



## WFMT BUZZ

From the desk of Dr. Melissa Mercadal-Brotons



# AUGUST 2019

Dear WFMT friends and colleagues,

It is a pleasure to introduce to you the 2019 August Buzz which features the Chair of the Global Crises Intervention Commission of the WFMT World Federation of Music Therapy: **Ms. Mireya González.**

This is the last Buzz of the 2018-2019 year which have featured the different commissions of the WFMT and their Chairs. The Global Crises Intervention Commission was established in 2005 when situations of crises and natural disasters became more common in our society and new areas of intervention became a reality for many professional music therapists. The purpose of this commission is to serve as a clearing house for current relief efforts, to help coordinate people who need contacts in different countries, and to establish a list server for wars, natural disasters, political crisis, and terrorist attacks, economic crises etc. Dr. Lucanne Magill was its first chair.

This commission has been instrumental in facilitating communication and maintaining a collection of materials and information to use in disasters or traumatic/crisis situations, to inform and facilitate the work of music therapist responding to crises around the world.

I hope you find the content of this buzz interesting and informative

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President WFMT



**Ms. Mireya González, BFA, MTA, BPS  
Chair, Global Crises Intervention  
Commission**

The Global Crises Intervention Commission of the World Federation of Music Therapy (WFMT), aims to support music therapists around the world who are concerned and who seek best intervention music therapy practices to answer the needs of individuals and groups affected by crises and trauma. Since 2010, many great music therapists have taken part on the commission leaving behind a wealth of knowledge and experience.

The Commission aims to facilitate communication, support colleagues involved in crises work and provide guidelines to face the challenges of crises intervention in diverse scenarios. This is facilitated by online communication and resources provided for evidence-based practice on the WFMT web page. We have reached all continents by responding to emails of concern and offering support to music therapists who focus their work on crises and trauma related issues.



As increasingly frequent traumatic events occur around the world, music therapists need to be prepared, from a trauma-informed perspective, with the appropriate therapeutic tools to support victims. Therefore, the importance of networking among music therapists working in crisis situations around the world, becomes essential. Culture, ethnicity, language, and religion, among various practice concerns, challenge the music therapist's ability to provide a well- rounded service. As continuous migrations occur due to war displacement and political turmoil, the individual needs of ever more diverse populations must be considered and addressed.

As a result, there is a vital need for communication and collaboration among music therapists worldwide, if effective results in trauma-informed work are to be achieved and appropriate guidelines develop.

Over the years, the committee members have learned and share our own experience of practice and also from colleagues around the world, facing the challenges of music therapy services in any particular area. Research on the neurobiology of trauma and its impact on the brain and body, has led to an understanding of how trauma works at genetic, molecular and neurological levels.

Over the years, music therapy research has informed us on how music impacts the brain and can play an important role in helping individuals to cope in crises resulting in trauma, as well as art based programs. Some of the benefits have been recognized in providing a safe space for self-expression, catharsis, facilitating grieving, relaxation, socialization, building individual's resilience, stress reduction and an opportunity to build community support. Music can facilitate being aware of the moment, recognizing individual and community strengths and prepare the way to accept and deal with the future, with positive feelings. Music has a way to help individuals' express feelings and emotions, without the pressure of using words, in their own tempo.



There is also a growing need for more research in this area and to develop a better understanding from the existing literature, of what is known about the role music and music therapy interventions in crises. Also, we need to learn from individuals who have benefited from music therapy services as a therapeutic support in crises. Education and training in crises and trauma informed intervention, should be considered and included in all music therapy programs, to accommodate the growing need of music therapists around the world to provide services in this complex area

The **Global Crises Intervention Committee** has gathered written resources on crises related issues, these are on the website of WFMT. We have also developed a “general guideline fact sheet” to guide the initial intervention of music therapists, together with online conference calls as needed. Soon we will contact music therapists around the world to learn more about the challenges and needs for best practice approaches and to be able to share our experiences in a large Crises Support Network. A survey will be sent to our regional liaisons to be shared within their regions.

*Music communicates where words fail, and music therapy has been proven to connect with those who were thought to be unreachable.... (J. Sutton)*

**We love to hear from our colleagues from around the world**

**Please, be in touch.**

**Ms. Mireya González, BFA, MTA, BPS**  
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