Jordan's Artful Wellness

UNSILENCED AND RECLAIMED

A survivor's guide to healing after TMS injury

"YOU MIGHT FEEL WORSE BEFORE YOU FEEL BETTER."

Dear Reader,

You're not alone.

I created this booklet because after my own experience with TMS left me injured, I searched everywhere for answers, support, and hope.

This guide is what I wish I had during the hardest days: clear information, validation, tools for healing, and proof that recovery is possible.

Whether you've been harmed by TMS, are supporting someone who has, or just want to understand what can go wrong, I hope this resource brings clarity, comfort, and strength.

— Jordan

MY TMS INJURY STORY

In June 2023, I received transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) at a clinic in Vancouver, Washington. I was told it was safe that it could help with my “overactive amygdala”, that it had virtually no side effects, and that it was FDA-approved. I wasn’t warned of any serious risks, let alone the possibility of brain injury. I trusted the doctor. I trusted the science I thought was behind it.

After just three sessions, something went terribly wrong. I began to experience intense neurological symptoms: pressure in my head, dizziness, vision problems, confusion, and a deep, unfamiliar disconnection from my body. It felt like my brain had been destabilized. I reported what I was feeling, but I was told to "stick with it" and that "you are just overly sensitive." I now know how dangerous that phrase is.

What I wish I’d known:

- That TMS is a powerful intervention and not harmless.
- That worsening symptoms can signal real harm, not just "adjustment."
- That some people don’t recover while staying with treatment.
- That there are more people reporting issues than the marketing materials lead you to believe.

Instead of healing, I was left with a traumatic brain injury which was confirmed through imaging and clinical evaluations. My vision, vestibular, and cognitive systems were all affected. I’ve spent nearly two years in rehab: neuro-optometry, vestibular therapy, trauma therapy, and brain injury care. Every step has been an uphill climb to get my life back.

This isn’t just a story about me. I’ve now connected with dozens, possibly hundreds of others with similar stories. Stories hidden behind shame, disbelief, and medical gaslighting.

If this happened to you: you are not alone. Your body is not betraying you, it is asking to be believed.

WHAT YOU'RE NOT TOLD ABOUT TMS

What the Marketing Says	What Some Patients Experience
"0 systemic side effects"	Neurological harm is not tracked or acknowledged
"83% improve" or "62% success"	Based on short-term, cherry-picked outcomes
"Non-invasive and safe"	Direct brain stimulation can still cause injury
"FDA-approved"	Approval ≠ fully understood long-term safety

Vulnerable Populations

- People with brain injury history (even minor concussions)
- Those who are neurodivergent (autism, ADHD, sensory sensitivity)
- Individuals with complex trauma or dissociation
- Those with hypersensitivities (to meds, noise, light)
- Anyone with prior adverse reactions to psych treatments

Industry Silence + Gaslighting

- "Stick with it" even when symptoms worsen
- Harm minimized or blamed on anxiety, not TMS
- No centralized adverse event tracking system
- Patients often left without validation or support
- Clinics repeat vague lines like "FDA-approved" and "safe," ignoring nuance

Symptoms of TMS Injury (as reported by patients)

- Cognitive fog, slowed thinking, trouble with words
- Double vision, tracking issues, light sensitivity
- Dizziness, balance problems, vestibular dysfunction
- Strange head sensations, pressure or pain at the coil site
- Emotional instability or blunting, dissociation
- Sensory overload, low stress tolerance
- Sleep issues, panic, dysregulated nervous system
- Hearing issues or loss of hearing
- Numbness, tingling, or heaviness in limbs

Recognizing a Possible TMS Injury

Many people who experience harm from TMS report symptoms that aren't listed in the brochures are often dismissed by providers. If you started feeling "off" or unwell during or after TMS, you are not alone.

- Vision issues: Blurry or double vision, trouble tracking, light sensitivity
- Hearing issues of loss: Tinnitus, ringing in the ears, ear popping, ear pressure, or hearing loss
- Cognitive impairment: Word-finding problems, slowed thinking, memory lapses, confusion
  - Feeling "disconnected" from your thoughts or surroundings
- Dizziness + imbalance: Feeling unsteady, swaying, vertigo, or vestibular dysfunction (trouble with spatial orientation)
- Emotional changes: Emotional flatness, numbness, crying spells, panic, irritability
  - Dissociation (feeling detached from self or surroundings)
  - Depression or suicidal thoughts that worsened post-TMS
- Head + body pain: Head pressure, pain near the treatment site, limb heaviness or numbness
  - Radiating pressure across forehead or scalp
  - Neck tightness or pain
  - Whole-body fatigue
- Fatigue + overstimulation: Sensory overload, brain fog, need to isolate, low stress tolerance
  - Inability to regulate temperature or heart rate
  - Heightened startle reflex or nervous system hypersensitivity
- Worsening over time: Symptoms may not show up immediately — many report delayed onset or progressive decline weeks after stopping

You are not imagining it.

Your body is trying to protect you. These symptoms are signals, not defects. If this sounds like you, trust what you're noticing — not just what you were told.

Healing Pathways

Recovery is possible but it often requires time, support, and brain-injury-informed care. Here's what helped me, what others report, and what to be cautious about:

What Helped Me

- **Getting a Proper Diagnosis:** It took over a year to be properly diagnosed with a brain injury from TMS. Many non-MDs recognized it, but I was dismissed by doctors because it didn't follow the "typical" injury path. I was told it was just a "headache" but I kept pushing. That diagnosis eventually opened doors and led to better referrals, though I still have to advocate daily for the care I need.
- Brain-injury-informed care: Working with providers who understand TBI made a huge difference. TMS harm is not "just anxiety." I have also learned that the sooner you are able to get to the right care, the better for your long-term healing and symptom management.
- Neuro-optometry: Vision therapy helped retrain my brain and ease symptoms like double vision, dizziness, and tracking issues. I wear prisms, tinted lenses for light sensitivity, and work daily on vision exercises to relearn what I lost.
- Physical therapy: Targeted exercises to support balance, brain and eye connection, neck instability, and adjustments to head, neck and midline to reduce symptoms.
- Vestibular therapy: Specialized exercises to improve balance, reduce dizziness, and help your brain adapt to motion and sensory input. Supports coordination between your eyes, ears, and body—especially helpful after TMS-related disruption to the inner ear or nervous system.
- Speech therapy: This helped my brain relearn word finding, memory, and other cognitive functions that were lost.
- Somatic + trauma support: Nervous system regulation, gentle bodywork, and trauma-informed approaches helped me reconnect to my body.
- Nutrition + rest: Anti-inflammatory foods, hydration, and deep rest supported healing especially early on. Explored prolonged juice fast and 3-day water fast.
- Supplements: Key nutrients to support brain healing, reduce inflammation, and promote neural regeneration. These have made a meaningful difference for me, though everyone's needs vary My protocol includes:
  - **Magnesium Threonate** for cognitive clarity and neuroplasticity
  - **Omega-3s** to reduce inflammation and support brain cell repair
  - **B-Complex** for energy and nerve function
  - **NAC** to boost glutathione and protect brain cells
  - **Lion's Mane** for neuroregeneration
  - **BodyBio PC** to restore cellular membranes and brain signaling
  - **Mitochondrial support** to improve energy at the cellular level
  - **BCQ** for inflammation and joint/nerve pain
  - **Ashwagandha** for stress regulation and nervous system balance.

Healing Pathways

Healing the brain and calming the central nervous system often involves gentle, consistent practices like meditation, breathwork, and trauma-informed therapies. These approaches support nervous system regulation, reduce stress, and create space for recovery. This collection highlights meditation resources and healing pathways that have helped me on my journey to wellness.

What Helped Me

- Syntonic Light Therapy (Color Light Therapy): I did a trauma-specific protocol using Syntonic phototherapy, a gentle treatment involving colored light filters directed into the eyes. While it's often used for visual processing issues, this particular protocol helped in a surprising way: it soothed my overactive stress response more than anything else I'd tried. I didn't expect it to reach so deeply into my nervous system but it did. Within a few sessions, I noticed subtle but real shifts: less hypervigilance, easier breathing, and a quieting of that constant internal buzzing that had defined my post-injury state. It helped bring my brain and body back into better communication.
- Craniosacral Therapy (CST): CST is a gentle hands-on technique that works with the rhythm of the cerebrospinal fluid and fascia. I knew that I wanted to try CST because I was trained in level one and immediately I noticed it helped release deep patterns of tension held in my neck, jaw, and head from the trauma. I would leave sessions feeling softer, clearer, and a little more at home in my body. For anyone recovering from head trauma or nervous system dysregulation, I found CST to be one of the most restorative, non-invasive therapies.
- Acupuncture + Meditation
  - Acupuncture was another powerful ally. By targeting specific points to calm the vagus nerve and support the liver/kidney/adrenal systems, I felt my body slowly begin to drop out of constant alert. My sessions were always paired with deep breathing and guided meditation, which helped reinforce the message: you're safe now.
  - I also developed a simple home meditation practice even 5–10 minutes of mindful breathing, body scanning, or listening to calming music helped rewire my brain toward safety and softness

Healing Pathways

These are approaches that others recovering from TMS-related injury have explored with varying degrees of success. Every brain is different — what helps one person might not help another. These are not blanket recommendations, but shared with the intent to inform and offer options worth researching further.

What Others Report Helping

- Functional neurology or chiropractic neurology: Some have found targeted, brain-based care helpful particularly with providers trained to assess and support mild traumatic brain injuries. This often includes balance work, oculomotor retraining, and nervous system calibration. Success depends heavily on the provider's experience with brain injury.
- Vestibular therapy: Especially useful for those experiencing dizziness, vertigo, balance issues, or motion sensitivity. Therapists guide you through tailored exercises to retrain the vestibular system and help re-integrate spatial orientation.
- HBOT (Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy): Some individuals report improvements with HBOT breathing pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber to increase oxygen delivery to healing tissues. Research is mixed, but results are promising for some TBI-related inflammation and neural repair.
- Light therapy (for those not light-sensitive): Low-level light therapy (LLLT or red/infrared light) has shown promise for brain healing in some studies. **Important note:** those with light sensitivity must proceed with extreme caution. For others, it may reduce inflammation and support mitochondrial function.
- Neurofeedback (mixed results, but gentle forms only): A form of brainwave training that can help regulate brain function. Results vary as many report success with gentle, trauma-informed approaches like infra-low frequency neurofeedback. **Avoid protocols that feel overstimulating or generic.**
- Water fasting: Some people have reported reduced inflammation and mental clarity during carefully monitored fasts. This is not for everyone especially if underweight, chronically ill, or without medical support, but has been explored in some TBI recovery paths. Please research if this would fit your healing.
- Microdosing: Tiny, non-hallucinogenic doses taken on a structured schedule (often every 3 days) may help neuroplasticity, mood regulation, and emotional healing. Many harmed individuals have reported benefits, though this is still experimental and ideally done with guidance or peer support.

PROTECTING YOUR BRAIN + NERVOUS SYSTEM AS YOU HEAL

Understanding the Impact of TMS

TMS sends powerful electromagnetic pulses directly into targeted areas of the brain. This technology bypasses the skull and alters brain activity by inducing electric currents sometimes far beyond what the brain can safely absorb.

- Some psychiatrists and neuroscientists have warned about potential brain damage from repeated or improperly applied TMS.
- One major system affected is the **autonomic nervous system**, the part of your body that controls survival functions like heart rate, digestion, and stress response.
- When this system is disrupted, people may experience panic, sleep disruption, light sensitivity, dysautonomia, or extreme fatigue.

What to Avoid (Especially Early in Recovery)

- Pushing through worsening symptoms: The worsening symptoms like head pressure, dizziness, cognitive fog, or emotional numbing may be signs of harm, not healing.
- Dismissive providers: If you're told "That can't be from TMS," it's often a signal to seek out someone trauma-informed or brain-injury-aware.
- Overstimulating environments: Flashing lights, loud sounds, and crowded spaces can overload your nervous system. Gentle pacing is protective.
- Med changes without caution: Injury can heighten medication sensitivity. Avoid rapid changes unless absolutely necessary and always with careful support.
- More brain stimulation therapies: Avoid further stimulation-based interventions (like ECT, more TMS, or intensive neurofeedback) until your system is clearly stable.
- Intense exercise or "grit through it" approaches: Pushing your body hard can worsen dysautonomia and delay healing. Choose gentle, restorative movement instead.

Somatic Reset

Reconnect with your body in safe, small ways

- **Butterfly hug**: Cross your arms over your chest and gently tap each shoulder, left–right–left, like wings. Do this slowly for 30 seconds to 1 minute.
- **Orienting practice**: Slowly look around the room and name 5 things you see, 4 things you hear, 3 things you can touch. Let your nervous system know you are safe here and now.
- **Vagus nerve breath**: Inhale for 4 seconds, exhale for 6–8 seconds. Let the exhale be longer than the inhale. Repeat for 2–3 minutes.
- **Grounding touch**: Press your feet into the floor or your hands against a surface and notice the sensation. This helps anchor the nervous system.

Integrative Regulation Tools

Support your nervous system with simple, brain-calming practices

- **Rocking**: Gently rock your body side to side while sitting or lying down. This can regulate your vestibular system and bring soothing.
- **Light movement:** Gentle walks, stretching, or yoga poses like child's pose or legs-up-the-wall can help move stuck energy and reduce agitation.
- **Sound and music**: Try low, steady sounds like binaural beats, nature sounds, or calming instrumental music to reduce overstimulation. Or block stimulation with noise-canceling headphones and an eye mask.

Memory + Cognitive Repair

Support your brain function with small, steady exercises

- **Daily journaling:** Write 2–3 sentences per day about how you feel or what you notice. This supports memory and self-awareness.
- **Card sequencing game:** Lay out 3–5 playing cards (or number cards) face up. Look at them for 30 seconds. Flip them face down. Now try to reorder them in ascending or descending order from memory.
- **Category naming challenge:** Have a friend or caregiver say a letter and a category (like "B" and "places"). Then try to name 12 things in that category starting with that letter: Boston, Baton Rouge, Brazil... This builds verbal fluency, cognitive speed, and creative recall.
- **What I did today" list:** At night, write or say 3–5 things you did that day (even small ones). This can strengthen recall and build confidence.

Soothing Eye Reset

For calming the nervous system — not for vision training
These gentle practices help reduce overstimulation, quiet the visual system, and signal safety to the brain.

- **Eye Mask Time:** Lie down or recline and place a soft eye mask or folded cloth over your closed eyes. Rest for 5–10 minutes in a dark, quiet space. Let your body soften and your breath slow.
- **Palming:** Rub your hands together to warm them. Gently cup your palms over your closed eyes — without pressing. Breathe slowly and feel the warmth. Stay here for 2–5 minutes.

Soothing Eye Reset

Creating a calming visual environment can prevent daily overwhelm.

- **Gentle Eye Cover + Music:** Put on an eye mask and play soft instrumental or nature sounds. Let yourself just listen while your eyes rest.
- **Reduce Visual Clutter:** Dim the lights. Keep rooms minimal and soft-colored. Reduce screen time when possible.

Breathing for Calm

Gentle ways to reset your system — if it feels okay for you.

Note: Not all breathing exercises feel calming for everyone — especially if you're recovering from trauma or brain injury. If any exercise increases discomfort, stop or try something softer. Always listen to your body.

- **Ocean Exhale:** Inhale gently through the nose. Exhale with a soft "Haaa" sound — like fogging up a mirror. Make your exhale longer than your inhale. Imagine your breath washing over you like waves.
- **Hand Tracing Breath:** Hold one hand out. Use your opposite finger to trace up and down each finger. Breathe in as you trace up and out as you trace down. Go slowly, one finger at a time.
- **Color Tracking Breath:** Pick a color that feels soothing or safe to you like blue, green, teal. Gently scan your space and find one object in that color. Let your gaze land softly on it. Inhale slowly. As you breathe in, gently notice the details of the object. Exhale and settle. As you breathe out, keep your eyes on the object. Let your body relax. Look for another object in the same color and repeat on the inhale move your gaze, exhale as you rest.

Positive Affirmations

In the aftermath of my TMS injury, my nervous system was stuck in a state of constant alarm. My body felt tense, my thoughts raced, and rest rarely came easily. Alongside physical and neurological therapies, one of the most unexpected but impactful tools for healing my autonomic nervous system came from the work of Marisa Peer.

Marisa Peer's guided meditations and positive affirmations gently introduced a new kind of self-talk, one that countered the fear and trauma I had internalized from medical harm. At first, saying things like:

- **I am safe in my body**
- **I am lovable just as I am**
- **I am worthy of healing and connection**
- **I can trust my body to support me**

At first, it felt unfamiliar. But over time, with repetition and breath, these affirmations began to regulate my inner landscape. My chest softened. My jaw unclenched. I cried, often but not from pain, but from relief.

This was more than just positive thinking. It was retraining my brain and body to feel safe again. When paired with therapies that supported my physical recovery, affirmations became a bridge to emotional healing, a daily invitation to soothe my nervous system and reclaim my inner safety.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

IF YOU'VE BEEN HARMED BY TMS, YOU ARE NOT ALONE. MORE PEOPLE ARE COMING FORWARD — AND WE ARE BUILDING SOMETHING POWERFUL TOGETHER: TRUTH, VISIBILITY, AND CHANGE.

The Documentary: TMS Injuries in the Words of Survivors

We're gathering interviews for a powerful new documentary led by a fellow TMS injury survivor. This film will shed light on the real, unspoken harms of TMS — told directly by the people who lived them.

It highlights:

- Patient voices
- Medical red flags and dismissals
- The physical and emotional toll
- The long and often isolating road to recovery

All from people who were told TMS was "safe, non-invasive, and free of side effects."

If you're open to sharing your story — whether anonymously or on camera — your experience could help others recognize the risks, seek support faster, and feel less alone.

BOOK AN INTERVIEW

Add Your Voice: TMS Injury Survey

If you've been harmed by TMS, your story matters.

We're collecting these accounts through the TMS Harm + Injury Survey to document patterns, elevate awareness, and push for change.

Your responses will support:

- Advocacy and education
- Future research
- Informed consent and accountability

FILL OUT THE SURVEY

SOME THINGS THAT MAY SEEM SMALL CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN YOUR RECOVERY. AFTER A BRAIN INJURY, ESPECIALLY ONE CAUSED BY ELECTROMAGNETIC DISRUPTION. YOUR SYSTEM MAY BE MORE VULNERABLE THAN BEFORE. HONORING THAT SENSITIVITY CAN SUPPORT HEALING.

RESOURCE + EVIDENCE PAGE

Concerns from Professionals + Researchers

"We have no long-term safety data on repeated TMS exposures in vulnerable populations... yet it's marketed as safe for everyone."
— Dr. Josef Witt-Doerring, psychiatrist and former FDA reviewer

"Neuromodulation can cause harm, particularly in people with trauma histories or underlying neurological vulnerabilities."
— Dr. Victoria Dunckley, integrative child psychiatrist

"The brain is electrically active. Modifying one region with external pulses can have downstream effects we don't fully understand."
— *Dr. Peter Sterling, neuroanatomist and author of "Principles of Neural Design"

Research + Reporting

- **FDA MAUDE Adverse Events Database:** Shows real-world reports of seizures, neurological symptoms, and harm post-TMS.
- **Mad in America:** Investigative Articles on TMS. Features patient testimonies, evidence gaps, and regulatory concerns. Please look up "James Hall."
- **TMS Harm Survey by Jordan's Artful Wellness:** Collecting data from individuals harmed by TMS to document symptoms, timelines, and treatment patterns.

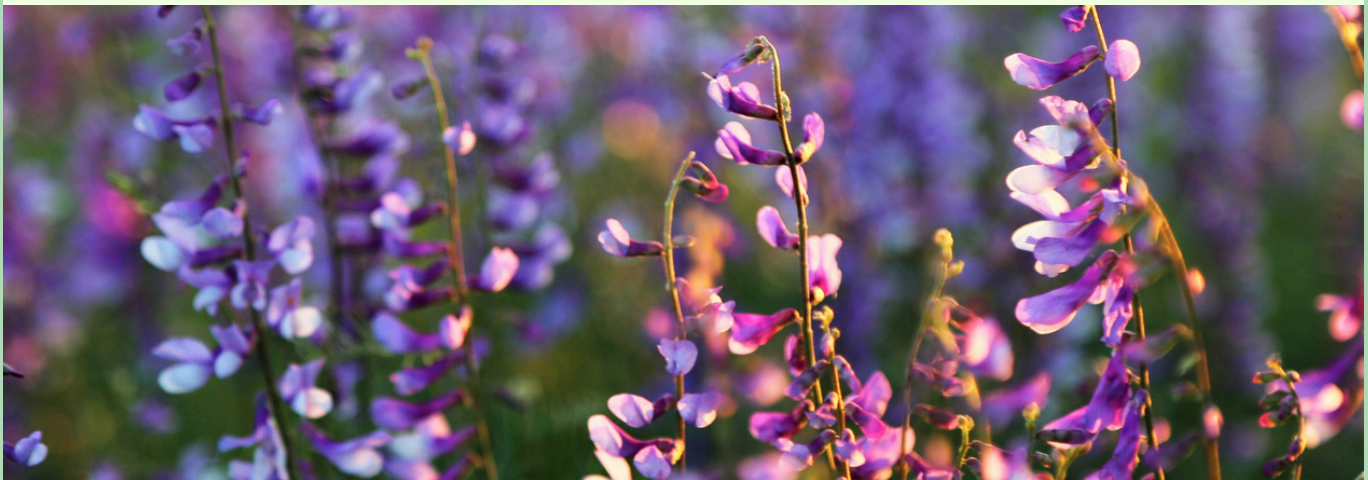
Footnotes:

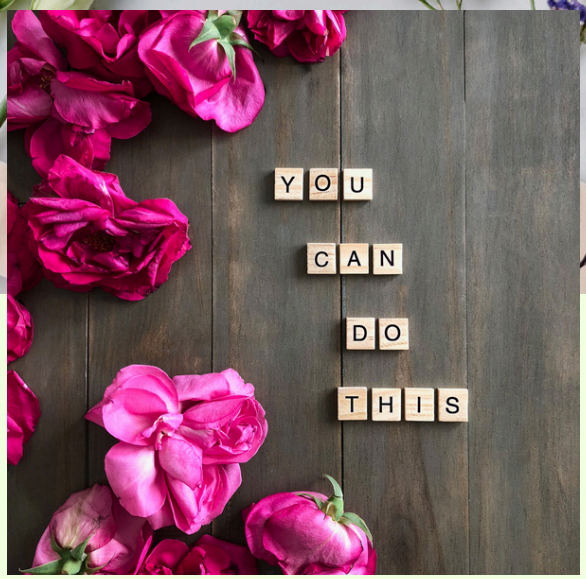
1. Witt-Doerring, J. (2023). Interview with Surviving Psychiatry Podcast, Ep. #67.
2. Dunckley, V. (2021). "Why Psychiatric Treatments Are Not One-Size-Fits-All." Psychology Today.
3. James Hall, Mad in America. "Can Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) Hurt You?"
4. FDA MAUDE Database: Search variations of "TMS" Reports.

Please email for a full collection of research as there is too much to include on a single page. Also, check out TMS-sideeffects.com for more information.

Brain Injury Resources Spreadsheet

For a comprehensive list of brain injury resources including books, websites, podcasts, support groups, and practitioner directories, please access the full spreadsheet with this QR Code.





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Healing is possible. Awareness is powerful. You're not alone.

Let's build something that lasts.