Six Years of Impact

BEHAVIOR CHANGE FOR GOOD INITIATIVE

A Joint Initiative of The Wharton School and the School of Arts & Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania
LETTER FROM KATY AND ANGELA

We founded the Behavior Change for Good Initiative in 2017 at the University of Pennsylvania with an audacious goal: to accelerate the discovery of new tactics that could be used to promote sustainable behavior change at scale. We’re thrilled to share the results of our first six years of work towards this objective.

In our initiative’s first six years, we developed and tested a new paradigm for conducting team behavioral science research at scale—the megastudy. A “megastudy” is a massive field experiment in which many different interventions are tested synchronously in one large sample using a common, objectively measured outcome. In 2021, we published a major paper in *Nature* introducing this methodology for studying new ways of changing behavior, and we applied this method to the challenge of boosting gym attendance. Since then, we’ve run megastudies on improving students’ grades and encouraging vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to multiple publications in the prestigious *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. We’ve also run a number of high impact field experiments on behavior change, including a study that led to 8% more volunteering by crisis counselors at a national suicide prevention network (published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*) and a study conducted in partnership with the city of Philadelphia that involved designing, implementing, and evaluating a city-wide COVID vaccine lottery (published in *Nature Human Behavior*). With more recently launched megastudies, we’re poised to make significant contributions to knowledge about how to promote emergency savings, improve elementary school students’ engagement with math, and boost college student retention over the next several years.

Our work has been covered by major media outlets including *The New York Times*, *CNN*, *The Washington Post*, and *NPR*. It has also informed our award-winning teaching at Penn as well as advice we’ve offered to the White House, state and city leaders, in Congressional testimony, and to organizations like Walmart, CVS Health, WW, Zearn, Crisis Text Line, and 24 Hour Fitness.

We couldn’t have made such strides toward our ambitious goals to advance science and share new knowledge widely without the ingenuity and collaborative spirit of our interdisciplinary scientific team, the dedication of our staff, the commitment of our organizational partners, and the generosity of our funders. We’re tremendously grateful for what we’ve been able to accomplish together in the last six years and eager to find new ways to use behavioral science for good in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

PROFESSORS KATY MILKMAN AND ANGELA DUCKWORTH

Co-Directors of the Behavior Change for Good Initiative
University of Pennsylvania
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OVERVIEW

WHAT DO WE DO?
The Behavior Change for Good Initiative (BCFG) at the University of Pennsylvania unites a world-class, interdisciplinary team of academic experts in behavioral science with leading organizational partners to help advance the science and practice of behavior change. We conduct megastudies—massive random-assignment A/B tests—to identify what interventions work at scale to change behavior. A megastudy simultaneously tests many different ideas that members of our Scientific Team propose could change a valued target behavior. Our novel approach to research gives us a way of determining which interventions designed to change behavior work best overall, what works best for whom, and how to most effectively use behavioral science to transform people’s lives for the better.

WHAT’S OUR MISSION?
1. Identify actionable and scalable ways to improve people’s health, financial security, and educational outcomes.
2. Build bridges between different academic disciplines to advance the science of lasting behavior change.
3. Disseminate the insights we generate widely for use in future research and in practice.

WHERE HAS OUR RESEARCH FOCUSED TO DATE?
- Health (promoting exercise, crisis counseling, and vaccination)
- Finance (promoting emergency savings)
- Education (promoting academic achievement)

WHO IS THE BCFG SCIENTIFIC TEAM?
BCFG’s team unites over 160 world-renowned, interdisciplinary scientists to advance the science of behavior change. BCFG Team Scientists are experts in economics, psychology, sociology, medicine, computer science, neuroscience, law, management, and marketing.
**BCFG TEAM SCIENTISTS BY THE NUMBERS**

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<th>169</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>20</th>
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<tr>
<td>BRILLIANT TEAM SCIENTISTS</td>
<td>NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS</td>
<td>MACARTHUR GENIUS AWARD WINNERS</td>
<td>TED TALKERS WITH OVER 1M VIEWS EACH</td>
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<th>14</th>
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<td>AUTHORS OF NEW YORK TIMES OR WALL STREET JOURNAL BEST-SELLERS</td>
<td>MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES, ENGINEERING, AND MEDICINE</td>
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There are many good ideas that behavioral scientists have identified in the lab that are relevant to the world, but which work to promote change? That is a question that the Behavior Change for Good Initiative is doing an excellent job answering."

BCFG Team Scientist Max Bazerman
Jesse Isidor Straus Professor of Business Administration, Harvard Business School

It’s challenging to study long-term behavior change in consequential real world settings. I commend the Behavior Change for Good Initiative for the important work they’ve done to make inroads in this arena."

BCFG Team Scientist Wendy Wood
Provost Professor of Psychology and Business, University of Southern California

There are many important differences between the highly educated individuals disproportionately studied in traditional lab settings and the populations that real policies will affect. By facilitating large-scale experimentation in the real world, BCFG is leading the way in conducting policy-relevant research.”

BCFG Team Scientist Neil Lewis, Jr.
Assistant Professor of Communication and Social Behavior, Cornell University

HOW MUCH FUNDING HAS BCFG RAISED?
$10+ MILLION RAISED

HOW VISIBLE IS BCFG TO THE PUBLIC?
8,000+ NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS
7,500+ TWITTER FOLLOWERS
3,500+ LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS
1,500+ YOUTUBE CHANNEL SUBSCRIBERS
45 TEAM SCIENTISTS FEATURED ON OUR CHANNEL
40+ VIDEOS
40,000+ VIEWS
We’ve pioneered a radical new approach to conducting behavioral science research. A “megastudy” is a team science approach to research in which different collaborators develop many, unique interventions targeting a common outcome that are simultaneously tested in the field. Megastudies allow researchers to determine which interventions work most and least effectively at scale.
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MEGASTUDIES?

THEY POOL THEORETICALLY DISTINCT INTERVENTIONS, BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS DISCIPLINES. Megastudies present an opportunity for interdisciplinary scientists to launch their interventions in parallel, learning from each other through collaboration to solve a single problem.

THEY GENERATE APPLES-TO-APPLES COMPARISONS OF INTERVENTION EFFICACY. Each intervention in a megastudy is tested over the same timeframe on the same population. Random assignment to interventions allows for apples-to-apples comparisons of the efficacy of each idea.

THEY ACCELERATE THE PACE OF DISCOVERY. By launching numerous, tightly-controlled experiments simultaneously, megastudies speed up the pace of science.

THEY FACILITATE THE PUBLICATION OF NULL RESULTS. The megastudy approach ensures that all interventions tested are published, even those that produce null results. Understanding what doesn’t show promise as a means of changing behavior in a given field setting is just as important as understanding what does.

THEY MOVE BEYOND ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL SOLUTIONS. Megastudies make it possible to determine which interventions work best for whom, not just what works best on average. This allows us to move beyond offering one-size-fits-all prescriptions to policymakers.

WHERE CAN YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT MEGASTUDIES?


Coverage of our unique approach to science in The Philadelphia Citizen:

Changing Behavior... for Good.

A Freakonomics podcast episode:

Could Solving This One Problem Solve All the Others?

“Megastudies provide an incredible opportunity to capitalize on advances in machine learning to identify which behavioral interventions change real-world outcomes for different types of people. This provides the promise of implementing interventions with precision.”

BCFG Team Scientist Rahul Ladhania
(and former BCFG post-doctoral scholar), Assistant Professor of Health Informatics, Health Management and Policy, University of Michigan School of Public Health.
BCFG’S RESEARCH
ENCOURAGING EXERCISE: A MEGASTUDY WITH 24 HOUR FITNESS


WHY ENCOURAGE EXERCISE?

51% of American adults exercise less frequently than recommended. 9% of global premature deaths are attributable to inadequate physical activity.

WHO WERE THE PARTICIPANTS?

61,293 gym members of 24 Hour Fitness (one of the largest fitness chains in the U.S.)

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

Every program except one directionally increased weekly gym visits compared to a placebo control program during the 4-week intervention. 23 programs significantly increased weekly gym visits. 5 interventions significantly outperformed a “best practice” intervention designed with insights from previous research:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>THE 5 TOP PERFORMING INTERVENTIONS</th>
<th>INCREASED WEEKLY GYM VISITS BY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Offering a micro-incentive (worth 9 cents) for returning to the gym after a missed workout</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<td>Offering a 10x larger than usual monetary incentive (worth $1.75) per gym visit</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicating that an increasing majority of Americans exercise at least three times per week</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering a micro-incentive (worth 16 cents) for returning to the gym after a missed workout</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing participants to choose whether they would earn points for going to the gym or lose points for skipping the gym</td>
<td>19%</td>
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* note that due to the winner’s curse, these estimates are likely upwardly biased

HOW WAS OUR MEGASTUDY OF EXERCISE DESIGNED?

We tested 54 variations of a 4-week digital program designed by 30 Team Scientists to encourage exercise among gym members.

EACH DIGITAL PROGRAM DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE EXERCISE INCLUDED:

- An online registration experience during which participants planned the timing of their weekly gym visits, received encouragement, and learned about incentives to exercise
- Text message reminders 30 minutes before each planned workout
- Text messages and emails throughout the 4-week program to encourage exercise
- Points for each gym visit made during the program (redeemable for an Amazon gift card)
We were pleased to partner with BCFG on the StepUp Program and to have the opportunity to use insights from leading behavioral scientists to help our club members change their lives through fitness.”

24 Hour Fitness

“Drawing on my years of studying and applying persuasion science, I helped design a treatment condition that called attention to the rising rates of exercise among Americans. It was exciting to be part of this megastudy effort.”

BCFG Team Scientist Robert Cialdini
Regents’ Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Marketing, Arizona State University

Public health experts, behavioral science practitioners, and laypeople were all unable to reliably predict the absolute or relative effectiveness of the programs tested, demonstrating the value of megastudies for informing policy.

WHERE CAN YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR FINDINGS?

A Penny for Your Squats? (2021), The New York Times

These Are the Best Ways to up Your Workout Habits, According to Study of Over 60,000 People (2021), CNN Health

Study Reveals Keys to Developing Workout Habits (2021), NBC News

How ‘Megastudies’ Are Changing Behavioural Science (2021), Nature Podcast

WHAT ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS RESULTED FROM THIS MEGASTUDY?


INCREASING VACCINE UPTAKE AT DOCTORS’ APPOINTMENTS


A Megastudy of Text-Based Nudges Encouraging Patients to Get Vaccinated at an Upcoming Doctor’s Appointment
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

WHY STUDY VACCINATION?
In Fall 2020, the COVID-19 vaccine was not yet available, but its rollout was imminent. We saw an opportunity: by identifying effective strategies for encouraging flu vaccination, we could be ready with tools for encouraging COVID-19 vaccines when they became available.

HOW WAS THE MEGASTUDY DESIGNED?
We tested 19 different SMS (text) messages designed by 26 scientists to boost flu vaccination rates among primary care patients.

The behavioral science-informed SMS messages encouraged patients to get their flu shot at their upcoming primary care appointment and were sent up to three days in advance of their appointment.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?
All 19 messages directionally increased flu shot rates compared to usual care (6 messages significantly increased flu shot uptake).

Our text messages led to a 5% boost in flu vaccination uptake, on average.

The top-performing message communicated a vaccine was “reserved for you” and increased vaccination rates by 11% (6.7% if adjusted for the winner’s curse).

WHAT ADDITIONAL PUBLICATIONS RESULTED FROM THIS MEGASTUDY?

INCREASING VACCINATION AT WALMART PHARMACIES


A 680,000-Person Megastudy of Nudges to Encourage Vaccination in Pharmacies
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

WHO WERE THE PARTICIPANTS? 689,693 Walmart pharmacy patients

HOW WAS THE MEGASTUDY DESIGNED?
We tested 22 different SMS (text) messages designed by 27 scientists to encourage Walmart pharmacy patients to get their flu shot at a Walmart pharmacy.
The messages included appeals to humor, social norms, communal responsibility, and more, and they were largely distinct from those tested in the primary care setting.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?
All 22 reminder messages significantly increased vaccination rates by an average of 7%.
The top-performing message conveyed that a vaccine was “waiting for you” and increased vaccination rates by 10% (9.3% if adjusted for the winner’s curse).
Sending multiple reminder messages yielded better results than sending a single reminder.

WHERE CAN YOU READ MORE ABOUT THE FINDINGS FROM BOTH OF OUR 2020 VACCINATION MEGASTUDIES?
These are the Text Messages That Get People to Take Vaccines (2021), The Washington Post
This Simple Text Message Can Encourage People to Get Vaccinated, Researchers Say (2021), CNN Health
Building Trust and Battling Barriers: The Urgent Need to Overcome Vaccine Hesitancy (2021), United States House of Representatives Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis

“Testing behavioral science ideas in field settings is critical, but operationalizing such studies is challenging. Through their megastudies, BCFG expands the opportunities for researchers to evaluate their hypotheses in realistic settings and facilitates clean comparisons among many interventions. I am enormously appreciative for being invited to contribute ideas for how to increase vaccination rates in two megastudies.”

BCFG Team Scientist Gretchen Chapman
Professor of Social and Decision Sciences, Carnegie Mellon University
Could a Geo-Targeted Vaccine Regret Lottery Boost Vaccination?


A Citywide Experiment Testing the Impact of Geographically Targeted, High-Pay-Off Vaccine Lotteries

Nature Human Behavior

Why Did We Design, Implement and Evaluate the Philly Vax Sweepstakes?

Vaccination saves lives, particularly vaccination against COVID-19.

In the summer of 2021, many Philadelphians remained vulnerable and unvaccinated against COVID-19.

Regret lotteries had been used successfully to encourage other health behaviors, but their value for encouraging vaccines hadn’t yet been tested.

Who Were the Participants?

1,064,805 Philadelphia adult residents

How Was the Megastudy Designed?

It was a “regret lottery:” All residents were entered but winners could only accept their prize if they had previously received a COVID-19 vaccine.

It was geographically-targeted: Across three drawings, residents of three randomly selected zip codes received half the lottery prizes available.

What Did We Learn?

Increasing residents’ odds of winning a prize of up to $50,000 by a factor of 50 to 100 by geo-targeting their zip codes did not boost vaccinations.

The impact of the overall sweepstakes on Philadelphia was more ambiguous; it may have been a cost-effective way to encourage vaccination in the city.

“ The Philly Vax Sweepstakes was a prime example of science meeting policy. We partnered with the city of Philadelphia to test the value of lotteries for increasing vaccination at scale during a critical moment in the pandemic. I enjoyed contributing to this BCFG project.”

BCFG Team Scientist Devin Pope
Professor of Behavioral Science and Economics,
The University of Chicago Booth School of Business
The most important lesson I took away from this project is that even for this amazing team, the many steps between a simple conceptual idea to a large-scale implementation under time pressure matter. To paraphrase a well-known graduate of the LSE: ‘You can’t always test what you want...’

BCFG Team Scientist Richard Thaler
Professor of Behavioral Science and Economics at The University of Chicago Booth School of Business and Nobel Laureate

WHERE CAN YOU LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR FINDINGS?

What We Learned From Philadelphia’s Vaccine Lottery (2022), The Philadelphia Inquirer

The Vaccine Lottery Seemed Like a Great Idea. Why Didn’t it Work? (2022), Freakonomics M.D.

Vaccine Jackpot (2022), Science Magazine
WHERE DID WE SHARE OUR RESEARCH AND EXPERTISE?

A White House briefing

Congressional testimony

Multiple presentations to the National Institutes for Health

Repeated conversations with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Via the National Academies’ Societal Experts Action Network


**I led a team which determined that the financial incentives offered by many US states in 2021 didn’t succeed in changing vaccination behavior in a substantial way.”**

**BCFG Team Scientist Harsha Thirumurthy**
Associate Professor of Medical Ethics and Health Policy, Perelman School of Medicine

WHAT WORKS TO REDUCE SELF-CONTROL FAILURE?


Beyond Willpower: Solutions for Reducing Failures of Self-Control
Psychological Science in the Public Interest

WHY DID WE WRITE THIS REVIEW ARTICLE?

Research on self-control has grown explosively in recent years.

Self-control failures can contribute to many of society’s great challenges, undermining our health, financial security, and educational achievement.

Careful syntheses of the best evidence that policymakers can use to help people overcome self-control failure and reduce self-defeating behaviors are lacking.

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

A Smarter Way to Think About Willpower (2019),
The Washington Post

“The more researchers use their tools to work in concert, rather than in niche silos, the faster our pool of knowledge will grow. This realization, as I explored in the context of willpower, provides the launch pad for BCFG.”

BCFG Team Scientist David Laibson
Professor of Economics, Harvard University
This work would not have been possible without BCFG. The study was run in high schools, a context where things can and often do go wrong. Everything BCFG does is mega. They run megastudies. They are also mega-respectful to participants; they are mega-rigorous in their methods, they are mega-efficient and mega-smart. It’s no surprise they get mega results.”

BCFG Team Scientist Lauren Eskreis-Winkler
(and former BCFG post-doctoral scholar and Penn PhD student).
Assistant Professor of Management and Organizations at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University
WHAT WAS THE RESEARCH QUESTION?
Will people give up earned financial rewards to convince themselves that self-improvement or acts of generosity were intrinsically motivated?

HOW DID WE TEST OUR HYPOTHESIS?
Two large experiments gave participants the opportunity to treat the positive feelings elicited during their tasks—either writing letters to sick children or exercising—as their reward. In each case, participants were given the option to forego incentives they earned for completing these activities.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?
If people are prompted to treat their goal progress as a reward and forego cash incentives they earned for virtuous behavior, many more will take the opportunity than would without this framing. This form of “motivation laundering” helps people convince themselves they were motivated by the act itself.

WHO WERE THE PARTICIPANTS?
17,968 gym members (plus 763 letter writers from an online panel)

This work benefited from the Behavior Change for Good Initiative’s incredible infrastructure for running large-scale field experiments. The BCFG team makes it easy (and fun!) to do great field research.”

BCFG Team Scientist Erika Kirgios
(and former Wharton PhD student), Assistant Professor of Behavioral Science, The University of Chicago Booth School of Business
Teaching Temptation Bundling to Boost Exercise: A Field Experiment
Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes

WHAT WAS THE RESEARCH QUESTION?
Does helping people bundle temptations (e.g., listening to an exciting audiobook or binge-watching a favorite TV show) with exercise yield benefits?

HOW DID WE TEST OUR HYPOTHESIS?
Gym members who signed up for a program to help them build exercise habits were either 1) encouraged to exercise more, 2) given a promotional code that allowed them to download a free audiobook and encouraged to exercise more, or 3) given a promotional code for a free audiobook that they were encouraged to enjoy only while exercising more (‘temptation bundling’).

WHAT DID WE LEARN?
Both providing free audiobooks in the context of a program designed to promote exercise and encouraging “temptation bundling” increased people’s weekly workout frequency by 10-12% for up to 17 weeks post-intervention.

WHO WERE THE PARTICIPANTS?
6,792 members of 24 Hour Fitness

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE
The Science of How to Stick to New Year’s Resolutions and Truly Change Your Habits (2021), CNN Health

“Professor Milkman and Professor Duckworth’s Science of Behavior Change Undergraduate Seminar began my journey with the Behavior Change for Good Initiative. I was one of several peers whose interests and career aspirations were shaped by the course material. Inspired by the course, I pursued a senior honors thesis that helped produce this fascinating paper. BCFG is a special place. It fosters growth and learning in a supportive and engaging environment for people at all stages of their research careers.”

Graelin Mandel
(Former Wharton undergraduate), Incoming PhD student, The University of Chicago Booth School of Business
A “COPY AND PASTE” NUDGE TO PROMOTE GOAL ACHIEVEMENT


WHAT WAS THE RESEARCH QUESTION?
Does nudging people to deliberately copy and paste their successful peers’ strategies for goal achievement add value?

HOW DID WE TEST OUR HYPOTHESIS?
Participants were randomly assigned to three different experimental conditions. Some were instructed to “copy and paste” another person’s motivational strategy to exercise by first asking another person for their strategy and then using the strategy themselves. Others were either given a motivational strategy someone else had obtained or received no strategy at all.

WHAT DID WE LEARN?
Participants who were prompted to “copy and paste” someone else’s life hack exercised up to 56 more minutes, on average, than those who received no such prompt.

WHO WERE THE PARTICIPANTS?
1,028 people recruited through an online panel

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE
The Copy-Paste Technique is the Easiest, Most Effective Self-Improvement Hack, a New Wharton Study Finds (2022), Inc. Magazine

"It was exciting to work on this project about a new way to nudge healthier decisions. I am so grateful for BCFG’s support of our research.”
Katie Mehr
Fifth-year PhD student, The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania
I loved working at BCFG as a Research Coordinator. At BCFG I learned first-hand how to conduct large-scale field studies on behavior change. This experience helped prepare me to lead my own field experiments and partner with BCFG as a PhD student on a large-scale test of a costless nudge to increase volunteering.”

Aneesh Rai
(Former BCFG Research Coordinator), Fifth-year PhD student, The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania
The Science of Behavior Change
Undergraduate Seminar

BCFG’s co-directors Angela Duckworth and Katy Milkman taught an advanced undergraduate seminar from 2018-2020 called “The Science of Behavior Change” at the University of Pennsylvania. The small, selective seminar covered foundational research on behavior change and was widely popular and beloved.

Student Perspectives on the Course

“Possibly the best course that I’ve taken at Penn. From the readings to the discussions we had in class to the guest speakers who came from a myriad of areas in the field of behavior change, I learned so much and am so much more inspired about making an impact in the world through the behavioral change space.”

“Angela and Katy got me so interested in behavior change that I think I’d apply for a PhD in this field rather than the field I was previously considering before taking this course.”

“This is the kind of course that brought me to Wharton. Stellar, star professors who communicated the material well and made discussions super interesting. The intimacy and maturity of the seminar made me feel part of something special.”

“I have never taken a class at Penn like this one! I loved Dr. Duckworth’s and Dr. Milkman’s graduate-seminar approach, especially because they fine-tuned it to the upperclassman-undergrad experience. The class was very organized, well-structured, and thoroughly engaging. This class has challenged my ability to think about complex societal problems, ask questions, and use constructive feedback.”

“This class helped me think about my life, the world, and research on a deeper level. I feel like I am so much more skilled, aware, and smart because of this course! Drs. Duckworth and Milkman are phenomenal professors who care so deeply about their students. The class felt like a tight-knit community. I am so grateful for this amazing experience.”
BCFG’S EVENTS
The year BCFG opened its doors, we hosted an inaugural gathering of 20 Team Scientists at the University of Pennsylvania. Event highlights included a fireside chat with Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman and the live recording of a *Freakonomics* episode featuring Team Scientists.

In the evening, Angela Duckworth co-hosted a live episode of the game-show *Tell Me Something I Don’t Know* featuring Team Scientists as contestants. In the show, guests offered facts to be judged on three criteria: Did the hosts already know this fact? Is this fact worth knowing? Is this fact demonstrably true? In our special episode, BCFG Team Scientists Colin Camerer, Ayelet Fishbach, David Laibson, Max Bazerman, Katy Milkman, Kevin Volpp, and Dean Karlan all offered their best facts. Max Bazerman left victorious, but you’ll have to listen to the episode to find out why…
In June of 2019, we hosted over 80 team scientists and industry partners on Penn’s campus for a celebration of our work so far. Nobel Laureate Richard Thaler and National Academy of Sciences member Robert Cialdini delivered the event keynotes. The day was capped off with a live taping of *Freakonomics* featuring our co-founders as well as Team Scientists Michael Norton, Laurie Santos, Justin Sydnor, Tom Gilovich, and Richard Thaler at the Merriam Theater in downtown Philadelphia in front of a sellout crowd.
In partnership with our close friends at the Center for Health Incentives and Behavioral Economics, we co-hosted a Healthy Habits Roundtable sponsored by WW (formerly Weight Watchers). Numerous Team Scientists convened along with several trainees to share the latest insights from their research on lasting behavior change.

This event led to the production of a special issue of Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes on healthy habits featuring articles contributed by 16 BCFG Team Scientists.

**WHO EDITED THE SPECIAL ISSUE?**
Team scientists Katy Milkman, Dilip Soman, and Kevin Volpp

**WHAT ARTICLES WERE FEATURED IN THIS SPECIAL ISSUE?**

- **Nudging: Progress to date and future directions** By John Beshears and Harry Kosowsky
- **Teaching temptation bundling to boost exercise: A field experiment** By Erika Kirgios, Graelin Mandel, Yeji Park, Katherine Milkman, Dena Gromet, Joseph Kay, and Angela Duckworth
- **What is a habit? Diverse mechanisms that can produce sustained behavior change** By Kevin Volpp and George Loewenstein
- **Behavior change** By Angela Duckworth and James Gross
- **Dodging dietary defaults: Choosing away from healthy nudges** By Helen Colby, Meng Li, and Gretchen Chapman
- **Target, distance, and valence: Unpacking the effects of normative feedback** By Jonathan Bogard, Magali Delmas, Noah Goldstein, and Stephanie Vezich
- **Returnable reciprocity: Returnable gifts are more effective than unreturnable gifts at promoting virtuous behaviors** By Julian Zlatev and Todd Rogers
- **When wanting closure reduces patients’ patience** By Annabelle Roberts and Ayelet Fishbach
- **Designing in-app messages to nudge behavior change: Lessons learned from a weight management app for young adults** By Carmina Valle, Brooke Nezami, and Deborah Tate

"It was a pleasure to co-host the Healthy Habits Roundtable with BCFG. The insights shared by researchers allowed us to make important contributions to the science of healthy habits that can help meaningfully improve people’s lives."

**Kevin Volpp**
BCFG Team Scientist, Director of the Center for Health Incentives & Behavioral Economics, Mark V. Pauly President’s Distinguished Professor at Perelman School of Medicine and Health Care Management at the Wharton School
BCFG’S RESEARCH SEMINARS
CAMPUS EVENTS

A presentation from Dean Karlan
Professor of Economics & Finance
at the Kellogg School of Management
of Northwestern University

The Topic: Randomizing Religion: The Impact of Protestant Evangelism on Economic Outcomes

A presentation from Shlomo Benartzi
BCFG Distinguished Senior Fellow and Professor Emeritus at the UCLA Anderson School of Management

The Topic: Helping People Save: Simple, Scalable Changes Can Lead to Dramatic Shifts in Creating Financial Security

ONLINE EVENTS

To continue scientific dialogue during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, we launched a popular online academic seminar series that attracted more than 4,000 registrants and drew 600-900 participants, live each week. Our YouTube channel featuring these online talks now boasts over 1,300 subscribers and 36,000+ total views.

WHO DID WE FEATURE IN OUR ONLINE EVENTS, AND WHAT TOPICS DID THEY COVER?

A presentation by Judd Kessler
Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

The Topic: The Gender Gap in Self-Promotion

A presentation by Ethan Kross
Professor of Psychology and Management/Organizations at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business

The Topic: Self-Talk: How You Do It Matters

A presentation by Gretchen Chapman
Professor of Psychology, Social and Decision Sciences at Carnegie Mellon University

The Topic: Numerical Cognition and Federal Budgetary Expenditures

A presentation by Betsy Levy Paluck
Professor of Psychology and Public Affairs at Princeton University

The Topic: Prejudice Reduction: Progress and Challenges

A presentation by Francesca Gino
Tandon Family Professor of Business Administration at Harvard University

The Topic: Piqued Curiosity

A presentation by Susan Athey
The Economics of Technology Professor at Stanford University

The Topic: Designing and Analyzing Behavioral Experiments With Machine Learning
WHO DID WE FEATURE IN OUR ONLINE EVENTS AND WHAT TOPICS DID THEY COVER?

A presentation by **Colin Camerer**  
Robert Kirby Professor of Behavioral Finance and Economics at the California Institute of Technology  
**The Topic:** New Perspectives on Habit Formation From Machine Learning and Neuroscience

A presentation by **John Beshears**  
Terrie F. and Bradley M. Bloom Associate Professor of Business Administration at Harvard University  
**The Topic:** Consumption Responses to Mortgage Payments

A presentation by **Dean Karlan**  
Professor of Economics & Finance at the Kellogg School of Management of Northwestern University  
**The Topic:** Nudge Today, Almost Gone Tomorrow

A presentation by **Modupe Akinola**  
Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. Associate Professor of Leadership and Ethics at Columbia University  
**The Topic:** Thriving Under Pressure

A presentation by **Alison Wood Brooks**  
Associate Professor of Negotiation, Organizations, and Markets at Harvard University  
**The Topic:** How to Talk Gooder: The Science (and Serendipity) of Conversation

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Jesse Isidor Straus Professor of Business Administration at Harvard University  
**The Topic:** Allocating Scarce Resources Under COVID Wisely

A presentation by **Ulrike Malmendier**  
Edward J. and Mollie Arnold Professor of Finance and Professor of Economics at the University of California, Berkeley  
**The Topic:** Exposure to Grocery Prices and Inflation Expectations

A presentation by **Marissa Sharif**  
Assistant Professor of Marketing at the The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania  
**The Topic:** Leveraging Flexibility to Increase Goal Persistence

A presentation by **Muriel Niederle**  
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**The Topic:** The Effects of Task Complexity on Group Synergy
WHOM DID WE FEATURE IN OUR ONLINE EVENTS AND WHAT TOPICS DID THEY COVER?

A presentation by **Eli Finkel**

*Professor of Psychology and Management & Organizations at Northwestern University*

**The Topic:** Joint vs. Separate Bank Accounts and Marital Quality

A presentation by **Hal Hershfield**

*Associate Professor of Marketing, Behavioral Decision Making, and Psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles*

**The Topic:** Pennies and Dollars

A presentation by **Ashley Whillans**

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**The Topic:** Time and Happiness During COVID

A presentation by **Hunt Allcott**

*Principal Researcher at Microsoft Research*

**The Topic:** Digital Addiction

A presentation by **Anuj Shah**

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**The Topic:** Perceptions of Imperfect Strangers

A presentation by **Katy Milkman**

*James G. Dinan Professor of Operations, Information and Decisions at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania*

**The Topic:** A Mega-Study Approach to Applied Behavioral Science

A presentation by **David Rand**

*Erwin H. Schell Professor and Associate Professor of Management Science and Brain and Cognitive Sciences at MIT Sloan School of Management*

**The Topic:** Understanding and Reducing the Spread of Misinformation Online

A presentation by **Neil Lewis Jr.**

*Assistant Professor of Communication and Social Behavior at Cornell University*

**The Topic:** Whose Minds Matter? Sampling, Measurement, Inference, and Application Considerations as We Diversify the Behavioral Sciences

A presentation by **David Yeager**

*Associate Professor of Psychology at University of Texas at Austin*

**The Topic:** Beliefs Count Twice

A presentation by **Cass Sunstein**

*Robert Walmsley University Professor of Law at Harvard University*

**The Topic:** Hayekian Behavioral Economics
Since 2021, we’ve hosted monthly online events with BCFG scientists who’ve written books in order to bring their applied insights to a wider audience. In the fall of 2022, we began partnering with Psychgeist Media on these events.

### Authors@BCFG Fall 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Book Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jay Van Bavel</td>
<td>Professor at New York University</td>
<td>The Power of Us</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Johnson</td>
<td>Professor at University of Columbia</td>
<td>The Elements of Choice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dolly Chugh</td>
<td>Professor at New York University</td>
<td>The Person You Mean to Be</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Cialdini</td>
<td>Emeritus Professor at Arizona State University</td>
<td>Influence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy Wood</td>
<td>Professor at University of Southern California</td>
<td>Good Habits, Bad Habits</td>
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### Behavioral Science Authors Spring 2021

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nina Mazar &amp; Dilip Soman</td>
<td>Professor at Boston University (Mazar); Professor at University of Toronto (Soman)</td>
<td>Behavioral Science in the Wild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Moore &amp; Max Bazerman</td>
<td>Professor at University of California, Berkeley (Moore); Professor at Harvard University (Bazerman)</td>
<td>Decision Leadership</td>
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### Behavioral Science Authors Fall 2022

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<td>Professor at University of California, Los Angeles</td>
<td>Happier Hour</td>
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<td>A More Just Future</td>
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<td>Complicit</td>
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“BCFG’s Behavioral Science Author Series presented me with a terrific opportunity to share the insights from my book with an audience that might not otherwise have encountered my work. The engagement from the audience was inspiring.”

BCFG Team Scientist Dolly Chugh. Jacob B. Melnick Term Professor, Leonard N. Stern School of Business, New York University
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Uri Gneezy</td>
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<td>Noah Goldstein</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Goldstein</td>
<td>Senior Principal Research Manager at Microsoft Research</td>
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**BCFG TEAM SCIENTISTS**
Behavior Change for Good Initiative | Six Years of Impact
We’ve been fortunate to work with many talented pre-doctoral research coordinators. We’re excited to see where their careers will take them!

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