



Illustration by Rafael Lopez



From the Executive Director

The GGSC has hit some major milestones recently: We eclipsed 1 million learners in our online courses, 60 million downloads of our podcast—and over the past decade alone, 100 million pageviews of our websites.

But what our team often finds most meaningful are the stories behind those numbers.

“For the past 2 years, I have been taking care of my spouse while he was dying of cancer,” a reader told us recently. **“GGSC was my connection to better health.”**

So many powerful stories show how members of our community apply what they learn from the GGSC to support other people: veterans, children, colleagues. **“Thanks to your work, I am a better teacher and have a more calm, safe environment in my classroom,”** said one reader, an educator in Utah. “I have been able to be more positive and helpful to others as well as healthier mentally and emotionally myself. Thank you!”

At a time of pervasive anxiety and even despair, stories like these inspire our team to keep infusing hope, compassion, and kindness into the world.

This annual report highlights our efforts over the past year: new programs, powerful events, and influential media that have expanded and deepened the GGSC’s impact.

Our work follows a simple but powerful model, illustrated by the accompanying pyramid:

- We turn cutting-edge research into practical resources—articles, podcasts, videos, playbooks, online courses—that explore “the science of a meaningful life.”



- We share those resources with millions of people worldwide, particularly with those who support others’ well-being.
- We teach people how to apply those resources in their daily lives—in families, classrooms, workplaces, and beyond.

Whether you are new to the GGSC or a longtime member of our community, whether you come to us for personal or professional guidance (or both!), we hope you find inspiration in these pages—and discover something you want to share with an important person in your life.

With gratitude,

Jason Marsh
Executive Director & Editor in Chief



Learn more about the GGSC’s impact

Photo credit: Cat Cutillo



“What do I love most about working at the Greater Good Science Center? It’s being part of a lively and generous community of scholars and students—and knowing that what we’re all trying to do is improve humanity.”

—Emiliana Simon-Thomas, GGSC Science Director

GGSC in the News!

Inc.

“A Neuroscientist Explains All the Good Things That Happen in Your Brain When You Forgive Someone”



GGSC Science Director **Emiliana Simon-Thomas** explains how forgiving others activates three key brain systems—governing empathy, attention, and social decision-making—ultimately helping you focus, stay calm, and reclaim emotional control.

Forbes

“According to Science, Kind Leaders Increase Stakeholder Satisfaction”



Greater Good Workplaces Director **Kia Afhari** and Science Director **Emiliana Simon-Thomas** highlight the science behind kind leadership, explaining that compassionate leaders drive greater company value, higher customer satisfaction, and lower turnover.

Inside Philanthropy

“Spreading Love Through the Media, the Regrantor Way”



A profile of the GGSC’s “Spreading Love Through the Media” project, which is partnering with journalists and other media producers to explore the human capacity for love. Features interviews with GGSC Special Projects Editor **Katherine Reynolds Lewis** and Executive Director **Jason Marsh**

Find more of the GGSC’s media appearances on our In the Media webpage!



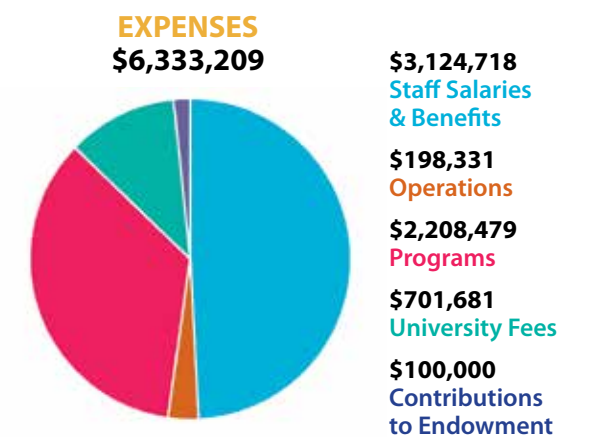
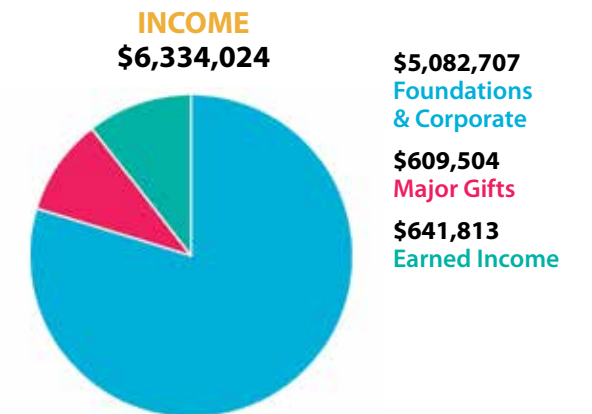
Greater Good by the Numbers

Cumulative through calendar year 2025

- Website visitors: **6,318,363***
- Website pageviews: **12,062,409***
- Social media followers: **418,065**
- Newsletter subscribers: **848,000**
- Podcast downloads: **61,566,414**
- Online course learners: **1,144,287**

** For 2025 calendar year only*

Financials for FY 2025



Putting the Science of Forgiveness into Practice



One of the main lessons from the science of forgiveness is that forgiveness benefits the forgiver, helping them heal and recover from a hurt or trauma, more than it is about reconciling with the person who caused that harm.

That process is at the center of “Putting the Science of Forgiveness into Practice,” a GGSC project that marked its first full year in 2025. Supported by a grant from the Templeton World Charity Foundation, the project disseminates practical insights from decades of research on forgiveness through articles for *Greater Good*, podcast episodes for *The Science of Happiness*, and many other resources, with a focus on reaching practitioners—specifically educators, mental health professionals, and faith leaders—who can apply these resources for maximal real-world impact.

“By reaching the people who are in influential positions to help others consider forgiveness—and equipping these practitioners with research-based strategies to support their students, patients, or congregants—we are generating a huge multiplier effect for well-being,” says GGSC Executive Director Jason Marsh.

Educators and mental health professionals have long been two of the GGSC’s biggest audiences. But the project has also deepened the center’s connection with faith leaders across denominations, who have expressed a strong desire to pair religious teachings with concrete lessons from research.

The project has already had impressive reach: A GGSC video on the psycho-biology of forgiveness, produced in collaboration with psychiatrist and social media influencer Tracey Marks, has already surpassed 250,000 views; the center’s forgiveness content appeared in Google search results more than 1.4 million times—triple the year before.

“What excites me most is that when people search ‘forgiveness’ in Google, they’re finding trustworthy science—and that impact extends into homes, schools, and communities around the world,” says Lauren Lee, the GGSC’s director of marketing and partnerships.

Learn more about “Putting the Science of Forgiveness into Practice”



Photo credit: Aurelia Santos

GGSC EVENT: THE POWER OF BRIDGING

On March 5, the GGSC and UC Berkeley’s Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI) hosted an event in Berkeley for OBI Director John A. Powell’s new book, *The Power of Bridging*, co-authored with Rachelle Galloway-Popotas. “My experience is that when you can listen to people’s stories, they’re much more willing to listen to yours,” Powell said during a Q&A with GGSC Bridging Differences Program Director Juliana Tafur.



Supporting Educators with Science, Community & Connection

A Q&A with Vicki Zakrzewski, Director of Greater Good Education



Vicki Zakrzewski, Ph.D., has led the Greater Good Education program since its inception in 2012, supporting the social and emotional well-being of millions of educators. Last year the program launched Greater

Good Educators, a virtual community for educators from around the world, which explores how to apply topics like purpose, empathy, and awe to schools and classrooms. Almost 2,000 educators have participated so far.

find the care and support they need—and remember why they got into the field of education in the first place.

What impact has Greater Good Educators had so far?

It’s been powerful. One hundred percent of participants report feeling a sense of belonging in the community, with most reporting very high feelings of belonging. We’ve also seen significant gains in their understanding of the content for their own well-being, as well as for their students’ well-being.

What are your hopes and goals for the future of this work?

Our grand vision is to have Greater Good Educator groups in countries all over the world. Already, we’re starting new communities in Ukraine and India next year, and eventually we hope to offer sessions in other languages, beginning with Spanish.

We’ve heard from alums that they love meeting people from other countries—it’s a powerful experience to connect with like-minded educators across the globe. It expands your thinking and helps you realize that you really are not alone in the challenges you face.

Learn more about Greater Good Educators



Why did you decide to launch Greater Good Educators?

Photo credit: Lauren Lee



We were responding to educators’ expressed need for community and connection. Since the launch of the Greater Good Education program,

we’ve focused on educator well-being—the pressure and expectations that educators face today are almost inhumane. Coming together in community can help them

GGSC Research Fellows

Each year, the GGSC awards fellowships to UC Berkeley students whose research speaks to the Center’s mission. Many of these fellows have gone on to top positions at some of the most distinguished universities in the world, creating a new generation of scholars exploring “the science of a meaningful life.” Here are three of the GGSC’s most recent fellows.

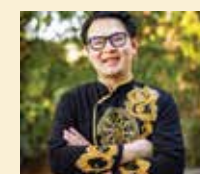
Zhuoya Wang, an undergraduate



at UC Berkeley majoring in psychology and statistics, is studying

how experiencing awe might reduce social divisions. She hypothesizes that feeling awe might encourage more empathy for members of other groups.

Phuc (Nick) Nguyen, our Hornaday



Graduate Fellow, is a Ph.D. student in the Clinical Science program at UC

Berkeley. As a GGSC fellow, Nick’s research is exploring ways to reduce stigmatization of people with ADHD and promote compassion and well-being.

Larissa Benjamin, our Libby Fee



Graduate Fellow, is a Ph.D. student in public health. As a GGSC fellow, she is

examining how rural community leaders in Alabama are supporting well-being in their neighborhoods through community-led initiatives, particularly for older adults.

Meet more of the GGSC Research Fellows



New Publications from the GGSC

In 2025, the GGSC produced four exciting publications: two workbooks, a playbook, and a “flourish journal.” Though geared toward different audiences, all four provide the same important service: to distill lessons from research into digestible and practical steps for well-being.

Family Well-Being for the Greater Good



This is a **free** “science-based workbook for people supporting parents,” such as pediatricians and parent educators. Its 16 visually engaging chapters cover pillars of family and community well-being, such as compassion, forgiveness, and empathy, with hands-on activities for both caregivers and practitioners to help children thrive.

Download Family Well-Being for the Greater Good



Bridging Differences in Higher Education Playbook



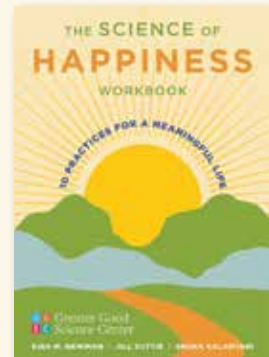
To address the intense conflicts and divisions plaguing many college campuses, the GGSC produced this **free** resource that builds on our popular *Bridging Differences Playbook*. This edition offers research-based skills

and strategies to foster connection, collaboration, and understanding across lines of difference—all tailored to the needs of college and university communities.

Download the Bridging Differences in Higher Education Playbook



The Science of Happiness Workbook



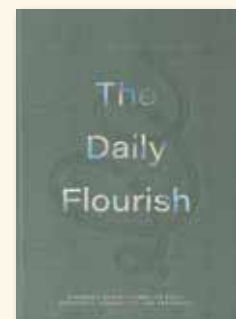
Drawing on many GGSC platforms—including *Greater Good* magazine, the Greater Good in Action website, and *The Science of Happiness* podcast and online course—this book features step-by-step practices to strengthen relationships and

emotional resilience. Each practice is illuminated by real-world stories of people who have applied these lessons to their own lives.

Learn more about the workbook from its publisher, Norton Professional Books



The Daily Flourish Journal



This journal features daily prompts to take you through a journey of positivity, resilience, and connection over 12 weeks. Drawing on well-being science, it enables users to track their development and finish with a tangible sense of accomplishment.

Learn more about the journal from its publisher, Holstee



The Art and Science of Caregiving

Two recent series from *The Science of Happiness* podcast

The well-being of a society depends on the commitment of its caregivers, from parents to social workers to preschool teachers. But how do we care for our caregivers?



Last year, a series from the GGSC’s *Science of Happiness* podcast explored that question, offering concrete strategies to support the well-being of parents and others who care for children. In the series, “Caring for Caregivers,” supported by a grant

from the Van Leer Foundation, three engaging episodes drew from recent research to highlight how caregivers can navigate stress and find emotional nourishment—specifically through the power of dance, music, and touch.

True to the format of *The Science of Happiness*, each episode featured a guest—including a pregnant pre-K teacher, a parent of a three year old, and a social worker with a two-year-old daughter—who tried a different research-based practice for well-being, then came on the show to discuss the impact of that experience with the show’s host, GGSC Faculty Director Dacher Keltner. Those restorative

techniques ranged from dancing to singing lullabies to experiencing short, soothing touches—“the lullabies episode is especially lovely,” notes Shuka Kalantari, the GGSC’s executive producer of audio. An interview with a well-being researcher in each episode explains the science behind each practice.

Another *Science of Happiness* series last year, called “Using Art as Medicine,” looked at how creativity can serve as a powerful tool for healing. “The guests were amazing,” says Kalantari. “One researcher in art therapy, Dr. Girija Kaimal, came on the show, and just listening to her made me go home to paint with my kids.”



Listen to The Science of Happiness podcast



GGSC EVENT: WHY KIND LEADERS WIN



Photo credit: Luis H. Monticelli

On December 1, the GGSC hosted an inspiring event exploring how leaders who prioritize kindness achieve greater profitability for their companies—while also fostering trust, resilience, and belonging in their organizations. Moderated by Greater Good Workplaces Director Kia Afcari, it featured a panel of distinguished business leaders, researchers, and UC Berkeley Chancellor Rich Lyons.

Our Top 5 Articles of 2025

These are the *Greater Good* articles from 2025 that received the most pageviews.

1. “14 Movies That Highlight the Best in Humanity,” by Various contributors
2. “What Matters Most to People Who Are Dying,” by Jill Suttie & Diane Button
3. “Seven Ways to Shift Your Difficult Emotions,” by Jill Suttie
4. “When You Feel Alone, Try This Practice,” by Kira Newman, Jill Suttie & Shuka Kalantari
5. “Seven Ways to Bring More Meaning to Your Life,” by Jill Suttie

Check out more articles on *Greater Good!*

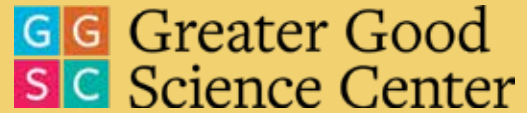




You make all of this possible!

The GGSC is not funded by UC Berkeley; our work only continues because of supporters like you.

Learn more at ggsc.berkeley.edu/donate.



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