



B. Smith Opens Up About Battle With Early Alzheimer's Disease

"I am going to fight," the model-restaurateur says.

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As you get older, it's natural to start losing your train of thought and become more forgetful, but when **Barbara Smith's** husband noticed that his wife was beginning to act differently, they decided to look a little deeper. Test results indicated that the model wasn't just suffering from a case of absentmindedness, but rather an early onset of Alzheimer's disease. The neurodegenerative disease causes dementia, behavioral issues and loss of bodily functions that lead to death. According to the [Alzheimer's Association](#), almost two-thirds of Americans living with the disease are women.

In a recent interview with the [TODAY Show](#), Smith and her husband, Dan Gasby, talked about life since receiving the diagnosis four years ago.

"I had tears in my eyes," Smith said about getting the news from her doctor. "But at the same time I also said, 'I'm not going to give to it. I am going to fight.'"

The 65-year-old model-restaurateur partnered up with the Brain Health Registry to create a public service announcement that would raise awareness about the disease and encourage minorities to participate in clinical trials.

Gasby and Smith have already gone through terrifying moments. Last November, Smith wandered aimlessly for 17 hours through the streets of New York City when she became disoriented, and they know it's only going to get more difficult in the coming years. But the couple, who've been together for 23 years, are staying strong and supportive of each other and focusing on all the good that surrounds them.

"I deal with it in a practical way," Smith said. "I know that I've got a problem. Sometimes it makes me teary. But because I have great support with my husband and my family, you know, I'm doing fine. I'm doing really good."

To view her interview, click [here](#).

<http://www.bet.com/news/lifestyle/2015/03/16/b-smith-opens-up-about-battle-with-early-alzheimer-s-disease.html>