

Music therapy clinical sessions (in person)

During the pandemic crisis many music therapy venues are closed, although some music therapists are able to continue as usual. In the case of in person therapy, the musical instruments and the environment are disinfected before and after each session. Most wind instruments are not used due to the increased risk of infection. For a greater sense of safety, clients can bring their own instruments to sessions if they wish. It is important that therapists and clients wash their hands and observe physical distancing guidelines. Music therapists can also offer live sessions through windows or from a garden, to keep sufficient distance from vulnerable participants. This way of working can limit the possibilities of in person music therapy, but can also be of great value to isolated people.

Remote sessions (by phone or online)

Music therapists can offer remote sessions over the phone or online, using secure software programs. There must be a clear privacy policy regarding the choice of program and the way it is used. Music therapists offer this service to ensure continued support, and it is not intended as a permanent alternative to 'live' sessions. In online sessions, it may not be possible to offer music therapy exactly as usual. Making music online is often difficult because of the delay and poor sound quality, but there are possibilities that can work well.

Here are some examples:

- Songwriting and composing music (a crisis can surprise us with creative impulses!)
- Adding lyrics to instrumental music or loops
- Receptive music therapy, including sharing playlists or watching videos together
- Turn-taking – making musical dialogues
- Singing and accompanying vocals while one microphone is turned off
- Reflecting verbally on the music made and feelings that arise during the crisis



Photo credit: Haven House Foundation, UK

European Music Therapy Confederation

The EMTC is a confederation of professional Music Therapy associations in Europe, with the aim of promoting mutual respect, understanding and exchange between European music therapists.

EMTC websites:

www.emtc-eu.com

www.musictherapyday.com

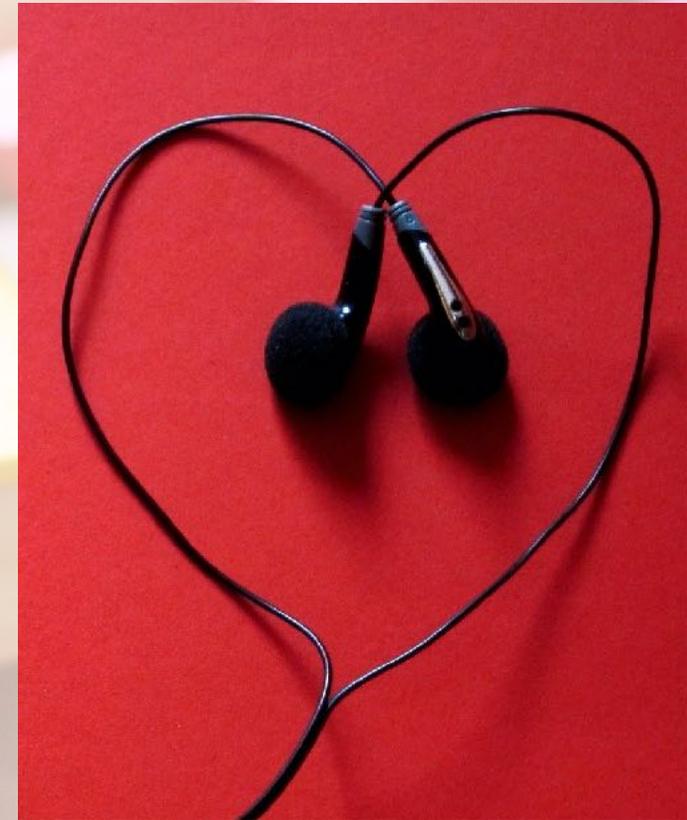
Text: *Albert Berman*

Sources: *Facebook (WFMT), BAMT.org, musictherapyday.com*



Music Connects Us

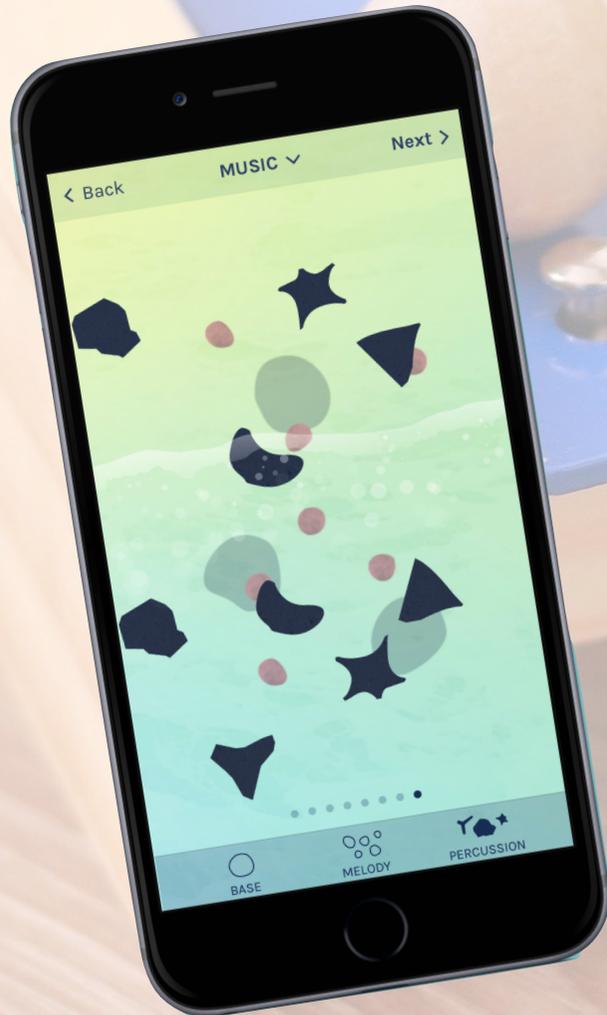
The use of music and the role of music therapy during a pandemic crisis situation



In the middle of a pandemic crisis situation lockdowns restrict our freedom of movement, forcing us to keep our distance from other people for long periods of time. This can cause stress and feelings of depression and isolation. As European music therapists we encourage you to explore the use of music for wellbeing during this challenging time and consider seeking help from a professional music therapist if necessary.

Music for wellbeing

Research suggests that singing and listening to your favorite music, dancing and playing instruments connects you to your body and emotions, which is REALLY good for you! These musical experiences create brain activity that supports mental and physical health. Here are a few suggestions to bring music into your daily routines during the crisis situation.



Listening to music

- Listen to your favorite feel-good, inspirational pieces of music each day
- Use playlists to help structure your day if you are stuck at home for a long time
- Share music with family and friends; send a song to help them feel connected
- Explore a new kind of music - there's a whole world to discover!

Singing songs

- Sing your favorite song; the tune that will get you through this crisis
- Start a backyard, balcony or open door hallway sing-along in your neighborhood
- Sing a special song for family or friends using secure video chat software



Making music and dancing

- Explore new or old instruments (perhaps hidden away in a cupboard!)
- Search for resources on the web (apps, Youtube) to discover fun new ways to make music
- Create your own lyrics and sing them while playing on homemade instruments
- Enjoy movement breaks or dance breaks with music!

If you need more support, however, consider contacting a professional music therapist in your country. They are specially trained to use music to help with a wide range of needs.



What is Music Therapy?

Music therapy is an established, research-based health profession. In Europe, more than 6,000 certified music therapists work in health and community institutions, schools, nursing homes or private practices, with a wide range of client groups across the entire age range - from infants to the elderly. Music therapists work with people with learning disabilities, autism or behavioral disorders, depression and severe mental health problems, trauma and anxiety, Parkinson's disease or dementia, in hospice care, neurodisability, in prisons and other settings. A well-trained music therapist supports clients musically and psychologically, stimulating development or change according to individual needs. The use of music therapy is effective, cost efficient and contributes to a holistic care plan.