She Tried Everything for Brain Fog. Vision Therapy Fixed It in a Week. Transcript

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Life Before the Intensive

Losing my keys all the time or my phone, like, that has been a game changer. I have saved so much time in the last week just not looking for things all of the times.

At our initial consult, I remember saying to you, how long can you read for before you want to stop? And you smiled and you're like a page. And in that a-page, it's taking minutes and minutes because I'm having to go back and reread it.

My eyes get sleepy and they get strained and tired. And then I give up and buy the Audible and listen to that instead. But reading has shifted instantly.

I remember telling you, like, Wednesday, I picked up a book and I was like I got through eight pages before. And I'm like oh my god I went through 8 pages without having to reread anything.

It's weird, but I actually miss really being there. I'm doing the exercises at home and I just want to get back in clinic and be with the team. I didn't anticipate how validating it would be because I realized for the first time that I am not broken, I was just misfiring.

Welcome to My Vision First. I'm Dr. Bryce Applebaum, a neuro-optometrist and founder of MyVisionFirst and ScreenFit. At My Vision First, we help people optimize their vision by treating the brain behind the eyes, not just the eye themselves.

We are going inside a real vision performance training intensive that we offer for week-long boot camps at My the fabulous Marie DeMacio, who's bravely sharing her experience.

So appreciate you being so open and so grateful that you're here. You're gonna hear life before the intensive, what the week felt like inside the clinic, and also the life altering changes that we could measure and feel.

Unfortunately, you just not gonna here it from me, You gonna to hear it form the Fabulous Marie. Thank you so much for being here, Marie, I really appreciate.

Thank you, Dr. Bryce. I'm so excited to be here today to help bring this out to the world. It has been absolutely life changing and transforming for me and everybody deserves this.

So here and happy to share. And we're not too far out from you as you were here a couple weeks ago. So this is hopefully fresh and we get to share what it was like during, after, and also what the future looks like.

I would say let's start by talking about life before the intensive and before we met. Tell me a little bit about what was going on with your vision, your daily experiences, the pain points and symptoms that you're dealing with on a regular basis.

Well, before the intensive, my daily life was heavy with brain fog, chronic fatigue. I often felt like I was moving through mud most days.

How the Vision Boot Camp Works

The ironic part is that when I in channel or working with clients in a spiritual state, I would feel absolutely amazing. It'd be full of energy, it'd crystal clear.

But the moment I tried to anchor back into my body in my day-to-day life, the exhaustion would hit me. The trauma

would kick in and it was just constant sluggish.

I've been doing multiple forms of different forms, of therapy, somatic, emotional, mental, physical health work, and all of it wasn't making the mark.

And so in desperation and talking to you, you showed me that there was light at the end of the tunnel. So I came. Amazing. And I know you shared with me, you kind of felt like you were just in this constant state of fight or flight, but that was your normal.

That was all you knew. As you know better than anybody, operating from that place can be very limiting, can scary, and can also change even just relationships you have with yourself and with others.

I feel like the first day when I was in clinic and I did that testing and assessment and saw the results, it was so overwhelmingly emotional for me because I realized for the 1st time in 38 years of life that I'm not broken, I am just misfiring.

You brought up the first day. You talked a little bit about the week. Let me kind of share for those listening who are like, what is this intensive? What are you even talking about?

Let us share what that looks like what's involved. And then I have a million questions for you here. So the whole process started with us being connected.

That's a really cool story that I definitely want to share. Then we did a formal virtual consultation where we had to fill out a lot of paperwork and a very thorough history of where things were operating a lot of symptoms where you had to score from a zero to four, how frequently the symptoms occurred, zero being never, four being always, and very targeted symptoms based off of our initial conversation.

So from all that, we, yes, this not only can help you, that can change your life, We need you for a week, and so you took the plunge. It was a five-day kind of boot camp.

So the first day on Monday, we do an initial evaluation. And that initial valuation in office, there's diagnostic testing, Looking at all the functional visual skills and abilities, tracking, focusing, converging, depth perception, eye teaming, but really looking at them in unique ways.

So take your tracking system, for instance. We evaluated it in three-dimensional space, in 2D space in a virtual world, But we looked at it unique way.

how your eyes move side to side and up and down and in different patterns. We can actually include a picture of some of the eye tracking software that showed they were in a little bit of a tug of war with each other.

There was this rivalry or competition where you're having to pick an eye to use rather than using both eyes. And there's some pretty incredible pre and post data from that that really showed synergy that you developed and are still working on.

So then during the week, it's up to a dozen hours of customized vision performance training work in the office. You're working with our doctors, with out teams.

It's all based off of where you were. where you needed to go and the path we needed take to get there. And then end of the week, follow-up progress evaluation on Friday, highlighting all the wins, the changes from day one to day five.

Then we put you in a customized home vision training program, which incorporated a virtual reality program where your going in chopping fruit, popping balloons, whatever the game may be.

We're adjusting the Oculus, you're having to converge or diverge or adjusting brightness, contrast, glare, whatever

it may be. We then get your results on the back end.

I'm not sure if you knew that. So we saw that you've been, we see that your crushing this and actually doing it.

Reading, Depth Perception, and Focusing Gains

And then the next time you go in, the doctors adjust the settings. You're playing a new game, but it's at a higher level of demand. It's kind of chipping away at this from a, cross-training approach from a lot of different setups.

And then during the week, depending on the case, incorporate a supplement protocol, we incorporate optometric phototherapy, red light therapy, sensor integration-based treatment protocols, digital performance lenses, and whatever really is going to help us get the best results in the shortest amount of time.

Then afterwards for that home program, I mean, there's check-ins that occur at a clear frequency. You're still chipping away at it, so the week is the reboot, but then the work continues.

I love that a lot of that has been continuing and hopefully even in a better place now than you were when you are here. The first day was testing and that's what we started off with.

It was a two-hour evaluation. There were a few pieces of the testing protocol where you're like, Oh my God, this is like you're asking me to do stuff that my entire life.

I could never do like, you asking the right questions. And one of them was looking at your visual spatial memory. So showing you four images, having you take a picture, pull them away and then reproduce what you saw and do that four separate times.

That's a standardized test that we use called the Monroe visual three and I think you joked and you're like, it's like my brain's in Etch A Sketch. It's there and then we pulled away and had to reproduce it and it was like where did that go?

And that so intimately relates to thinking in mental pictorial images but remembering somebody's name or remembering a phone number or just being able to process up here, which is so complicated, but also something that's so important for so many aspects of life.

We did a reading assessment as well, and I'm gonna share a little bit of the details from that, even just getting past those tests where it's like exposing your warts.

That's hard, I would love for you to share just kind of if there was a point during the testing where you were like, excited or we thought, oh, there's actually this, this makes more sense.

Or if it was something that shifted, um, when you were in, in vision performance training with us, but was there any point where you're like, Oh, it feels like this is what I need.

Did you know that ahead of time? No, I had no idea ahead of time. I trusted you. So I came in and I was like, all for it. one sense that I discounted a little bit too much.

And I think we all do. We're taught that it is just for seeing so we miss so much there. But I noticed going through all of the tests where I was like, Oh, like, my eyes are doing things and making movements that I'm forcing them to do now in order to fulfill these exercises that, I was like I've never had that sensation before in my eyeballs.

I feel like we need to show you off a little bit in terms of some data and some testing. Can I share a couple things just from before and after? Yeah, i'd love to see them.

So day one, we had you read a paragraph on a screen, and we have eye tracking software measure eye movements as you were going across. What each eye was doing individually and together, how many eye

movement you made, How many times your eyes backtracked, speed, accuracy, then ask comprehension questions after.

And in five days, you went from 144 words per minute to 166 words, so 22 extra words in a minute. more fluent, more efficient. Your fixations per 100 words, so essentially how many eye movements you made to read the paragraph was worth, you make 13 less eye movement to this small paragraph.

And you had half the regressions, meaning the amount of times you have to go backwards rather than going forwards. When we did this day one, there were 24 regressions, 24 times where you went backwards and that's among only about a hundred eye movements.

So like a fourth of the time we're going backwards. And then day five, literally half, 12 regresses with less eye movement, which is so cool. We had an image drawn of what each eye was doing in terms of where it was tracing with different tests where we had you jump from one place to another or move your eyes in a certain pattern or follow a target that was moving around.

And it literally went from like chicken scratch and scrabble because the eye movements were jerking all over the place, to this fluid, clean path. So that should show up in life as way less or eliminated skipping words, skipping lines, losing your place, getting to the end of one line and then knowing where the beginning of the next line is.

I hope you're starting to read for fun a little bit, and I hop reading is fun. In our initial console, I remember saying to you, how long can you read before you want to stop?

And you smiled and you're like a page. And in that page, like it's taking minutes and minutes of minutes because I'm having to go back and reread it. Then my eyes get sleepy and they get strained and I get tired.

It's like anything but this. Reading has shifted instantly. I remember telling you like Wednesday, I picked up a book and was reading and like, it was like I got through eight pages before I was, oh my God, got up through 8 pages without having rereading anything.

shocked from that. But I would say in clinic, doing the exercises, definitely moving through with the convergence and divergence and seeing how much struggle I had before with my nervous system.

I have done so much work over these last seven years to get myself out of that state. When I was in those exercises I realized how my brain, my eyes were still locked in.

Two other areas.

Home Practice and Lasting Confidence

We measured your depth perceptions, your ability to see in 3D, which requires two eyes pointing the same place for long enough that the brain turns on that information and we develop cells in the back of our head and our occipital lobe that we're not born with that only allow for 3-D awareness.

Any brain at any age can develop those. You went from day one, respectfully not being at the adult level with some challenges because at times you would actually suppress or ignore input from one of the eyes to get rid of confusion because it was too hard to process both simultaneously.

And that's because of this rivalry of binocular information, this fighter, like almost like choosing an eye rather than using both together. Went from that to day five, perfect depth perception.

100% accuracy, both at distance and at near, and whether you wanna tell your kids and spouse this or not, that's up to you, but you don't have any excuse to not play ball sports unless you want to play ballsports.

Previously, yeah, it was really hard for you because you had a hard time knowing where things were so you

couldn't possibly anticipate where they would be.

Now, not only can you keep your eye on the ball, you can almost slow down perception of the ball and plan ahead to react more fluidly and accurately. So maybe you can become a professional pickleballer as another gig if you want to pick up another hobby in life.

And then third area, your focusing system's stamina. So there's age appropriate norms for every age for essentially how much weight we can lift with our focusing muscles.

And when we measured day one, when asked you to relax your focus, you were really good at that because that was your normal. That system was just disengaged.

But then we asked to stimulate and turn it on. I mean, it was below 20% of where it should be for your age. We're probably now at maybe about 80 to 90%. knowing that you've been continuing with a lot of the work, we're about 75-ish percent when you left on Friday.

And all that means is being able to hold things closer, clearer for longer. For you now, it's not really the strength, just the stamina. So it being to keep that system functioning at its potential for a longer, and so that's where taking lots of breaks with reading and screen time to just kind of rest the eyes and come back, great for being be able come to back at a higher level with better proficiency.

The practices like in clinic when I realized like, oh my gosh, this is really making a huge game changer was doing the bean bag toss on like the balance board with these wonky lenses on.

I was so distorted. They thought I would fall over, but yet here I am actually being able to toss this bag back and forth with ease while doing a memory game at the same time while balancing and challenging myself in a way that I didn't realize was possible.

And seeing that, if I did that on Monday, that would have been an epic fail. But by doing it, I think it was like Wednesday or Thursday, it's wild how far we got.

how much fun it was as well. Like I think we made the whole clinic laugh. It's weird but like I actually miss really being there. I'm doing the exercises at home and I just want to get back in clinic and be with the team.

like, I didn't anticipate how validating it would be because I am somebody who always says that healing isn't linear, it's integrative and it can be a lot more fun and enjoyable.

and easeful than a lot of the industry has made it out to be and as much as we, you know, kind of apply our fears to it as well. But it was it, was fun.

It was such a good environment. Now I feel you know, not to be extreme, but I feel limitless in what I can do. And I'm excited for this next chapter, and I fell so much more just positive with the kids at home, with what's ahead, no matter what does come up, because yes, life happens, I have a new added level of resilience that I didn't have before.

I'm so happy for you. That's incredible.