Why Do Adults Get 'Stuck'? Dr. Vince Callahan Explores How the Brain Learns Survival and How Hope Gets Us Moving Again

Mental health pro draws on more than 30 years of clinical experience to examine the hidden patterns behind bitterness, emotional exhaustion and the loss of hope



New Release, I Have a Tricycle

LAKELAND, FL, UNITED STATES, September 11, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Many adults can identify the feeling: life looks functional from the outside, but something inside has stopped moving. They go to work, care for families, lead organizations and fulfill responsibilities, yet feel increasingly guarded, exhausted, disconnected or unsure why the life they built no longer feels like the life they imagined.

Dr. Vince Callahan believes part of the answer may begin much earlier than people realize.

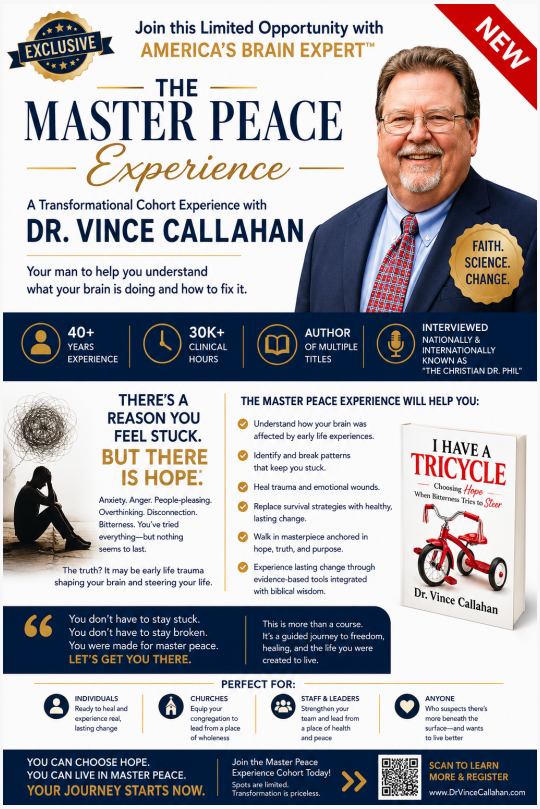
In his new book, I Have a Tricycle: Choosing Hope When Bitterness Tries to Steer, Callahan explores how experiences of disappointment, unresolved pain, trauma and emotional survival can shape patterns in the brain and how patterns that once helped a person cope can eventually contribute to feeling stuck in adulthood. Drawing from neuroscience, psychology, faith and more than three decades of clinical experience, Callahan moves the conversation beyond simply telling people to “get over it” or “think positively.”

> “The brain adapts according to experience.”
>
> *Dr. Vince Callahan*

"The brain adapts according to experience," Callahan writes. His central message is equally important: adaptive patterns can be reshaped.

That distinction forms the heart of I Have a Tricycle. Rather than treating bitterness, withdrawal, or lost hope simply as character flaws, Callahan examines what happens when the brain and nervous system repeatedly learn disappointment, self-protection, and emotional survival, and what it takes to begin creating different patterns.

The book uses the simple image of a childhood tricycle as a metaphor for something many adults have lost: the willingness to move before everything feels certain. Children wobble, fall, get back up and keep riding. Adults, Callahan argues, can begin interpreting setbacks differently: a betrayal becomes a worldview, disappointment becomes expectation, and a painful chapter can gradually become identity.



Master Peace Flier

From Survival Mode to Forward Movement

Callahan's work focuses on a question with relevance far beyond the therapy room: What happens when experiences that helped us survive yesterday begin determining how we live today?

Through the book's Tricycle Framework™, Callahan connects six elements involved in forward movement: hope, resilience, action, prospect, identity and purpose. The model uses hope as the front wheel providing direction; resilience and action as the rear wheels supporting recovery and movement; prospect as the handlebars that help people perceive possibilities; identity as the seat providing stability; and purpose as the rider giving meaning and direction to the journey.

The result is a conversation particularly relevant for adults who may be:

- outwardly successful but privately depleted;
- carrying unresolved disappointment, grief or relational wounds;
- struggling with burnout, numbness, cynicism or loss of hope;
- repeating patterns they understand intellectually but have difficulty changing;
- navigating the intersection of faith, emotional health and healing; or
- wondering whether their past must continue determining their future.

Callahan brings more than 30 years of clinical experience and over 30,000 counseling hours to that conversation. With an Ed.D. in Educational Psychology and a specialization in the neurological impact of trauma, his work integrates neuroscience-based approaches with Christian faith. He is also the founder of the Florida Institute for Neural Discovery, which provides education and resources around trauma, development, learning, and trauma-informed ministry.

“Pain explains many things. It should not define everything,” Callahan writes in I Have a Tricycle.

Taking the Conversation Beyond the Book

The release of I Have a Tricycle also coincides with Callahan's Master Peace Experience, a six-week, faith-rooted guided group designed for people seeking to move from bitterness toward hope and from feeling emotionally stuck toward greater engagement with life. The program extends themes central to his broader work around trauma, emotional patterns, faith and transformation.

Rather than positioning healing as instant or simplistic, Callahan's approach emphasizes understanding why patterns developed, recognizing how they continue to operate and intentionally practicing new ways of thinking and moving.

Why This Conversation Matters Now

Burnout, chronic stress, emotional fatigue and disconnection are increasingly part of everyday conversations about work, family, leadership, ministry and relationships. Callahan offers media a way to take that discussion one level deeper: What if some adults aren't simply tired—what if they have spent years adapting to life in ways they no longer recognize?

That opens the door to conversations not only about what makes people feel stuck, but about neuroplasticity, resilience, hope, identity, faith and the possibility of meaningful change.

About the Book

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More information about Dr. Callahan, his work and the Master Peace Experience is available through Dr. Vince Callahan's official website.

Media Contact

Michelle Gines
Purpose Publishing
contactus@purposepublishing.com
816-866-7742

Michelle Gines
PURPOSE PUBLISHING
+1 816-866-7742
contactus@purposepublishing.com
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