

*Caminante no hay camino,  
Se hace camino al andar.  
Golpe a golpe, verso a verso...*  
—Antonio Machado

*Wayfarer, there is no pathway,  
The pathway is made by travelling along it.  
Stroke by stroke, verse by verse...*  
—Antonio Machado

Dear Delegates

First of all, I want to express my wish and the wish of the entire board for your well-being and that of your families. Our thoughts and our solidarity lie with all the members of our organizations and networks that are part of the EFPP. We extend our support and admiration to all the health professionals who deal on the frontline with this medical crisis. They assist, with limited resources, the sick and silently accompany those who die alone. They are the real heroes of the day across our lands.

We also salute all the psychotherapists that contain so much of the existing anxiety, adapt their setting to the current situation and work in difficult circumstances. This is a learning situation for psychotherapist and patient alike and in some hope-fully not so distant future we can think, write and confer together about this important experience. Learning from experience.

The Covid-19 pandemic has been the most devastating period in recent world history. It has been relentlessly affecting all national health systems, the economy, social dynamics, labour, cultural and institutional systems across the globe. The virus, very pathogenic and with great virulent speed that characterizes it, remains for the foreseeable future without medical containment. It has revealed a great fragility, vulnerability and inadequacy of our societies and its citizen within it. As a firewall to the spread of this virus, drastic measures of confinement, isolation, distancing and cessation of activity are imposed. We are all faced with the awareness of uncertainty, about what may come. Immediate changes to our daily routines, to our work and in our dealing with others are the same for all. Our perception of time, of inside and outside, of the unpredictable is transformed...

All this evokes strong anxieties, causes a lot of suffering; sometimes not recognized and not always understood. Everyone's mental health across our continent and beyond is affected, in many cases in a very severe way. Patients become unemployed, lose their work and often find it difficult to pay their therapy fees. We have to think about this, and our solidarity must extend also to them. The EFPP as a European institution whose primary objective is mental health, has the responsibility to collaborate in solidarity in the care of suffering and in the emotional reparation of the damage caused.

The EFPP board is aware that the COVID 19 crisis affects our institutional work and adds complexity to the development of the Federation at different levels: organizational, scientific, economic, political, emotional. The crisis has impacted and abruptly modified our activity. Planned scientific conferences have to be postponed, movements in the networks that have to

be delayed, projects that have to wait. But this crisis also confronts us with new psychotherapeutic experiences, new clinical, technical and theoretical challenges. In this sense, the EFPP with all the organizations and networks that comprise it, is also a privileged institution that more than ever must be an active, dynamic space that allows all networks and their members to share those new experiences.

The EFPP must develop into a platform for the exchange of our thoughts, articles, to form study and discussion groups by Zoom or Skype, to find answers to the questions this current situation asks of us: clinical issues, revisiting theoretical psychoanalytic concepts, use of technology, research, organization of assistance to health professionals and victims, crisis interventions, effect on different ages, families, couples, groups, institutional uncertainties, politics etc.

We are all aware, how important the web is, we must adapt it to the challenges of today. Members need to be able to use it, to communicate within it and to share initiatives of various kinds. Think of blogs, video channels and international forums. The EFPP is a nerve center for participation and collaboration, open to all. Use the EFPP website to be a tool to transmit everything that worries you and matters to you at this time. We will keep you informed of the ongoing developments.

As mental health professionals we must be in the best possible conditions to undertake our work at this time of turbulence and uncertainty. Far from isolating and confining ourselves, we must nurture and strengthen our communication between professionals, in each of the associations, in the networks and among colleagues from different countries. We must join forces in an atmosphere of collaboration, solidarity, trust, tolerance and creativity.

Do not hesitate to contact the Board, the section coordinators, the president, the administrative secretary, whenever you need it. We will be happy to assist in everything we can.

Together we will continue to build the history of the future of the EFPP.  
Warmest regards.

María Eugenia Cid Rodríguez  
President of the EFPP  
On behalf of the Board.

Madrid, March 2020