

# THE 1ST TEDXYOUTH EVENT IN CYPRUS

The 1st TedxYouth Event in Cyprus took place in Limassol on February 6th 2021, on Zoom, organised by the Tedxyouth Agiou Andreou team. Yes, the pandemic once again posed a challenge to our plans, but we still managed to bring around 150 young voices together online. Like every TedxYouth event, we encouraged young speakers to make their voices heard about local or global issues and hence cultivate an inspirational environment. Our theme was Beyond, a word that thoroughly describes what goes on in a young person's mind. Young people want to go beyond their powers and achieve their dreams. We tend to wonder what is going to follow after we or the people around us take a certain action. We love to explore the world and seize the opportunities provided to us. Thus, young speakers were given the moment to make a speech related to their own "beyond" and give us an insight into what the word "beyond" conveys to them. It should be noted that this event was non-profitable and it came to life from the heart and passion of volunteers and participants, five of whom are students from our school. Our students did not miss the chance to participate in this free-spirited event in any way they could: Jason Poyiadjis (Year 6) and Thraso Giannoulakis (Year 5) were the hosts of the event; Anna-Maria Loysha (Year 7) was a speaker; Anastasia Kardash (Year 7) a performer; and I, Ioanna Antoniou (Year 7) was a volunteer on the media creation team.

What kind of event would it be without our amazing hosts, Jason Poyiadjis (Year 6) and Thraso Giannoulakis (Year 5). As hosts they ran the event with energy, joy and a great dose of humour. From the very beginning of our digital event smiles and laughs were spread in every tiny Zoom box. They had the ideas and the inspiration on how to make the event as entertaining and memorable as possible with their clever lines and jokes. At some point they even dressed up as fruits! Why be plain when you can be extra? They also organised games for the two intermissions and got all the audience involved. You could tell that they rehearsed well because they did not seem nervous at all, instead they were confident and enjoyed every moment.



The first speaker Jason and Thraso introduced was our Year 7 student Anna-Maria Loysha. Her speech *An Anxious Girl and Beyond Herself* Converse left us all speechless. So powerful, touching and inspiring; a perfect way to start the Tedxyouth event. In her speech, she explores her feelings and what helped her tackle crippling anxiety and depression. Here, Anna-Maria emphasises how one has to go beyond their strengths and hopes to make themselves healthy again. Her speech received a round of applause and cheer not only from us and the audience but many people who saw it on YouTube liked it as well. Yes that's right, after a few weeks her online speech was uploaded on the official TEDx Talks channel on YouTube! You can "search" the speech there and you will find it. Her speech has 549 views at the moment, but we can definitely add to that.

Anastasia Kardash, a student from Year 7, performed a contemporary dance that she filmed a few days before the event at the Limassol Garden Theatre. She performed the song *Bored* by Billie Eilish, a duet with her friend from their dance school, and no, she was not actually bored nor was the event boring. Even though it was not possible to admire the duo dancing live, the pre-recorded film was successfully share-screened during our Zoom event. At least she was not breathless when the recorded dance finished! The dance was delightful and magical. Having such a performance in our event undoubtedly reminded us all how important it is to appreciate the art of dancing and movement. Anastasia went beyond current obstacles to create such a memorable ac Cyprus and posted them on our accounts. Therefore, we gained recognition and support from organisations such as the Mediterranean Model UN. On the day of our event, I was responsible for announcing on social media the programme and who was about to perform next. All volunteers were vigilant, with eyes on the lookout for any errors or typos that could occur at any time during the event. We also cheered on our performers, speakers and the whole team in the comments or zoom chat, like any live audience would.



Overall, our students did a fantastic job and there is more to come. For you reading this, what is your beyond? Next time you are inspired to create something do not hold back, just go for it! Grab every opportunity to learn, discuss and make a change in our world! Events like TEDx are eye openers to our big and complicated world, so why not give it a try? Finally, although I am not a public speaker, I have always dreamed of saying this so here I go: Thanks for coming to my TED Talk.

- **Ioanna Antoniou, Year 7**

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A transcript of a TedX Youth Agiou Andreou  
Speech by **Anna Maria Loysha**

## **AN ANXIOUS GIRL AND BEYOND HERSELF CONVERSE**

I wrote this speech at the very end of September. It's about God/Jesus (personified as Beyond), struggles with faith and personal explorations of difficult feelings I was dealing with back then. It's all written from a September POV, in the present tense for more ~dramatic tension~.

I've had seasons of depression and eating disorders and heartbreak that have been easier than the past month of September. I'm applying for university this year and turns out, decision making really does cripple me. My whole body has been in constant fight or flight mode for the whole month.



You know the cutesy Netflix rom coms, where the protagonist is a Noah Centineo looking dude who is having a full-fledged identity crisis and an overdramatic dilemma because he doesn't know what to decide what to study at university. I always thought these films were exaggerated and unrealistic, but now I feel like Troy Bolton, crying in the bathroom at 2 am trying to decide between basketball and theatre. And all the fighting with the parents. Never knew Troy Bolton and I had so much in common.

Because, I'm standing before all these decisions and staring into the Big Scary Beyond, trying to understand who I am and what is required of me in this life. And it can be so nerve-wracking to hear all your fears and worries echo back at you.

Close your eyes and picture this, picture the room of my mind. Let me try simplifying my feelings. Imagine a small room, dimly lit. We're standing ambushed by all my friends and foes.

In one corner, there's my parents' expectations and all the arguments and tears I've spilt in just the past month and them telling me from the age of ten that I'll buy them a private jet. And on the other side there's all the self-doubt and self-hatred and all of the times I was binge eating because of stress, then looking at my reflection in the mirror staring sadly at me as I tell her exactly how much I hate her.

And in the middle, like a monstrosity, are all my desires and romanticised dreams, screaming in unison at me, and I'm not able to distinguish what is true and what is not. And there's this one very loud voice chanting really loudly about a boy and that maybe I want to spend my life with him and maybe I should change every plan I've made for him?

And in a disorganised and dusty pile on the side are all my other 25 desires and childish dreams that resurface to speak, like when I wanted to be a chef and open an artsy restaurant as a kid, and oh my goodness, wait should I be a chef?

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And lastly, there's this very loud and mean, dictatorial booming adult voice telling me to be rational, and logical, when by nature I am anything but logical.

I'm standing there in the middle with my head spinning and my sight clouded. Thinking about the audacity these anxieties have to live rent-free in my head, but mostly just feeling tired, and confused.

Then I hear a gentle whisper from the very back of the room, whose voice I keep losing in the screaming crowd, yet it is so intriguing and consistent. So I get up and walk around the room, look every rent-free monster in the eye and tell them to shut up for just a single moment.

I get closer to the whisper and I hear it speak louder and louder. And in the dim lighting, I start to see her. Her eyes are big and radiant- burning with the same kind of truth that I've spent my whole life searching for, and she's so much calmer than I and sees things that I don't.

Her voice is so quiet and still, that I stop the frantic search just to hear what she has to say. maybe, just maybe, this anxiety will be washed away the more I listen. I know she's not my own, she has nothing to do with the mix up of anxiety that I've been running from.

She's singing a song with words and languages that I've never heard. She's singing about me though, that I know. It's about me. It's for me. She's telling me to trust her, to simply hold on.

Her name is Peace. Her name is Beyond.

I promise she lives and she constantly speaks. She's compassionate and Fatherly, with an ever-growing heart. Maybe I don't fully comprehend her language, but I understand her heart. She loves me faithfully and she sees Beyond. So next time you walk into your own screaming room, call out for Beyond. She will guide you. She will quieten your screaming heart with love, with a bright future and hope in things that go far beyond what you can see.

Looking back It was definitely a messy time. However, I'm not joking when I say I found a voice to guide me. I encourage you to Find out who she is on your own. Thanks to her, I'm applying to study animation next year in Sweden. Life feels under her gentle control. The voices are finally under control, even when they speak up, I decide to only listen to Beyond.

Thank you for your time.