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ART OF MEDICINE

Wayfinding

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Abstract

This charcoal gesture drawing was inspired by a mid-adolescent nonbinary patient, who once suffered suicidal thoughts and has recovered. The drawing investigates a caregiver's and patient's journey from despair to hope.

Figure. *Free to Choose*, 2020



Media

Charcoal on paper 5.2 cm x 22.9 cm (6" x 9").

This gesture drawing was inspired by a mid-adolescent patient progressing

through a **gender transition**, despite enduring others' biases. This patient shared that they finally felt free from suicidal thoughts after years of failed attempts to control their depression with medication. After researching **electroconvulsive therapy** (ECT), they requested it, despite its status as a stigmatized intervention.

After ECT, the patient's suicidal thoughts ceased, and they reported excitement about having found ways to more freely and nimbly move within, and respond more dexterously to the demands of, their emotional world. This patient now had the internal resources to transform a frightening, narrowing bleakness into a capacious future, with space for movement, growth, and life.

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