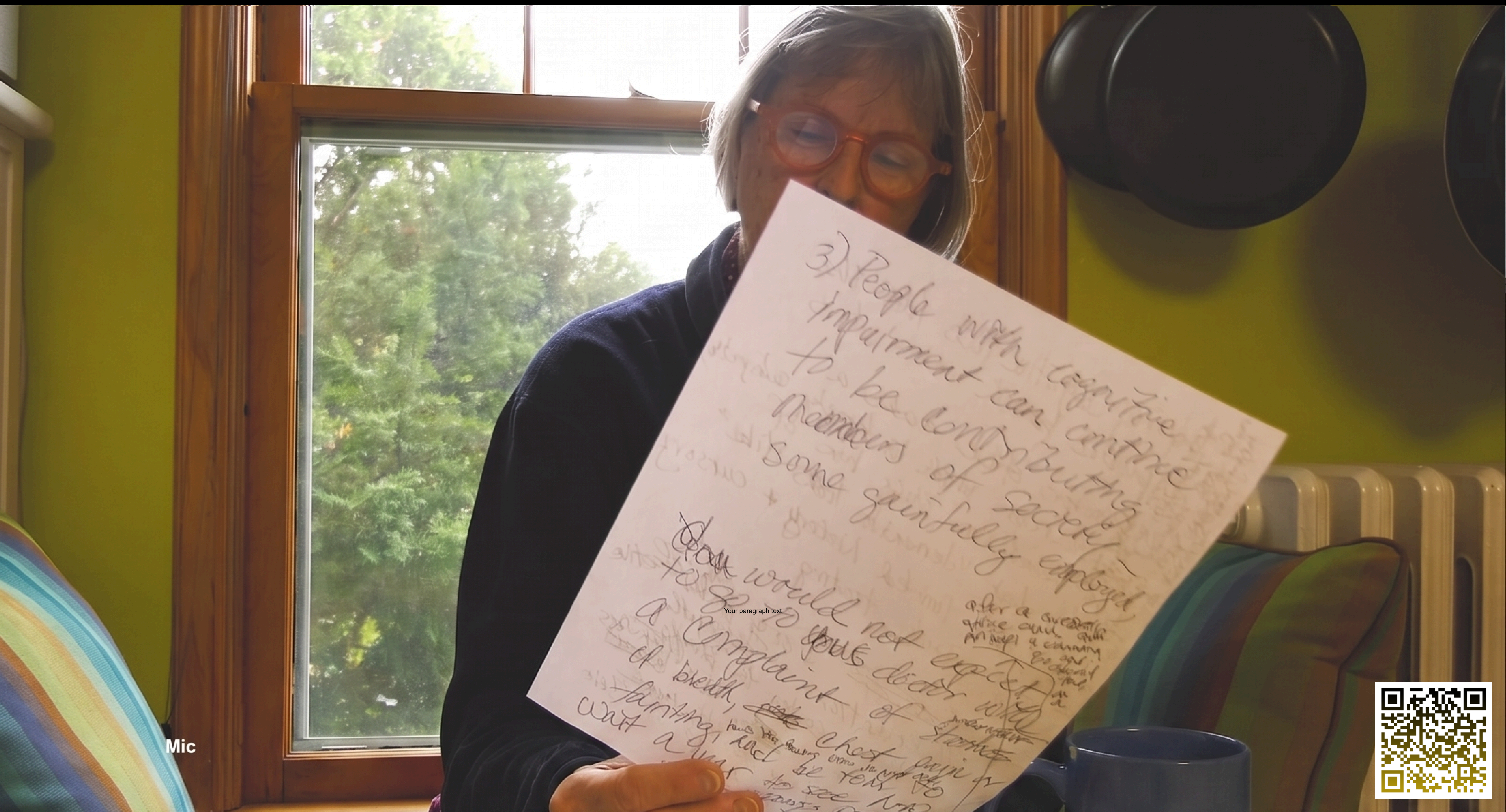


Flipping the Script: Notes from a Neurologist Living with Lewy Body Dementia



Sara Langer, MD, advocate and former neurologist living with Lewy body dementia, sits drafting notes for an Op-Ed. Diagnosed at 60 after more than a decade of cognitive symptoms—and coming from three generations of her family affected by dementia with Lewy bodies—Sara understands both the clinical and personal consequences of delayed recognition. “You would not expect to go to your doctor with a complaint of shortness of breath or chest pain or fainting, and be told to wait a year,” she says. Drawing on both lived experience and medical training, she also challenges the quiet dismissal that often follows a dementia diagnosis. “It’s not as if we no longer have intelligent, cohesive thoughts,” Sara explains. “It’s just that we may not be able to organize or articulate them as well as we used to.” Central to her advocacy is the belief that people living with cognitive impairment must be heard—not only for their humanity, but to improve research and care. “The assumption is that once you’re given a diagnosis, you’re no longer capable,” she says. “That assumption is wrong, and it’s harmful.”

Sara Langer, MD, filmed by Atlantic Fellow Michelle Memran in 2023