



Judy Johanson
Research Study Partner

When it comes to winning the war on Alzheimer's disease, Judy Johanson is on the front lines -wielding research participation as her best weapon. Judy's beloved husband Steve was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at age 59. Shortly after Steve's diagnosis, he and Judy were introduced to the idea of participating in research by Dr. Teresa Gomez -Isla, Assistant Director of the Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (MADRC).

A devout family man, Steve knew that participation in research was a way to impact the future of his grandchildren. "Steve was a visionary and volunteering for research was an outlet for him to feel connected to science and make a profound impact," says Judy. "By participating in Alzheimer's research you join an army of brilliant minds who are working to change the trajectory of this disease. That is incredibly powerful."

Recognizing that the idea of participation in research may not be something everyone with the disease is comfortable with, Judy suggests getting involved with observational studies as a "gentle entrance."

Steve, who sadly lost his fight with Alzheimer's at age 65 in 2018, initially participated in an observational social engagement study, before moving on to enroll in clinical studies. Judy says it was also very important to Steve to donate his brain to research.

According to Judy, another benefit of research participation was that it provided an activity that she and Steve could do together. "He could no longer work or drive, but we could still contribute to a bigger cause in this way." She adds, "I am so grateful for this mechanism that helped Steve find hope and create a legacy."

For Judy, the fight to end Alzheimer's disease continues. Earlier this year she joined the staff of MADRC as a Research Ambassador, where she now guides other families who are navigating the disease and research options.

MADRC is so grateful for Judy and Steve and all of the families who participate in research studies. Thank you for helping accelerate the path to a cure!