



# GRIT & GRACE

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
GINA DE SIMONE,  
THE 2023 WINNER OF  
FAB OVER 40

BY ANNE-MARIE PRITCHETT

An exceptional woman is confident in herself and her abilities, empowering those around her; she is a trailblazer, leading others on an enlightened path of existence. Fab Over 40 winner Gina De Simone, Psy.D., exemplifies this notion. She is a woman who embraces her own power and uses it to make a positive impact on the world around her. She is an incredible synergy between physical and mental well-being. As a licensed psychologist with a private practice focusing on children and adolescents and as a hot yoga instructor in Scottsdale, Arizona, she intertwines her dedication to fostering mental health with her passion for sharing the transformative gift of yoga. “Everything that’s part of my life has to be in alignment; it has to be interconnected and authentic.” In this exclusive interview, De Simone shares her views on aging, fitness, and wellness of the body, mind, and spirit.

## What is your favorite tip to stay fabulous?

“Yoga, without a doubt! It serves as the Fountain of Youth for me, physically and mentally. Beyond the physical practice, yoga grounds me in all aspects of life, from work to workouts. It’s the reason people are surprised by my age, attributing to my vitality.”

## How has your approach to health and wellness evolved over the years?

“In my younger years, dancing shaped my physique. It was transformative. From overcoming shyness to finding my true self on stage, it’s where I came alive. My teenage years were filled with pageants, and dance



was the anchor that helped me express myself. As I grew older, yoga became a holistic practice aligned with my psychology profession. Spirituality plays a crucial role; it’s the thread that ties mind, body, and spirit together in my wellness journey.”

## How has your pageant experience shaped your outlook?

“The pageant experience was eye-opening. Realizing the positive influence on others has filled me with gratitude. It’s a joy to know that unexpected connections and support can emerge from such competitions, shaping a bright future.”

## Tell me about your passion for running.

“Running is my therapy! I do a lot of the same runs every year. I’ll kick off my race season with the Thanksgiving Day Classic [10 miles]. Then, I typically do the Runner’s Den Scottsdale Half Marathon (but we haven’t had one in the last few years — sad face). And, I run the Lost Dutchman marathon in February. I’ve run the New York City Marathon, as well. I am proud to say that I have completed 11 full marathons and 22 half marathons — I’m fully committed to my training. Some days, I get up at 3:30 am to train — rain or shine.”

## What advice would you give your younger self?

“Slow down. Despite what you might think, it actually gets better. I was always in a rush, racing through high school, college, and grad school. Now, I wish time would slow down.”

## How have your passions and habits contributed to your authentic life?

“Authenticity is key. Whether it’s my passion for travel or habits I’ve cultivated, they all contribute to a genuine, aligned life. Embracing authenticity in my 40s is about cherishing what truly matters.”

## As far as your career goes, when did you know you wanted to work with kids?

“I’ve always been motivated to help others and make a difference. Ever the ambitious one, I immediately entered a doctoral program after undergrad and got my master’s along the way. In 2012, I opened my practice with a good friend.”

## Favorite movie: 16 Candles

## Guilty pleasure: Mexican food

## Cook, order in, or go out: Go out

## Celebrity to play you: Marisa Tomei

## Favorite restaurant: Los Dos Molinos

## First job: Contempo Casuals at Paradise Valley Mall

## Most recent book: The Untethered Soul

## What are you watching on Netflix: Manifest

## 5 or 8 hours of sleep: 9, please

## Mantra: Be grateful for all you have, but also for all you don’t have!

## Happy place: On my yoga mat

## Your pit bull holds a special place in your heart. How has this furry companion enriched your life?

“Despite facing health challenges and needing extra attention, our pit bull, Belle, is our source of joy. My partner and I have been together for 27 years, and she’s been our constant companion for 13 years, bringing immense love into our lives.”

@gina\_fabover40\_23

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Colossal is a nationally registered professional fundraiser that inspires people to advocate for themselves and those in need. Colossal’s Fab Over 40 competition serves as a fundraising campaign for DTCare, a United States 501(c)(3) public charity organization. Fab Over 40 brings together thousands of mature women to vie for the prestigious title and raise awareness for the National Breast Cancer Foundation.



Colossal’s 2023 Fab Over 40 fundraiser resulted in a grant by DTCare for over \$9 million to the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF). Recognized as one of the leading breast cancer organizations in the world, NBCF is Helping Women Now® by providing early detection, education, and support services to those affected by breast cancer.





# Fortune Favors The Fabulous

The 2023 Fab Over 40 finalists reflect on the past, savor the present, and share their wisdom on manifesting a fulfilling future.



## Tonya Hairston

Tonya Hairston is a free-spirited wildflower who is forever blossoming, accepting each experience as yet another step on the bridge



of life. In 1998, she moved from Louisiana to Jackson, MS, where she started her safe, steady role as HR Director, but left it for the thrill of commission as a real estate agent. She moved to Georgia in 2005 (on faith) where she continued her career in real estate, becoming a broker. “This liberating move gifted me Jahmal, my soulmate husband, and the joy of raising our three vibrant daughters—Carrington, Katelyn, and Charity. As I’ve learned, God’s plan is far grander than any human roadmap.” Joining Fab Over 40 reignited a fire within, reminding her to open doors in 2024 and beyond. Here, Hairston encourages all to embrace each moment, find strength in authenticity, and recognize that the most beautiful compositions arise from the courage to dance to one’s own rhythm.

“My biggest tip for having confidence is to own every part of who you are. I call it a “wabi-sabi” viewpoint: a way of living that focuses on finding beauty within imperfection and peacefully accepting the natural cycle of growth and decay.”

“People often ask, ‘What advice would you give your younger self?’ I don’t write messages to my younger self. What she teaches me as an adult is bigger than any message I could ever give her—reminders that I came here as love and to never lose my childlike wonder or compassionate heart and love for others.”

“True beauty is kindness, courage, and the unique aspects of each person’s passions. It’s not limited to external appearances, but a light that shines when we tap into our authentic selves.”

“For me, embracing my age means savoring new experiences, whether learning a new skill, traveling to a new place, or simply deepening my connection with loved ones. With each new age, I’ve gained wisdom and confidence that helps me navigate life with grace and humor.”

@atlvipgirl



## Kym Maloney

Residing in Ladera Ranch, CA, the classically beautiful Kym Maloney owns a successful interior design firm and shares a blissful



life with a supportive husband and four children. Her commitment to a healthy lifestyle, marked by regular exercise and nutritious choices, has become an integral part of her daily routine, fostering a sense of vitality and well-being at this stage of life. The impactful influence of her mother’s courageous battle with triple-negative breast cancer shapes her perspective on aging. Witnessing her mother’s strength, tenacity, and ongoing resilience is a perpetual source of inspiration. In her reflections on aging, Maloney advocates for self-care as a form of self-preservation and promotes a message of kindness, urging less judgment and more grace towards oneself and others.

“My favorite tip to stay fabulous is prioritizing health—drink lots of water, get plenty of sleep, move daily, and have a positive attitude. I know it’s cliché, but when I properly care for myself physically and mentally, I can better care for my family.”

“Don’t sweat the small stuff, and do not be afraid of getting older. There is so much more you learn to appreciate with age, like amazing friendships, appreciating family and their quirks, really looking at things on a deeper level, worrying less about what other people think of you, and just being you, not what you think people want you to be. There is so much beauty in individuality rather than being a clone.”

“Turning 40 was a struggle for me initially, but I have now embraced it because it really is just a number and not a definition of who you are or preconceived limitations society tells us comes with age. You gain so much more wisdom, life experiences, and meaningful friendships.”

“No amount of guilt can change the past, and no amount of worry can change the future. So, be present and go easy on yourself.”

@kymmaloney | @kymmaloneydesign



## Rebecca Pranghofer

Becky Pranghofer is empowered by the life she’s experienced in her 47 years on this Earth, and she firmly believes that age is



a feeling, not a number. This Fab Over 40 finalist lives in Kimberly, WI, and navigates the multifaceted roles of wife, mother of three children, RN, and owner of L’artiste Injecteur (The Injector Artist) med spa in Appleton. Here, she offers thoughts and advice on aging and how she approaches her day-to-day with grace and gratitude.

“Learn to stop worrying about what others think of you. Do what makes you happiest! Stop trying to make everyone but yourself happy.”

“Go with your gut. All the choices you make will inevitably lead to where you need to be. And there are some things you wouldn’t want to change in the end.”

“We all know the 40s are the new 20s. And it’s so much better this time around because we have life experience to fall back on. I firmly believe that if your soul is happy, you will exude that on the outside. I have learned never to do anything that doesn’t ‘feel’ right.”

“I have done Botox, but I rely more on medical-grade skincare, which has been essential for me since my 30s. My favorite service, by far, is a medium-depth chemical peel.”

“We all embrace getting older differently. So, what are your aging goals? They may be more exercise, new skincare, healthier eating, or even anti-aging procedures like Tox or Filler. Everyone has their comfort level. Some will try everything, and some will do nothing. Neither one is right or wrong.”

“I recently read somewhere that someone should listen to understand, not to reply. This spoke to me, and it’s my new mantra.”

“You should always take that chance on yourself. You just never know.”

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