

2021 Annual Report



For two decades, the GGSC has turned the “science of a meaningful life” into research-based resources that support the well-being of millions around the world. In our 2021 annual report, we are proud to share the programs, insights, and stories that animate our vision.

About the GGSC



OUR MISSION

The Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley studies the psychology, sociology, and neuroscience of well-being, and teaches skills that foster a thriving, resilient, and compassionate society. Since 2001, we have been at the fore of a new scientific movement to explore the roots of happy individuals, strong social bonds, and altruistic behavior—"the science of a meaningful life."

Our work:

- **Equips individuals** with research-based skills that improve their social and emotional well-being.
- **Brings a trusted, inclusive voice** to the cultural conversation about compassion, connection, and happiness.
- **Empowers people** to become agents of change in their own communities and organizations, improving institutions inside and out.

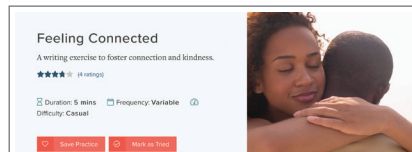
This 2021 Annual Report celebrates our recent accomplishments and highlights our newest initiatives.

Core Programs



GREATER GOOD MAGAZINE

Our award-winning online magazine is home to a rich array of media, including articles, videos, quizzes, and podcasts—all available for free. With over 10 million annual visitors, the research-based stories, tools, and tips on the site make cutting-edge research practical and accessible to the general public, especially parents, educators, health professionals, business leaders, and policy makers.



GREATER GOOD IN ACTION

GGIA is the field-leading source for research-based positive practices to cultivate happiness, resilience, kindness, and connection. These practices provide the basis for our courses, podcasts, and more, and each walks users through the How and Why of growing a new well-being skill. In 2021 we developed a Pathway to Happiness to guide GGIA users along a personalized journey. We're now analyzing data from the site to determine which practices work best for whom and to build a recommendation engine.



SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS PODCAST

With more than 30 million downloads to date and reaching as high as #2 on iTunes' list of Top Podcasts, *The Science of Happiness* is sharing stories and changing lives around the world. Listeners love the surprising, funny, and touching stories of our guests who try research-tested practices for bringing more joy and goodness into their lives. Co-produced by PRX, new episodes come out bi-weekly, all year long.



BRIDGING DIFFERENCES

Public discourse in our nation is at a breaking point. But research has been identifying how people from different groups can better understand and get along with one another. Through science and storytelling, we highlight the research-based skills and social conditions critical to reducing polarization, promoting constructive dialogue, and fostering positive relationships across divides.



ONLINE COURSES

More than 900,000 students from around the world have enrolled in our free, flagship 10-week Science of Happiness online class—and data shows that it substantially boosts their positive emotions and helps them deal with the stresses of life. Since then we've launched other new courses for workplaces, educators, and bridging differences (see p.6).

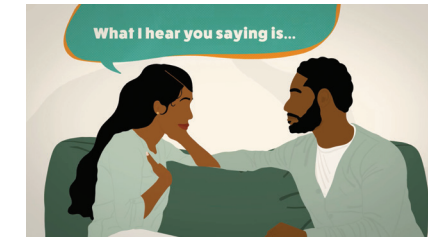


PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Our parenting initiative, *Raising Caring, Courageous Kids*, gives parents free multimedia resources—to nurture healthy kids of character who treat others with compassion and respect. Through this initiative, we also provided \$1 million in grant funding to 16 community-based organizations that work directly with parents.

VIDEO SERIES

Our Science of Happiness, Greater Good Parents, and Ask Greater Good video series turn research into bite-size, smile-worthy clips that are easy to share with friends and family of all ages. Greater Good goes viral!



GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

We have supported, nurtured, and advised over 100 graduate and undergraduate scholars at UC Berkeley since 2002, in a wide range of relevant fields from psychology and sociology to medicine, biology, business, education, public health, and more. Greater Good Fellows have gone on to rich and distinguished scientific and academic careers.



Kathryn Styer Martinez and Mathew Miranda are the recipients of our inaugural Reporting Fellowship on Latino Well-Being.



GREATER GOOD EDUCATION

Through our new Greater Good in Education platform, online courses, and partnerships with educational institutions and organizations across the nation, the GGSC helps educators to nurture their students' emotional lives—as well as their own—and build prosocial classrooms. We go beyond Social-Emotional Learning to teach the How and Why of elevating courage, compassion, kindness, determination, and equity alongside traditional academic goals.



TRAINING FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS & WORKPLACES

Our training program helps professionals apply the science of well-being to their work and their organizations. Our team is leading experiential workshops, providing consultation to industry leaders, and developing trainings for different sectors, particularly health care (see p. 7), to help combat stress and build resilience.

What Can We Do Now?

An Excerpt From *Greater Good Magazine*

In our politically charged and polarized environment, what steps can Americans take toward a more inclusive, cohesive, just, and compassionate society? That's the question we put to a circle of researchers, leaders, and Greater Good contributors—and here are their answers.

Seek Out Feelings of Awe

by Dacher Keltner

The climate crisis, racism, and economic inequality are all cultural toxins that undermine our happiness, reduce life expectancy, and hurt our immune systems. In recent years, my lab has looked at awe as an antibody to these toxins. Our empirical work finds that people can experience awe easily, without burning fossil fuels or emptying the bank account, by looking to what I call the eight wonders of life: the moral beauty of others, collective effervescence (such as dancing or singing together), nature, music, visual art, spiritual practice, big ideas, and in encountering life and death.

These studies find that brief exposures of awe—in thinking of a past experience, for example, or watching a nature video, or an awe walk outdoors—lead people to consume less, emit fewer carbons, and eat less red meat (which is itself a massive source of carbon emissions). Brief exposures to awe lead people to see common ground with others, and to view the most polarizing debates, like police brutality or immigration, in less extreme terms with opportunities for finding common ground.

Sharing a feeling of awe is one potential antidote for the racism and division of our times. Brief experiences of awe can even counter the toxic dimensions of our unequal economic structures, according to the studies to date. It makes those who have been more inclined to give. Awe leads us to feel we have more time in our work, and care more about the purpose of that work than its likelihood of bringing status or material gain.

So, what should you do today? Choose awe: Wander outdoors looking for awe, reflect on people whose courage and kindness give you the chills, listen to music that lifts you up. If you open yourself up to feeling awe, our research suggests you'll gain strength for facing our collective challenges. And perhaps lead us out of the toxic dimension of these times, to an age of awe.



Dacher Keltner, Ph.D., is the founding director of the Greater Good Science Center, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, and author of *The Power Paradox*.

Make a Commitment to Your Community

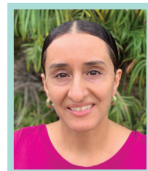
by Maryam Abdullah

One step that parents and children can take toward a more inclusive, cohesive, and compassionate society is to make a sustained commitment to community engagement.

Recent research by Laura Wray-Lake and Laura S. Abrams, with mostly Black middle and high school students, offers a clue about what that community engagement might look like. According to the young people, community engagement is not just about participating in formal activities. It also involves helping neighbors in your community by shoveling snow and mowing lawns, offering child care, or helping the homeless. It includes serving as mentors to younger kids, and intervening to break up fights or stand up to bullying. Connecting with the community can happen at block parties, field trips, and barbecues.

Kids could get engaged by participating in community and social activities like job trainings, faith group activities, or community forums where they discuss issues with the local government. They can make their voices heard by giving speeches or attending rallies and marches, such as pride parades. Even social media can be a place to voice their views.

The good news from this research is that children who are community-engaged tend to feel empowered. In other words, they have a sense of efficacy that they can make a difference, knowledge about power and injustice, the skills needed to make change, and a belief that they can work together to collectively do good. It's a virtuous circle: Engaged kids feel empowered, and empowered kids are motivated to be engaged in their community.



Maryam Abdullah, Ph.D., is the parenting program director of the Greater Good Science Center.

Ask Yourself What It Means To Be An American

by Carolyn Hopper and Ashley Quarcoo

We must recommit to being in relationship with one another. To be able to make this commitment, we first must gain a deeper understanding of who we are, and who we want to become. That's why we should each ask ourselves: What does it mean to be an American today?

From our policies around immigration, to the protests for racial justice, to the politics of mask-wearing, we are grappling with deciding what our common story is and what that means for how we treat each other. It's time that we face these tough questions directly.

Right now, two distinct, competing versions of American-ness are dominating our current discourse. These competing narratives are manifesting in new ways amid our increasingly polarized context. Consider, for example, how we talk about our national history. One narrative says that we must reckon with our history of violent white supremacy, and another tells a story of a nation that established itself as a model of freedom and liberty. But American identity should not be structured in such binary terms.

There are many parts in our country's founding and in our country's past of which we should be proud and celebrate. There are also profound failures which deserve greater acknowledgement and atonement, and from which we should continue to learn. We believe that developing this fuller story can reveal how American identity can and should evolve. We also think it is a critical part of the process to help us figure out who we want to be in a shared future.

Through exploring and articulating a more honest and inclusive story of America, we believe we can help to equip ourselves with the language, the common understandings, and the mutual respect for difference that will enable us to develop a shared narrative of what it means to be an American.



Carolyn Hopper is the managing director at the Aspen Institute's Citizenship and American Identity Program.



Ashley Quarcoo is the senior research manager for *Who Is Us: A Project on American Identity* at the Aspen Institute's Citizenship and American Identity Program.

Practice Active Listening

by Niobe Way and Crystal Clarke

It is clear that Americans are facing a crisis of connection in which we are increasingly disconnected from ourselves and each other. Evidence of the crisis can be found in the soaring rates of loneliness, depression, suicide, violence, and hate crimes across the United States. COVID-19 has only exacerbated these disconnections and deeply rooted divisions.

How can we reconnect? Here's one way: actively listen to each other.

Listening actively means replacing judgment with curiosity and asking questions of each other that allow us to reveal our common humanity and see each other outside a set of stereotypes. Ask the guard in your office building about his favorite childhood memory. Ask the Black teenager or the white elderly lady who lives next door to you what she wants most in her life and why.

By asking such questions and listening to their answers, we open up the possibility of a genuine connection. If we start from a place of curiosity and listen for what we can learn from others about who they are and what matters to them, we disrupt our own stereotypes about them and the cultural ideologies that promote them. Ideologies like patriarchy, white supremacy, and capitalism are premised on a hierarchy of humanness in which some humans (e.g., male, white, and rich) are considered more important than others (e.g., female, not white, and not rich). Dehumanizing stereotypes get in the way of our capacity for empathy and our ability to connect within and across communities.

By listening actively to each other, we begin to see ourselves in each other and recognize our common humanity. It is only with the recognition that we are all equally human that we will be able to build a more just, inclusive, and compassionate society.



Niobe Way, Ph.D. is a professor of developmental psychology at New York University, coeditor of *The Crisis of Connection*, and founder of the Project for the Advancement of Our Common Humanity (PACH).



Crystal Clarke, Ph.D. is former director of PACH.

GGSC Recent Highlights

This past year, the GGSC explored new ways to foster connection and support during challenging times.

Bridging Differences Online Course

In October 2021 we launched a new online course to help bridge social divides and foster constructive dialogue across group lines. This free course illuminates skills of listening, empathy, and curiosity that are key to helping us all become better citizens and neighbors. It has a particular focus on college campuses, and it was launched in tandem with a community of practice supporting dozens of leaders in higher education as they apply what they learn.

Greater Good in Action

We added new features to our ground-breaking website to make it more engaging and help us better understand which types of research-based well-being practices are the best fit for which types of individuals. Try it now to find your own pathway to happiness and track your progress!

CalHOPE Partnership: Supporting Educators Across California

The GGSC is providing ongoing training and support to every county office of education across the state of California. Drawing on our Greater Good in Education platform, we are giving county leaders science-based tools they can share with their districts to support social-emotional learning and help build more inclusive, compassionate, and equitable classrooms.

New Courses for Educators

Also building on Greater Good in Education, we launched several new online courses to support education professionals around the world. Our trailblazing course for educators, “Teaching and Learning for the Greater Good,” is complemented by “mini-courses” on the basics of social-emotional learning, mindfulness, and character education.

Reporting Fellowship on Latino Well-Being

In partnership with UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism, we were pleased to launch a new fellowship that is supporting early-career journalists as they report on the health of Latino families and communities, drawing on findings from the social and behavioral sciences.

“This morning I was being interviewed for a Stanford article and the last question was, ‘Is there one particular resource you would recommend to our readers?’ I answered, ‘Absolutely. Greater Good.’ Then I added, ‘It’s the Amazon of well-being but instead of buying stuff, you receive gift after gift after gift.’”

— Lecturer at Stanford Medical School

Greater Good By The Numbers

11,869,534 Individual visitors to the GGSC websites

22,876,048 Total website pageviews

31,279,516 Podcast downloads

272,130 Social media followers

908,645 Online course enrollees

587,801 Newsletter subscribers

Figures for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

What’s Next

The coming year promises to be one of new growth and impact for the GGSC, including:

Purpose Across the Lifespan

For years we have explored the science of purpose: What gives our lives meaning, connects us with others, and makes us feel a part of something bigger than ourselves. In the coming year, we will share a new suite of media, practices, and events covering how and why to cultivate a sense of purpose, at different life stages, including for those embarking on a “second act” in their lives.

Cultivating Intellectual Humility

“Intellectual humility” involves recognizing that our beliefs might be wrong and that other views might be (at least partially) right—a vital skill at this time of intense polarization and partisanship. In partnership with the John Templeton Foundation, we are launching a new three-year project to expand public understanding of intellectual humility research, both by reporting on it broadly, through GGSC media and by providing grants to other journalists and media producers to support their stories as well.

“I am a trainer for the Assembly Rules Committee and attended your session this morning. I actually dripped tears during the meditation portion and at the end of your presentation, I found I did not want it to end. If you ever wonder if what you are doing is impactful, I’m here to tell you it is!”

— Staff member of the California State Assembly



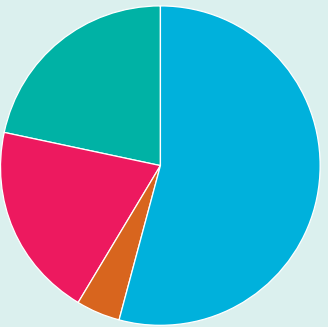
Gratitude in Nursing

In May 2021 we set out to support frontline health care workers, who have been stretched to their limit by the pandemic. In partnership with the American Nurses Association, our “Gratitude Practice for Nurses” campaign offers research-tested resources to support the well-being of a community that tirelessly cares for the well-being of others.

Financials 2020-2021

INCOME

\$3,845,482



\$2,083,795
Foundations & Corporate

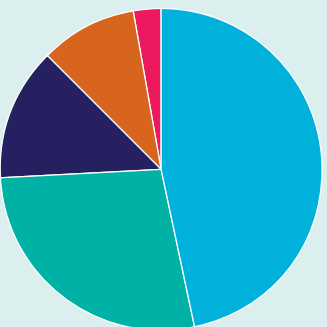
\$174,390
Memberships

\$758,920
Major Gifts

\$828,377
Earned Income

EXPENSES

\$3,760,951



\$1,763,993
Staff Salaries & Benefits

\$95,682
Operational Expenses

\$1,027,559
Programs

\$373,717
University Fees

\$500,000
Contribution to Reserves

Greater Good Supporters

We are very grateful for our multi-year partnerships with the Einhorn Collaborative, the John Templeton Foundation, Acton Family Giving, the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, the Kern Family Foundation, the Room to Breathe Project, and many other institutional supporters.

We deeply thank our founding donors Ruth Ann and Thomas Hornaday, along with the following donors who have given at the \$1,000 level or above since 2020, as well as all those who contribute to the mission of our Center at every level.

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Jan Elfline	Lisa Rakusin	Leslie Westphal
Barbara & Elliot Gewirtz	Martha & Bradley Rock	Catrina Wiley
Jerry Hirsch	Jim Roumell	Frank Worrell
Yan Huo	Khaled Said	Peter Yee



The photo above of the GGSC staff was taken during a pre-COVID retreat on Angel Island.

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How You Can Help

As an independently funded center based at UC Berkeley, we rely entirely on supporters like you to fund our mission to study and share the science of a meaningful life.

To learn more about how you can further our work, visit greatergood.berkeley.edu/donate



Greater Good
 Science Center

Promoting a happier, healthier, more peaceful world

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