

# Stories on resilience

By the participants in the  
#BeMyVoice  
project encounter in  
Luxembourg, July 2021

FOLLOW-UP TO A  
WORKSHOP BY  
KARINA MINDA



# The wolf

We should describe our features, based on the animal we picked, which help us become stronger or stay strong:

The WOLF is lonely and self contained. He is thought to be wild and dangerous but in actual terms, he is completely harmless and very tender if given the opportunity. He doesn't like words. He prefers to do things without being noticed. He could easily be vegetarian if needed. He can be with the pack, even in the center of it, but he prefers to be at the back, caring for anyone who is left behind or is in need. He will be ferocious if attacked or if someone from the pack is in danger. He likes the wilderness and prefers to be near water. He is afraid of barking dogs and would like to avoid problems. But in any case, there is a solution and he will find a way through. He is faithful and proud. He likes his family and his friends and hates it when he has to be away. He likes his pack, although he never feels really a part of it...

So, from the Wolf's characteristics pool, what help me become stronger are his autonomy, his sense of protection, his sense of freedom and his ability to always find a solution to any problem.



# The sloth

My animal is Sloth that tree-dwelling mammal noted for its slowness of movement. All five living species are limited to the lowland tropical forests of South and Central America, where they can be found high in the forest canopy sunning, resting, or feeding on leaves. Although two-toed sloths are capable of climbing and positioning themselves vertically, they spend almost all of their time hanging horizontally, using their large hooklike extremities to move along branches and vines.

I am small

I am slow

I am smiling

AND I am patience.





# No title

In our life we constantly undergo changes and often have to find new ways and paths. The panda showed up in my life just when being at one of these crossroads.

In order to develop my resilience, there are several things that I can learn and forge with the help of the panda:

Forge my own path just as the panda does with his being independent, and find my own unique signature as the panda has its very distinctive and unique black and white markings.

I can reach that by being tenacious: the panda will climb and search till he finds enough bamboo to eat and I will learn to be tenacious to get what I want and need in my life.

On the other hand I will need to be agile and balanced: although pandas spend a lot of time resting and eating, pandas are efficient climbers and swimmers and very quick when threatened by a predator. This shall teach me to find balance of rest and action in my life, while staying fast on my feet.

Thank you Karina for this inspiring workshop.





# A story on resilience


When did I start to see myself the way I am and not how I think others see me? Or how they want me to be?

The search for oneself is the eternal unanswered question. An answer that might become a powerful weapon. Or is it the journey that is more important than the answer-destination?

My strongest point, I know, can easily become my weakness as well. Through years and growth, the world expected me to grow stronger, expected so much that strength of support that the bigger I would seem outside, the smaller, tired and scared I would be inside. It is so easy to detach yourself from other pieces of your being just to get along with the surrounding world. In the process, you don't realise the emptiness that cracks your reality. That emptiness that becomes the medium through which you think people see you. Without realising it, you start to see yourself the same way as well.

I have been this big, huge, super-strong entity for so many years. People need me.






My nature is to take care of whatever is around me.  
What is that puts a balance between the two?

When did I start to see myself the way I am? The moment I realised I was becoming invisible. I found the strength, another form of strength, something that was entirely for me, that was for no one else to take, demand or even pretend. I stopped!

I stopped time. I stopped the outside growth and getting big to start recognising myself. I isolated myself because people can be cruel, especially those who love you the most.

I don't have to run. I can just stop and look under that thick skin. Just look and search. Or just be. Breathe mostly. Balance myself after finding it. Love who I am, whatever or whoever that is, to protect myself from myself and the rest of the world.

My home is both water and earth; they are both my elements. I don't really care how the world sees me. I don't care how I think the world sees me. My superpower has become the journey toward meeting me, outside and inside.



# A day in the life of a grizzly bear


It is a hot summer day in June, on a Saturday. A fluffy, full-bodied grizzly bear wakes up from her afternoon nap in a forest far far away. She doesn't need that much sleep, only a siesta-long nap to avoid the afternoon heat, as she is saving all her sleepy energy for those cold winter days.

Her day so far has been slow. No beehives on sight, she ate the last one on Thursday, and the rivers don't seem all that busy. The streams, glistening from the 4o'clock sunlight, are still. Where is all the salmon? No sound of any frog jumping around. Even the birds usually sitting on the trees, chirping at each other about the week's gossip, are nowhere to be seen on this relaxed Saturday in June.

"Where is everybody? How long was my nap? Did I accidentally sleep through the summer and skip all the way to winter? That can't be... The sun is still shining, my fur is still warm", thought the grizzly.

The grizzly bear is used to living a life of isolation. She does not have close friends; she chose to live in this forest deliberately far away from any male bear; she doesn't want the conventional life of motherhood. She sees the changes in the environment.







Climate change may not allow her babies to have a fulfilled life, they might not even survive this next generation. Why bring a cub into this cruel, cruel world? Yet, if she does not procreate, won't her species become extinct soon? This grizzly does not care all that much. The world is changing, and she can be as involved as or detached from it as she deems right. She wants to go through this life on her own, meet new animals along her way, be friendly with everyone, and explore whatever's left from what nature has to offer.

The sun has started to set. Time flies by when she wanders off on her daily explorations. Tonight's destination was her latest discovery from today's walk; a gorge so deep that tomorrow's sunlight won't bother her, but wide enough to let the bright moonlight shine through. The sight is enchanting.

It is a brisk summer night in June, on a Saturday. A tired grizzly bear is sitting beside the bank of a river, watching fireflies balancing on paper-thin leaves. "What more can a bear ask for?" she thought.

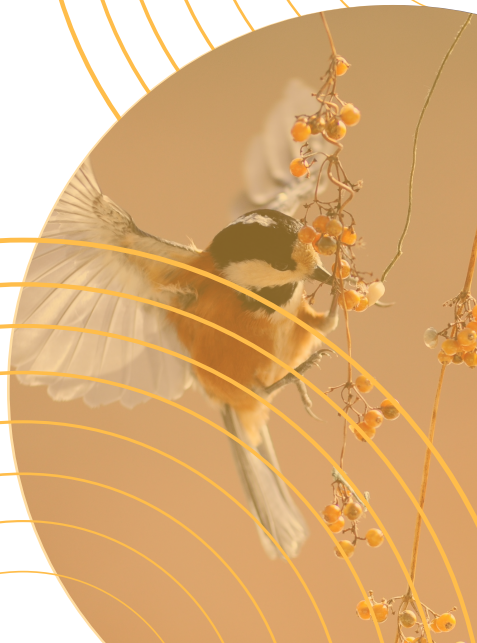


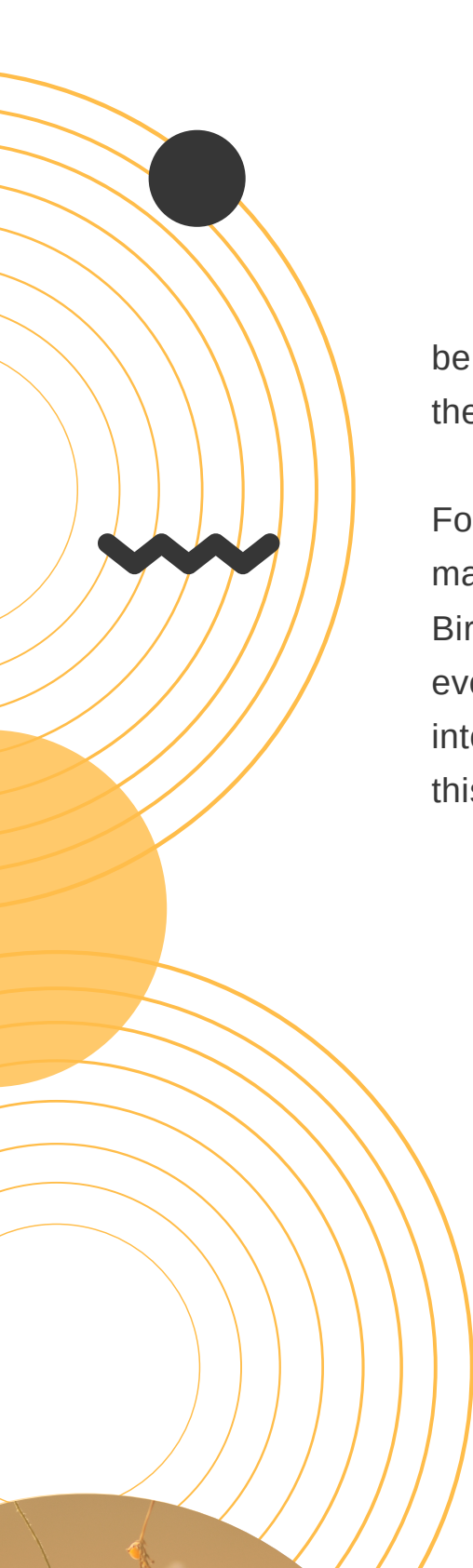


# I am a singing bird

The animal I picked is a singing bird. I can easily identify myself to this animal. I think a bird is synonymous to freedom. Birds can fly, meaning moving freely and easily around, vertically and horizontally, in any direction, wherever they want. Their everyday is felt within this sense of openness to adventure, learning and exploration, thus a sense of lightness, of childlike joy and carefree enthusiasm. In the same time, a bird's eye view is the view of the wise: bearing the capacity to focus on details (to pick the best seed from the ground) but also the capacity to have a wide, 360° perception of reality, seeing all things from a distance and in perspective.

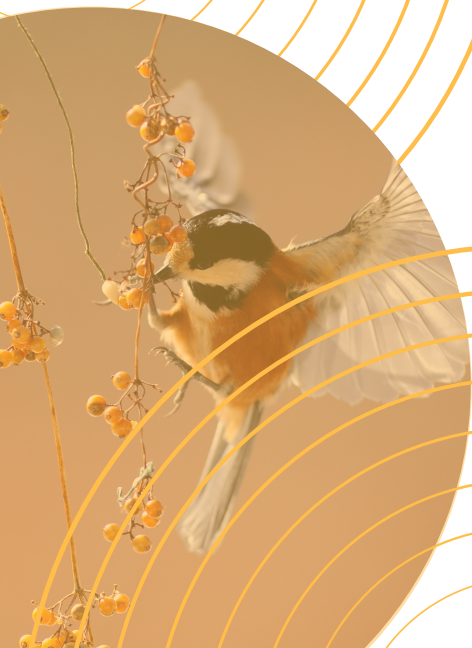
A bird is expressing its emotions through singing and tweeting, producing a harmonious language that can be comprehended only by those who focus and pay attention to it, or by other birds. The winged community is a world within a world, knowing how to hide mostly from their predators' eyes, interacting in harmony with the rest of living beings, fauna and flora but with their terms. Birds are always "in tune" with Mother Nature's biorhythm: they will sing joyfully on a sunny day, they will hush when a storm is near. After a pouring rain, they will





be the first to start singing again, bringing high spirit to their environment.

For a bird the sense of family is very important and the making of his/hers suitable nest a number one priority. Birds' nests are archetypical places of safety, care and evolution, where eggs are supported to be transformed into assertive beings able to open their wings and leave this safe place to have a life of their own.

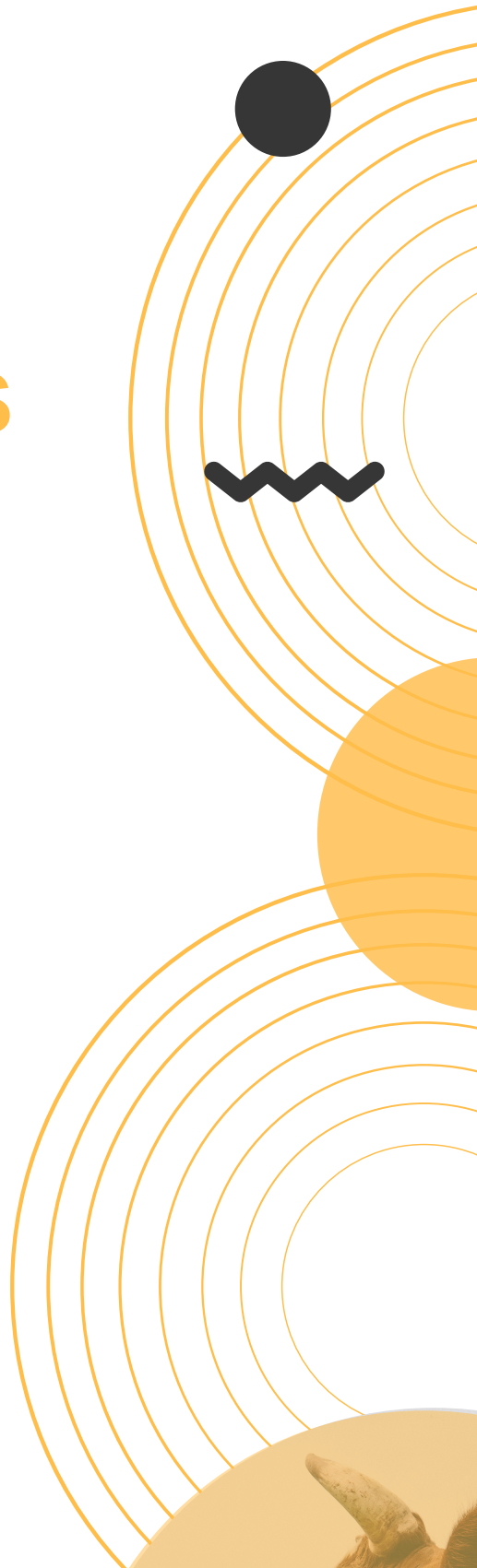


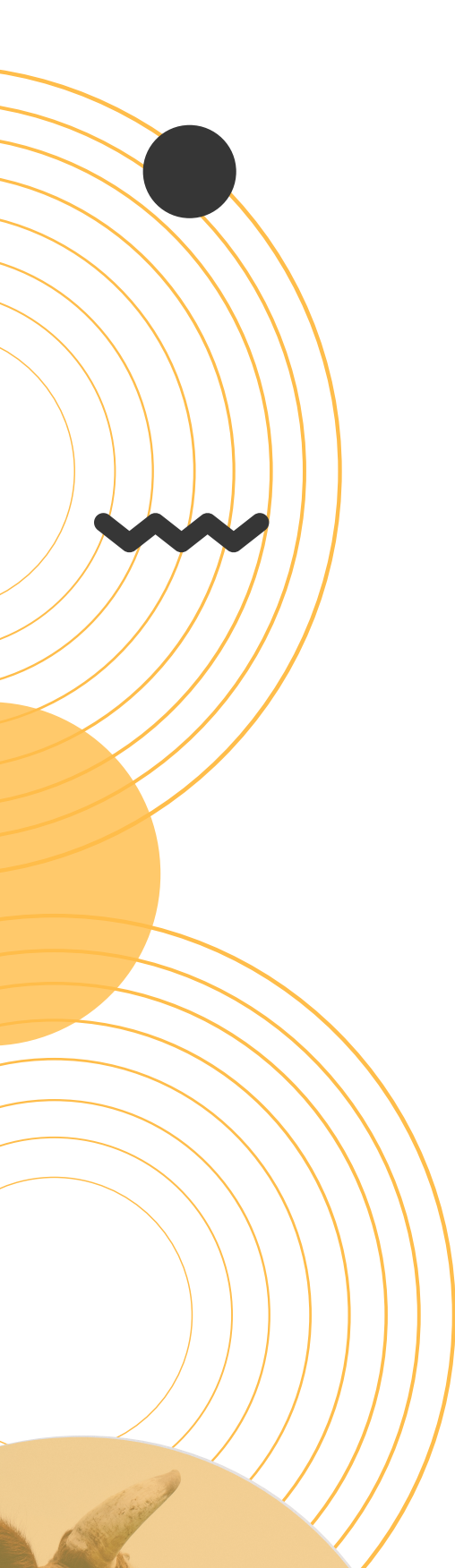
# The story about the cow who thought she was a bull

Once there was a cow who thought she was a bull. She thought she was a bull, because she had two horns, which she never used. Her eyes were pretty bad, but inside her mind, she tried to see far. Looking at her legs, she knew that trying to be the fastest would be in vain, so instead she focused on persistence. She liked to advance steadily, without a hurry.

As she thought she was a bull, she thought she was pretty strong. But she decided not to make use of this strength, preferring to advance within groups. She had a feeling that things achieved in community were worth more than things achieved alone. So, she would often show only a small part of what she felt inside, in order not to overwhelm her peers.

Had she tried to use her full force, she might have found out about her true nature.






Maybe staying in the dark about her true self helped her find mystery in life, as nothing could ever fully be explained. This uncertainty, she would transform it into energy. It would help her not to get stuck and always see a new perspective. This openness left little space in her brain for recalling the past, and some people thought she had a bad memory.

As a young student, she found out that she always had to read everything twice if she wanted to fully grasp it's meaning. After the first read, the words would ring in her brain. Only after the second reading would they start to make sense. In the face of her nature, this comes as no surprise. Proper digestion calls for double chewing.

Over the years, as she had built many castles in the air, she managed to be quite patient all the way, knowing that beautiful things would eventually be in store for her.





# The story of my.....

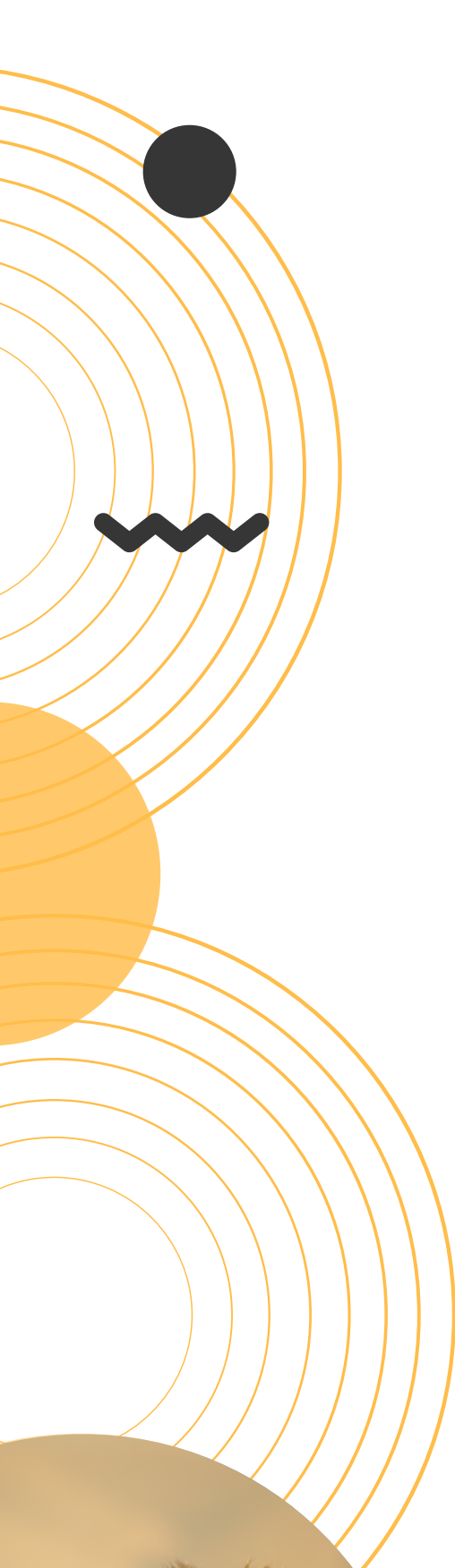
I looked up at everyone else for years. I remember how tall and strong they all looked to me. I was striving to reach as high as them, but unsuccessfully. I have been frustrated at times and sad at others.

I longed to be like them and eat the leaves at the top of the tree. I tried to elongate my neck and even stand on the tip of my feet, extending my tongue as long as possible, but in vain. I began thinking there must be something wrong with me, I doubted that I would ever be successful and wanted many times to give up. I felt there is nothing I can do to feel better, or to BE better. But I was wrong, and that I understood only later.

Patience was the key word.

Everyday I was a bit longer, everyday I could reach a bit higher, but the difference was so slight that I failed to notice it. Nevertheless, my perspective was changing. One day I realised I could eat those long desired unattainable leaves and what was once unreachable was now at the tip of my nose. I got where I wanted to be for so many years, but how? When? What was I doing differently? Now I had a







long neck, and strong legs. Now I could see far away in the distance, and eat the highest leaves in the tree.

My wild nature was leading me exactly where I had to get, where I desired so strongly to be. My growth was natural, was organic. I only had to trust it.....to have the patience and trust that all is as it should be.

But nature was acting slowly. It guided me through all the steps of my growing process, not skipping any, as my impatience and envy craved. It gave me the time I needed to prepare myself for what came next.

Being tall and strong brings about specific challenges and responsibilities, and I saw myself forced to act in accordance with the new and wide perspective that I gained. I had more responsibility for the safety of my kin, as I could see the danger from far away. I could understand now what the young ones couldn't, and it was my role to guide and protect them, as I have been while I was growing up.

I understand why it needed to be so, why I had to wait to grow, since my perspective can only expand as my ability to comprehend develops. In that understanding I found my peace and trust, and this became the story of my ....resilience.



# BINI with Nine Souls


In the streets of Istanbul, BINI walked their way. Under the trees with Nadia, they wondered, "Wait! What? but why they?" In less than a few seconds, the whole world made more sense.

BINI danced in the shoes of many as unique creatures themselves. In their nine souls, their ego vanished into many tails, in the blue trousers they admired, in the smell of a morning meal made out of protein by a woman who knew when to be as cruel as life can be and as tender as a soft marshmallow in a cheating pleasure between dawn and morning.

In that last hour, BINI drank her out under a hot shower. BINI knew that this woman would be their only god if they would ever be theist with such great harmony. BINI let her go as one of the rich journeys in nine egoless souls.

"Be real! it is not that complicated (?)." BINI knew the rebel in you, but they also knew that their power laid in the egoless journeys of their nine souls. Because eventually, BINI is a reflective mirror of you and me.



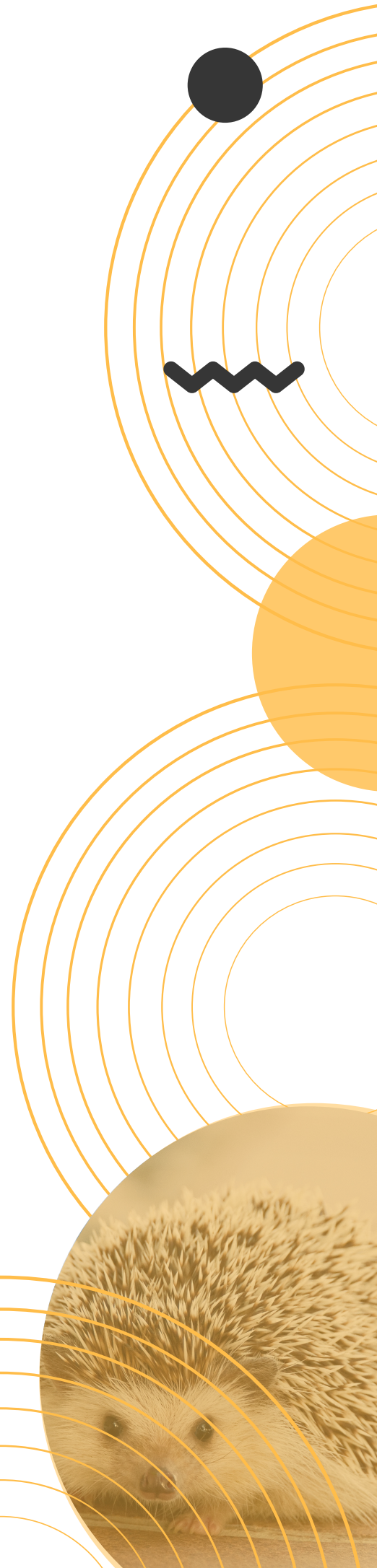


BINI is an echo of “they, them and their.” BINI was real, but it did not fit your standards of how realness should look and feel. BINI is real, but their reality and realness can be as fluid and diverse as nine souls can be. She and they are no longer lovers, but they will always remain a prosperous journey in nine egoless souls, a woman who is the one and only god if BINI will ever become theist.



# The hedgehog

Once upon a time, when it was walking alone was thinking, dancing and listening music but it isn't happy, it was wondering why it is not happy? knowing that everything was around him, I mean everything was and still amazing and good around but it is alone... suddenly it had idea that it will forget the past and live in the moment. but it discovered that it couldn't do it without a partner so it decided looking for partner. until now the animal has looking for love.



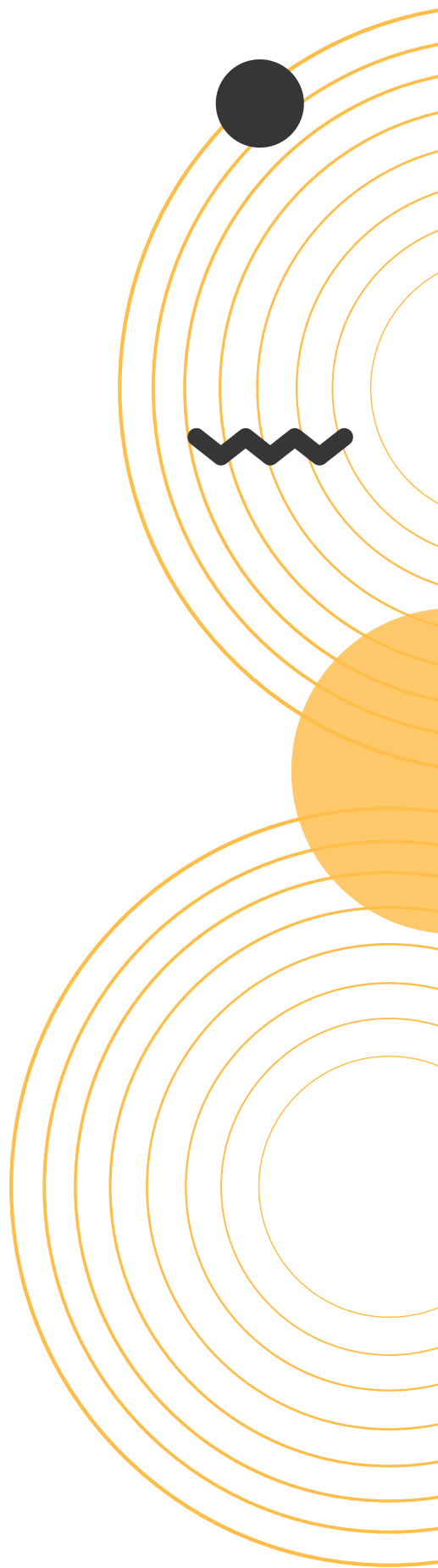
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Philippe is a musician and consultant in international & EU Affairs active in a variety of European cities as well as in the MENA region. He currently serves as contact point of the Citizens, Equality, Rights & Values Programme in Luxembourg, in cooperation with the Centre for Citizenship Education. Philippe further supports the European Parliament Ambassador School programme and occasionally teaches International and EU Affairs to public servants. Philippe is also active as co-head of network of the Anna Lindh Foundation in Luxembourg, an inter-governmental institution bringing together civil society, citizens, and governments across the Mediterranean to build trust and improve mutual understanding. In the field of music, Philippe performs with his band "Elysiah" as songwriter "FyeFye Yantú".



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