



SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Initiative for Educators

As CEO & Founder of the nonprofit Soaringwords, I'm excited to share our proven, empirically based SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Initiative for educational communities and the clients who they serve. The initiative is a seven-module, virtual, asynchronous workshop series with the goal of bolstering resilience and productivity amongst clients, clients' families, and health care professionals and their team members. When an agency participates in the program, it is given access to all modules to use throughout the year. This empirically based program enhances and elevates the positive culture amongst employees and combats burnout in order to amplify their resilience, empathy, core skills, wellbeing, and performance, which can also lead to superior client outcomes. The Soaringwords workshop series can provide continuing education credits for professionals, funded through your company's Continuing Education Credit budget.

No other organization has synthesized such a wide array of relevant findings from wellbeing science into an award-winning, accessible workshop series. These immersive modules motivate participants to fully engage in each workshop and make meaningful changes in order to experience enhanced wellbeing in their lives.

About Soaringwords

[Soaringwords'](#) mission is to inspire individuals and professionals to take active roles in self healing to experience greater physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing. Since 2000, Soaringwords' interventions have been shared with more than 500,000 individuals in communities experiencing health inequity or serious illness. We are proud to have partnered with 196 hospitals around the world and health and human service agencies throughout North America.

Since 2000, Soaringwords has led social-emotional learning initiatives and educational programs in classrooms, school-wide assemblies, and after-school programs. Soaringwords is considered a best-practice partner by leading educational organizations such as KIPP Schools; dozens of public school systems including NYC, Indianapolis, and Chicago; and universities including Columbia, Barnard, NYU, University of Pennsylvania, Pace, Howard University, Montgomery Community College, and Universidad Tecmilenio. Soaringwords' interventions have been developed in collaboration with top educators at The Bank Street College and Teachers College at Columbia University. These initiatives have been shared with more than 500,000 people. Soaringwords has additionally led programs for marginalized communities experiencing health inequity or serious illness through partnerships with 196 hospitals around the world and health and human service agencies throughout North America. Additionally, Soaringwords has provided programs for 150,000 employees at Fortune 50 companies including Accenture, American Express, Cigna, Cisco, Deloitte, Goldman Sachs, Google, JetBlue, Johnson & Johnson, JPMorgan Chase, Lilly, Meta, New York Life, Sony, Verizon, and Viacom. Soaringwords was given the Chairman's Award at BNY Mellon, Growing with Technology Award from Cisco, and the Chairman's Award from Lilly.



The Need

Since the COVID outbreak, communities are focused on responding to emerging, long-term mental health issues. As you well know, many educators are overwhelmed, burned-out, and experiencing post-traumatic stress. At Soaringwords, we appreciate that your educational community is facing the following challenges:

- New teachers are increasingly likely to leave the profession within the first five years, despite the intensive time and resources put into their training (Nguyen, 2022)
- While teacher education prepares new teachers for their academic role, new teachers are not prepared for the mental health challenges that students bring and the emotional burden that they face in the classroom, which includes the need to maintain a professional appearance despite possible mistreatment by students, parents, other staff members, and school leadership (Hargreaves, 2000; Zapf, 2002)
- Stress within the classroom negatively impacts teachers' attention and concentration skills (Braunstein-Bercovitz, 2003; Mackenzie, Smith, Hasher, Leach, & Behl, 2007); reduces decision-making and communication skills (Shanafelt, Bradley, Wipf, & Back, 2002); decreases empathy (Beddoe & Murphy, 2004; Thompson & Waltz, 2007); and reduces their ability to engage in meaningful relationships (Enochs & Etzbach, 2004), even as these skills are critical for creating a safe environment for students
- Within schools, the focus is mostly on student mental health and wellbeing. Less focus is given to teacher and staff mental health and wellbeing. However, if teachers are unwell, then they cannot authentically deliver positive education materials to their students. A systems informed perspective is required that starts with the individual then extends out to others (Kern & Taylor, 2021; Kern & Wehmeyer, 2021)

The Solution: The SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Initiative

Soaringwords' SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Initiative is a turn-key solution for educators teaching K-12 and at the tertiary level, providing your school with empirically based, proven programming. When an educational community participates in the initiative, it is given access to all modules to use for the entire year. This comprehensive Soaringwords Initiative creates more resilient teams, which can lead to superior student outcomes.

I am the host of each workshop video, leveraging my experience as Soaringwords' CEO & Founder and bringing expertise as the president of the International Positive Psychology Association's (IPPA) Positive Health & Wellbeing Division. I am a graduate of the Master of Applied Positive Psychology program at The University of Pennsylvania under the direction of Dr. Martin Seligman, the founder of the field of Positive Psychology.

In each module, participants watch a 60-minute video and engage in Appreciative Inquiry prompts through a companion interactive workbook which aids in the internalization of core learnings. At the end of each module, participants are invited to create a pay-it-forward expressive arts/writing project as a peak emotional experience, synthesizing what they learned in each module. Projects are donated to pediatric patients in hospitals in their local area.



Shifts in participant wellbeing as a result of engaging in the workshop are measured through pre- and post-workshop surveys based on the SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Model. The results are aggregated to measure meaningful shifts in wellbeing and qualitative and quantitative data are shared in an Executive Summary. The comprehensive Positive Dose Effect follow-up system includes three-minute reminder videos so participants can continue to practice and internalize core concepts from each workshop.

The results from Soaringwords empirical based initiatives in 2021-2022 include:

- Enhancing Resilience: 91.7% of participants reported a decrease in worry
- Amplifying Agency: 87.5% of participants reported an increase in pride
- Bolstering Self-Regulation: 100% of participants report decreased anger; 87.5% increase in joy; 75% increase in gratitude; 50% decrease in sadness

When educators in your workforce are seen and heard, it reinforces organizational values and norms, which leads to better communication and more effective high-performance teams. The Soaringwords program will positively impact the language and culture at your organization. Overall, the SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Initiative positively impacts the entire constellation of educators and bolsters the entire community.

SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Model

In 2012, Soaringwords codified its unique approach into a scientific model, which was published in 2013. This empirical data and case studies from Soaringwords initiatives have been presented at 17 international scientific conferences including the International Positive Psychology Association, European Conference on Positive Psychology, and Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS). Soaringwords has also been featured in leading media including Good Morning America, USA Today, CEO to Watch in Chronicle of Philanthropy, 2022 Authority Magazine's Mental Health Champion, and Fortune Small Business. View the model on the following page.



SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Model	
Strengths	Creating shifts in one's mind, body, relationships, and overall wellbeing.
Optimism	Choosing to look towards the good, even when times are difficult or painful, with hopeful expectation that things will be good in the future.
Altruism	Building community by giving to others without expectation of return.
Resiliency	Bouncing forward through challenges.
Imagery	Connecting to your inner self through reflection.
Narrative	Sharing the power of positive storytelling.
Gratitude	Noticing and appreciating the good things in and around you.

Next Steps

Please email workshops@soaringwords.org to schedule a meeting to discuss bringing the SOARING Into Positive Wellbeing Initiative to your educational community. Our Soaringwords team is eager to inspire them to go from strength to strength as they experience greater resilience, agency, belonging, and hope by learning how to incorporate the latest Positive Psychology discoveries and insights to enhance their physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing.

Warmest regards,

Lisa Honig Buksbaum, CEO & Founder, Soaringwords