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## Editorial

# Generosity, Dialogue and Change

Giorgos Tsiris

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“Generosity begins in *welcome*: a hospitality that offers whatever the host has that would meet the need of the guest” (Frank 2004: 2).

I *welcome* you to this new issue of *Approaches*. Writing this editorial – only three weeks after the World Congress of Music Therapy (7-12 July 2014, Austria) – I find that this issue’s contents resonate with two themes that characterised the congress: *generosity* and *dialogue*.

In his book, *The Renewal of Generosity*, sociologist Arthur Frank writes about the role of generosity in transforming “demoralised medicine” into relationships of care and dialogue between professionals (“hosts”) and patients (“guests”). In our world, where generosity has been distorted from a moral relationship to an administrative problem, Frank offers an alternative perspective; a perspective where the hospitable and dialectical nature of generosity becomes a space for mutual change of both hosts and guests.

“Generosity [...] always begins in dialogue: speaking with someone, not about them; entering a space between I and you, in which we remain other, *alter*, but in which we each offer ourselves to be changed by the other” (Frank 2004: 126).

Although Frank’s context of reference is the world of medical care, his ideas are also key for other professional fields where ideas, values and practices are developed, exchanged, refracted, examined, challenged and sometimes discarded. Generosity (which in Greek means the offering of “brave gifts”, see Froudaki 2012: 51) is indeed a brave, adventurous practice. Two strangers wish to meet and this meeting poses challenges which can even lead to “misunderstanding” by one of the other. As a brave act however, the key of generosity is to avoid the estrangement or ‘ghettoisation’ of the other and to both remain in dialogue (Ansdell 2001; Tsiris 2013).

Through this prism, and with *guests* from various countries, the World Congress offered a generous platform for exchange and constructive dialogue, and I hope that in the end we all left changed – even if just a little.

Likewise, this issue of *Approaches* offers a platform upon which authors from heterogeneous socio-cultural contexts and theoretical orientations communicate a range of music therapeutic and educational initiatives. Despite their diversity, the ideas and practices documented in this issue reflect the endeavours of ‘hosts’ (authors: practitioners and researchers) to listen and respond to the needs of their ‘guests’ (music therapy clients, students, their families and so on).

The issue begins with an interview with Anthi Agrotou – a significant personality in the development of music therapy in Cyprus. Interviewed by Dora Pavlidou, Agrotou narrates her personal journey in music therapy – a journey that portrays how an individual’s story and work is interwoven with the wider historical and socio-political circumstances within which they act. Melita Belgrave writes about the development of a music-based lifelong learning programme for older people in the USA, while Bo Nilsson presents a research study which was conducted in Sweden with the aim to explore the music education practices applied within the context of digitally-based music making with young people with special needs. Margaret Broad’s study explores the potential role of music therapy with bereaved parents following miscarriage or stillbirth. Moreover, this issue includes Niall Mc Guigan’s report from the conference “*Rethinking Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Towards New Ethical Paradigms in Music and Health Research*”, as well as five book reviews by Tamsin Dives, Carol Chambers, Evangelia Arachoviti, Bob Heath and Stella Kolyvopoulou respectively.

In closing this editorial, I would like to share with you some of the journal's recent developments, as well as its future directions:

- *Approaches* introduced the [First View](#) section which provides advance online access to papers prior to their assignment to a journal issue. Enhancing the efficiency of the journal's review and publication procedures, [First View](#) minimises the time gap between submission and publication of texts.
- *Approaches* has announced two forthcoming special thematic issues. The first one, "[Music Therapy in Europe: Paths of Professional Development](#)", is the fruit of a partnership between *Approaches* and the European Music Therapy Confederation (EMTC). The second one, "[Music, Drama, Dance Movement and Art Therapy: Interdisciplinary Dialogues](#)", reflects the journal's interest in promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and exchange. Potential authors are encouraged to contact the respective guest editors and discuss their writing ideas.
- During the World Congress, *Approaches* took part in a meeting of international music therapy journal editors. Among other topics, we had the opportunity to discuss the various ethical requirements in connection with journals' peer review procedures and open access policy.
- Our growing editorial team welcomes two new members: Mitsi Akoyunoglou-Christou (Greece) and Melanie Voigt (Germany).
- As a 'messenger', *Hermes* – the official newsletter of *Approaches* – has become an important means of communicating national and international news, currently counting more than 1100 mailing list members<sup>1</sup>. Kandia Bouzioti spearheads the development of *Hermes*, and you can share with her your news from the wider field of music and wellbeing: [approaches.hermes@gmail.com](mailto:approaches.hermes@gmail.com)

In line with these developments, the editorial team of *Approaches* will meet in Athens in September 2014. The purpose is to critically review the journal's current work and future directions. As *generous hosts* (that we are constantly trying to be!), we are interested to understand and respond to the needs and wishes of our *guests*, i.e. you: writers and readers. Therefore, I invite you to contact us ([approaches.editor@gmail.com](mailto:approaches.editor@gmail.com)) and share your

ideas and suggestions regarding the changes you may wish to see in *Approaches*.

## References

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