

## Greg Walton

Greg Walton is a Bass University Fellow and Professor of Psychology at Stanford University. Much of his research investigates psychological processes that contribute to major social problems and how even brief “wise” psychological interventions that target these processes can address such problems and help people flourish over long periods of time.

Often, these interventions help people address existential questions like, *Do I belong? Can I do it? Do you love me? Can I trust you?*, and, in so doing, shift the spirals that define our lives. In education, for instance, delivered to both teachers and students, wise interventions can support students’ sense of belonging in school, strengthen relationships, raise grades, reduce disciplinary conflicts, and improve life satisfaction and career success years into the future. Often these interventions mitigate inequalities, revealing the contribution of psychological processes to social inequality and how this can be addressed. In other contexts, wise interventions can sideline intergroup biases to promote more prosocial patterns of interaction, promote sustainability, strengthen close relationships, and improve civic behavior.

Dr. Walton is the author *Ordinary Magic: The Science of How We Can Achieve Big Change With Small Acts* (2025, Penguin Random House). He also co-edited the *Handbook of Wise Interventions: How Social Psychology Can Help People Change* (2020, Guilford, with Alia Crum). Earlier titles include *The Fat Bat* (1984), and *The Bobcats* (1987, with Sam Erman)



Dr. Walton’s research has been published in leading journals in science (e.g., *PNAS*, *Nature*, *Science*), psychology (e.g., *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Psychological Science*), and education (e.g., *Review of Educational Research*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*). It has been covered in major media outlets including the *New York Times*, *Harvard Business Review*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Huffington Post*, *NPR*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Washington Post*, *The San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Onion*.

He has received awards from numerous organizations including from the American Education Research Association, the American Psychological Association, the Society for Experimental Social Psychology, and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. He was identified as a “Rising Star” by the American Psychological Society in 2011; received the Daniel M. Wegner Theoretical Innovation Prize from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology in 2018; the Career Trajectory Award from the Society for Experimental Social Psychology in 2022; and is a two-time recipient of the Robert B. Cialdini Prize from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology for field research (2017 and 2022).

His research has been supported by the Institute for Education Sciences, the National Institute of Health, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Jeff and Tricia Raikes Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Spencer Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Arnold Foundation, and Character Lab, among others.

He has presented at major universities and to educators and policymakers including at the White House. He co-organized the preparation of two *amicus* briefs on the implications of identity threat for affirmative action for the United States Supreme Court.

In addition to his scholarship, Dr. Walton is a committed teacher and mentor. At Stanford, he teaches courses on psychology and social problems, including one entitled “Wise Interventions.”

Dr. Walton earned his A.B. in Philosophy from Stanford in 2000 and a PhD in Psychology from Yale University in 2005. After graduate school, he worked for a year as a fellow in the Office of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton and then completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Waterloo before joining the Stanford faculty in 2008.