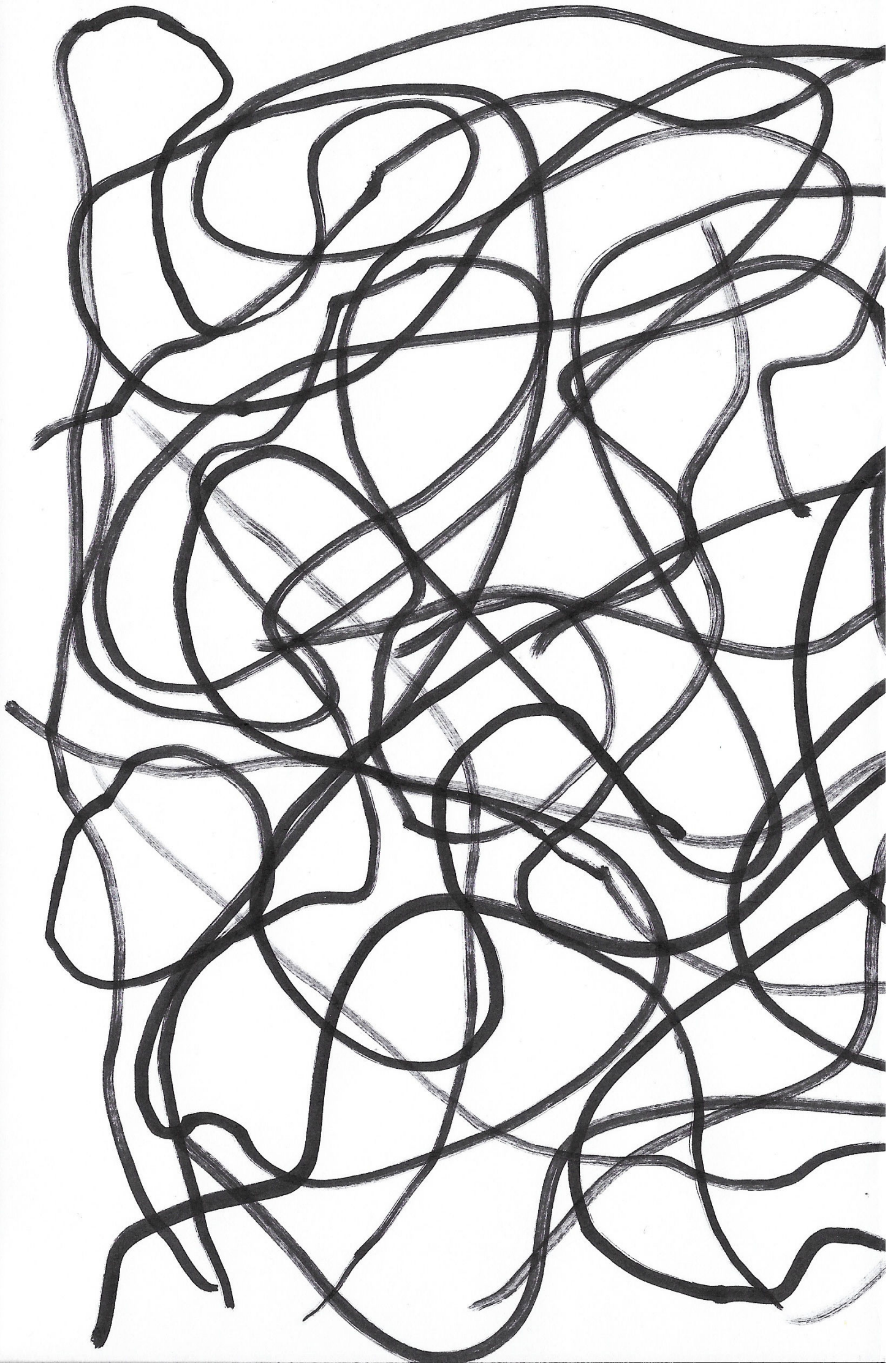


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Trichotillomania is characterized by **recurrent** and **persistent** urges to pull out one's own body hair. It occurs *de-novo*, is tension relieving, and **cannot be explained** by a medical or psychiatric morbidity. The term was first coined in 1889 by the French dermatologist Hallopeau, who described a young man who pulled out his hair in tufts. The word is derived from the Greek

thrix (hair)

tillein (to pull)

mania (madness)



Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV:


Recurrent pulling out of one's hair resulting in **noticeable hair loss**.

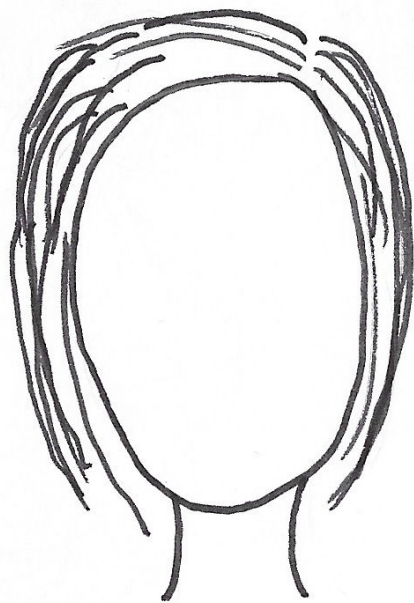
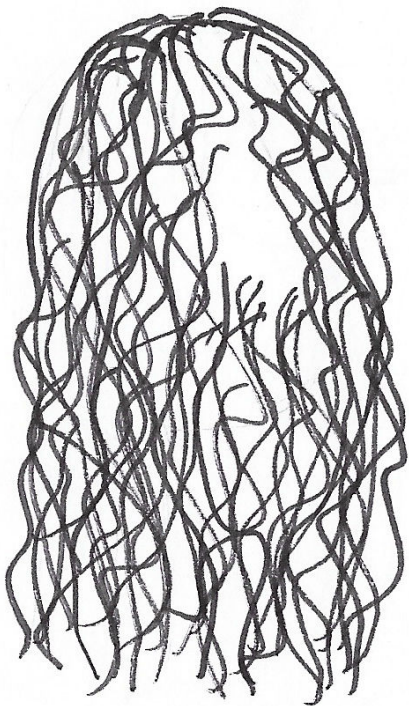
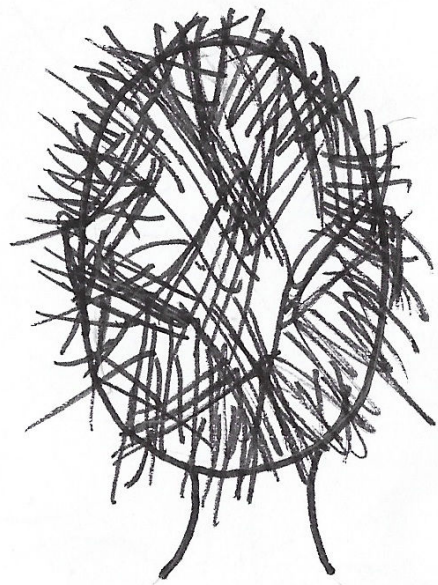
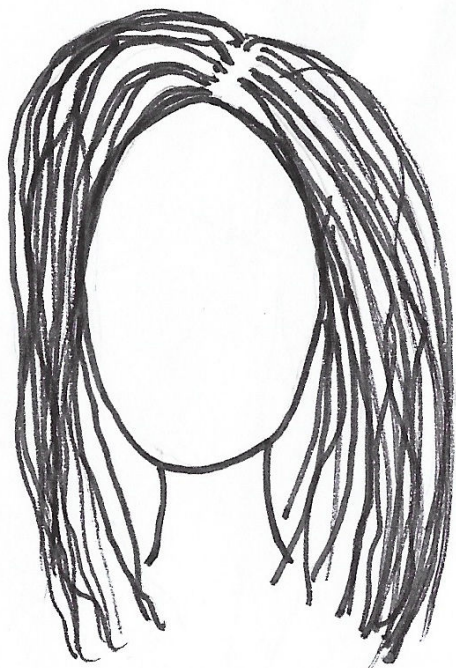
An increasing sense of **tension** immediately before pulling out the hair or when **attempting to resist** the behavior.

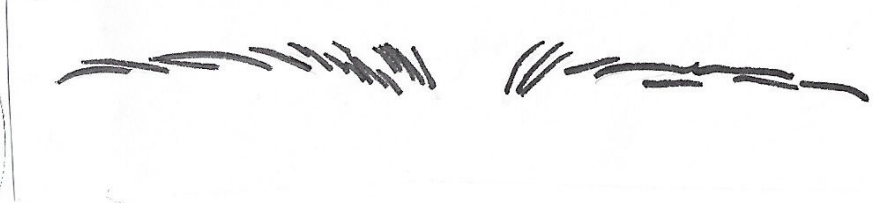
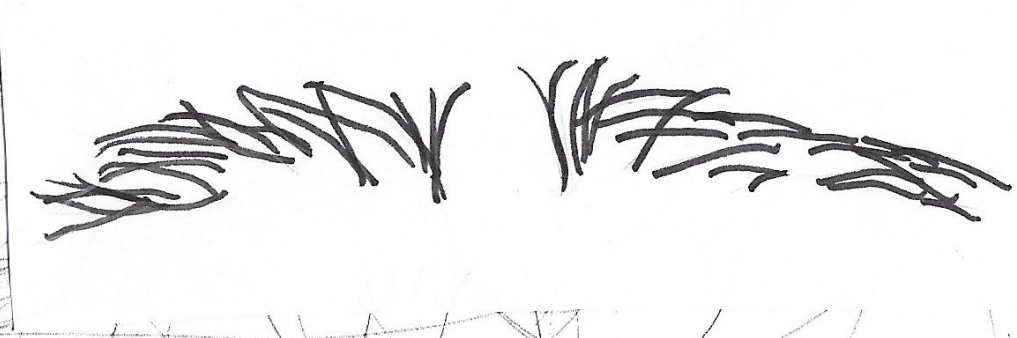
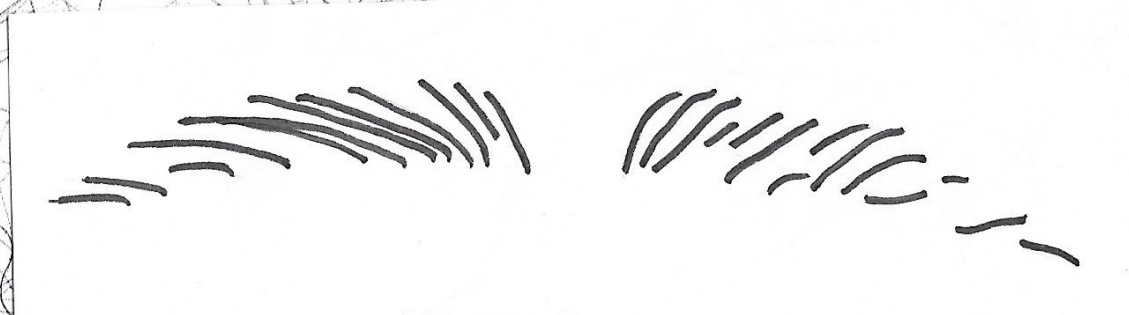
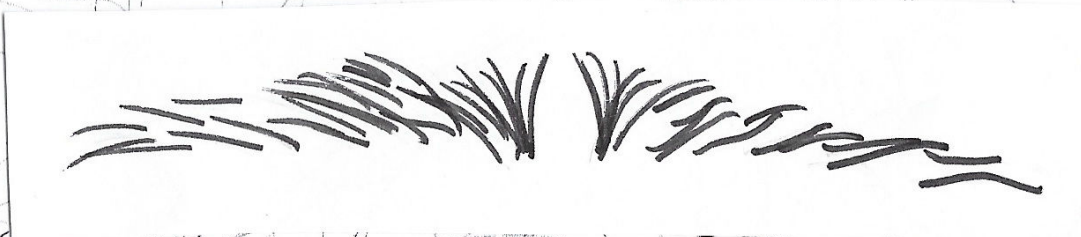
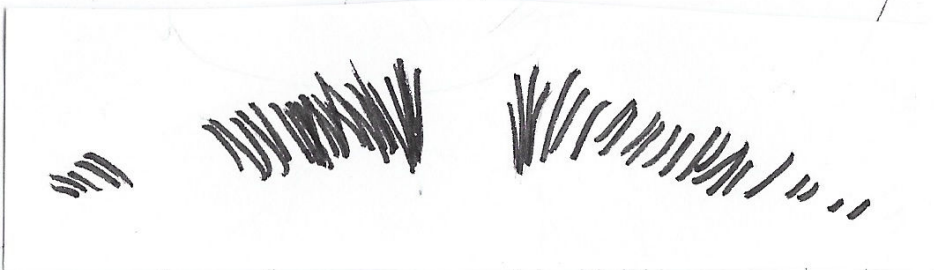
Pleasure, gratification, or relief when pulling out the hair.

The disturbance is **not better accounted for by another mental disorder** and is not due to a general medical condition (e.g., a dermatological condition).

The disturbance causes **clinically significant distress or impairment** in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.







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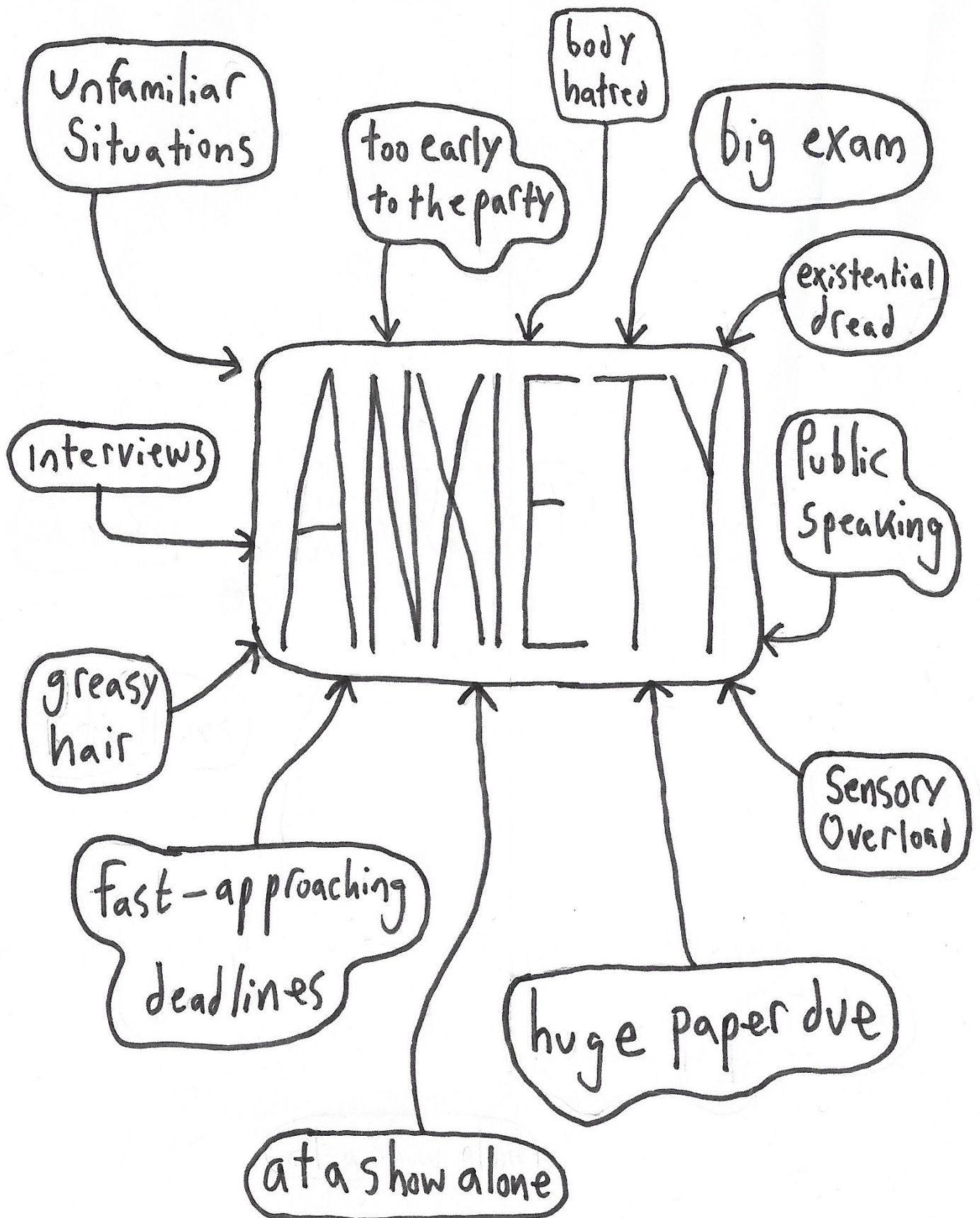
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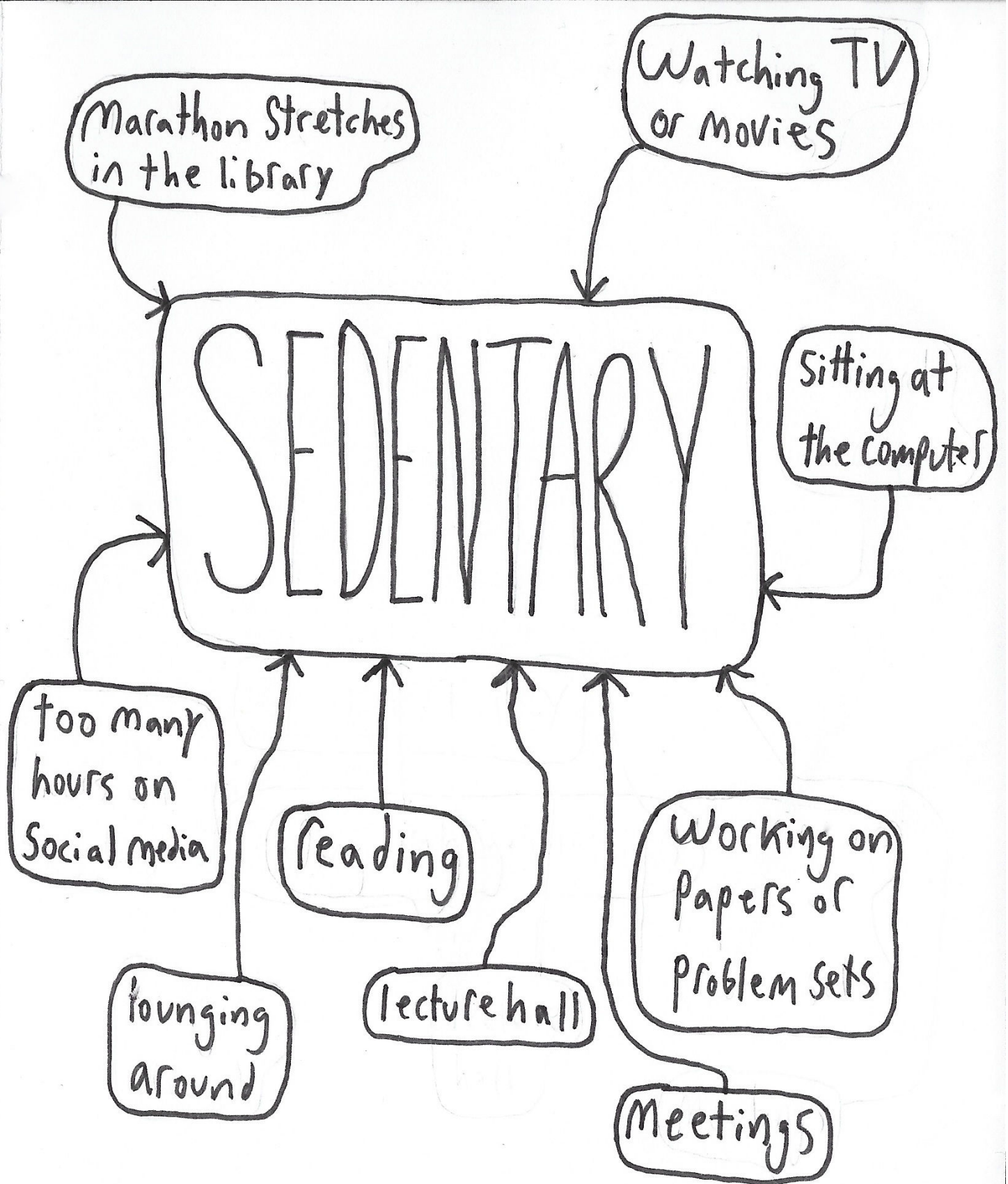
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“Many people are trapped in a cycle of hair pulling over which they have apparently little or no control: alternately **drawn by the addiction** to the behavior, and then **crushed by the shame** of the consequences.”

ENVIRONMENTAL





STRESSORS + TRIGGERS

50 ways to stop pulling your hair, according to the Trichotillomania Learning Center

● = methods I have tried, with varying levels of success

Wear a bandana to bed.

Make a sticker chart. Everyday that you go without pulling add a sticker. Hang this sticker chart in a room where you pull the most.

Reward yourself after several days (or hours) of being pull free. ●

Be patient with yourself. ●

Join a support group.

Talk to another person with Trichotillomania. ●

Wet down your hair. This will make it really hard to pull out your hair since it will be slippery. ●

Learn what your body needs instead of pulling. Is your body tired, hungry, sleepy, excited, etc? Then tell yourself out loud what you need and go do it. ●


Get a membership with the Trichotillomania Learning Center

Stimulate your senses. Many of us that pull like the sensation that comes with it. Instead of pulling do other things to stimulate these such as washing your hair, brushing your lips on dental floss or string (if you rub the hair on your lips), and massaging your scalp. ●

Avoid caffeine right before bed. Often bed time is a time when a lot of people pull. By using caffeine you keep yourself up longer and it heightens anxiety. ●

Buy a fidget toy. ●

Find other things to do with your hands such as knitting, crocheting, or cross stitch. ●



Wear a hoodie to bed as a barrier to pulling.

Go see a psychologist that performs cognitive behavioral therapy. ●

Try hypnotherapy

Make small reasonable goals. Such as I will not pull for the next three hours. Then keep increasing your time. ●

Look at your hair in the mirror everyday with your hands behind your back. Stare into the mirror until the anxiety to pull has lessened. This is called exposure therapy and it does work!

Look in the mirror every day to see how much it's grown. Be proud of your hard work. ●

Brush your hair instead of pulling ●

Have a positive attitude ●

If you pull some hair do not beat yourself up about it, just try again. ●

Use the saying "every hair belongs on my head" and repeat this over and over until the urge to pull ceases.

Make yourself busy, too much down time can be dangerous. ●

Help others, which in turn will help you. ●

Read everything you can on the internet about trichotillomania and the treatment plans to deal with it. ●

Watch shows and documentaries about trichotillomania to learn new techniques. ●

Wear perfume on your hands so that you will realize when your hand is going up to pull out your hair.

Name the hairs you want to pull out. It sounds silly but for some it works.

Spend less time in the areas of your house that you pull in.

Keep a journal of your feelings. ●

Find a hair that is laying around your house and stare at it daily. For many people the sight of hair can trigger hair pulling. By staring at a piece of hair everyday you are exposing yourself to the anxiety that follows. This will eventually cause the anxiety to lessen.

Read textbooks about the anatomy of hair.

Play with silly putty ●

Take a long bath to ease the anxiety. ●

Wear a wig the entire day, until you go to bed. Then put on a bandana. (Only use this the first two weeks or so, then trust yourself enough to take it off)

Take good care of your hair. Appreciating the hair you have will provide you with the courage you need to grow more. This means you should brush your hair daily, wash it at least once a day if possible, and respect that it belongs on your head. ●

Put your tweezers in a cabinet until you need them for grooming, not Trichotillomania. If you use tweezers a lot you may need to throw them out and only buy new ones when you have your Trichotillomania under control.

Imagine your life without Trichotillomania and with hair. ●


Place lotion or gel on your hands so it's hard to grasp the hair you want to pull.

Place notes that say "NO" or inspirational sayings about stopping hair pulling in places where you normally pull. ●

Wear a rubber band around your wrist to snap every time you want to pull. ●

Wear a bead bracelet to fidget with. ●

Lift weights. Your arms will be too tired to want to pull.



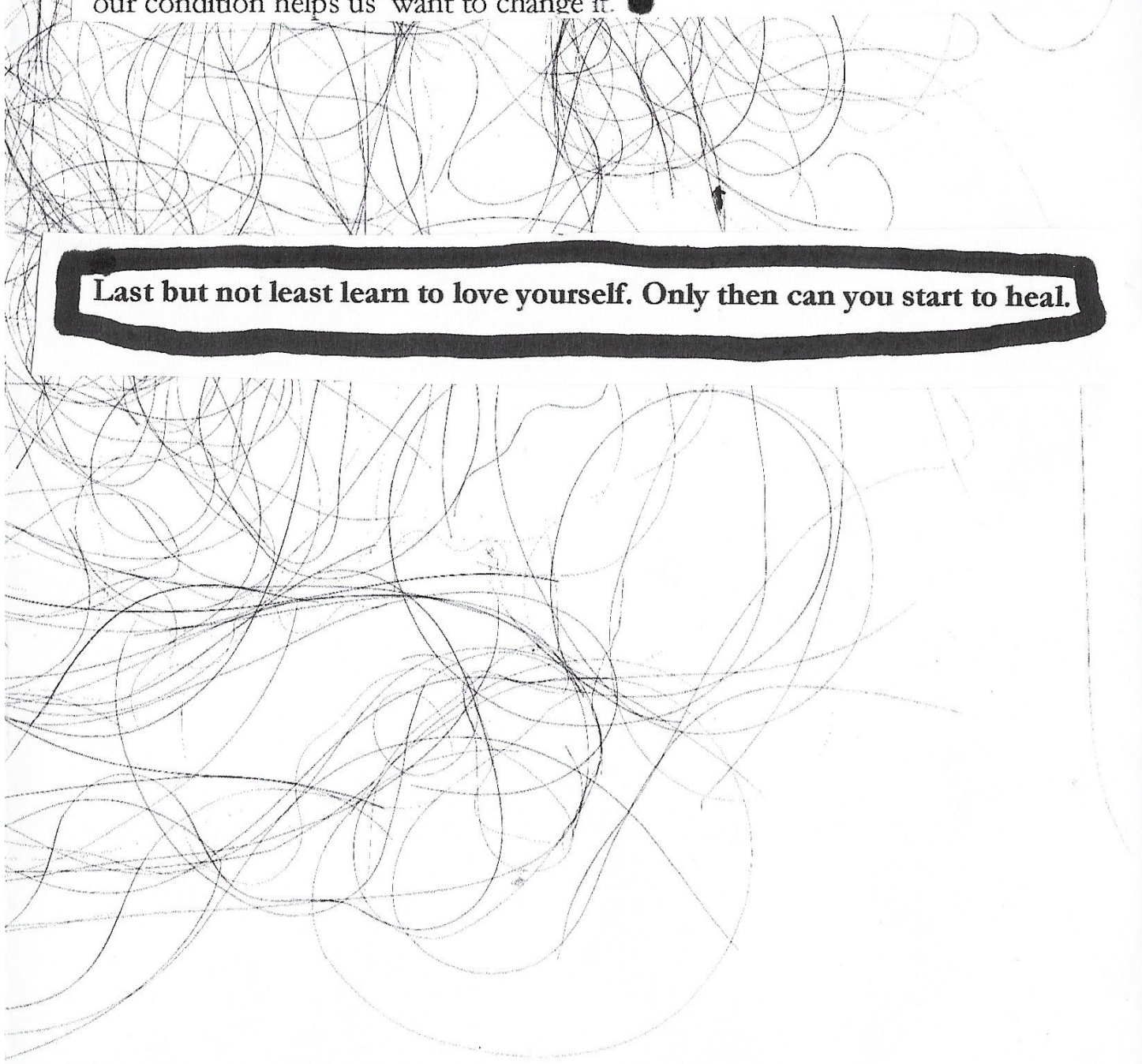
Pet an animal. Sometimes just running your hands through a pet's fur can stimulate the same sensation that you need in order to ease anxiety. ●

Meditate. ●

Take pictures of your bald spots and post them where you usually pull. When seeing these pictures you will not want to pull since bald spots are frightening.

Tell your friends and family to tell you to stop if they see you pulling.

Spread the word about Trichotillomania. Sometimes telling other people about our condition helps us want to change it. ●



Last but not least learn to love yourself. Only then can you start to heal.

References and Resources:

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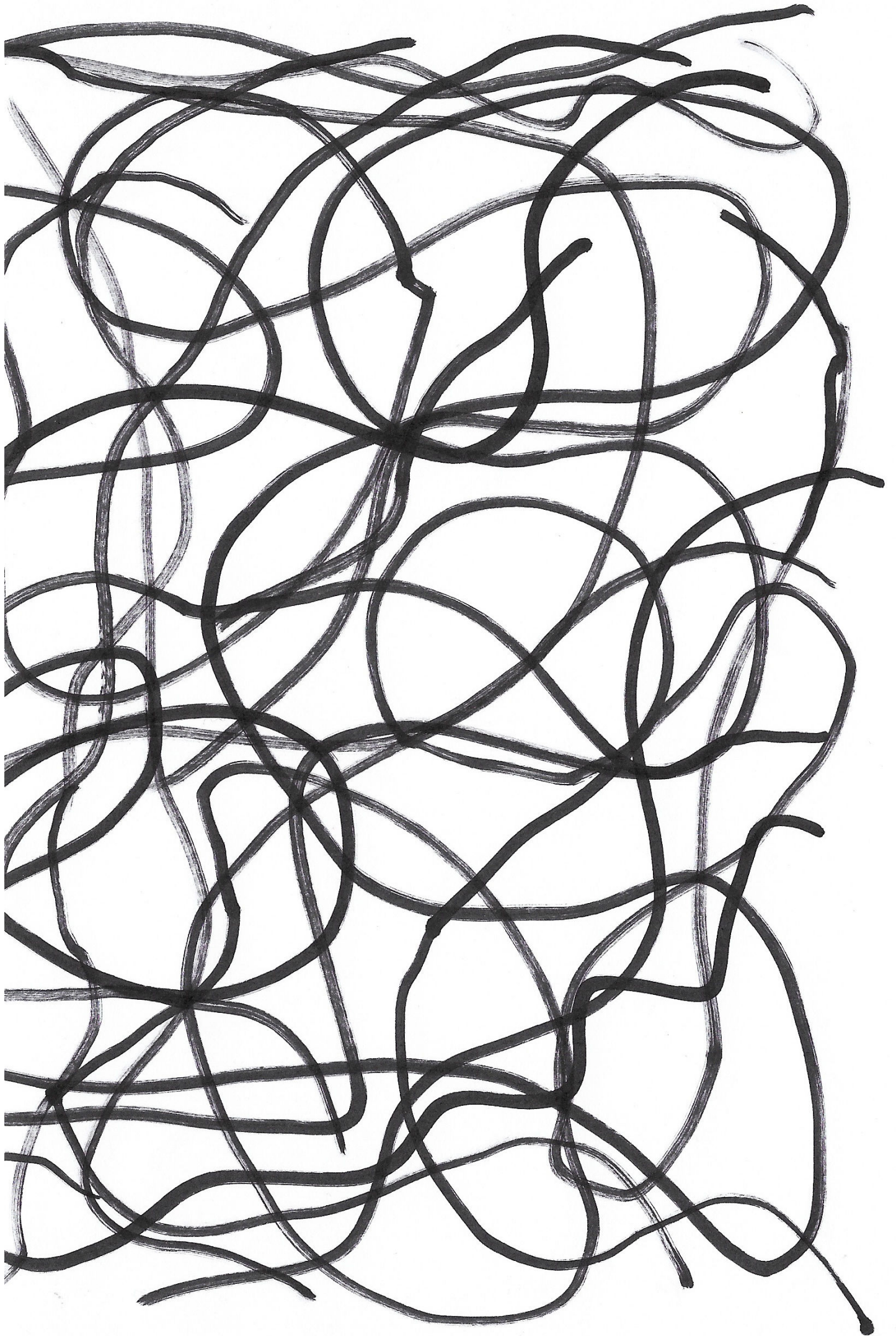
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juliet eldred © january 2015

julieteldred.com

contact: zine@uchicago.edu



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