

How You Dare

A reflection on Alzheimer's disease

Francisco Durand da Costa · Neuro Cognition Lab, InsCer

“I can't... remember”

“Can I try? I'm not sure”

How dare you,
Alzheimer's disease?

Neuro Cognition Lab · Brain Institute of Rio Grande do Sul · Porto Alegre, Brazil

Sometimes even a simple essay makes patients stop for a second and, in some way, reflect: *am I capable?*

Some prefer to just say “*I can't... remember.*” Others take minutes before finally asking, “*Can I try? I'm not sure.*”

Brazil, my country, is unfortunately walking — while the US, Canada and others run fast toward prevention and early diagnosis. But Brazil is an open sample for real-world and epidemiological data. I truly hope people around the world give some attention to our researchers and our memory clinics — because my country holds diversity, miscegenation and many different cultures. That makes it a unique opportunity for real data, in real life.

I'm thankful. Since I began, my seniors in research have said we have an incredible opportunity: taking clinical, open, real-world data — especially for early diagnosis. It makes every patient's screening unique. They are all so different, exactly because of Brazil's population. Each Mini-Mental and MoCA we run, different results. Each PET and MRI. Each blood sample. *Everything changes.*

But one question unites everyone — those who have Alzheimer's disease and those who don't. Taking memories, executive functions and cognition away isn't fair. So, more than ever, we can't miss the chance to invest in early-diagnosis methods. And I repeat: although Brazil is a low/middle-income country, we have a *vast and still-undiscovered population.*