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“Allan Hamilton is a **natural storyteller**. His real-life experiences remind us that patients and surgeons can share in a spiritual transformation during the course of battling a disease. He also reminds us that **every patient** presents a **dramatic opportunity** to see the **miraculous**, the **inexplicable**, and the **inspirational** at work.”

--Linda Klein, R.N., producer of *Grey's Anatomy* and *Nip/Tuck*

THE SCALPEL AND THE SOUL

Encounters with Surgery, the Supernatural, and the Healing Power of Hope

by **ALLAN HAMILTON, M.D., FACS**
foreword by **ANDREW WEIL, M.D.**

MEDICAL SCHOOL TEACHES DOCTORS HOW TO HEAL THE PHYSICAL BODY, often using sophisticated pharmacological and surgical techniques. But what about the spiritual and mental aspects of life that are so prevalent in times of crisis—should doctors be trained to treat those as well? And can sensitivity to the mind and the spirit have a positive effect on a patient's outcome?

In his new book **THE SCALPEL AND THE SOUL: Encounters with Surgery, the Supernatural, and the Healing Power of Hope** (Tarcher/Penguin hard cover; on sale March 13, 2008; \$23.95), renowned neurosurgeon **Dr. Allan J. Hamilton** explores these issues, and recounts his own remarkable experiences both in and out of the operating room. At Harvard Medical School, Dr. Hamilton was trained to think logically, to look for physical evidence, and to rely on hard facts when treating a patient. His surgical skills and medical training were excellent, but when he began to interact with patients he found himself unprepared to wrestle the spiritual questions and crises he encountered. “I started my journey as a doctor trying to understand the difference between the brain and the mind,” Hamilton writes. “In the end, I also had to grapple with the conundrum of the soul.”

In his thirty years of treating patients—many with malignant brain tumors—Dr. Hamilton encountered many strange events that could not be explained by medical science. Not just uncanny coincidences, but near-death experiences, visions, and premonitions. His colleagues admitted to him privately that they'd had similar experiences, but weren't comfortable revealing them to most people. Doctors are trained to disregard the inexplicable and the unbelievable, and anyone who talks publicly about such things risks damaging their credibility.

Yet patients have the same experiences. In fact, many patients find that life threatening illness or stressful surgery revives their once-dormant spiritual side – and the soul often needs more than what intensive care alone can give. **THE SCALPEL AND THE SOUL** validates the spiritual manifestations physicians see everyday, and explores how premonition, superstition, hope, and faith not only effect how patients feel but can also change outcomes. Dr. Hamilton empowers patients to voice their spiritual needs when they seek medical help, and includes an appendix of “twenty rules to live by”—practical, hard-won advice for patients or their loved ones on how to navigate through surgery or critical care. **THE SCALPEL AND THE SOUL** addresses the mysterious, attractive powers the soul exerts during life-threatening events, and demonstrates that hope is a palpable force that can make the difference between life and death.

About the Author: After beginning his working life as a janitor, **Allan J. Hamilton, M.D., FACS**, went on to attend Harvard Medical School and become the chief of neurosurgery and chairman of the department of Surgery at the University of Arizona Health Sciences Center. He is a script consultant in neurosurgery for *Grey's Anatomy*, and lives outside of Tucson, Arizona. He is available for interview.

THE SCALPEL AND THE SOUL
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