

Gina Vance

Trauma Healer • Hypnotherapist • Author • Speaker
Creator of Somatic Mindful Guided Imagery® (SMGI®)

Who I Am

After a successful career in engineering and business, excruciating physical pain redirected my life. What began as a search for relief became a decades-long exploration of trauma, healing, the nervous and energy systems, imagination, and human resilience.

I am the author of *Life Is Hard and Then You Fly*, a trauma-informed memoir and practical guide that introduces an expanded framework of **nine survival responses**—revealing how they can become trauma-related reactions and how they can be transformed through safety, connection, and choice. For over twenty years, I've helped people gently resolve the root causes of pain, trauma, and survival patterns without forcing reliving, catharsis, or overwhelm. I also lead retreats and workshops and teach an annual professional training that certifies wellness practitioners in my revolutionary SMGI® method.

“Healing doesn’t require reliving the past—it requires restoring safety, connection, and coherence within the nervous and energy systems.”

Conversation Themes I’m Known For

- Trauma as intelligent survival responses—and how nine distinct responses can become trauma-related reactions
- Why unrecognized survival responses shape personality, relationships, health, and life choices
- Regulation and connection of the nervous and energy systems as the foundation of healing
- The Four Essential Steps: simple, embodied tools for stabilization and change
- The Good Place: guided imagery as an inner refuge that restores safety and coherence
- Survival responses as hidden strengths once safety is restored
- Power and the fear of it—reclaiming agency without force
- Surrender as trauma response versus surrender as conscious healing choice
- Intuition and inner guidance as reliable, learnable skills
- Turning pain into purpose, meaning, and contribution
- Hope that naturally emerges as the nervous and energy systems settle
- Why healing happens faster, deeper, and more sustainably in community

Published Work & Recognition

Author: *Life Is Hard And Then You Fly: How Your Nine Instinctive Responses Can Turn Pain into Purpose Through the Revolutionary Power of SMGI®* — September 29, 2025

by Gina Vance

Guest Chapter: *Stable Wisdom: Surviving Midlife with Style* — July 15, 2013, by Shirley J. Potterton

Quoted Contributor: *Fried: Why You Burn Out and How to Revive* — January 1, 2011, by Joan Z. Borysenko, PhD

“When the nervous and energy systems settle, even our most confusing reactions reveal their original intelligence.”

Credentials & Training

Graduate of Inner Quest School of Hypnotherapy, the Academy for Guided Imagery, and the Center for Mind-Body Medicine. Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist, Certified Master Hypnotherapist, Mind-Body Medicine Advanced Professional, HealthRHYTHMS® Facilitator, Certified Life Coach, and creator of Somatic Mindful Guided Imagery® (SMGI®).

Why Podcast Hosts Invite Me

I speak in clear, human language—never academic jargon. I blend personal story with practical tools, offer an expanded and compassionate understanding of trauma responses, and leave listeners grounded, resourced, and hopeful by supporting regulation and connection within their nervous and energy systems.

“What we call trauma responses are often unfinished survival strategies—waiting for safety to complete.”

Gina Vance • Author & Speaker • *Life Is Hard And Then You Fly* (2025) • Somatic Mindful Guided Imagery® (SMGI®)