



The Body Does Keep the Score... But the Score Can Be Rewritten Without Replaying the Game

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Introduction: When Trauma Becomes a Bodily Experience

Over the last decade, one phrase has profoundly shaped how people understand trauma:
“The body keeps the score.”

Popularized by psychiatrist and trauma researcher Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, this idea helped millions recognize an important truth: trauma is not just something that happened in the past, it is something the nervous system remembers *now*.

For many people, this realization brought relief. Their symptoms were no longer personal failures or weaknesses. Anxiety, hyper vigilance, emotional numbing, intrusive thoughts, and physical tension suddenly made sense.

But for others, the phrase created a new fear: *If my body keeps the score, does that mean I'm stuck with it forever?*

An even more troubling belief followed: *If trauma is stored in the body, do I have to relive it to get past it?* The answer, supported by modern neuroscience, is **no**.

Yes, the body keeps the score. But that score is not permanent. And it does not need to be replayed in order to be rewritten.

What “The Body Keeps the Score” Actually Means

When trauma researchers say the body keeps the score, they are describing **how the nervous system learns from overwhelming experiences**.

During trauma:

- The brain prioritizes survival over reflection
- The autonomic nervous system shifts into fight, flight, freeze, or fawn
- Stress hormones flood the body
- Defensive reflexes activate

If the threat cannot be resolved or escaped, the nervous system does something remarkable: it **memorizes the pattern**.

This memory is not primarily verbal or narrative. It is:

- Physiological
- Emotional
- Sensory
- Reflexive

That is why trauma can show up as:

- Muscle tension or pain
- Startle responses
- Digestive issues
- Sleep disruption

- Emotional flooding or numbness

The body is not holding the trauma to punish you. It is holding it to **protect you**.

Trauma Is Stored as a Pattern, Not an Event

One of the most misunderstood aspects of trauma is the idea that the body stores the *event itself*.

In reality, the nervous system stores:

- **A threat prediction**
- **A survival response**
- **A state of readiness**
- **The initial imprint of trauma**

Think of trauma less like a video recording and more like a software program that was installed during danger.

That program might say:

- “Stay alert.”
- “Don’t relax.”
- “People are unsafe.”
- “You must stay prepared.”

Even when life becomes safe, the program keeps running, simply because the nervous system was never told it could stop.

Why the Brain Replays Trauma

Many people become trapped in repetitive thinking about the past:

- Replaying conversations
- Obsessing over betrayals
- Rehearsing what they should have said
- Imagining different outcomes

This is often labeled rumination. But from a trauma-informed perspective, it is something deeper.

The nervous system is trying to **finish what never felt complete**.

Trauma often ends without:

- Resolution
- Safety
- Repair
- Power

So, the brain replays, not to torture you, but to search for completion. This is why traumatic memories often surface at night, during rest, or when external demands drop. The nervous system finally has space to attempt resolution.

Why Thinking and Talking Are Often Not Enough

Insight is valuable. Understanding your trauma can bring clarity and self-compassion. But many people discover a frustrating truth: *I understand what happened. I know it wasn't my fault. But my body still reacts.* That's because trauma is stored **below conscious thought**.

The parts of the brain responsible for survival (the amygdala, brainstem, and autonomic nervous system) do not respond to logic or explanation. They respond to **signals of safety or danger**.

You cannot reason a nervous system out of a threat response it learned through experience.

Does Trauma Have to Be Relived to Be Released?

This is one of the most persistent myths in trauma healing.

Earlier therapeutic models often relied on emotional catharsis: reliving, retelling, and reexperiencing the trauma in order to “get it out.” While this helps some people, it can overwhelm others and reinforce the very patterns they are trying to resolve.

Modern neuroscience shows that **reliving is not required for healing**.

What *is* required is:

- A new experience of safety
- A regulated nervous system
- Updated threat predictions

This process is known as **neuroplasticity**.

Neuroplasticity: How the Score Gets Rewritten

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change its wiring based on new input.

When the nervous system repeatedly experiences safety *while trauma cues are present*, the brain updates its prediction: “This memory is not dangerous anymore.”

Over time:

- Emotional charge fades
- Physical tension releases
- Intrusive thoughts decrease
- The body stops reacting as if the trauma is happening now

Importantly, this can occur **without reliving the event in detail**. The memory may still exist, but it no longer controls the nervous system.

Trauma Resolution vs. Trauma Suppression

Letting go of reliving does not mean suppressing emotions.

True trauma resolution looks like:

- Feeling emotions without being overwhelmed
- Remembering without physiological collapse
- Being present rather than reactive

Suppression numbs. Resolution integrates.

The key difference is whether the nervous system believes the threat is still active.

How the Body Learns Safety

The nervous system learns safety through:

- Regulation
- Coherence
- Predictability
- Calm input

When these signals are present consistently, defensive responses are no longer necessary. This is why many body-based and regulation-focused approaches work even without detailed storytelling.

Where Peak Mental Health Broadcasting Fits In

Peak Mental Health Broadcasting is designed as a non-invasive emotional wellness service that supports nervous-system regulation and emotional recalibration.

Rather than asking individuals to relive traumatic events, it is intended to provide **coherent, harmonizing informational input** that supports the body's natural regulatory processes.

From a trauma-science perspective, this aligns with a key principle: Trauma resolves when the nervous system no longer predicts danger.

By supporting regulation at an unconscious level, broadcasting may help:

- Reduce maladaptive threat signaling
- Soften emotional imprints
- Decouple memory from survival response

When that happens, the body-held trauma response can ease, without replaying the past

Responding to Memory Without Reliving It

One of the clearest signs of healing is this shift:

“I can think about it, but it doesn't hijack me anymore.”

This reflects a nervous system that has learned safety. The score was not erased. It was **rewritten**.

Why Some Trauma Models Still Emphasize Reliving

Reliving persists in some frameworks because:

- It can create visible emotional release
- It feels active and effortful
- It aligns with older cathartic models

But intensity is not the same as integration.

For many people, safety, not exposure, is what allows the nervous system to finally let go.

A Gentler, More Modern Understanding of Healing

Healing does not have to be:

- Painful
- Re-traumatizing
- Exhausting

You do not need to reopen wounds to allow them to close. When the body learns that the present moment is safe, the past loses its grip.

The Body Keeps the Score... and It Can Learn a New One

Trauma is not a life sentence. It is a learned response. And what is learned can be updated.

You don't have to relive the worst moments of your life to move beyond them. You don't need closure to find peace. You don't need to force healing. When safety becomes real in the nervous system, the score changes naturally.

That is how the body keeps the score. And that is how the score can be rewritten, without replaying the game.

How to Experience Peak Mental Health Yourself

1. Visit MentalWellnessLab.com.
2. Start your 3-week complementary trial of Peak Mental Health Broadcasting.
3. Upload a head-shot photo of yourself to activate your personal coherence field.
4. Go about your day as usual, while the broadcast re-installs the blueprint of calm.
5. Notice the difference: less inner static, more genuine ease.

It's wellness at the speed of information: instant, constant, anywhere.

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For more information or to schedule a discovery call about our broadcasting services, click the following link: <https://calendly.com/charley-mentalwellnesslab/30min>

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Peak Mental Health Broadcasting is an emotional wellness service and is not intended to cure any psychological condition. Individual experiences may vary.

Traumatic frequency imprints, hypervigilance relief, Peak Mental Health Broadcasting, feeling safe again, nervous system regulation, emotional coherence, PTSD support, informational healing, safety