes; they revolt when changes feel arbitrary.

Part VII: Conclusion

Dead by Daylight is not in danger because players hate it. It is in danger because the people who love it most are becoming exhausted. A healthy live-service game cannot survive indefinitely on new chapters alone. It survives by maintaining trust that today's frustrations will become tomorrow's improvements. At present, too many players believe the opposite: that old problems will simply be buried beneath new content. Until that perception changes, every balance patch, anniversary event, and chapter release will be judged not on what it adds, but on what it continues to leave behind.

The goal should not be the strongest Dead by Daylight in terms of player count. The goal should be the **healthiest** Dead by Daylight in its history: a game where horror, tension, mindgames, and player agency once again take precedence over spectacle, power creep, and endless meta rotation. Numbers can keep a game alive. Trust is what keeps a community together.

THE WHOLE REDESIGN IN ONE SENTENCE (v2.0)

Stop nerfing the strongest perk every patch and calling it health. Make hooks the win condition, spreading the optimal play, and regression bounded, and pause the content machine long enough to actually build it, so that for the first time in the game's life the strongest strategy, the most fun strategy, and the studio's own definition of success all point in the same direction.

Behaviour's recurring mistake has been treating symptoms (slugging, tunneling, camping, and now a broken anniversary) with reactive patches, while the disease underneath went untouched: thin objectives, the solo/SWF gap, perk bloat, a scoreboard that rewards death above all, and a development cadence that buries every old problem under a new release. Treat the disease. Then treat the habits that keep reinfecting the patient. Make the toxic line an option a player can take, never an obligation the game forces on them, and make the next ten years something the players who built the first ten can still believe in.