



# “Use my name!”

## rTMS treatment restores confidence, well-being

*Dr. Mandana Modirrousta,  
Director of Neurostimulation  
and Neuropsychiatry,  
St. Boniface Hospital.*

“Some days it was excruciating just to get out of bed. Life felt hopeless. . .”

Leanne Anderson was interviewed on radio in 2013. She was happy to talk about how repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) helped treat her depression, but too timid to use her real name on air.

Thanks to the treatment, her confidence steadily grew. When she agreed to participate in this issue of *Believe*, she insisted: “Use my name!”

For Anderson, a 48-year-old payroll consultant, the journey to confidence and well-being was not an easy one.

“I think I’ve had anxiety since grade school, and depression since junior high,” she says. “In my mid-20s I had an official diagnosis and a prescription for citalopram.”

By the time life dealt her a series of blows starting in 2007, the medication had ceased to be effective. First, her mother died; then her beloved cat; and then her father. Shortly after, her husband was

diagnosed with cancer. It was a lot to handle over a period of just a few years, to say the least.

“Some days it was excruciating just to get out of bed. Life felt hopeless and I lost interest in everything I had a passion for,” says Anderson, who went on long-term disability. “On my worst days, I would bang my head in despair.”

In 2011, she read an article about rTMS. She learned how the cutting-edge technology used targeted, painless, magnetic pulses to tackle depression. She also learned that St. Boniface Hospital was about to get an rTMS machine, thanks to St. Boniface Hospital Foundation donors. By the summer of 2012, the machine was installed and Anderson was one of the first patients to receive rTMS treatment with Dr. Mandana Modirrousta, Director of Neurostimulation and Neuropsychiatry.

The outcomes have been astounding. Within a few months, Anderson was

back at work after two years on disability. Her energy is back and she is enjoying her pastimes again, especially genealogy. She and her now-healthy husband are making travel plans.

“I have some zip now,” she says with a smile. “I am so grateful for Dr. Modirrousta. She is a real go-getter and an advocate for mental health. This isn’t just her job – it’s her passion.”

Through Dr. Modirrousta’s advocacy and the generosity of donors, a second rTMS machine was added in the fall of 2016 which included a “theta burst stimulation” add-on. A conventional rTMS treatment lasts about 30 minutes. With theta burst stimulation, a treatment lasts six minutes. Given that patients need up to 30 treatments and occasional follow-ups, the impact on wait times has been phenomenal.

“I feel good,” says Anderson. “I am so grateful for the donors who have stepped forward for mental health.” 