

# Maddi Niebanck's Stroke Recovery - Breaking Through the Plateau

*Intensive 3-week NeuroAnimation therapy yields dramatic gains in grip strength, cognition, and independence*

COLUMBUS, OH, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Stroke survivor and advocate Maddi Niebanck, eight years after her life-changing stroke, has achieved extraordinary recovery milestones through a recent intensive recovery program at NeuroAnimation. According to NeuroAnimation's clinical program summary, the 45-hour, three-week VR-based therapy yielded dramatic improvements: her grip strength more than doubled (from 4.82 lbs to 12.8 lbs), her cognitive score jumped from 410 to 511, and she regained the ability to type (3 words per minute at 100% accuracy). These results, achieved after years of plateaued progress, signal not only a personal triumph but a promising shift in stroke rehabilitation science.

Maddi's story is one of exceptional resilience. In May 2017, at the age of 22, she suffered a devastating brainstem stroke that left her paralyzed on her dominant side. For years, she fought to reclaim her independence through traditional rehabilitation, with limited results. But in May 2025, her participation in NeuroAnimation's novel program sparked a breakthrough. "I didn't expect to make such meaningful gains this far out," Maddi shared. "But I did — and it's changed how I think about my future."



Maddi Niebanck

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Now I can open and close my hand more easily—proof that real progress is possible, even eight years after my injury.”

*Maddi Niebanck*

Now a published author, Maddi has become a powerful voice in the stroke recovery community. Through her blog “A Stroke of Luck” and on Instagram [@maddistrokeofluck](https://www.instagram.com/maddistrokeofluck), she has chronicled the highs and lows of post-stroke life, offering hope to thousands. Her recent post, A Celebration of Life, highlighted the emotional transformation she felt during her time at NeuroAnimation: “This was the most

progress I've made in years.”

## The Science Behind NeuroAnimation:

NeuroAnimation is not a typical therapy center. It represents a new frontier in stroke recovery — a therapy model that blends neuroscience, immersive technology, and cognitive-motor learning to push the boundaries of neuroplasticity. Housed in a single flagship center in Columbus, Ohio, the program is attracting patients from across the globe who travel to Ohio to participate in its three-week bootcamp.

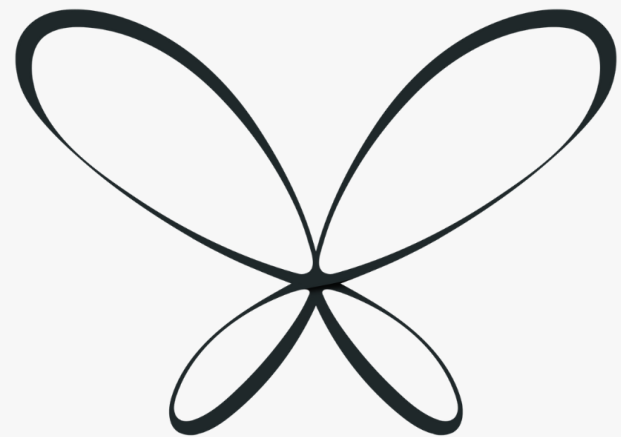
The therapy itself is built around an immersive virtual experience. Patients are in an immersive room and take control of a whimsical digital creature using only their affected arm — no controllers required. This system challenges the patient's brain and body simultaneously through challenging natural movement in a game-like world.

What makes NeuroAnimation even more promising is the emerging science behind it. In a randomized clinical trial (RCT) to demonstrate feasibility — currently pending publication — the program demonstrated unparalleled growth in key areas of the brain and generalized plasticity, resulting in gains that extend beyond just movement. Participants also showed improvements in executive functioning, suggesting the program is activating deeper systems of brain repair.

"We're uncovering new science in real time," said Dr. Omar Ahmad, CoFounder and CEO. "Maddi's results are not an outlier — they're evidence that the adult brain, even many years post-injury, is more capable of recovery than we once believed."



Maddi moves Kana the Octopus



NeuroAnimation

STRENGTHENING & RECOVERY CENTER

### Results That Speak for Themselves:

Maddi's improvements during the program were significant and measurable:

- \* Grip Strength: Increased from 4.82 lbs to 12.8 lbs — more than doubling in 3 weeks.
- \* Typing Ability: From 0 to 3 words per minute with perfect accuracy.
- \* Writing: She went from being unable to write a letter to writing 3 full words under timed pressure.
- \* Cognitive Score: Rose 25% in just 3 weeks, with notable improvements in processing speed, attention, and impulse control.
- \* Motor Control: Greater dexterity, finger isolation, and decreased spasticity in her affected arm.
- \* Functional Wins: She can now drink from a glass using her left hand — a personal goal she had long pursued — and she reports new sensations in her hand for the first time in years.

Importantly, Maddi had not reached a plateau during the program. NeuroAnimation's team emphasized that her progress continued daily.

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### A New Hope for Stroke Survivors:

NeuroAnimation's approach is giving hope to stroke survivors - both acute and chronic, who were previously told that meaningful recovery was unlikely beyond the first year. With a growing global interest, the Columbus-based center is becoming a destination for patients seeking more than maintenance — they want progress.

"Too often, stroke survivors are taught to accept limitations," the NeuroAnimation team notes. "But we're seeing people challenge that narrative — and win."

### About NeuroAnimation:

NeuroAnimation Strength and Recovery Center, is a neuroscience-driven stroke and brain injury recovery center offering immersive virtual therapy from its flagship location in Columbus, Ohio. Through a groundbreaking combination of movement, cognition, and cutting-edge virtual environments, NeuroAnimation is helping patients uncover new capabilities — even years after their injury. To learn more or schedule a consultation, visit [www.neuroanimation.com](http://www.neuroanimation.com) or call (614) 758-8889.

### About Maddi Niebanck:

Maddi is a stroke recovery advocate, author, speaker, and blogger. Her recovery journey can be followed at [maddistrokeofluck-blog](http://maddistrokeofluck-blog) and on Instagram at @maddistrokeofluck.

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