

ID TALKS!

A series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics in the promotion of "Year on Mental Health". The spring 2023 edition under the motto "Understanding Mental Health" forms a general understanding of young people's mental health and wellbeing and its link to quality youth work.



ID Talks:

MENTAL HEALTH EXPLAINED
CLIMATE-CHANGE ANXIETY
SOCIAL-MEDIA ADDICTION
SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S WELLBEING
YOUTH-WORKERS WELLBEING

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ABOUT SALTO

...‘Support and **A**dvanced **L**earning and **T**raining **O**pportunities within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes’. The European Commission has created a network of seven SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the EU Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes, which provide young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to support the implementation of the European Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps Programmes with regard to priorities such as Social Inclusion, Diversity, Participation, and Solidarity. SALTO also supports co-operation with regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe, or Eastern Europe and The Caucasus and coordinates all training and co-operation activities, as well as information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides resources, information, and training for National Agencies and European youth workers. Most of these resources are offered and disseminated at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net. Find online the [European Training Calendar](#), the [Toolbox for Training and Youth Work](#), the database of youth field trainers active at the European level ([Trainers Online for Youth or TOY](#)), links to online resources, and much more.

SALTO-YOUTH actively co-operates with other actors in the European youth field, among them the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers, and training organisers.

THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (based in Belgium Flanders) works together with the European Commission to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Through that, it works to contribute to social cohesion in society at large. SALTO Inclusion and Diversity also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing training, developing youth work methods, disseminating information via the newsletter, etc. By offering opportunities for training, exchange, and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility, and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ and ‘positive diversity management’ a widely supported priority.

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion & Diversity pages at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/



DISCLAIMER

This magazine contains pictures as a result of the Graphic Recording which is an integral part of all the ID Talks events. There are four types of styles throughout the whole magazine.

- **General Cover Picture.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events. It is displayed as a cover picture of each ID Talks version.
- **Portrait of Speaker.** It depicts each speaker and a few graphic recording elements such as written parts of their "speech" and/or any other graphics according to the style of each ID Talks version. It is displayed on top of the speaker's description page.
- **Main Graphic Recording Card.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events, including the specific name of the event, the portrait of the speaker, written quotes of their "speech" and/or any other graphics. It is displayed on top of the first page of each article.
- **Graphic Recording Elements.** Throughout each article, the graphic recording elements complement the text with essential parts of each speaker's "talk".



I & D Talks

“Understanding Mental Health”

What is it all about?

ID Talks is a series of 5 stand-alone online events (workshops) of up to 90 minutes each, with inspiring guest speakers, thought-provoking insights, discussion in small groups, and Q&A sessions.

Mental health represents an integral part of an individual’s capacity to think, emote, interact with others, earn a living and enjoy life. Consequently, mental health underpins the core human values of independent thought and action, happiness, and friendship. Mental health and well-being are put at risk by a wide range of factors spanning individual, social, and environmental levels, including poverty and deprivation; debt and unemployment; and violence and conflict.”

- WHO, European Framework for Action on Mental Health 2021–2025

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resources Centre and the Mental Health in Youth Work project jointly announce 2023 as “ID Talks: Year on Mental Health”, with the spring 2023 edition under the motto “Understanding Mental Health” and the autumn 2023 edition under the motto “Discovering Mental Health Practices”.

For whom?

Youth workers, youth leaders, professionals, and volunteers involved in ID in the EU youth programmes, as well as all those interested in youth work and Inclusion & Diversity topics.

Main objectives:

- To provide food for thought and learn from inspirational ID stories;
- To provide an opportunity to learn about ID topics from the youth work sector and beyond;
- To get information, inspiration, and methods to help the youth sector address ID;
- To inform about and contribute to quality (international) youth work;
- To identify and learn how to tackle existing and future challenges within ID;



Event Dates:

- 15 February (13h CET) > **ID Talks Mental Health Explained:** You increasingly hear about mental health in the media. But what is mental health really about, and what not? How is mental health perceived and interpreted? How are young people today doing regarding mental health and well-being? What should we know, pay attention to, and be prepared for? Put your assumptions to the test and gain a common frame to look at mental health. Guest speaker: **Maria Agorastou, Greece**
- 01 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Climate-Change Anxiety:** If climate change and the environment make young people take to the streets, these global challenges obviously have an influence on their mental health and well-being? What kind of approaches help you to address their climate-change worries? How can you promote climate resilience, both at an individual and at a societal level? Come and discover what role youth work can have in tackling climate-change anxiety. Guest speaker: **Anna Pribil, Austria**
- 15 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Social-Media Addiction:** You probably know (young) people who are constantly glued to their phones. Maybe that's you? Let's zoom in on social media addiction. How can you identify it in yourself and in others? Find out what are the main issues, causes, and consequences. And how does it impact the mental health and well-being of young people? Find out what practical tools and support youth work can offer. Guest speaker: **Katja Mankinen, Sosped Foundation, Finland**
- 29 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Supporting Young People's Wellbeing:** You probably (hopefully) feel that youth work supports young people's mental health and well-being. But what are young people's needs, and how can you identify and support those needs better? What kind of (extra) support do young people with fewer opportunities need for their mental health? Get an insight into coping and resilience strategies and learn how to create a sense of belonging and safe spaces (among others) in international projects. Guest speaker: **Ana Perović, Serbia**
- 12 April (1 PM CET) > **ID Talks Youth-Workers Wellbeing:** In order to take care of someone else, you need to take care of yourself as well! But how do you take care of your self-care? What are the main well-being issues that youth workers are experiencing? How do you prevent and overcome (emotional) exhaustion and burnout? Get to know the competences you need to take care of your own mental health and well-being (as a youth worker) so that you can continue to attend to the needs of young people. Guest speaker: **Natalja Gudakovska, Latvia**



ID Talks: Mental Health Explained

You increasingly hear about mental health in the media. But what is mental health really about, and what not?

WE ARE MORE THAN
WHAT WE HAVE
BEEN TOLD WE ARE!

MARIA AGORASTOU
(GREECE)



GUEST SPEAKER: MARIA AGORASTOU

Dr. Agorastou is a clinical psychotherapist, psychology professor, and clinical supervisor at Hellenic American University in the Athens, Greece campus. Throughout her 20+ years of clinical, teaching, and research experience both in the United States and in Greece she worked to understand the impact of systemic and individual trauma on the well-being and sense of emotional agency of youth and adults, especially those who come from disadvantaged groups, such as disability, sexual orientation, and poverty. She is a strong proponent of a holistic view of well-being and mental health, taking into consideration the mind, body, and spirit connection as well the interaction of the individual with the environment.



Article

Maria Agorastou

ID TALKS
Mental health explained

Understanding mental health

WHAT IS THE ACTUAL STORY THAT EACH ONE OF US CARRIES?
"YOUR EXPERIENCES are valid!"
"OUR ASSUMPTIONS SHAPE OUR REALITY"
"WE ARE MORE THAN WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TOLD WE ARE!"
"BE YOURSELF! (?)"
MARIA AGORASTOU (GREECE)

WELLBEING
⇒ IS NOT ⇒ THE ABSENCE OF DISEASE
IT IS THE AWARENESS OF HOW FAR OFF WE HAVE GONE FROM OUR "TRUE SELF"
MOVING AWAY FROM THE MEDICAL MODEL OF MENTAL HEALTH INTO A MORE INTEGRATED APPROACH
HOW ATTUNED ARE YOU WITH YOURSELF?
ATTUNEMENT IS THE REACTIVENESS WE HAVE TO ANOTHER PERSON
EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION IS THE ABILITY TO MODIFY OR CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, ACTIONS & WORDS
LOOKING BACKWARDS TO MOVE FORWARD

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO FIND THEIR TRUE SELF?
"EMOTIONAL GROWTH HAPPENS WHEN THE ENVIRONMENT IS good enough"
WITHOUT THIS, INDIVIDUALS:
➢ FORM A FRAGMENTED SENSE OF SELF
➢ SEEK ATTACHMENT AT THE EXPENSE OF AUTHENTICITY
➢ ENTER A SURVIVAL MODE
• OVERCOMPENSATION
• PEOPLE-PLEASING
• SELF-MEDICATION
• LACK OF BOUNDARIES

What is TRAUMA?
"AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO A TERRIBLE EVENT" (APA, 2022)
ALSO... DAILY STRESS IN ANY SHAPE OR FORM THAT GOES UNREGULATED
NOT ONLY!
ABUSE
IDENTITY ISSUES
POVERTY
EMOTIONAL NEGLECT

DETERMINANTS OF MENTAL HEALTH
PREDISPOSING FACTORS (WHAT WAS "DEALT TO US")
+ PRECIPITATING FACTORS
+ PRESENT SOCIAL CONTEXT
ONE OF THE MOST PREVALENT ASPECTS OF TRAUMA IS A DIFFERENTIATED PERCEPTION ABOUT OURSELVES & OTHERS

EFFECTS OF TRAUMA
PREFRONTAL CORTEX
HIPPOCAMPUS
AMYGDALA

⇒ **A HEALTHY SENSE OF AGENCY** ⇒
How do we bring ourselves back to our true self?
BE IN CONTACT WITH YOUR BODY & BE PRESENT WITH YOUR EMOTIONS & STOP NORMALIZING SURVIVAL MODE!

PEOPLE DO THEIR BEST WITH THE LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS THEY HAVE

SALTO In cooperation with: Mental Health in Youth Work project
INCLUSION & DIVERSITY
GRAPHIC NOTES: @MYINTHINK

The notion of well-being is a term that seems to be playing everywhere from social media platforms to online retreats to printed material. In a market research survey (2021) the well-being and self-improvement momentum through books, audiobooks, infomercials, motivational speakers, public seminars, workshops, holistic institutes, personal coaching, weight loss programs, apps, Internet courses, training organizations and more have reached a whopping 10.4\$ billion in 2021 and is expected to grow by an average of 6% annually.

The statistics are clearly telling us a story about the inherent human need to seek and find answers about themselves and their relationship to the world. Clinical practitioners have seen sharp increases in the numbers of people seeking mental health advice, especially during the COVID period, and the concepts of well-being, Mental Health, and Self-improvement seem to be prominent in peoples' behavioral choices.

In this plethora of information available then, clinical practitioners have an obligation to clear the air of malpractices and misinformation that might be out there and to provide some sense of direction to all people seeking to better their lives. And with that premise in mind, I believe it's imperative to go back to the basics in order to get a sense of guidance for the future. What we are lacking is not the information available to us but a common sense of understanding about what mental health and wellbeing really are. Is well-being the absence of a mental disorder?

The short answer is no!

Well-being is a twofold process; on one hand is the awareness of how far off we have gone from our true selves and our sense of stability and agency and on the other hand, how we are consciously and actively working towards coming back to it. People do their best with the level of consciousness they have. Understanding this will greatly increase our chances of awareness and where to go from here.

WELLBEING
⇒ IS NOT ⇒
THE ABSENCE
OF DISEASE

IT IS THE AWARENESS OF
HOW FAR OFF WE HAVE GONE
FROM OUR "TRUE SELF"



So, what is a true “real” self then?

If there is a state that can potentially save us is this: the worthwhile pursuit of a deep sense of well-being through an emotional agency. That capacity to have such an emotional connection and trust within us that nothing can shake us off the ground, nothing can make us forget our worthiness and value, and no one can make us feel less than others. But are we aware of what that even means? Who can give it to us? How do we develop it? And how do we get in touch and embody such a state amid economic crisis, unemployment, pandemics, and natural disasters? Aren't we supposed to survive first and then try to reach these “higher” states of consciousness and well-being?

Yes and no.

There is a widespread idea that hard work always pays off, that fighting reality to the ground, that battling with circumstances and surviving hardships on a daily basis is an “almost” sacred purpose, and that refusing to do so constitutes at the very least a moral failure on our part.

Survival became our status quo, a glorified perpetual hunt for external validation that will give us permission to stop fighting and start living. And, in modern days terms, what exactly are we calling survival? Apart from natural disasters, diseases, and someone pointing us at a gun, what other elements send this unique signal in our amygdala to start believing that we are under attack?

These are questions that clinicians try to elaborate on and work with clients daily in their practices. People come against not only the collective consciousness of expectations and what a “good life” should look like but also their own internal critic who points a finger at them as a constant reminder of fighting, trying, battling, and overcoming. All this dynamic has an almost moral label attached to it: you have to be a productive member of society; you are to be successful and accomplished; no rest, no relaxation, no slacking.

Go, go, go!

HOW ATTUNED ARE YOU WITH YOURSELF?



ATTUNEMENT IS THE REACTIVENESS WE HAVE TO ANOTHER PERSON

EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION IS THE ABILITY TO MODIFY OR CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS, ACTIONS & WORDS

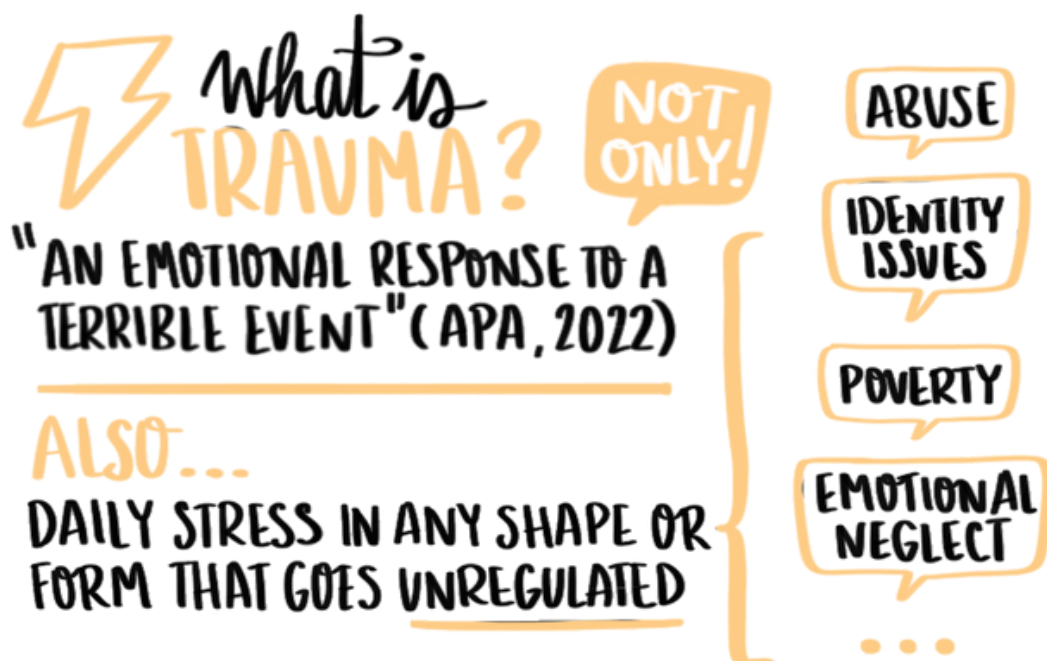
Individual agency is sanctified only to the degree that your inside self and your outside reality are in agreement. People are gaslighting themselves -at the expense of their mental health and well-being- to develop an increased amount of tolerance to sometimes horrible situations either personally or socially or both. As a society, we have chosen and are encouraged to run away from our own selves, and our own trauma through dissociation, denial, and addiction.

If then survival is glorified why would someone choose a different path? And how?

Well, it looks like this decision will be made sooner or later by our own bodies. The psychosomatic symptoms that accompany chronic survival functions are supported by science for decades now:

Autoimmune disease, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, elevated blood pressure, hormonal issues, chronic migraines, gastrointestinal problems.

Unprocessed, unhealed emotions are embodied experiences. We know, beyond doubt, that the causality between emotions and disease is certain and that a constant state of survival not only does not assist in our survival but is a direct source of malady.



What our current state of being calls for, is a return to our bodies, to our own sense of safety, security, and thus emotional agency. Even the simple awareness of that notion is an effective way to start getting our emotional well-being back on track. Simple practices such as breathwork, diaphragmatic breathing, mindfulness meditation, walks in nature, and taking a couple of minutes a day to emotionally self-regulate can have enormous benefits for our mental health. Being deliberate in connecting with our body and mind in the here and now, sends a powerful signal to our brain that things are going to be ok, and that we are in fact in charge of our responses regardless of the circumstances.

This type of mindset will guide us towards a more integrated sense of self and it will provide us with enough balance to be able to activate a parasympathetic response (creativity, problem-solving, etc) toward our set of circumstances.

The path is not linear not it will be one of constant success, and the old, conditioned survivor self, will persist in things staying the same but coming back to ourselves is well worth the effort.

⇒ A HEALTHY SENSE OF AGENCY ⇐

How do we bring ourselves back to our true self?

BE IN CONTACT
WITH YOUR
BODY

&

BE PRESENT
WITH YOUR
EMOTIONS

&

STOP NORMALIZING
SURVIVAL MODE!



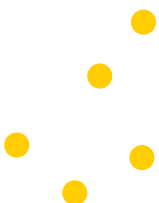
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Understanding mental health
ID TALKS
Mental health explained



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!

