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The history of the nederlandse vereniging voor hypnose (netherlands society of hypnosis)

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THE HISTORY OF THE NEDERLANDSE VERENIGING VOOR HYPNOSE
(NETHERLANDS SOCIETY OF HYPNOSIS)

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Abstract: The foundation and history of the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnose (Netherlands Society of Hypnosis or Nvvh) is described. The year 2001 marks the 70th anniversary of the Nvvh's creation. The article describes the accomplishments, leadership, and philosophy of the Society across the decades. Current professional and training directions are discussed.

In light of our formal affiliation with the International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis and by invitation of the editor, we herein describe the history of the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnose (Nvvh). Those who are interested in a more detailed account of the history of hypnosis in the Netherlands would be well advised to read van der Hart, Spinhoven, Vermetten, and Vanderlinden (1998). The Nvvh began in 1931 as the Netherlands Society of Medical Hypnosis, a society for physicians and dentists interested in hypnosis. The founders were mainly psychiatrists, neurologists, and dentists who were using hypnosis in their practices and research. For a long time, the Society was little more than a club for enthusiasts. In those days, there was not an official office, and most of the meetings were held at a member's home.

The first president of the Society was Berthold Stokvis, who in large part directed the Society's activities for its first 35 years. Stokvis gave the first training courses in clinical hypnosis to groups of medical students. In addition, he was interested in the practical application of hypnosis, the formulation of theory, and experimental research in the field of hypnosis and suggestion. By 1955, the Society consisted of 51 members, six of whom were psychiatrists, and one member was a Belgian.

In 1965, Wybe Vietor, a psychiatrist, together with another psychiatrist, Harm Kloos, and a dentist, Dick Coster, resurrected the Netherlands Society of Medical Hypnosis. In the Society's early days,
psychologists were not allowed to join because of a law enacted in 1892, which limited the practice of hypnosis to the medical profession. In the 1970s, after the law was repealed, it became possible for psychologists to affiliate with the Society. J. T. Barendrecht, who at that time was a professor of clinical psychology at the University of Amsterdam, exercised a great deal of influence in the decision to include psychologists in the Society. This development, in 1973, led to a change in the name of the Society to Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnotherapie (Netherlands Society of Hypnotherapy). This title was retained until recently. In 1974, the Society was given royal approval by Queen Juliana and the official name of Koninklijke Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnotherapie (the Royal Netherlands Society of Hypnotherapy).

Twenty years later, the question of whether other professional disciplines could be admitted as members was raised again. Although this development is going at a slow pace, since 1995 it has been possible for health care workers, such as social workers, social psychiatric nurses, and dental hygienists, to become members by undergoing specialized training programs. At the same time, the name of the Society, after prolonged discussion, was changed to its current title, the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnose (Netherlands Society of Hypnosis).

Under the presidency of Richard van Dyck (1978-1984), an excellent training program was developed, which led to the enormous growth of the Society. Initially, invited colleagues associated with Milton Erickson did much of the teaching and training. Later, this function was handed over to local colleagues.

At this time, there are four divisions in the Society, each with its own membership training requirements. They are psychotherapy (BP), dentistry (BT), medicine (BG), and health care (BSO). Training is provided on two levels. In 1979, the basic training program was implemented. This now consists of 28 hours of training in small groups of 12 participants, focusing on the basics of working with hypnosis: standard induction techniques, hypnotic phenomena, forms of suggestion, basic therapeutic procedures, deinduction, handling adverse effects, and reviewing the experience in terms of autonomous process. The usual format of training in these topics includes discussion of studied texts; a demonstration of the technique or phenomenon by the teacher/trainer; practice sessions by the participants (supervised by the trainer); practice review, sometimes complemented by video demonstrations of actual therapy sessions; group experiences; and supervision-like presentations.

The emphasis in basic training is on technique and familiarizing participants with many of the situations one encounters when starting to work with hypnosis.

To this end, we give our students a "Dutch treat." They must read a solid hypnosis textbook and pass a written examination. Then the focus of training moves to hands-on practice instead of lectures. Further,
participants are required to read about 80 pages a day during the training program. The 28 hours of training usually take place over a period of several months, with practice sessions and homework assignments interspersed. During this period, participants are advised to use hypnosis only in the therapeutic domains with which they are already familiar (e.g., in relaxation or guided-fantasy techniques). The health care division is the only one that has an integrated basic and advanced training program, consisting of a total of 56 hours (8 days) over a one-year period.

Although the basic training program is the same for all divisions and can be given to groups of mixed professionals, the advanced training program (since its inception in 1981) is more specialized: Psychotherapists do 104 hours of training (16 workshop days over a two-year period), and dentists have 56 hours (8 days), as do physicians. For every professional group, the training addresses the complaints, problem behaviors, and symptoms that are amenable to hypnosis and hypnotic techniques and interventions that are useful for specific treatment settings, in addition to more general guidelines for treatment planning.

Psychotherapists (including psychologists and psychiatrists) receive the most extensive training. Generally speaking, half the workshops are orientated around intervention methods (e.g., metaphors and ego states), the other half around complaints and diagnostic categories (e.g., phobias and dissociative disorders).

In addition to the divisional training programs, clinical supervision is required to become a full member of the Society. Psychotherapists require 20 clinical hours of supervised work, medical doctors and health care workers need 10 sessions, and dentists need 7 hours of supervised practice. In addition, the candidate must write a paper intensively describing at least one case.

In 1984, the Nvvh became affiliated with the International Society of Hypnosis and, a little later, with the European Society of Hypnosis in Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine (ESH).

The Nvvh has twice organized and hosted an international congress on hypnosis. The first time was the 11th International Congress of Hypnosis, held in The Hague in 1988, an international breakthrough for the Society. The second time was the 8th European Congress on Hypnosis in Psychotherapy and Psychosomatic Medicine, held in Amsterdam/Noordwijkerhout in 1999. The Society’s international orientation is also reflected in the fact that three consecutive presidents of the Society, Richard van Dyck, Kees Hoogduin, and Erik Hoencamp, were on the ISH and ESH boards. Several members have gained national and international recognition as a result of their activities in the field of hypnosis, either through their therapeutic work or through publications in professional journals.
In 1991, the Society celebrated its 60th anniversary with a highly successful conference on Trauma, Soma, and Hypnosis, with guest speakers including David Spiegel and Bessel van der Kolk. On this occasion, Erika Fromm was made an honorary member. In 1999, the Society formally adopted the *International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis* (IJCEH) as its journal. Prior to that time, the Society published a quarterly journal of its own, *Hypnotherapie*. The Society organizes conferences and seminars regularly, sometimes in conjunction with other professional societies. In 1999, the Society started a 3-year project in South Africa to train a group of professionals in trauma treatment with hypnotic procedures. In addition, there are several regional study and peer supervision groups throughout the country.

In sum, the Society began as a small interest group more than 60 years ago and has matured in concert with the field of hypnosis to an organization with a membership of more than 650 professionals. Like the history of hypnosis, the Society’s membership has shown an undulation of prosperity and decline, but what remains is the spirit of enthusiasm. We take pride in our history and our ongoing participation in clinical and scientific hypnosis worldwide as we celebrate our 70th anniversary this year with a symposium in Amsterdam on October 6, 2001.

**REFERENCES**


**PAST PRESIDENTS**

1931-1965  B. Stokvis, M.D.
1965-1970  W. Vietor, M.D.
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1984-1986  C. Hoogduin, M.D., Ph.D.
1986-1989  E. Hoencamp, M.D., Ph.D.
1989-1992  O. van der Hart, Ph.D.
1992-1997  J. Verlinden, M.P.D.
1997-      H. de Berk, M.D., Ph.D.

Die Geschichte der Nederlandse vereniging voor hypnose
(Niederländische Gesellschaft für Hypnose)

Anne Korsen und Ton Wilken

und die allgemeine Philosophie der Nvvh durch die Jahrzehnte, einschließlich der aktuellen Berufs- und Ausbildungsrichtungen.

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Histoire de la Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnose
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La historia de la Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnose
(Sociedad Holandesa de Hipnosis)

Anne Korsen y Ton Wilken
Resumen: Describimos la creación e historia de la Nederlandse Vereniging voor Hypnose (Sociedad Holandesa de Hipnosis). En el 2001 se celebra el 70mo. aniversario de la creación de la Nvvh. Este artículo describe los logros, liderazgo y filosofía de la Sociedad durante estas décadas. Se mencionan también las direcciones actuales en cuanto a la profesión y su educación.

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