



# Model B. Smith Opens Up About Living With Alzheimer's Disease: "I Deal With It in a Practical Way" but "I Have Great Support"

by [NATALIE FINN](#) Today 1:43 PM PDT



**B. Smith** goes to battle every day—but she's a fighter and is facing her challenges head-on.

The 65-year-old former model, restaurateur, designer and author was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease four years ago, and she credits her husband of 23 years and the rest of her close-knit support system for helping her be able to cope. "I deal with it in a practical way," she told [Al Roker](#) in an interview that [aired Friday on Today](#). "I know that I've got a problem –doesn't make me happy. Sometimes it makes me teary. But because I have great support, I'm doing fine, I'm doing really good."

Sitting by her side was husband Dan Gasby, who admitted that when his wife was first diagnosed, "First of all, you don't believe it. There's total denial."

Then, he said, came the stages of "anger," "frustration," "sadness" and...dealing. "You say 'why?'" Gasby said. "If anybody didn't deserve this it was this woman right here...And after you curse God, you apologize."

Smith first went public with her diagnosis last June.

"I want people to know, you know, I have early-onset..." she began telling Roker, but got too emotional to finish her sentence. "It's tough," Gasby added. "But," Smith began again, smiling, "I'm going to wash those those tears and just continue to go back and be a better person even than I was, than I've been in the past."

She recently shot a PSA for the Brain Health Registry, speaking out about Alzheimer's awareness, in particular on behalf of minorities who have been underrepresented when it comes to support and research.



In November, Smith [went missing](#) for more than 17 hours after becoming disoriented in NYC, ultimately turning up at a café in Manhattan.

"I felt a little bit like a bad girl," she burst out laughing when recalling how she felt when Gasby finally found her. "Just a little bit. But I wanted to be *free*. That's what I wanted."

<http://www.eonline.com/news/635576/model-b-smith-opens-up-about-living-with-alzheimer-s-disease-i-deal-with-it-in-a-practical-way-but-i-have-great-support>