

Visual Content Warning: drawn abstract body horror & art nudity
Please feel free to listen without looking, or come back in 5 minutes.

illmarks: Symptom Mapping Art

How body mapping for disability affirms our lived experiences,
and unites us in creating hopeful, transformative futures

Artivism from Bedspace / Artivismo desde el Espacio-cama
nyx mir - illmarks.com

presentation materials



illmarks.com/yale-deck

Hi I'm Nyx Mir

(fae/faer, they/them)

Multiply Disabled

Health&Care Activism Artist

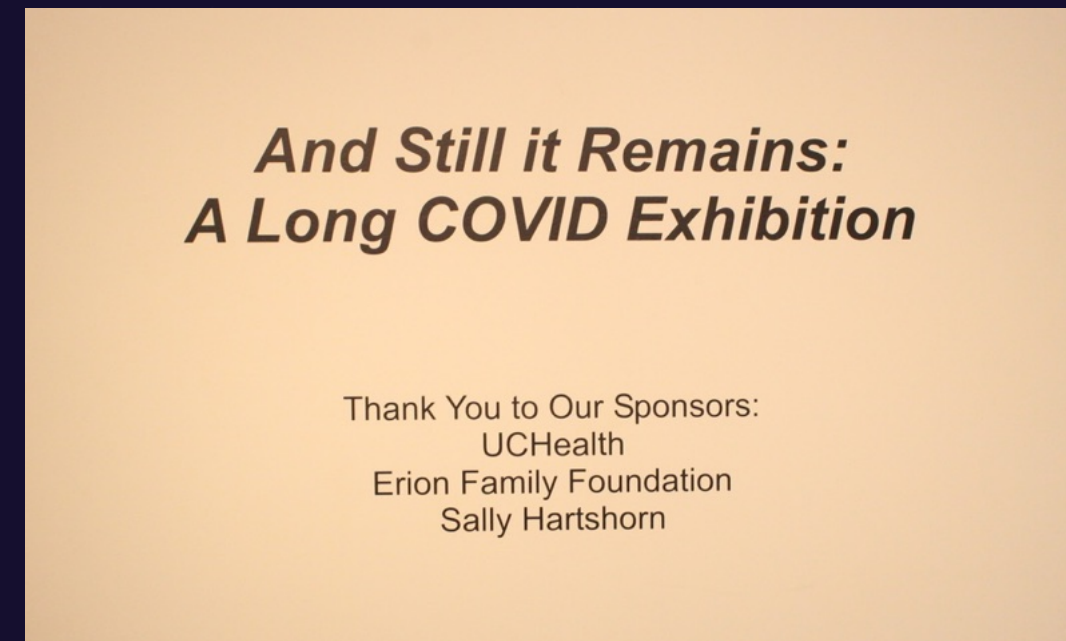
Visualize Long Covid Symptoms

illmarks.com

Pre-Chronic Illness:

Creative Director & Multi-Disciplinary Designer

- Walt Disney Imagineering
- BlizzCon
- Magic Patio



Body Mapping's Roots

Please learn more about body mapping art from Women with HIV in Subsaharan Africa, Latin Indigenous Ecofeminists, and Labor Rights Organizers!

“When I see [my body map] I feel much happier just because when I look at it, I see what I can't see when I look at myself in the mirror. My picture is like an X-ray.”

- Ncedeka (art on right)

CW: child/infant death, HIV, medical trauma:

<https://msfaccess.org/body-maps-art-and-memory>

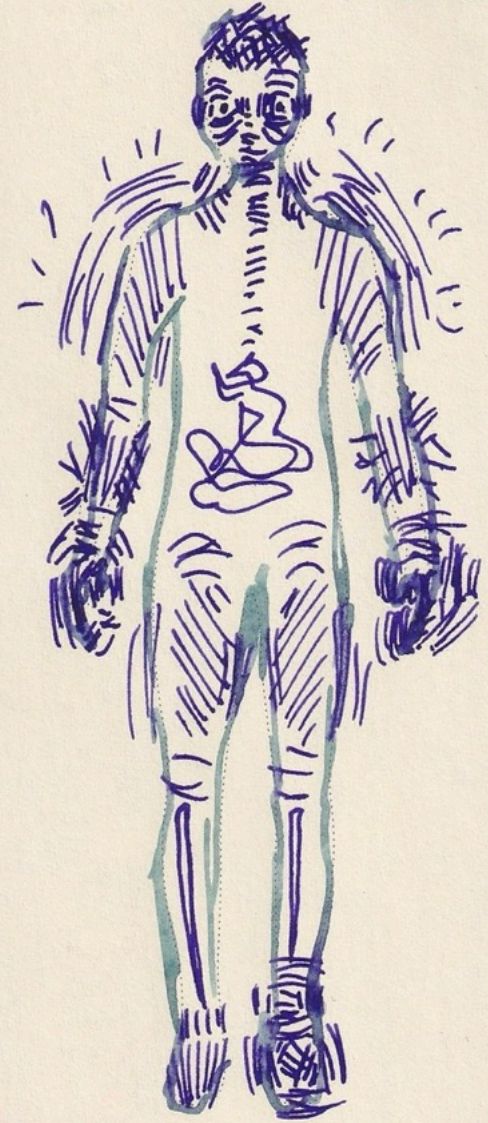


ABOUT

illmarks project

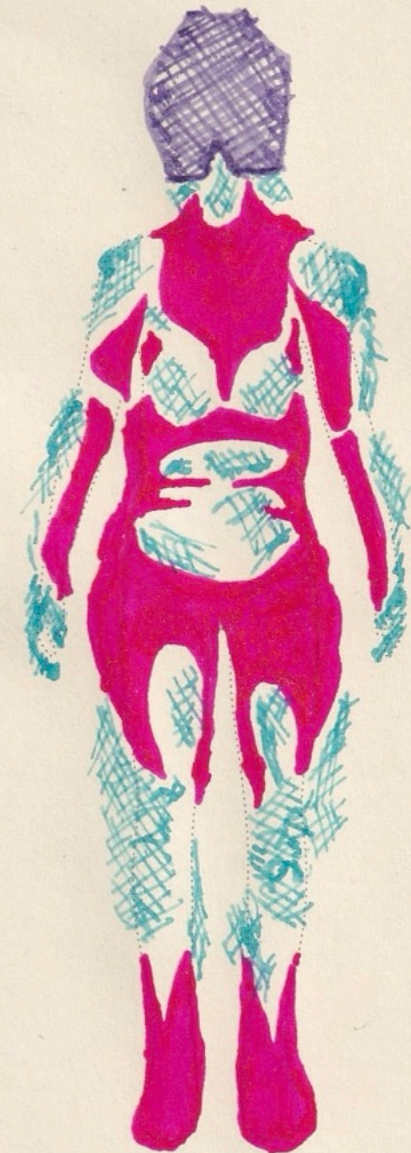
Coordination

MEMO
2023-1-1
Tried grocery shopping. Overexerted.
Pain, swelling, itching all over.



Coordination

MEMO
2024-3-2
Migraine
Holding Pattern



Coordination

MEMO
2024-5-2
I'm not very theistic
but gods, what did I
do to deserve this?



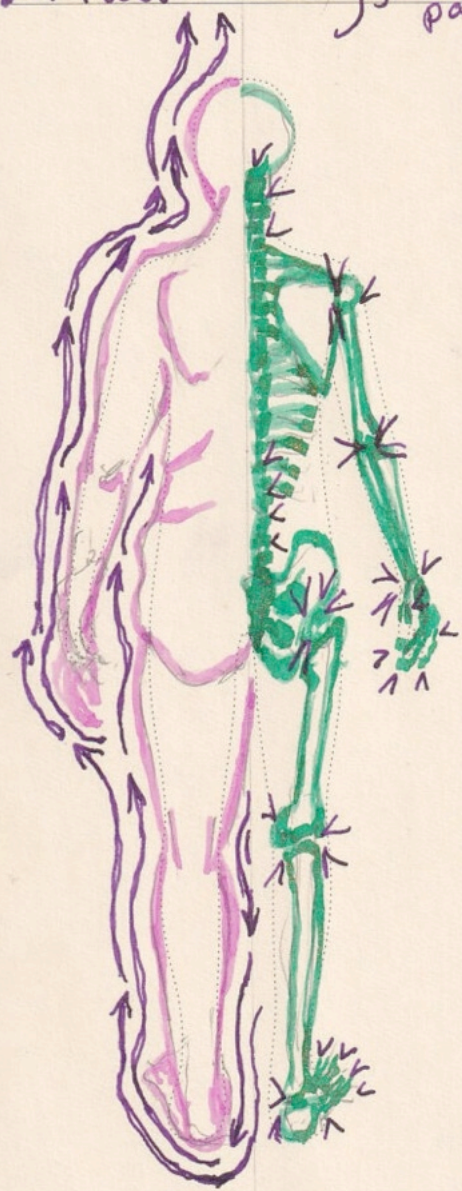
Early Symptom Tracking Art

Coordination

MEMO

2025-6-22

my new medication
has been recharging,
but I also have big joint
pain



Coordination

MEMO

MIGRAINE TRIGGERS

- eating
- sitting or standing
- sleeping



Coordination

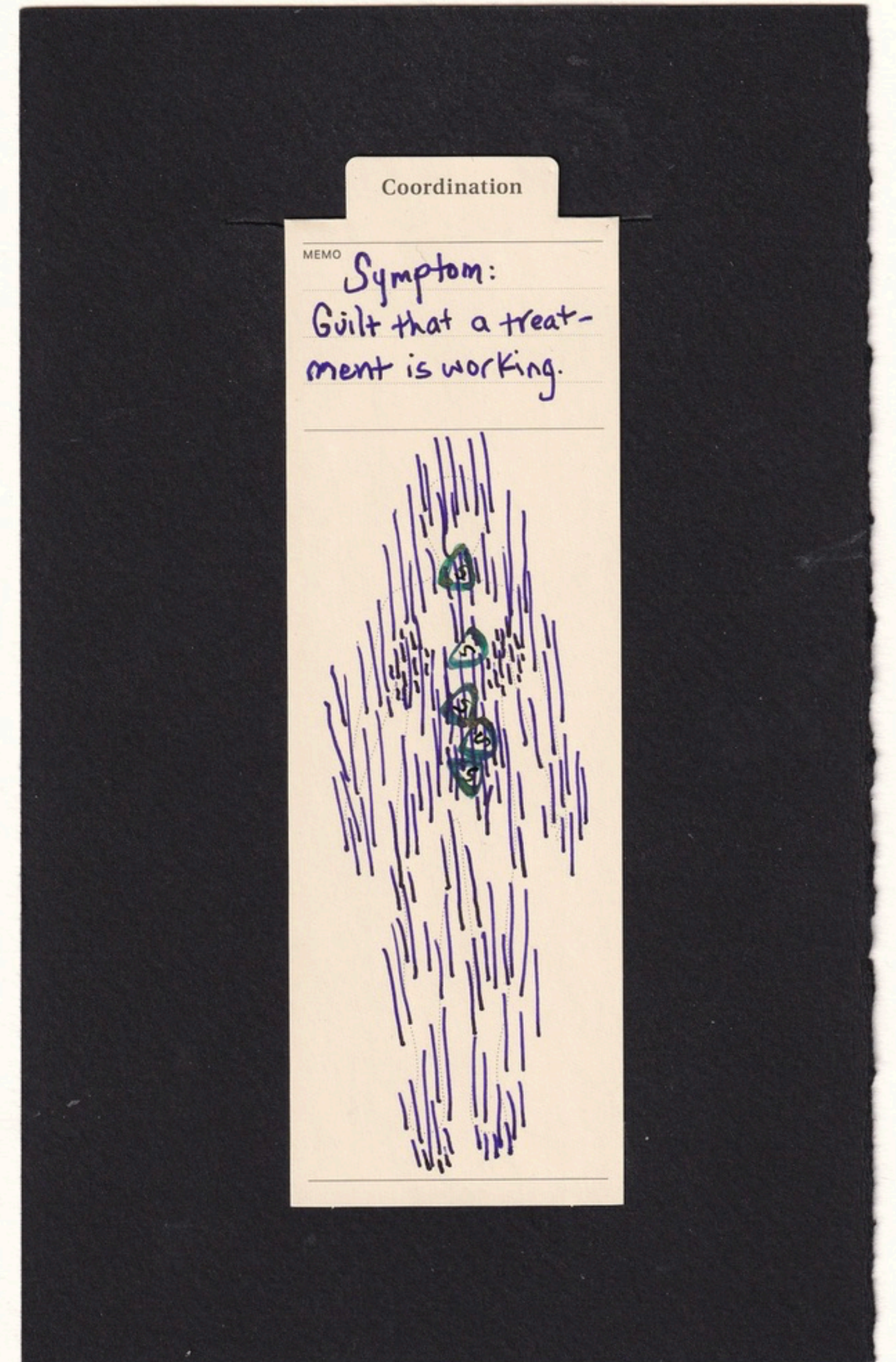
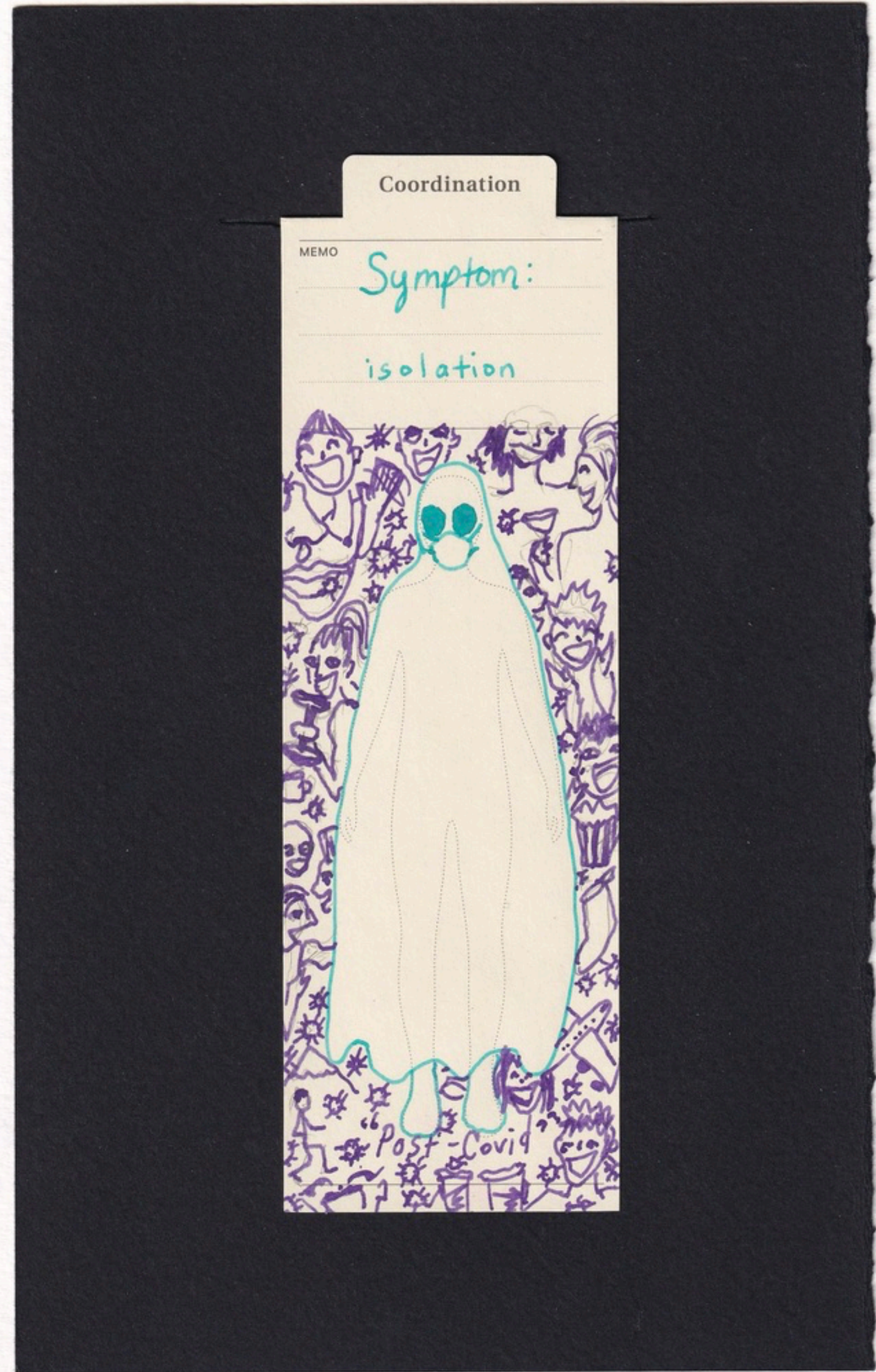
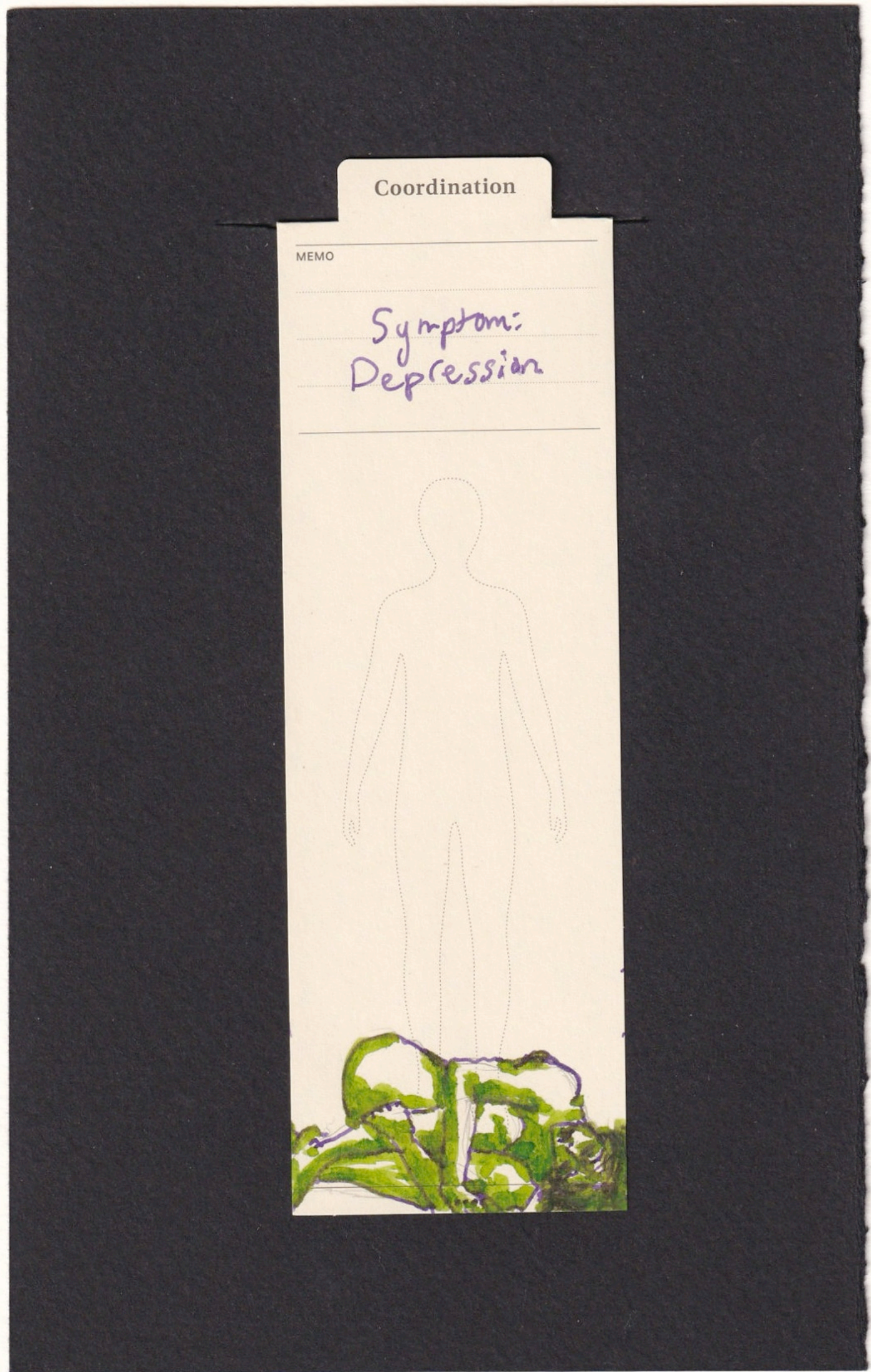
MEMO

2024-12-9

Hung up by my
(trapezius)
(find term)



Continued Symptom Tracking Art



Emotional, Systemic & Interpersonal Chronic Illness Art

Coordination

MEMO

2025-8-11
My migraines
are triggered by
drinking water



Coordination

MEMO

2026-1-7
WORST POTS.
DAY EVER.



Coordination

MEMO

Symptoms
Mast Cell
Itching

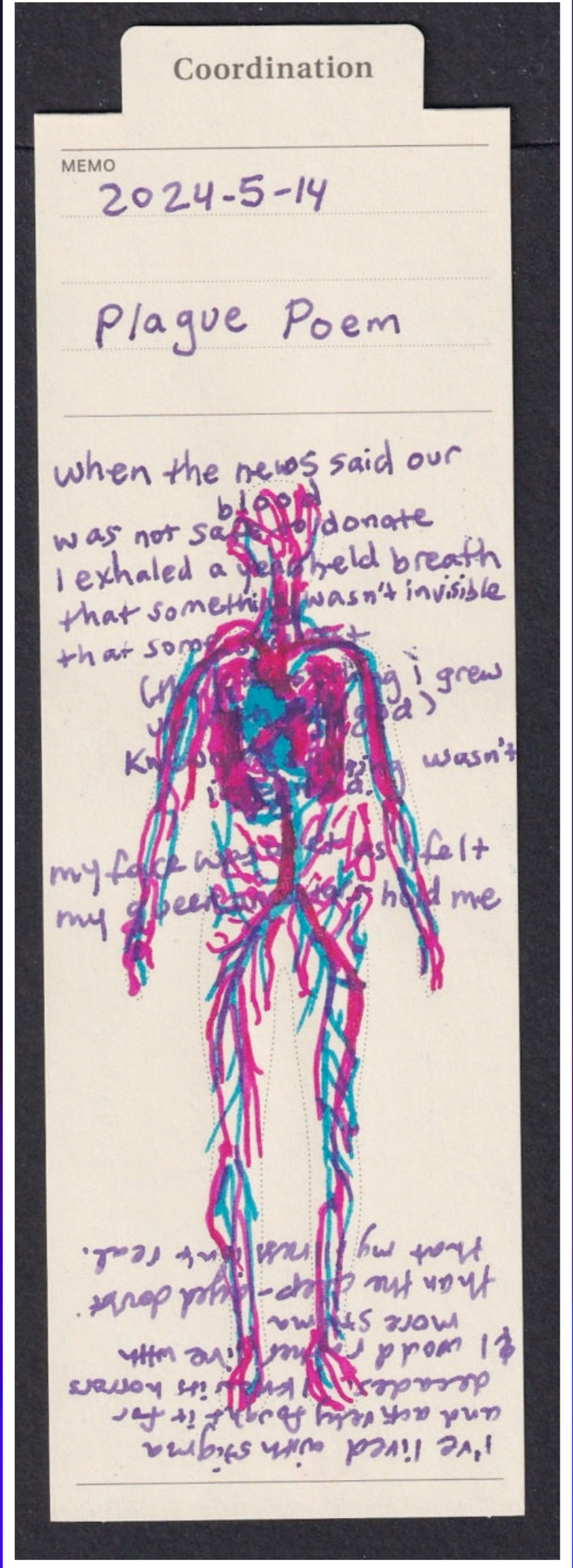


illmarks

Some different ways to portray symptoms:



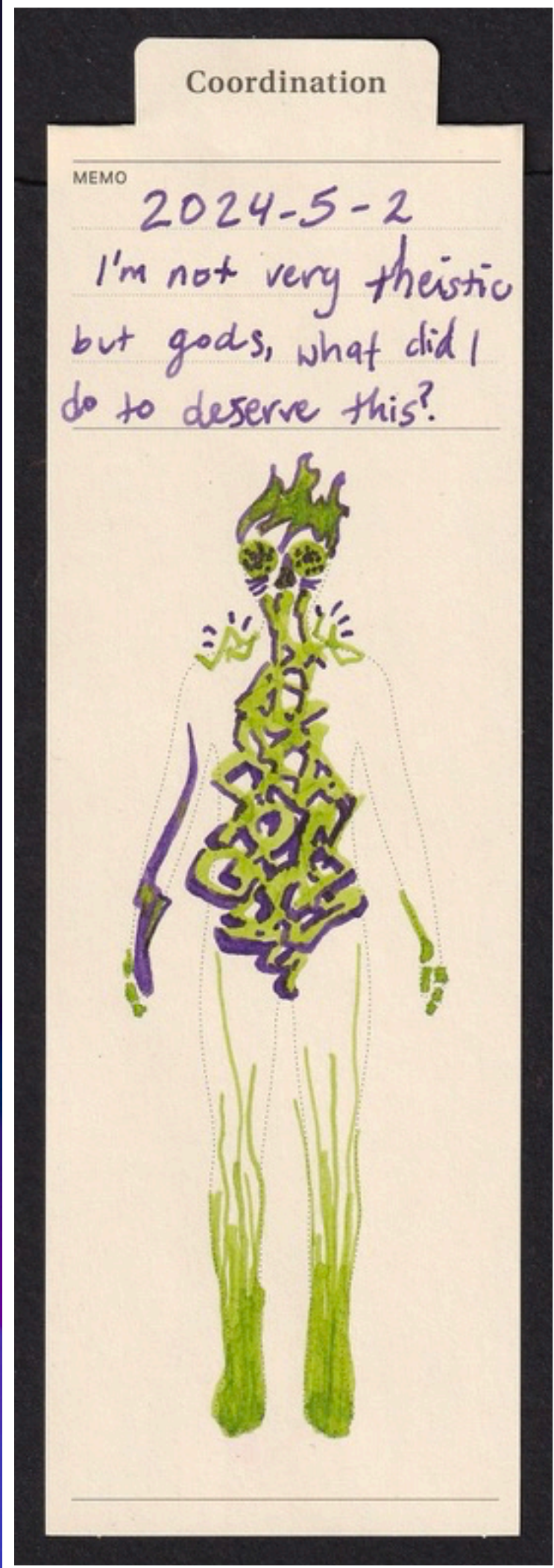
Visual
Depiction



Writing &
Description



Comparison
& Metaphor



Abstract
Shape & Color



Representative
Shapes

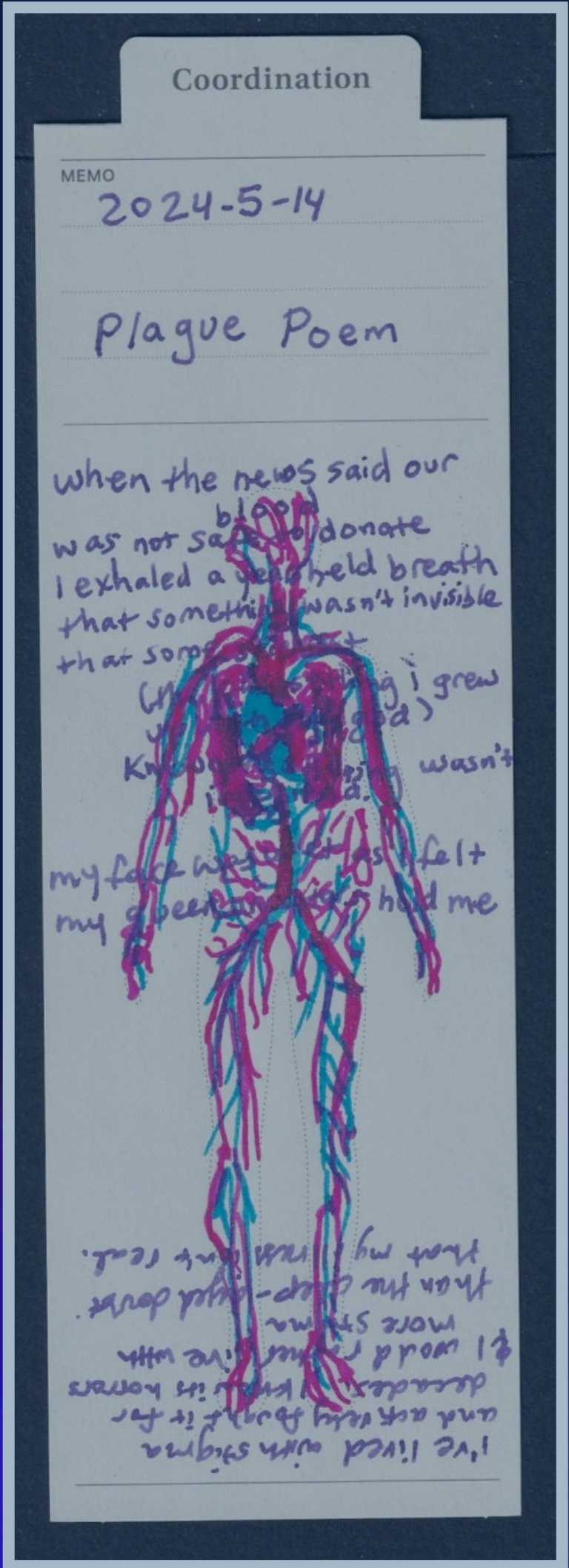


Size &
Scale

Some different ways to portray symptoms:



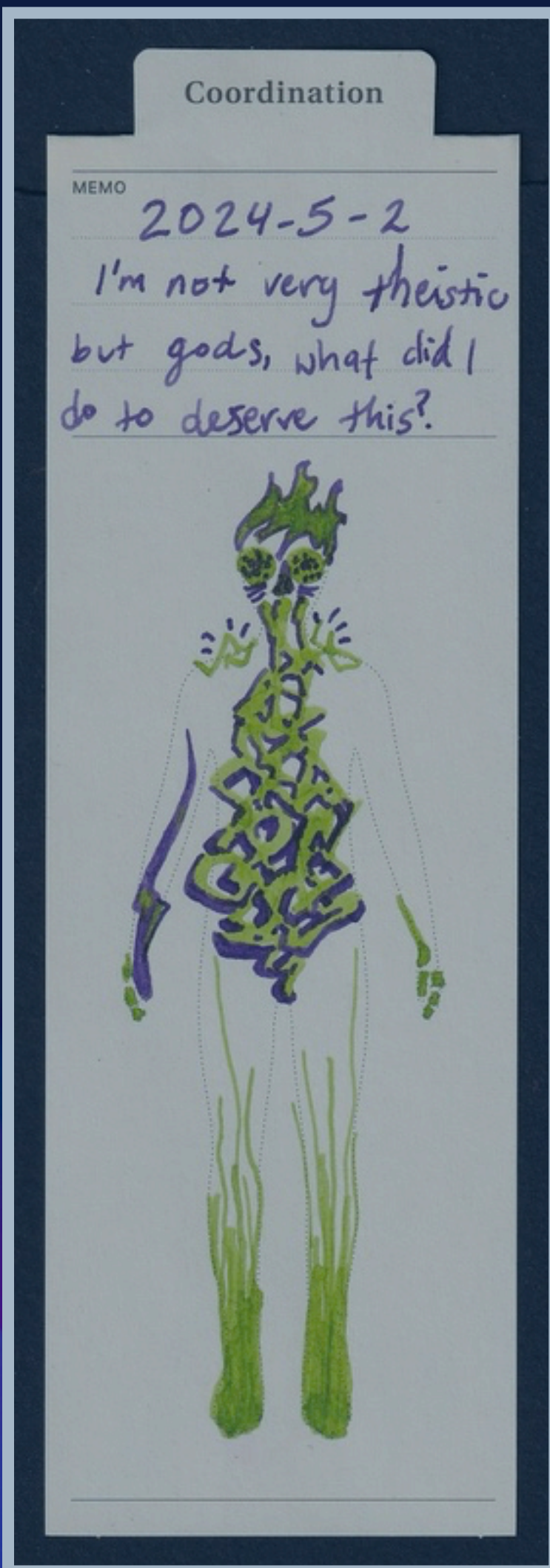
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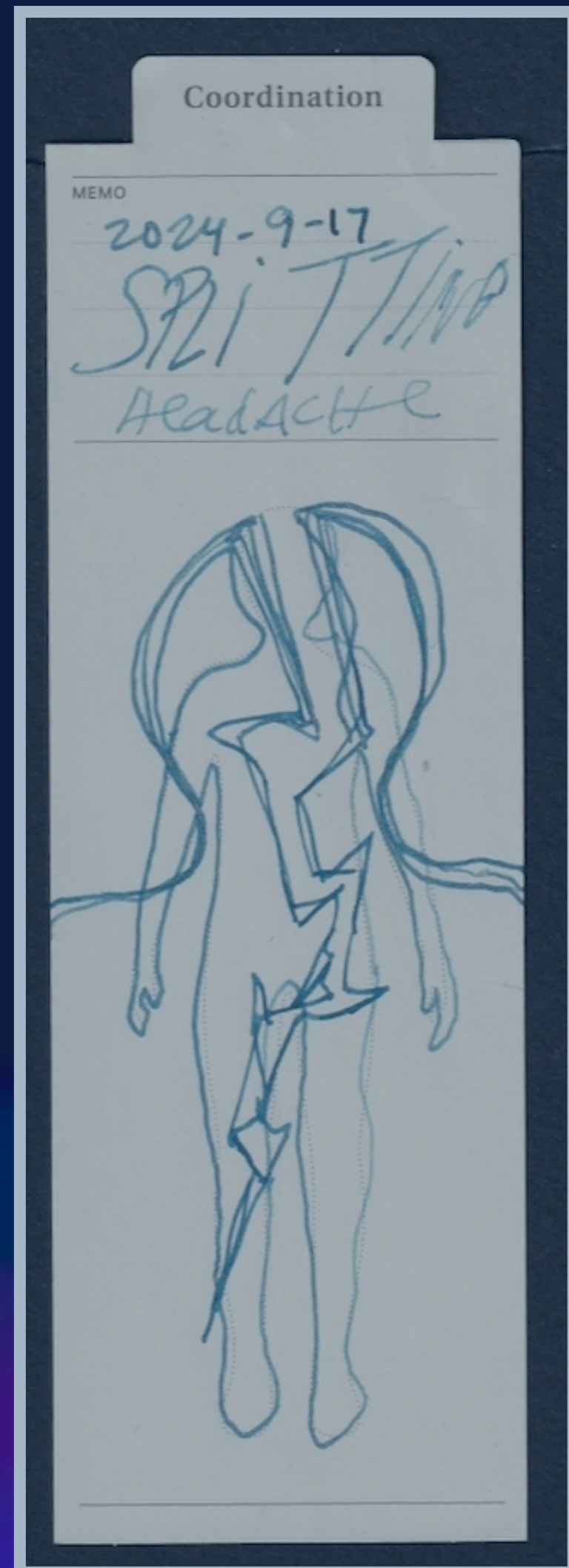
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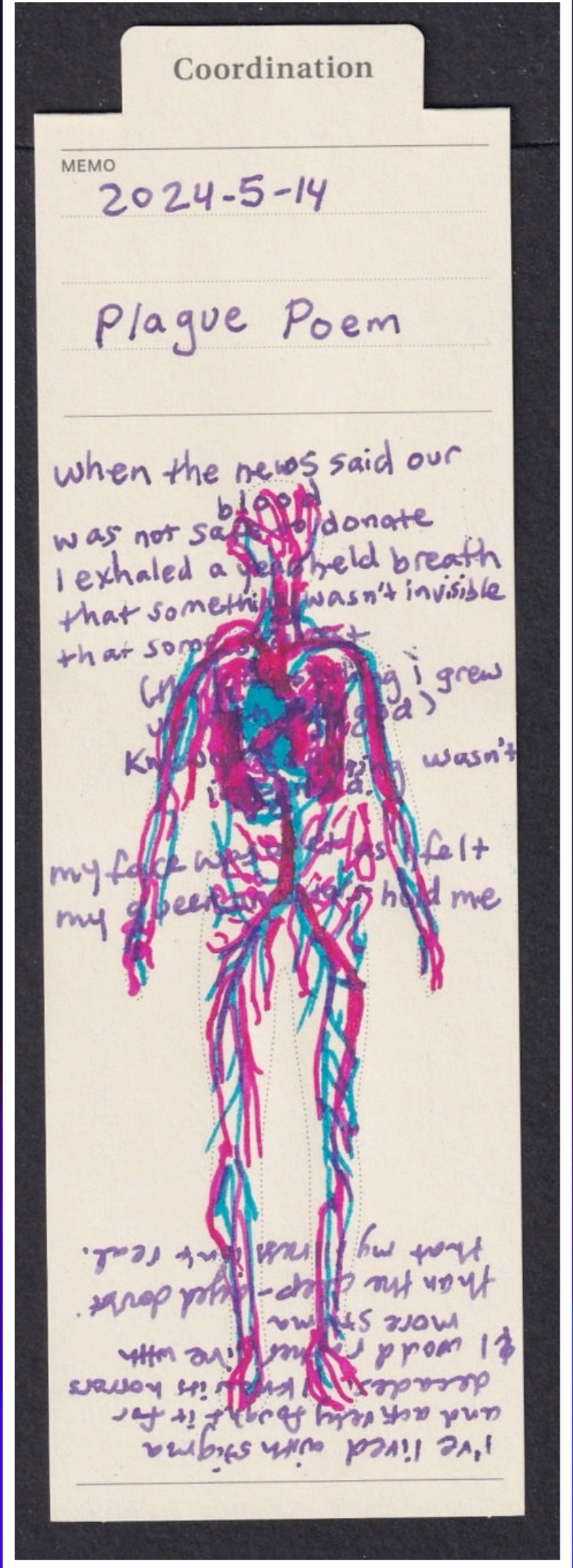


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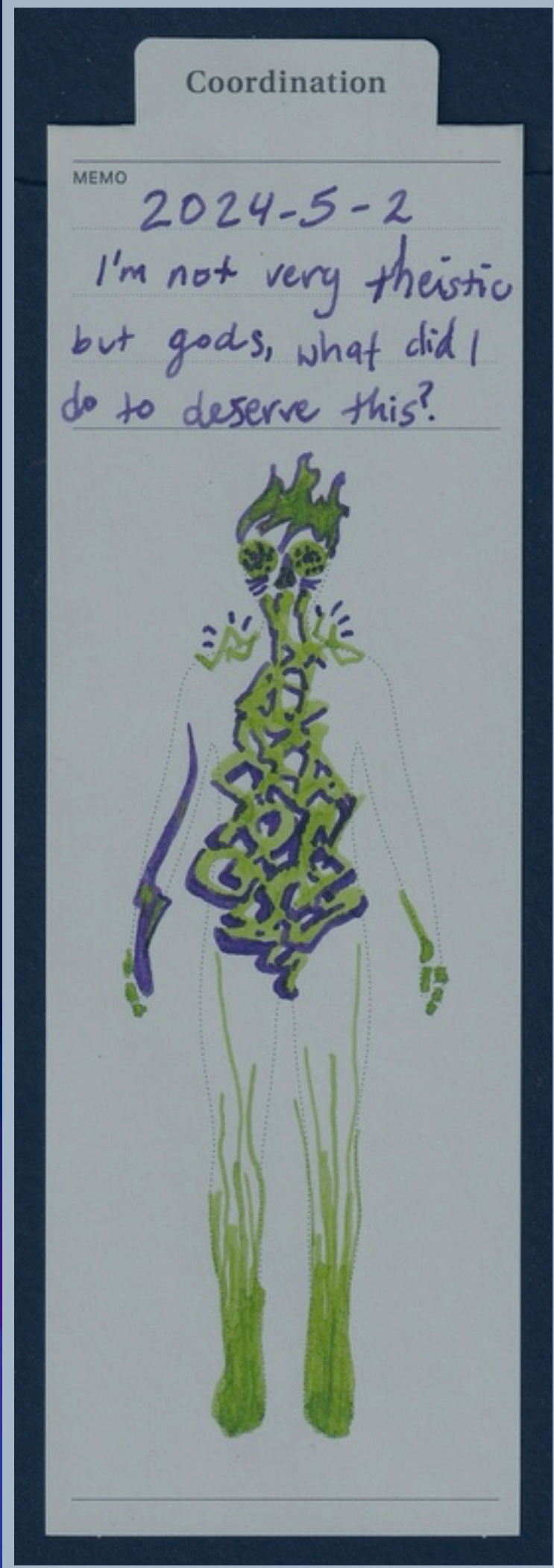
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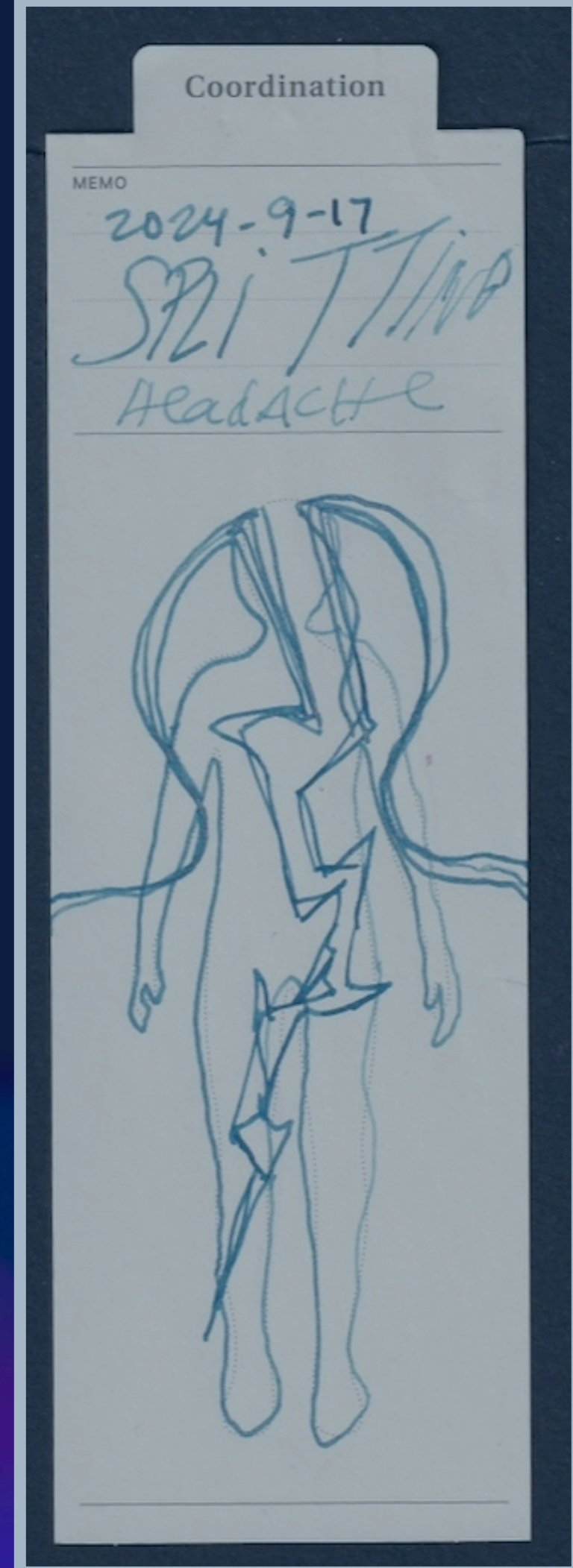
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Description



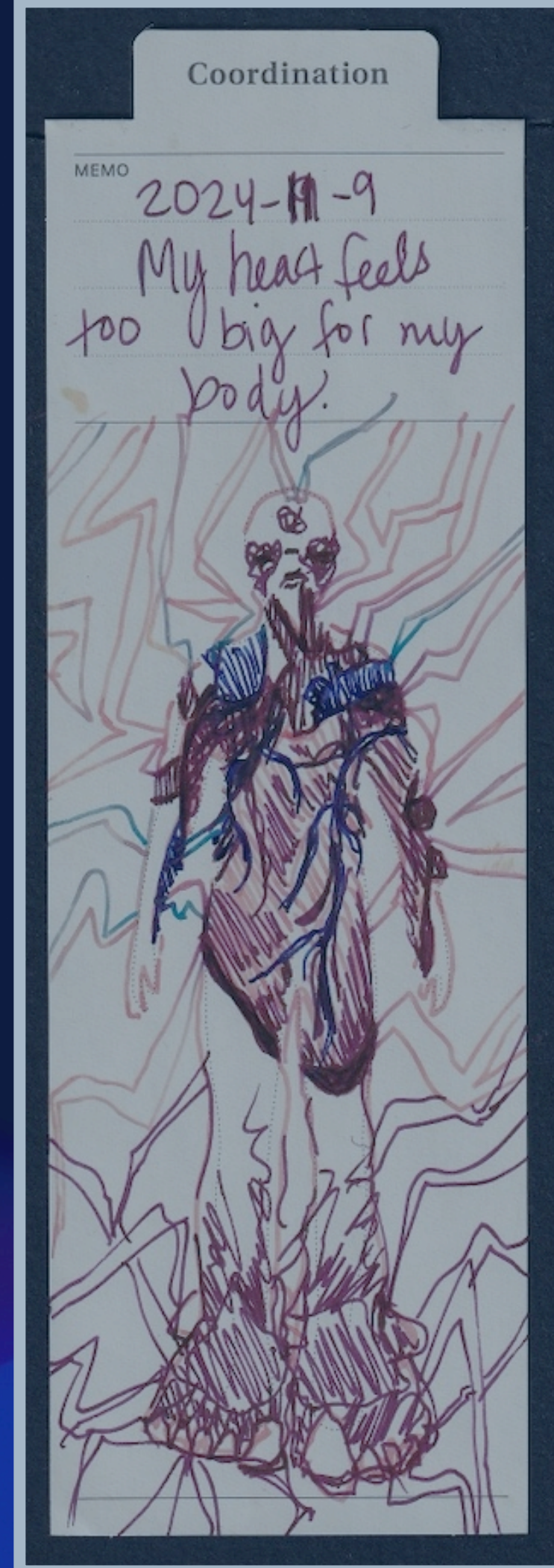
Comparison
& Metaphor



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Shape & Color



Representative
Shapes

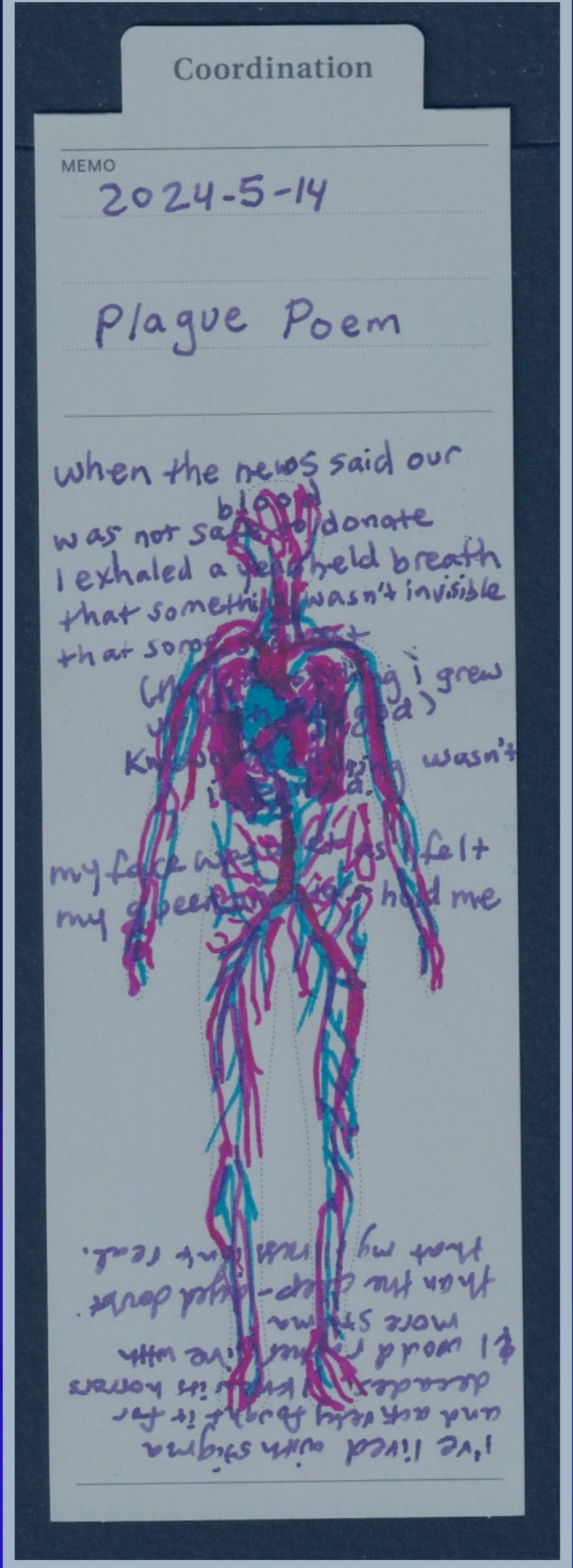


Size &
Scale

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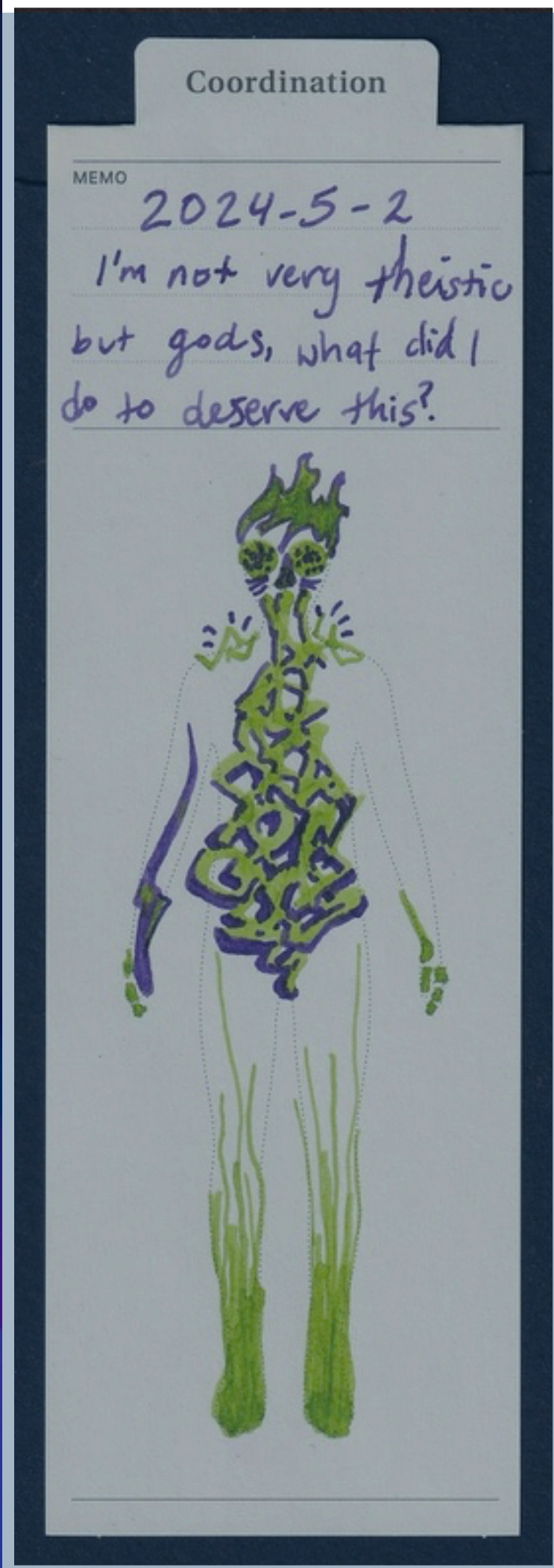
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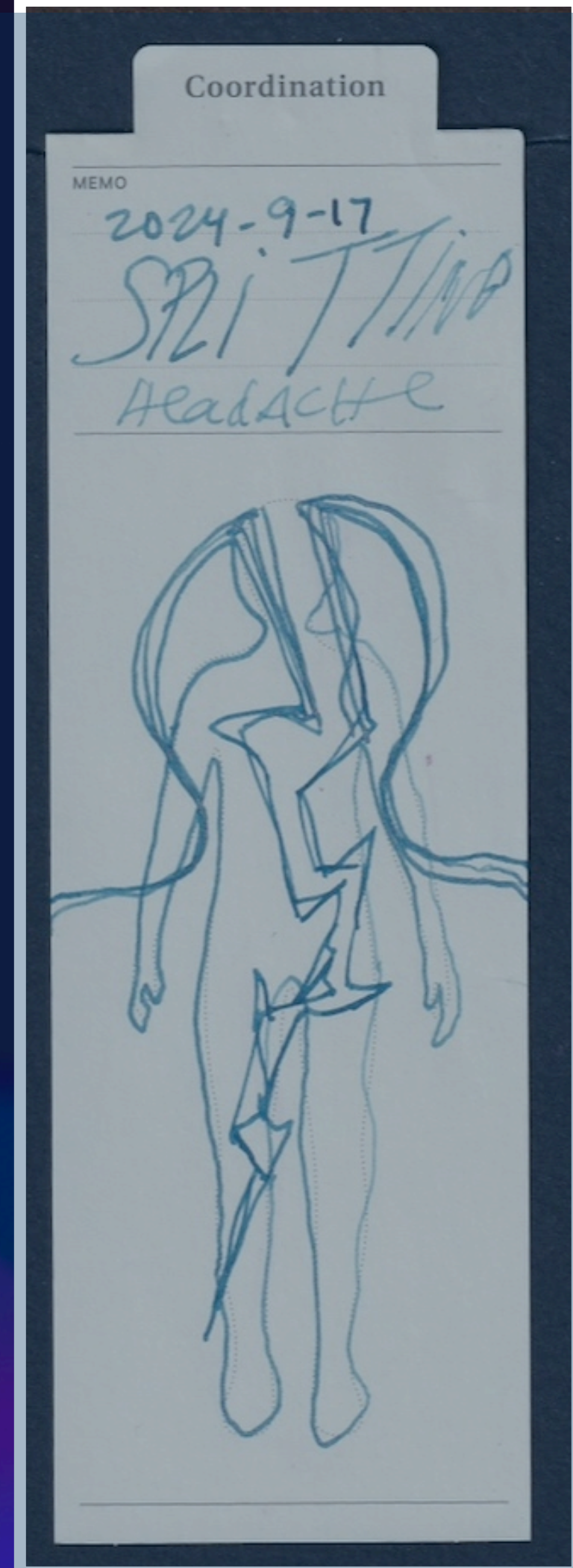
Writing &
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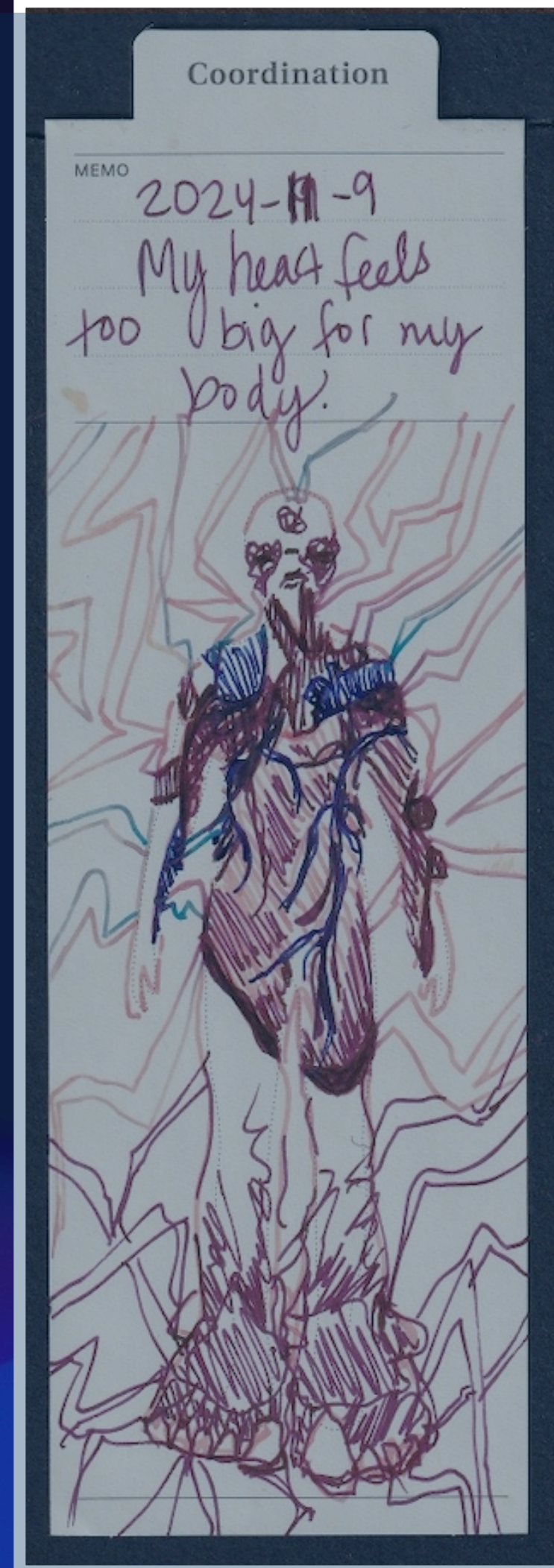
Comparison
& Metaphor



Abstract
Shape & Color



Representative
Shapes



Size &
Scale

Some different ways to portray symptoms:

Coordination

MEMO

Symptom:
Nausea & Reflux



Visual
Depiction

Coordination

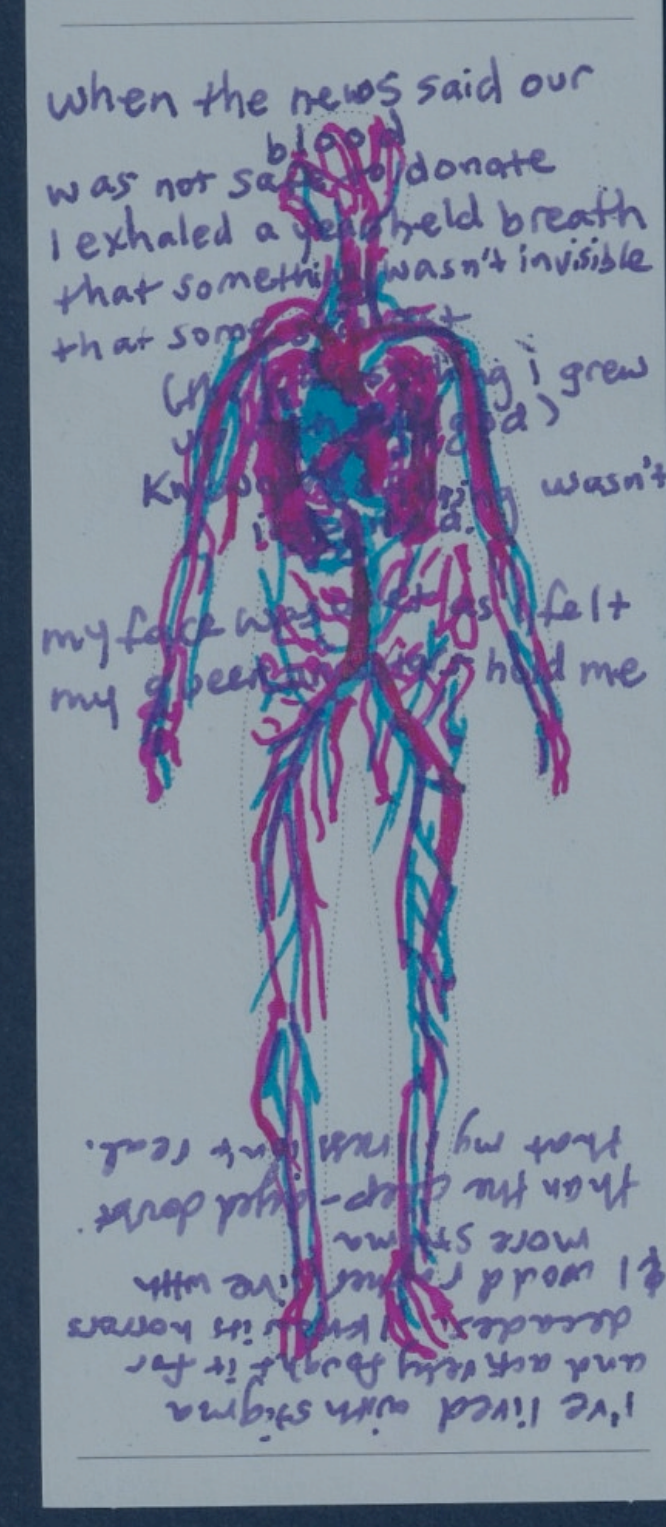
MEMO

2024-5-14

Plague Poem

When the news said our
was not safe to donate
I exhaled a held breath
that something wasn't invisible
that something wasn't
(I know I grew
up in a world
I know I wasn't
my face was
my heartbeat held me

I've lived with stigma
and anxiety about it for
decades. I know its horrors
& I would rather live with
more stigma
than the deep-wound doubt
that my heart isn't real.



Writing &
Description

Coordination

MEMO

2024-4-17

Can't sleep due
to the feeling of a
heavy metal rod in my leg.




Comparison
& Metaphor

Coordination

MEMO

2024-5-2

I'm not very theistic
but gods, what did I
do to deserve this?




Abstract
Shape & Color

Coordination

MEMO

2024-9-17

SPLITTING
Headache




Representative
Shapes

Coordination

MEMO

2024-11-9

My heart feels
too big for my
body.



Size &
Scale

Some different ways to portray symptoms:

Coordination

MEMO

Symptom:
Nausea & Reflux

Visual
Depiction

Coordination

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my eyes held me

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I would rather live with
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that my friends read.

Writing &
Description

Coordination

MEMO

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Comparison
& Metaphor

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SPLITTING
Headache

Representative
Shapes

Coordination

MEMO

2024-11-9

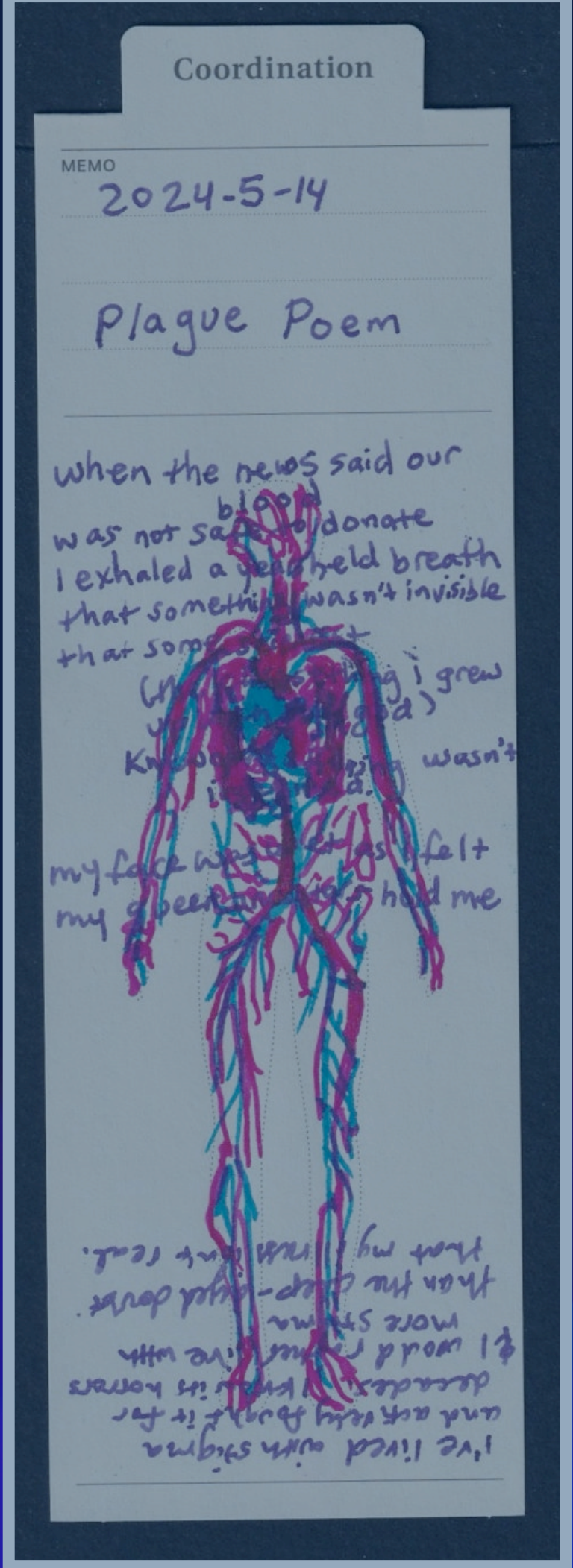
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Size &
Scale

Some different ways to portray symptoms:



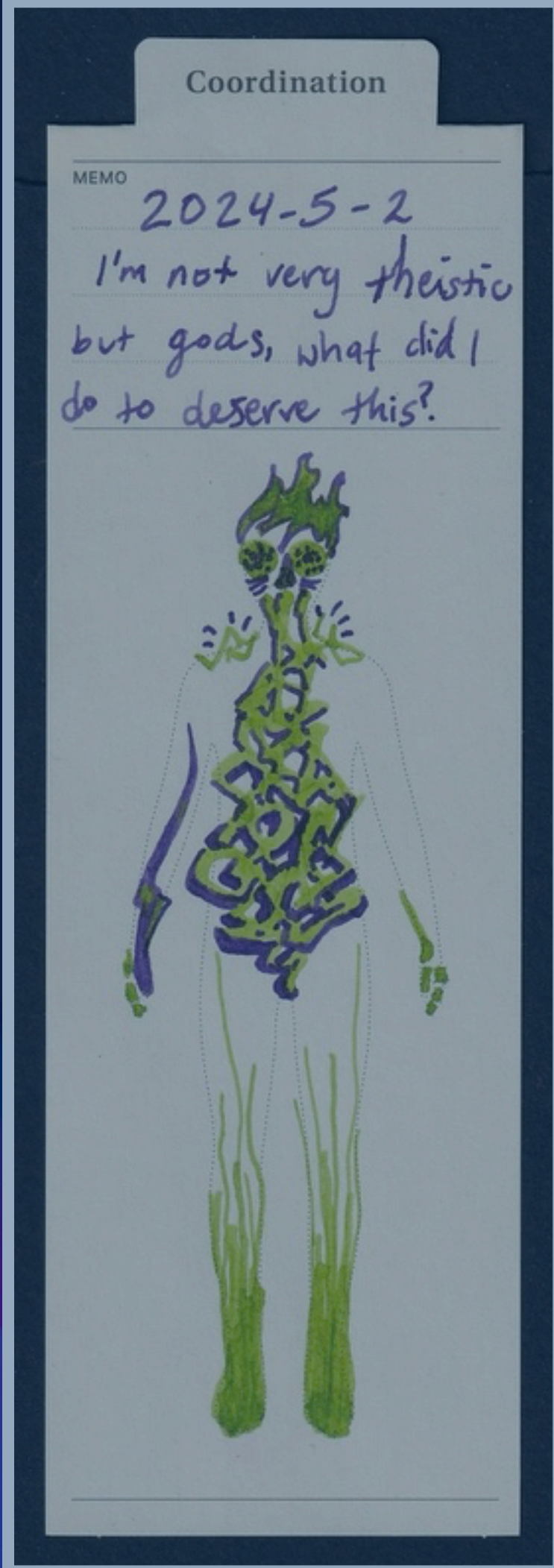
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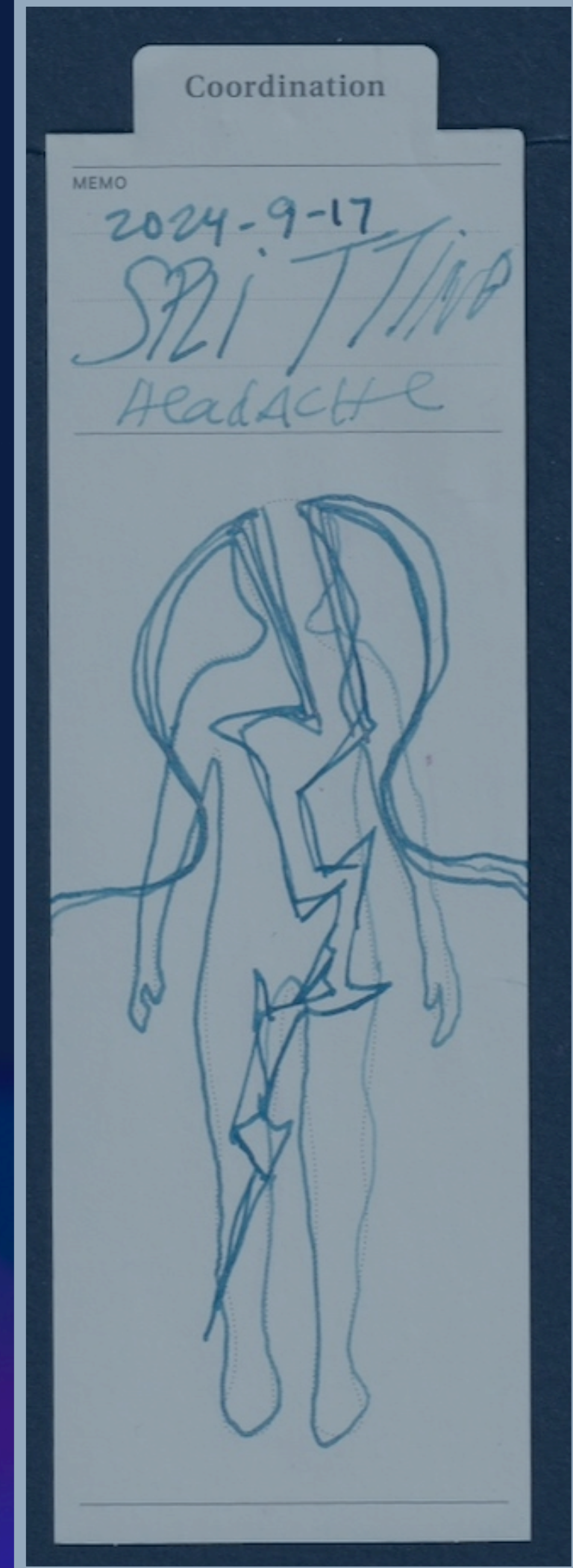
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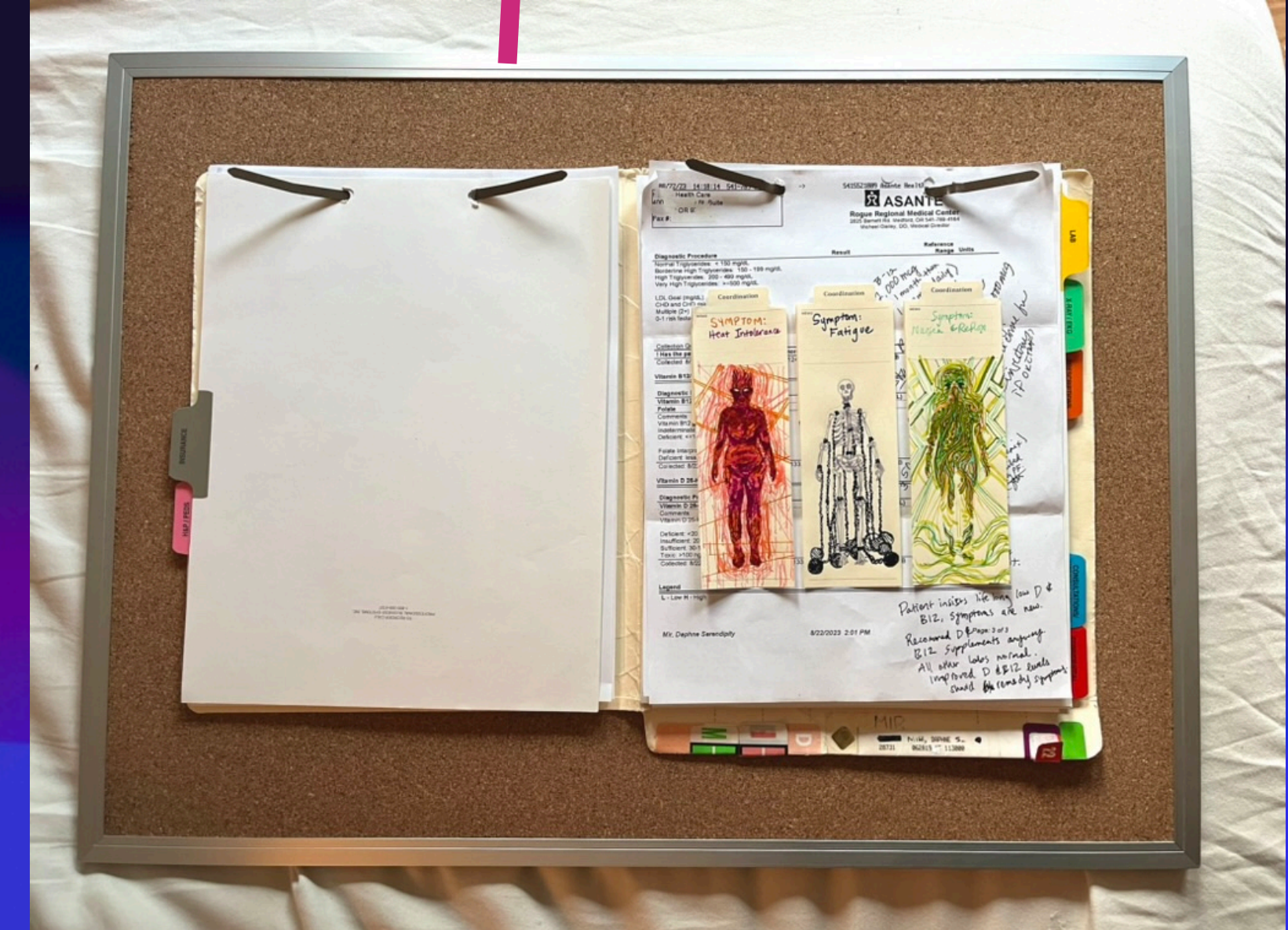
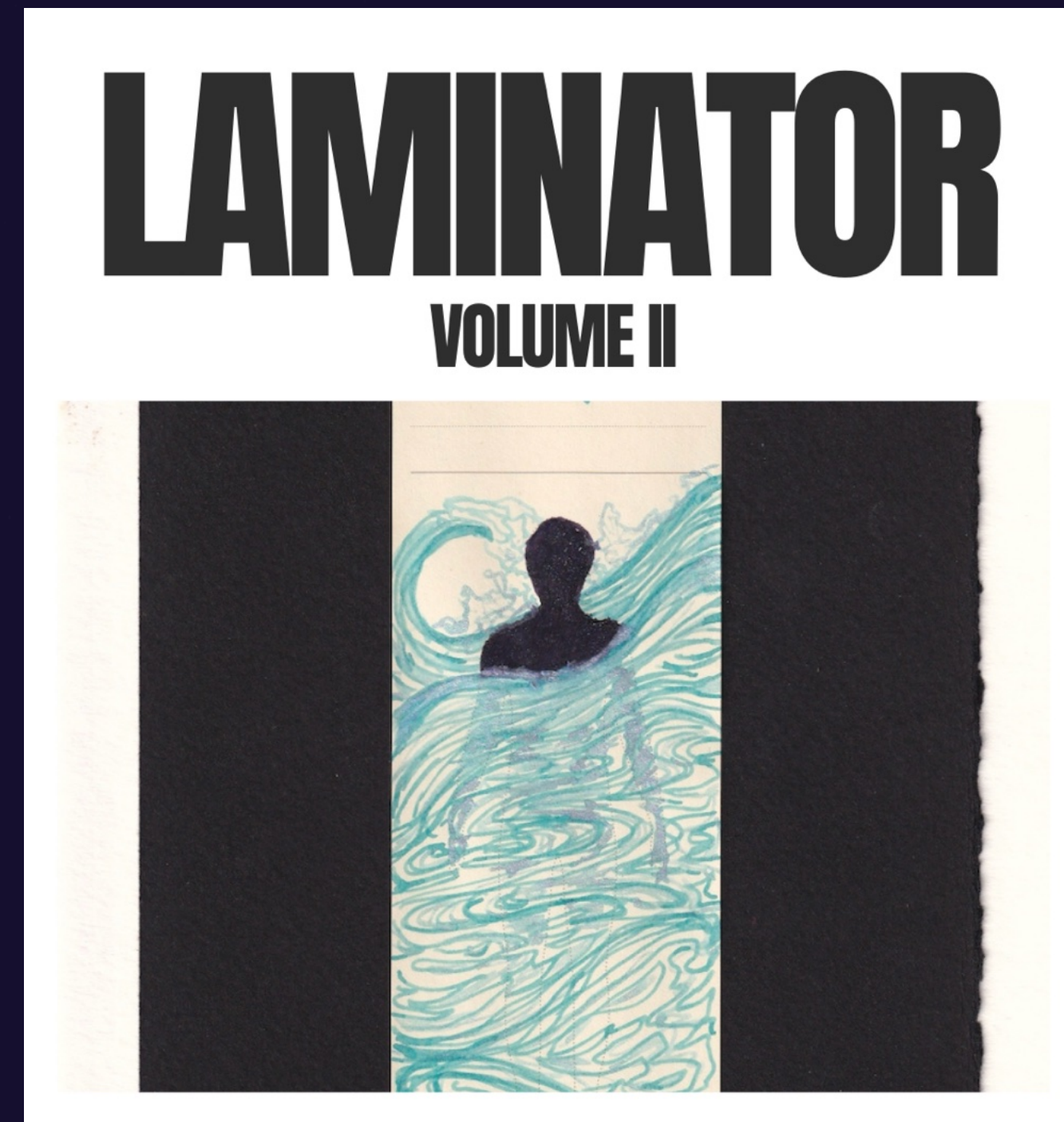
illmarks



illmarks activism!

Selected Impacts:

- Homiens Art Prize Summer 2024: “Symptom: grief”
- HERALBONY Art Prize Finalist 2025: interactive “medical chArt”
- 3 IRL Exhibits & 2 Virtual Exhibits
- 5 Publications
- 2 Workshops

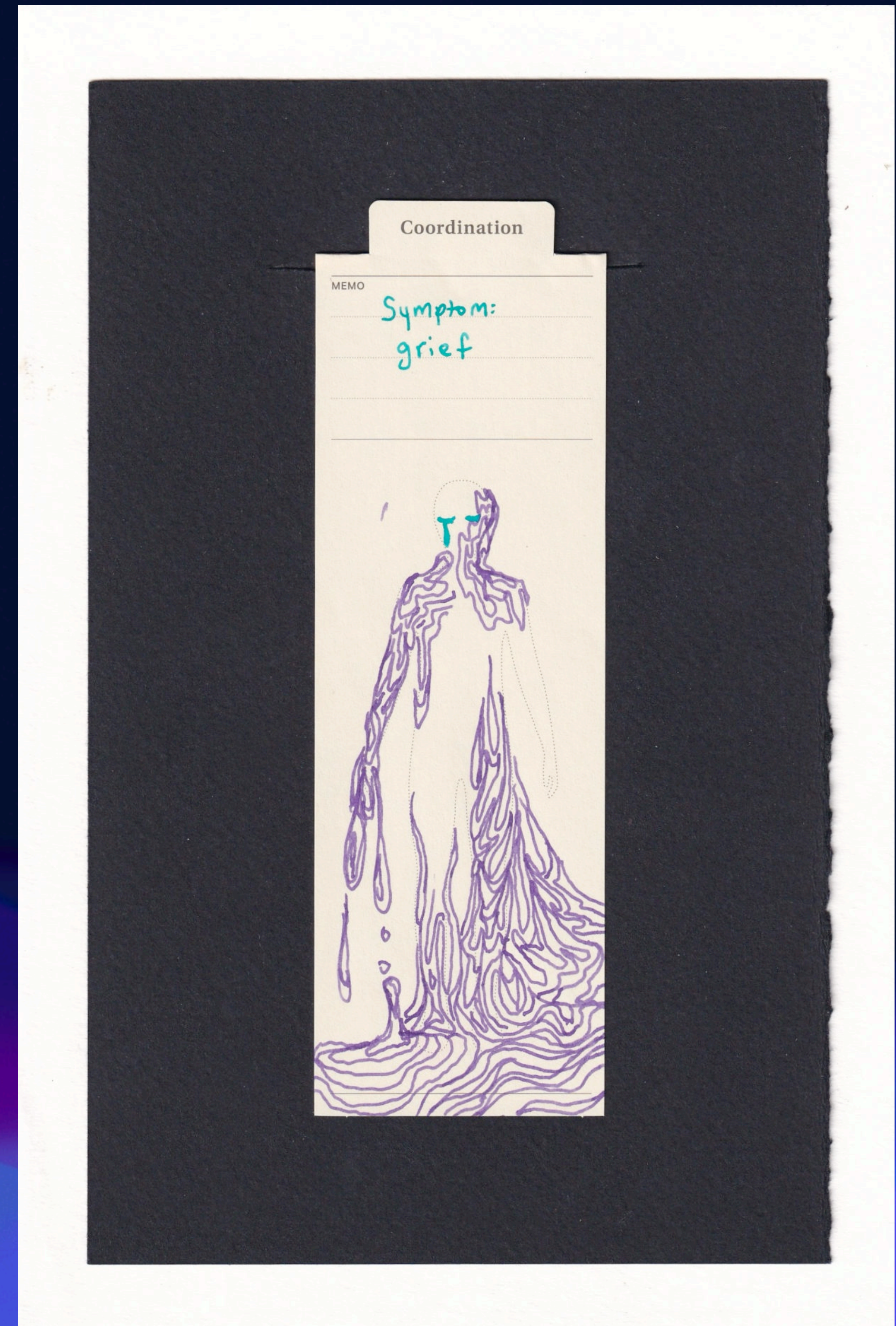


Want to host a workshop? illmarks@nyxm.com

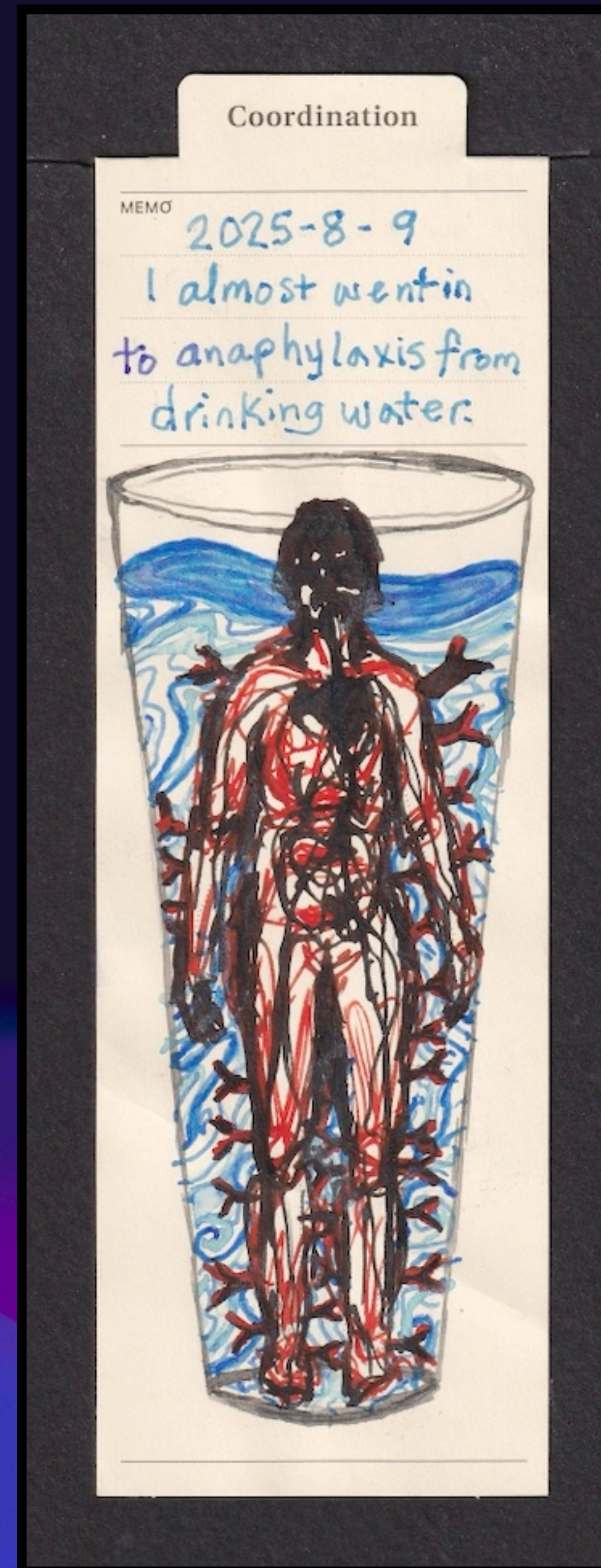
FINDING

Key Learnings from illmarks

“Symptom: Grief” winner of the
Homiens Art Prize, Summer 2024



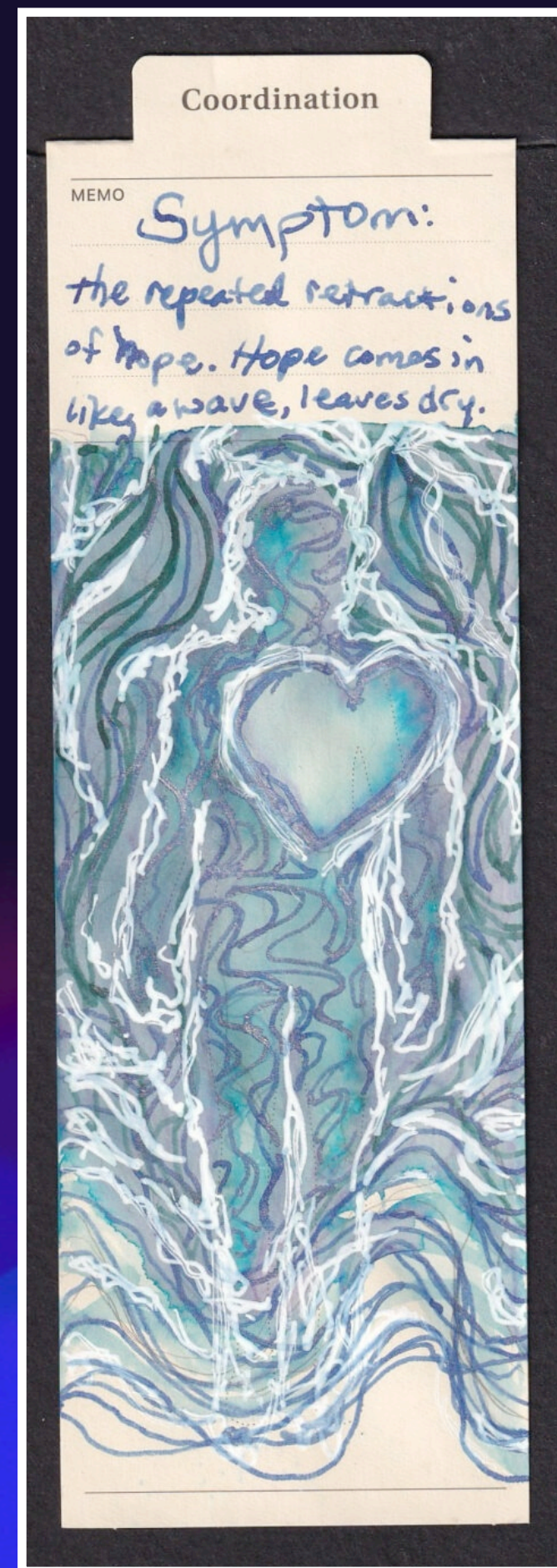
We know our bodies better than anyone else.



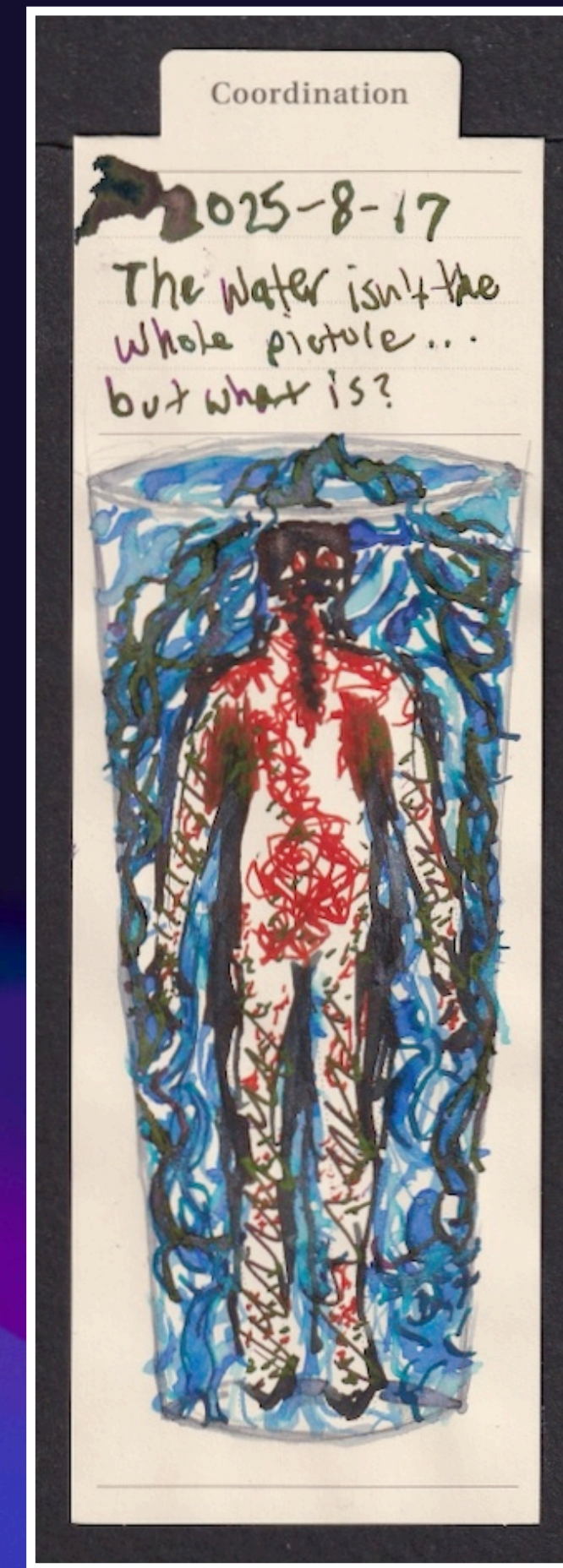
By Externalizing our Internal Experiences we are able to:



make them tangible
/ physically real



process them



witness how they change
& how we change



communicate them
to others

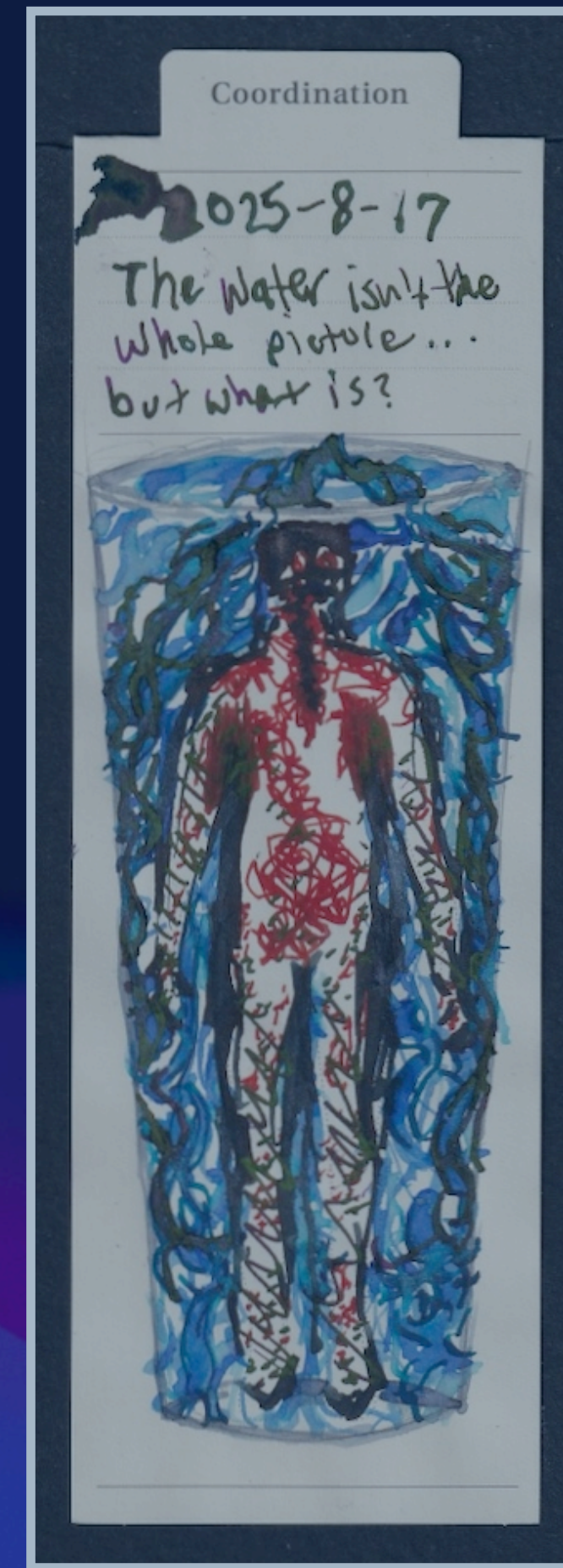
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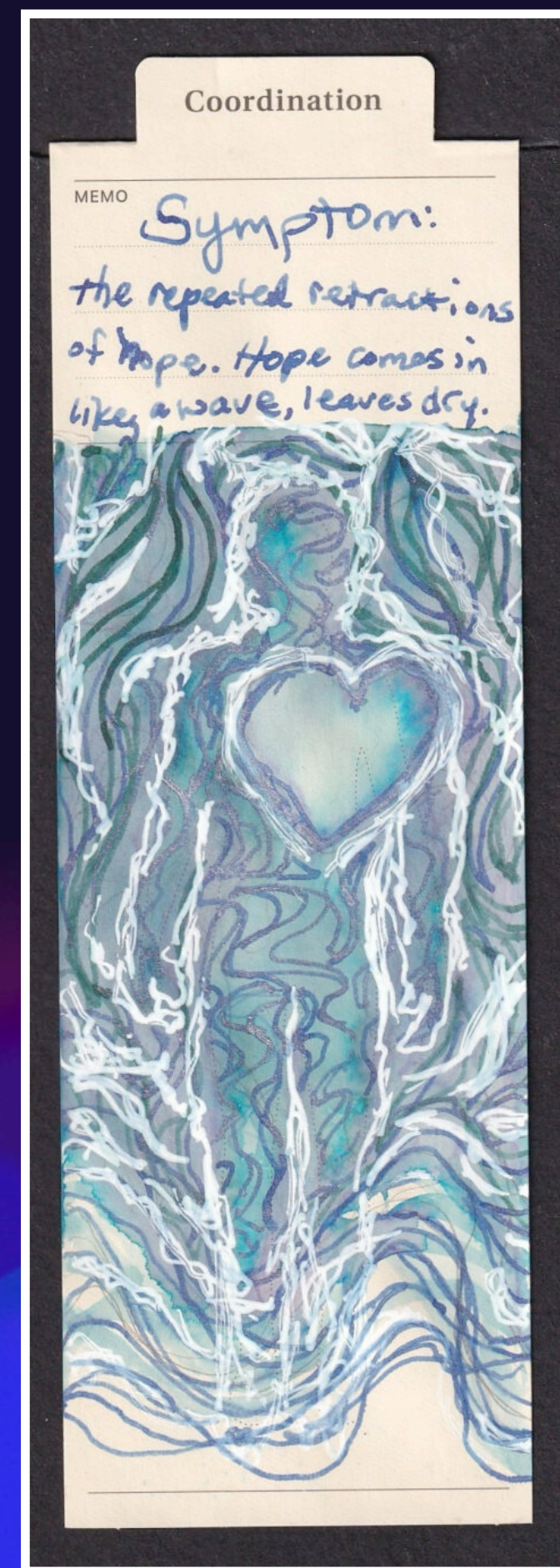


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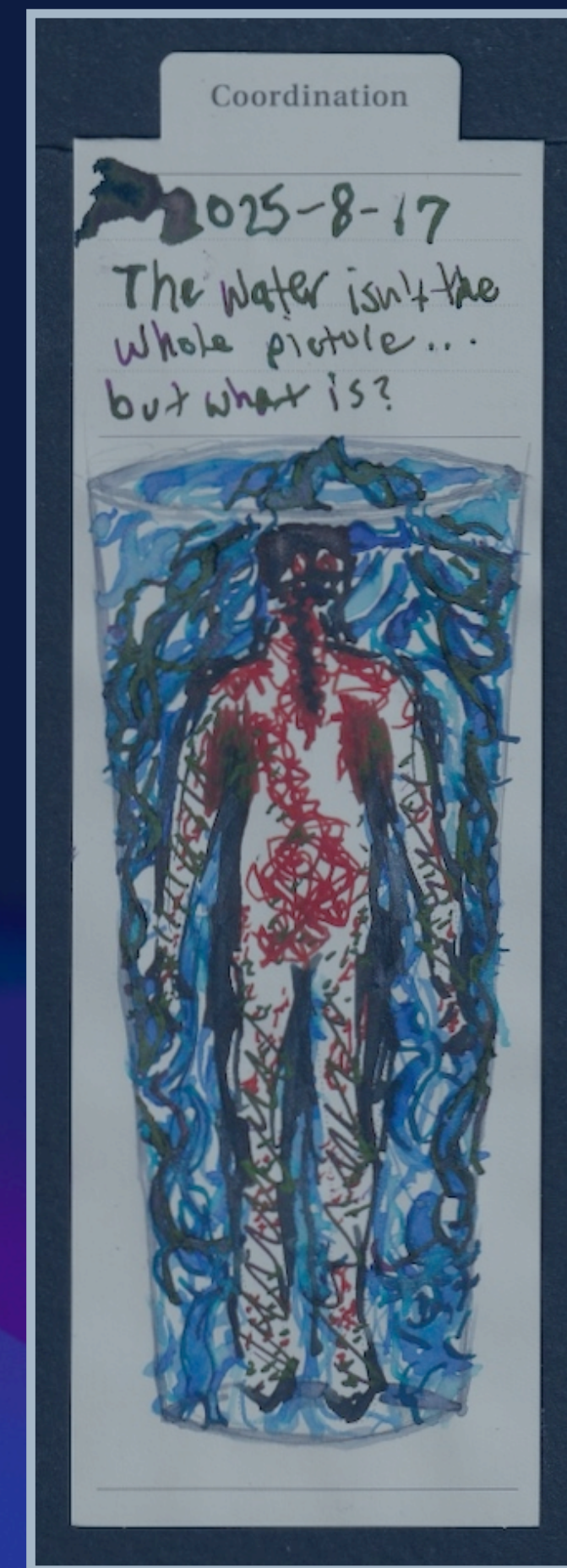
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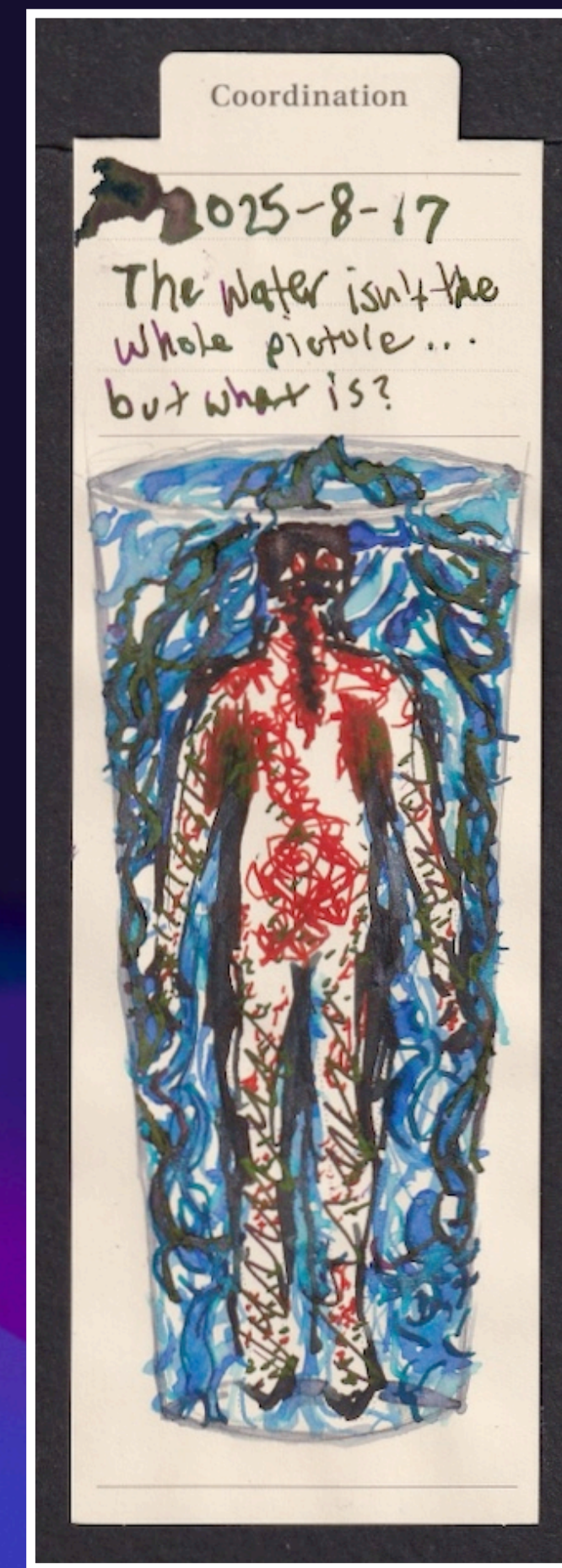
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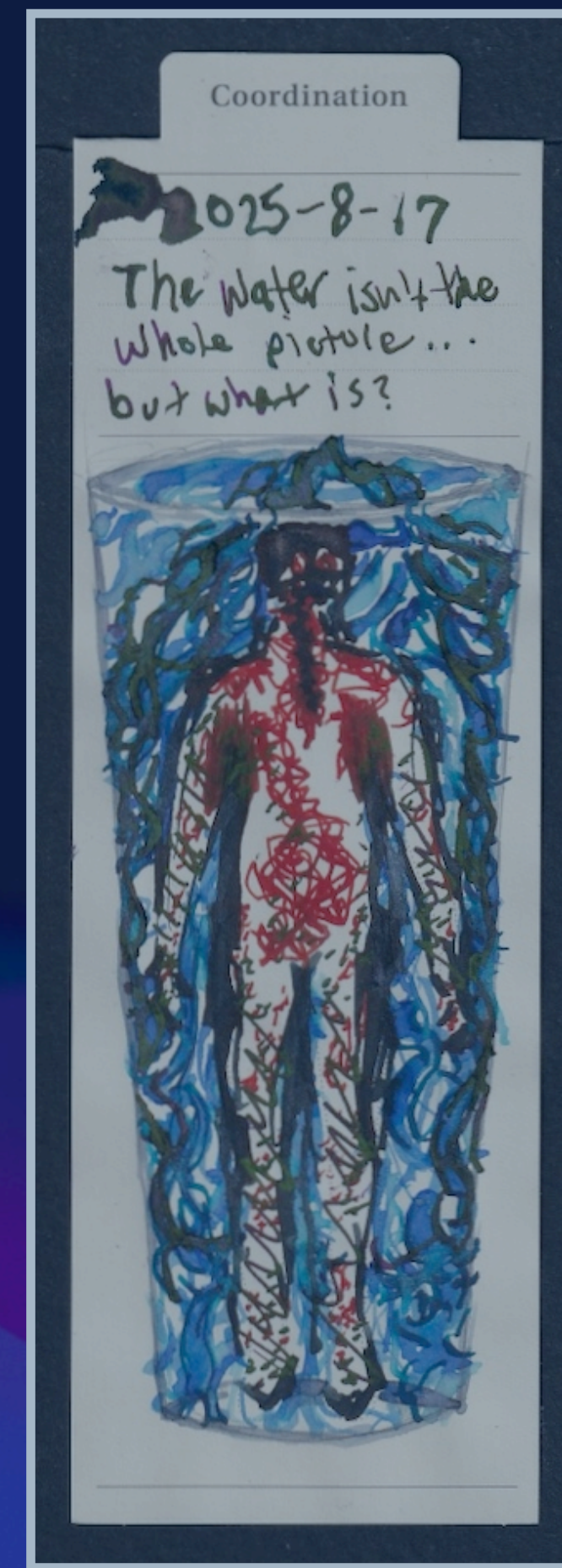
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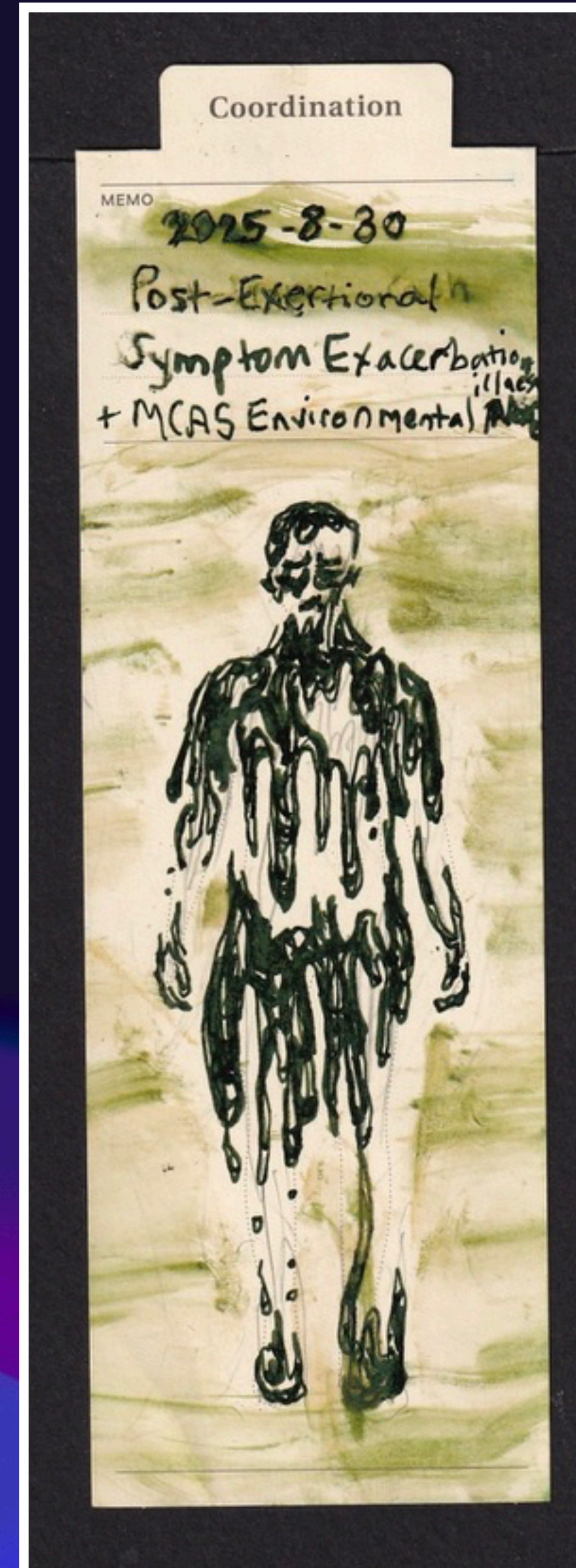


witness how they change
& how we change



communicate them
to others

We affirm our & each others' bodily experiences, internal knowledge, and subjective truths.



Coordination

MEMO

2025-6-27

Birthday Party Invite

TO: YOU WHEN: TMRW

DRESS CODE: ~N95



WHERE: #SaltingTheVibes

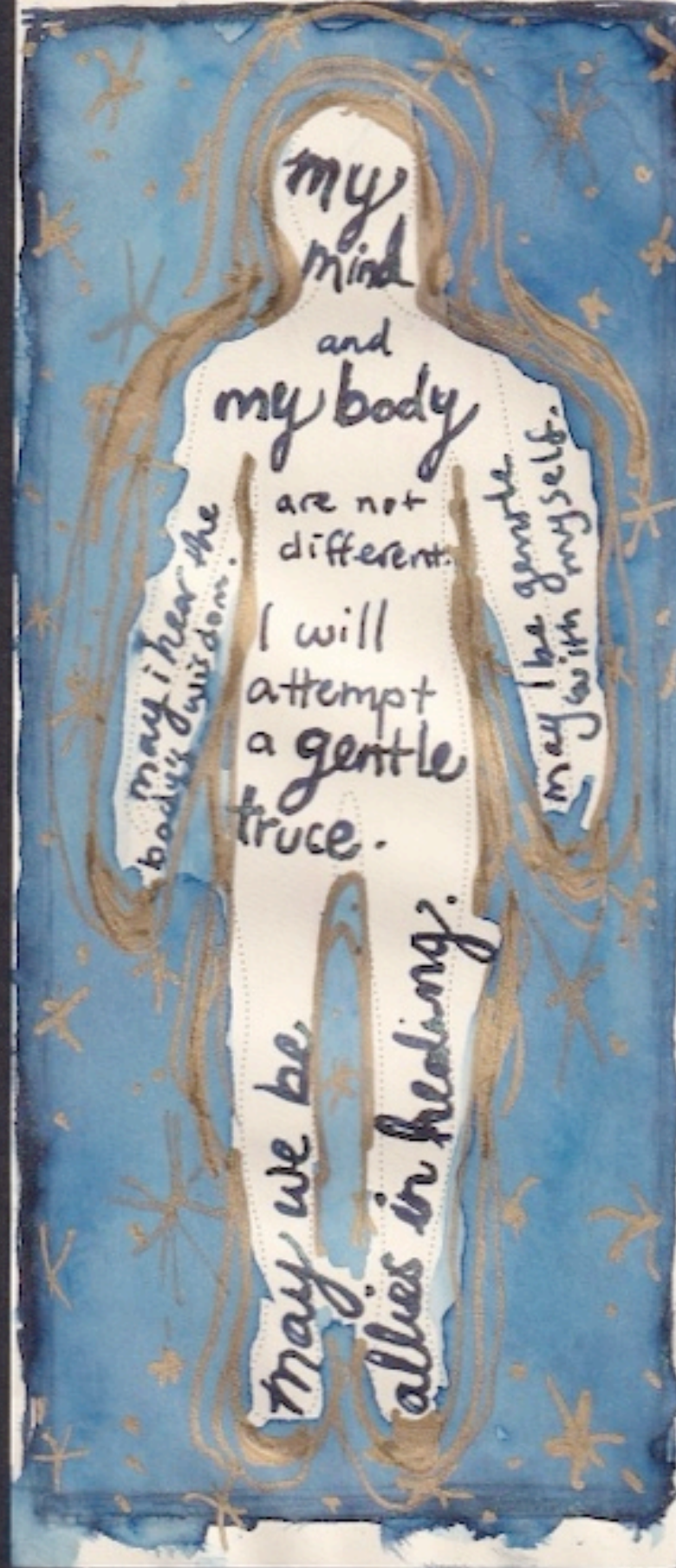
Coordination

MEMO

2024-9-21

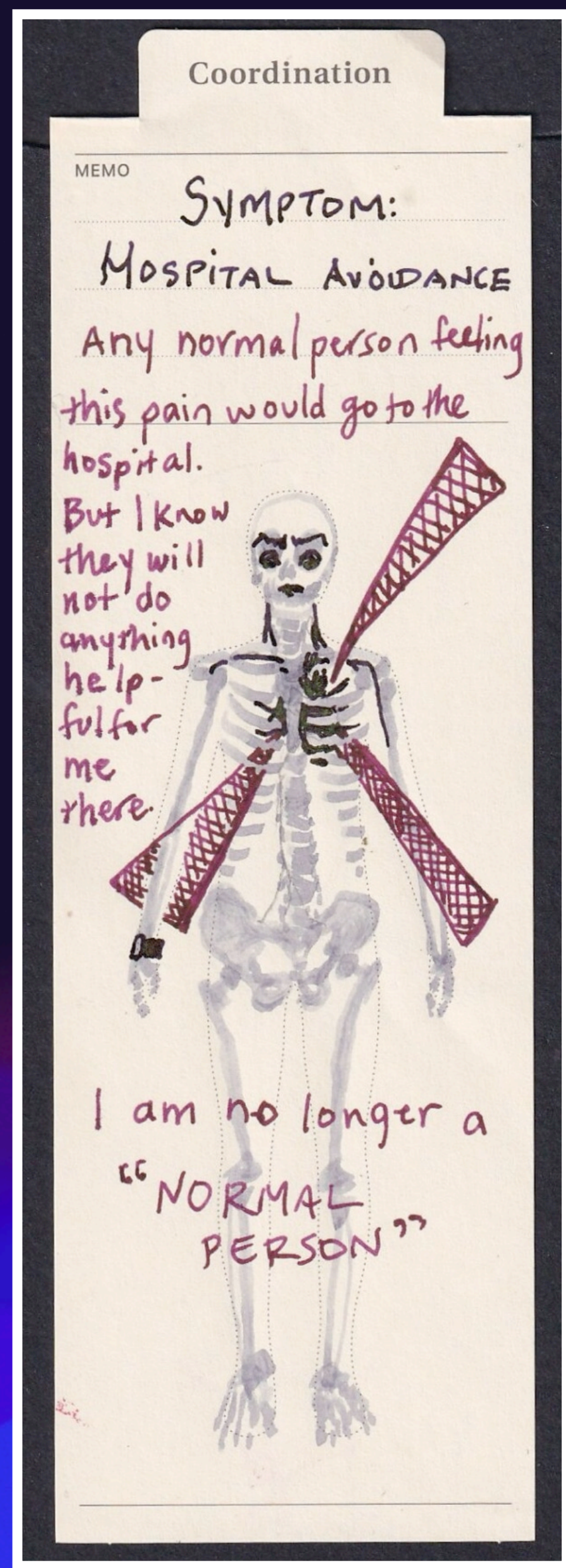
Treatment:

Meditation Retreat
(zen Sesshin)



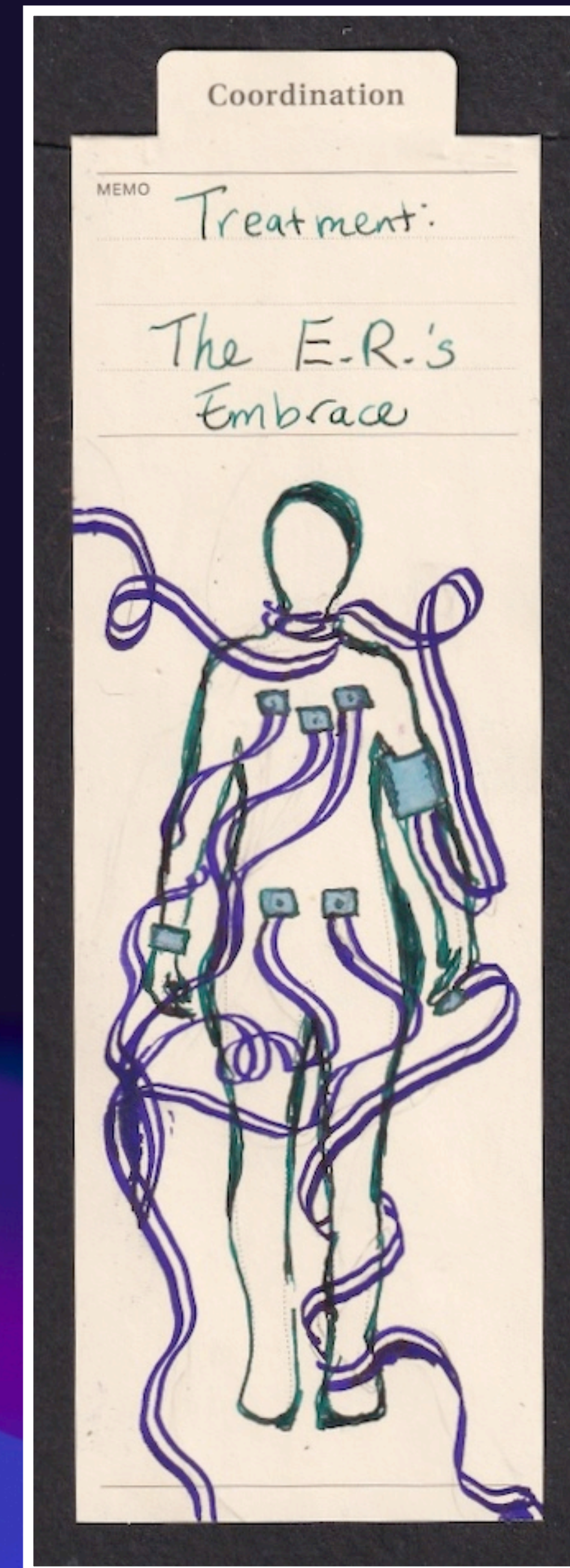
CLOSING

I Hope



Because we all have bodies,
healthcare is uniquely
situated as an issue that
can unite people across
political spectrums to
create systemic change.

It is critical we envision different, hopeful systems of health&care.



Thank you!

illmarks: Body Mapping for Chronic Illness & Disability
Reach out anytime: illmarks@nyxmir.com



presentation materials
illmarks.com/yale-deck

