

# OMEGA

Rhinebeck, New York

Dear Student,

You are registered for course # 4005-565, "Your Brain Without Pain: A Spine Surgeon's Roadmap Out of Chronic Pain," with David Hanscom and Frederic Luskin on August 18-23, 2013.

Please note that there is a special schedule for this course:

Schedule:	Monday	9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. <b>2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.</b>	Workshop <b>Workshop Optional Workshop Hours</b>
	Tuesday	<b>7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.</b> 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. <b>2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.</b>	Workshop <b>Workshop Optional Workshop Hours</b>
	Wednesday	<b>7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.</b> 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. <b>2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.</b>	Workshop <b>Workshop Optional Workshop Hours</b>
	Thursday	<b>7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.</b> 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. <b>2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.</b>	Workshop <b>Workshop Optional Workshop Hours</b>
	Friday	<b>7:30 P.M. - 9:30 P.M.</b> 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.	Workshop

The Children's Program will be available during the extended hours of this workshop. The above schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the faculty.

Faculty asks that you read the following books in preparation for the course:

- *Back in Control: A Spine Surgeon's Roadmap Out of Chronic Pain* by David Hanscom
- *Forgive for Good: A Proven Prescription for Health & Happiness* by Fred Luskin

Additionally, faculty recommends you read the following books in preparation for the course:

- *The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born. It's Grown. Here's How.* by Daniel Coyle
- *The Art of Living: The Classical Manual on Virtue, Happiness & Effectiveness* by Epictetus (A New Interpretation by Sharon Lebell)

Lastly, the faculty asked us to pass along the letter below as well as the attached questionnaire.

We look forward to seeing you this season!

Sincerely,  
*The Omega Staff*

Dear Omega Participant:

We are excited about teaching the tools that will allow you to live a life without pain. The workshop is based on my book, "Back in Control: A Spine Surgeon's Roadmap Out of Chronic Pain" and Dr. Fred Luskin's book, "Forgive for Good". Babs Yohai is my wife who will be in charge of the somatic work.

### **Introduction to the faculty**

I am an orthopedic spine surgeon who is practicing complex spine surgery in Seattle, WA. I not only survived a severe burnout and chronic pain, I am thriving. I am grateful to be able to share my journey with you.

My wife, Babs Yohai, has been a major influence in my making it through my ordeal. She is a performer/artist experienced in tap and mask theater. She will be working with the movement exercises.

Fred Luskin, PhD. is a professor of psychology out of Stanford University. He has made major contributions to his field in the area of forgiveness. He recently received a lifetime achievement award for his work. Forgiveness is the "Continental Divide" of chronic pain. His role in the five-day seminar is pivotal.

### **The Workshop**

The intent of this workshop is to enable you to implement the strategies in my book, "Back in Control: A Spine Surgeon's Roadmap Out of Chronic Pain" and also Fred Luskin's book, "Forgive for Good." Reading these books will be required prior to coming to this seminar. Although we will be reviewing some of the material we will be focusing much more on implementation. At the conclusion of the week the goal will be for you to have a daily and long term plan in place to shift your nervous system into a pain free existence.

### **The Format**

The DOCC (Defined Organized Comprehensive Care) project is not a formula. It is about organizing your thinking to calm down the chaos in your mind about your pain and being trapped in a medical system that is not showing you a way out. You then will be able to re-connect with who you really are and move forward in a powerful manner. The seminar is about connection.

You will be in groups of eight throughout the week. You will be randomly assigned to a group for the week. You will also be assigned a "buddy" that you will work with throughout the week. All exercises will done in groups of two, four, or eight. Some will be done with the entire seminar group.

Each day there will two leaders per table that will rotate. The 5<sup>th</sup> day will be a random assignment.

### **The Schedule**

Be prepared to engage. You will be eating lunch with your group and discussing the morning topics. Dinner will be with your buddy.

About a third of the course will be educational. Most of it will be focused on learning and practicing tools that you can take home with you. There will be a lot of physical activity but none

Awakening the Best in the Human Spirit

of it strenuous. Although mindfulness and meditation are an important part of your healing they will not be emphasized in this course due to time constraints.

### **Overview of Course**

Monday – Review of the Mind Body Syndrome model and Anxiety

Tuesday – “Judgment Day”

Wednesday – From Reactive to Creative

Thursday – Taking Back Your Life – Relationships

Friday – Putting it together

### **Evening Activities**

The evening activities will be from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. They are as follows:

Monday – Watching the Movie “Cinema Paradiso”. The intention is to reinforce the concept of how your brain works in images. It is much more powerful than logic. It is also a great movie.

Tuesday – Open question and answer session with the faculty

Wednesday – Creation of your personal “vision board”. You are being asked to each bring 4-6 magazines that have a lot of pictures. You will be working with your home group to share and create a vision of what you would like to create in your life.

Thursday – You will be asked to develop your own personal “business plan” for the following: 1) you 2) your family 3) your life. This will also be done with your group and open discussion is encouraged.

### **Target Audience**

Anyone and everyone. You will see that even if you do not have chronic pain any chronic condition creates a lot of anxiety and frustration. Every human being experiences at least three to five Mind Body Syndrome (MBS) symptoms. I have personally experienced 16 of the 33. They have been gone for years. Health care providers are encouraged to attend, as the best way to relate to your patients is to first have gone through the same journey.

Ideally you should have already read my book, “Back in Control” and being actively involved in working on the stages outlined both in the book and on my website, [www.back-in-control.com](http://www.back-in-control.com). You should have also read Dr. Luskin’s book, “Forgive for Good.” He also outlines some excellent concepts and tools. We are not going to re-teach the models. We will be working on helping you implement them. Many people become pain free with just these resources prior to the seminar. You would not only greatly benefit from the workshop but you would be a wonderful addition to the group. Sharing stories is a powerful tool for everyone.

### **Who Should Not Attend**

Too Painful.

If your pain is severe enough that you cannot endure full days, please do not sign up for this course. You are not ready for it.

Not Sleeping.

Sleep is the number one variable that must be addressed in treating chronic pain. As per my book I ask every patient to discuss sleep with their primary-care physician, as you cannot sleep without meds if you are in chronic pain. Please address this before the seminar and you should be sleeping at least six hours per night.

Unwilling to Contribute.

You are being asked to fully participate. Your support to your group and buddy is important. The final phase of the DOCC project is giving back and you will be doing that all week.

Not Open to Change.

The biggest and only real obstacle to success with this process is unwillingness to engage. In chronic pain there is a lot of anger and frustration. We will help you process it. However, if you are not open to new ideas and experiences please don't sign up for this course. Please be honest with yourself regarding your willingness to undergo a true change. This course does not represent a life philosophy as much as it represents how your brain works. You can and will be able to "rewire your brain without pain."

### **Ground Rules**

You cannot discuss your pain or medical care with the faculty or **ANY OTHER PARTICIPANT**. If you begin to discuss it then each participant will be instructed to ask you to change the subject. One of the paradoxes of the MBS is that you cannot "fix it". The harder you try to fix yourself the stronger your neurological circuits will become. We are focusing on learning methods to shift your nervous system into a more powerful place.

- If you are persistent in discussing your medical condition I will personally ask you to leave the course.

You will be asked to not bring any electronic devices into the seminar from 9:00 am until after dinner at 6:00 pm. This request also includes the evening activities from 7:30 to 9:30.

Dress is completely casual. It would be best to wear athletic shoes for the daily activities.

### **Please Bring:**

Vision Board Exercise

- Three to five magazines that have a lot of pictures.
  - We will be creating vision boards on Wednesday evening for a couple of hours.

Reconnecting with the Best Part of Who You Are

- A few songs on a digital device that connect to the most enjoyable part of your life
- Any small symbols or memoirs of that era
  - A photograph, souvenir, letter, etc.
  - Four pictures of yourself
    - Baby < one year
    - Elementary school
    - High school or college

- Within the last year

### Sharing You

- Bring anything
  - Poems
  - Stories
  - Pictures
  - Music
  - Art
- You will be sharing with your group and your buddy

This seminar is going to be a lively and interactive experience. One of the most powerful tools to cause your nervous system shift is play. While in chronic pain you tend to lose your sense of humor. We are looking forward to meeting you and sharing our experiences with you. We will be learning as much from you as you will from us.

Warm Regards,

David Hanscom

Babs Yohai

Fred Luskin