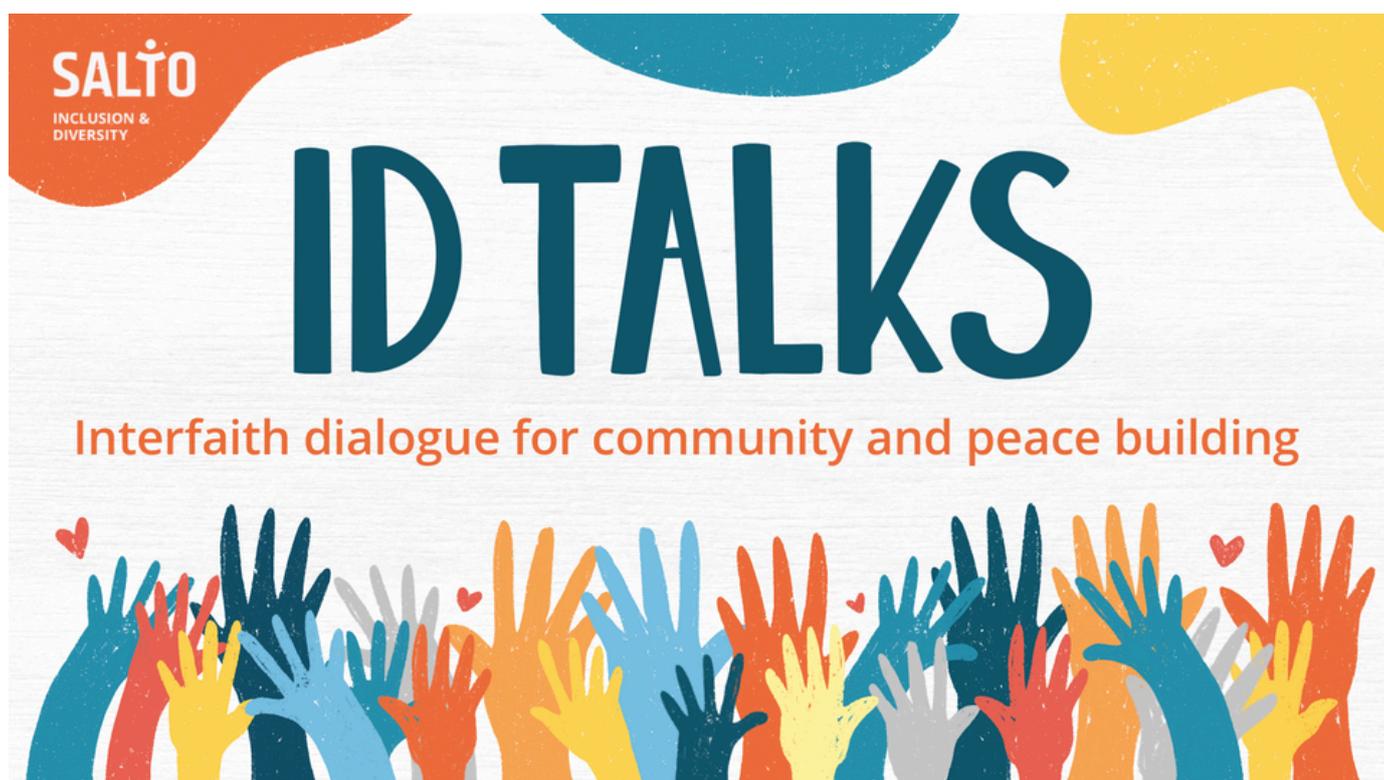


# ID TALKS!

*ID Talks 2024 spring edition will take you on a journey through faith, belief, and how to build projects to encompass different perspectives in your youth & community projects.*



## ID Talks:

- UNDERSTANDING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE
- INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND IDENTITY
- INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND COMMUNITY
- INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION
- INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND PEACE

Download this and other SALTO Inclusion & Diversity booklets for free at [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/). This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre or the organisation co-operating with them.

## 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](http://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/](http://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/](http://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

## “Interfaith Dialogue for Community and Peace Building”

### What is it all about?

ID Talks are a series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics to form a general understanding of interfaith dialogue and its link to community building and quality youth work. They feature youth workers, professionals, and volunteers from all over the world to share insights, research findings, food for thought, good practices, or inspirational stories. They will guide participants through the pressing matters and challenges affecting interfaith dialogue and inspire them to make their programmes and organisations more inclusive, embrace human differences, look ahead and picture how the future of youth work and Inclusion and Diversity might be.

Each workshop begins with an input from a guest speaker. Afterwards, participants have the opportunity to engage in the discussion, ask questions, and share their realities and experiences.

### 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:**

- 14 February (13h CET) > **ID Talks Understanding Interfaith Dialogue** - Are you wondering what is interfaith dialogue and what we can learn from it? Why it is important and what is its value and relevance today? Let's discover together the various concepts (such as inter-conviction dialogue, religion, faith, spirituality...) and differences between those, and have a closer look at the basic elements of interfaith dialogue, its potential and limits. Guest speaker: **Meg Villanueva, Philippines**
- 13 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Community** - It is undoubtedly important to foster dialogue and exchange between people and communities living side by side. But what does it really entail and how do you conduct it? What makes "good" interfaith dialogue, what conditions enable it and who should be involved? Let's analyse how the complexity of diversity affects interfaith dialogue and community building, and discover the role the city and the EU youth programmes can have in this process. Guest speaker: **Fien Ingelbrecht, Belgium**
- 27 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Reconciliation** - How can we create bridges between people? This session zooms in on reconciliation and the role of interfaith dialogue in this process. As religion and faith can be forces of cohesion instead of division in the society, let's find out about possibilities to bring together different religious communities in post-conflict areas and the role of the youth work and youth programmes like Erasmus+ in reconciliation processes. Guest speaker: **Nadežda Mojsilović, Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- 10 April (13 CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Peace** - Peace and conflict are very often addressed in non-formal learning and youth work. But what sets interreligious conflicts apart from other types of conflict? Let's see what is the role of interfaith dialogue in conflict prevention, conflict transformation and peace building, and how youth work and youth programmes like Erasmus+ support the work on intercultural learning and peace building. Guest speaker: **Mamoun Khreisat, Jordan**
- 24 April (13h CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Identity** - Ready for some introspection? In this session you'll discover what is identity and the role religion and faith play in its creation. How do the religious identities of an individual and a community interrelate? Knowing that our religious and cultural narratives are as important to us as theirs to different other communities, is the clash of narratives inevitable? Guest speaker: **Nyanchama Okemwa, Belgium**

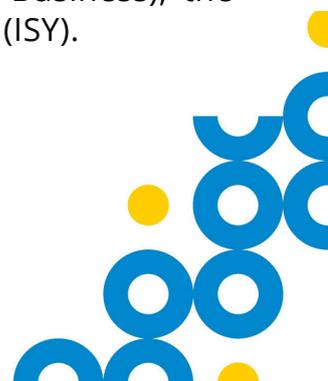
# ID Talks: Interfaith Dialogue and Identity

*Ready for some introspection?*



## **GUEST SPEAKER: NYANCHAMA OKEMWA**

I am a defender of human rights with more than 30 years of experience in decolonial and intersectional anti-racism activism. I have two master's degrees in education and anthropology and am currently pursuing a PhD research in philosophy. Professionally, I work for a non-profit organization "Hand in Hand against Racism asbl as a decolonial expert and facilitator in the implementation of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) organizational policies. I am currently the Chair of the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) & ENAR Foundation. Privately, I am a creative artist and founder of the Chama Artistic Creations and curator of the Pagne Africain Textile Exhibition and the Kenya Kikwetu Abagusii Artefacts Exhibition. I am also an executive board member of the following organisations: The European Network for People of African Descent (ENPAD), the European Network on Religion & Belief (ENORB), the Africa Diaspora Network Europe (ADNE), the People of African Descent Business (PAD Business), the Creative & Performing Artists Network (CAPA) Africalia asbl and I See You (ISY).



# Article

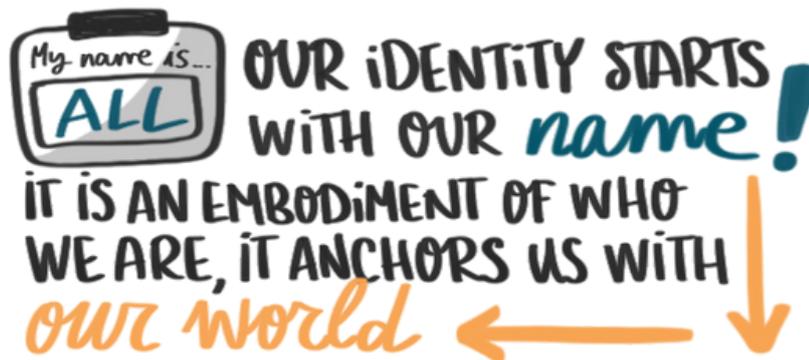
\*Written & edited by the digital facilitator



## The Fluidity of Identity: Insights from Nyanchama

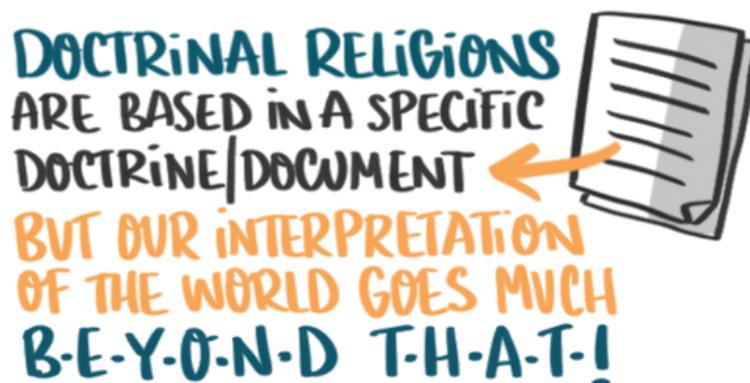
In a world where conflicts often go unnoticed, the conversation about identity and spirituality becomes increasingly significant. Nyanchama, a Kenyan-born woman who has spent over three decades in Belgium, provides a rich narrative that intertwines personal experiences with cultural reflections. As a mother and grandmother, she delves deeply into the essence of identity.

Nyanchama's exploration starts with her name, an essential element of self-identity. Born as Nyanchama, she faced early challenges when her name was deemed unsuitable by a priest. Her mother, an avid reader, named her Marie Antoinette Stellamaris. During confirmation, Nyanchama adopted the name Roberta after her brother. Despite these changes, Nyanchama, meaning one with a gift for divination and healing, remains integral to her identity.



Names in Nyanchama's culture are dynamic, evolving with life experiences. She challenges the notion that individuals are the sole authors of their identities. She believes that identity is a culmination of various influences: family aspirations, personal dreams, cultural heritage, and societal interactions. Identity is not a static entity but a dynamic interplay of factors, including culture, religion, and biology.

Spirituality and religion play crucial roles in shaping identity. Nyanchama differentiates between doctrinal religions, like Christianity and Islam, which follow specific doctrines, and African spiritualities, which encompass diverse beliefs. She emphasizes that African spiritualities, though less formally recognized, have a vast following and should be included in discussions about faith and identity.



Nyanchama's personal journey reflects this complexity. For many years, she used her Christian name, Marie Antoinette Stellamaris. However, upon becoming a grandmother, she chose to be called "Magokoru," a term from her culture meaning outgoing ancestor. This name change symbolized a deeper connection to her cultural roots and a desire to pass on this heritage to her granddaughter.

Identity is an ongoing process of construction and reconstruction. It is like a tapestry, constantly woven and interwoven with the influences of those around us. This dynamic process is both individual and relational, creating a rich and complex fabric that represents society. By embracing this view, we can appreciate the multifaceted nature of identity and its continuous evolution.



Through her reflections, Nyanchama encourages us to explore our identities deeply, recognizing that they are not merely labels but rich narratives shaped by various influences. Her insights remind us that our sense of self is a dynamic, ever-changing mosaic shaped by our interactions and experiences within our cultural and social habitats.



## Identity and the Mirror Analogy

Nyanchama poses a thought-provoking question: why do we perceive our reflection in a mirror differently from how we see ourselves in photographs? This discrepancy highlights the complex nature of identity. When we look into a mirror, we don't just see a simple image. Instead, we see ourselves through a prism of different perspectives:

1. **Self-Perception:** How we think we look and who we hope to be.
2. **External Expectations:** How friends, family, schools, and society expect us to be.
3. **Cultural and Ancestral Influence:** The depth of our roots and the heritage that shapes us.
4. **Future Aspirations:** Our dreams and how they influence our current identity.

Nyanchama describes this as a kaleidoscopic view, where multiple facets contribute to a comprehensive, albeit complex, understanding of who we are. This process is subconscious, constantly working in the background of our minds.



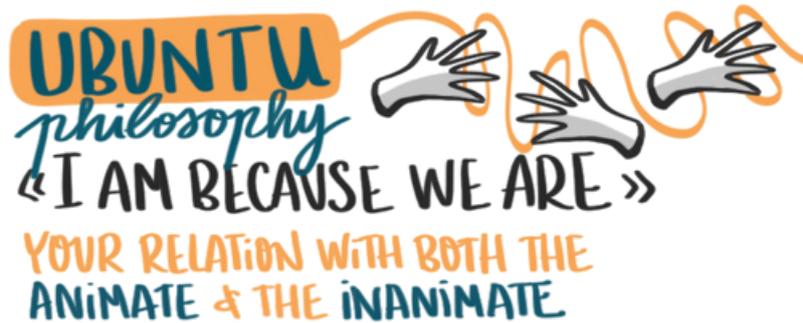
## Relational Identity

Identity is relational. It is continuously shaped and reshaped through our interactions with others and the societal structures we inhabit. This relational aspect means that our identity is never static; it is always in flux, influenced by our environment and our relationships within it.

WE ARE WHO WE ARE THROUGH  
OUR RELATIONS WITH OTHERS  
( & WE CONTRIBUTE TO OTHER  
PEOPLE'S OWN IDENTITIES )

## Ubuntu Philosophy

At the core of Nyanchama's understanding of identity is the Ubuntu philosophy, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all humans. "I am because we are" encapsulates the idea that our humanity is co-constituted with others. This philosophy highlights the mutual shaping of identities, where we not only form our own identity but also influence the identities of those around us.



### Crisis and Stability

Nyanchama notes that during crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the stability we find in religion, beliefs, and ideologies is often challenged. These moments force us to return to the core of our spirituality and values. For Nyanchama, Ubuntu provides a guiding principle that reaffirms the interconnected nature of our existence.

### Practical Tools

Nyanchama encourages us to:

- Reflect on Self: Understand and critically reflect upon our personal identities.
- Engage with Society: Examine our relationships with neighbors, society, and nature.
- Macro Understanding: Question broader societal structures, doctrines, and how they represent our spirituality and existence.
- Learn, Unlearn, and Relearn: Nyanchama stresses the importance of continuously updating our understanding by learning, unlearning misconceptions, and relearning new perspectives. This process: encourages critical self-reflection and growth, enhances our ability to adapt and understand different viewpoints, helps us address and integrate complex issues like climate change by seeking balance and recognizing our interdependence with nature.



## Unlearning in the Context of Interfaith Dialogue

Unlearning is a crucial process:

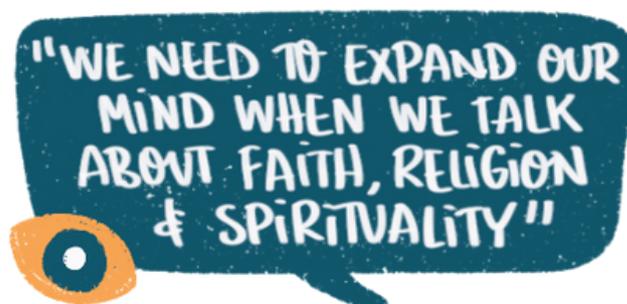
- Historical Context: The mindset of colonization, which began over 2,000 years ago, needs to be deconstructed to move beyond colonial thinking.
- Spiritual Decolonization: Before the establishment of major religions, various natural spiritualities existed that emphasized interconnectedness and harmony with nature.

## Theocratic Influence and Decolonization

Nyanchama simplifies the concept of theocracy, where divine authority has historically dictated human autonomy. To decolonize our minds, we must challenge and unlearn these ingrained beliefs and rediscover the diverse spiritualities that existed before such structures were imposed.



Nyanchama's insights call for a deeper, more reflective approach to understanding identity and spirituality. By embracing the complexities of our relationships and continuously engaging in learning processes, we can foster a more holistic and interconnected view of ourselves and the world. This enriched understanding not only enhances personal growth but also contributes to a more balanced and spiritually aware society.



## EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Published in May 2024 by SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (Support & Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within The Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes)

Official Website: [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/inclusion/)

SALTO-Jint, Grétrystraat26, 1000 Brussel, Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 209 07 20 Fax: +32 (0)2 209 07 49

[inclusion@salto-youth.net](mailto:inclusion@salto-youth.net)

Legal info: JINT vzw, 0441.254.285, RPR Nederlandstalige Ondernemingsrechtbank Brussel

Coordination: Henrique Gonçalves and Marija Kljajic ([inclusion@salto-youth.net](mailto:inclusion@salto-youth.net))

Facilitator: Anna Yeghoyan ([ayeghoyan@yahoo.com](mailto:ayeghoyan@yahoo.com))

Digital Co-Facilitator: Maria Kousoula ([marakikousoula@gmail.com](mailto:marakikousoula@gmail.com))

Graphic Facilitator: Olalla González ([olalla@shokkin.org](mailto:olalla@shokkin.org))

General Editor of the Publication: Maria Kousoula ([marakikousoula@gmail.com](mailto:marakikousoula@gmail.com))

Reproduction and use for non-commercial purposes are permitted provided the source [www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/](http://www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/) is mentioned and [inclusion@salto-youth.net](mailto:inclusion@salto-youth.net) is notified.

---

***On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!***

