

ROZHOVOR S WELMOED VISSER-KOREVAAR

ORTOPEDKA A SEXUOLOŽKA V HOLANDSKU



LECTURER IN THE FIELD OF SEXUALITY

MARKETA MALATOVA

Could You introduce Yourself, please?

I'm an orthopedagogue and sexologist, NVVS (member of the dutch scientific society for sexology). I have been working from my own practice, orthopedagogical consultancy Welmoed since 2005. Before that, I worked in the care for people with a slight intellectual disability and youth care as a treatment coordinator.

In my own practice I have specialized in sexological issues among people with an intellectual and / or physical disability, in people with a disorder in the autistic spectrum and in children and adolescents in residential youth care. They are both children and adults who are registered with me. The applicants come from the family system, institutions for people with disabilities, education, clinics and the CCE. The CCE is the center for consultation and expertise, which focuses on complex casuistics.

I do both research and treatment, I also give lectures and trainings in the field of sexology in combination with my specializations. The examples from daily practice form a lively part of my lectures and trainings, in addition to a solid theoretical foundation.



How exactly do you work with people with disability? What do you offer them?

I do both research and treatment. I work with them at the place they live. So, in their residential home care or at home or in schools. I treat them with different verbal techniques, but also I use a lot of visual materials in my treatments, like cards with drawings and questions, a play, pictures, dolls etc. I use these to help them integrate the message better.

What tools do you use when you are working with people with disability and which are most proven?

We have different tools we use, you can find a selection at the website; <https://www.kennispleingehandicapensector.nl/eigen-regie/seksualiteit>.

There has also been a study at the tools we use in the sexual education programmes for clients with intellectual disabilities. You can find information about the proven or non-proven tools there. This is the link to the article; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234031996_Exploring_the_Development_of_Existing_Sex_Education_Programmes_for_People_with_Intellectual_Disabilities_An_Intervention_Mapping_Approach.

How and when did you meet Freya?

I met Freya by a former colleague of mine in 2018. Freya asked them to do a training in the field of sexology for people with an intellectual disability. They were not able to do the asked training, so they approached me. I asked my colleague Daphne Kemner and so it happened.

How sex education takes place in Netherlands?

Sex education takes place both at home as in schools as in residential care. There are programs for schools as there are programs for residential care settings. But you always have to work together, it's never only a responsibility from the parents or only from the caretakers, especially not for people with ID. They need this collaboration. The Rutgers organization provides a lot of these programs.



Do you recommend sexual assistance to your clients? If yes, in what case?

Yes I recommend that, but only if I know that's the question, to have sex (or other sexual activities) with someone else, and they are ready for it. In the past it was more often suggested to clients and their caretakers, but I'm careful. Because crossing a boundary, even if that's not your goal, is something that can happen fast. So a good knowledge about sexuality, their own sexuality, assertiveness and a good idea of their own wishes is necessary. So most of the times we give psycho-education or treatment before sexual assistance, so the clients and their caretakers know better what they choose for. Want to have sex is different from having sex. The reality is sometimes more difficult than the idea.

And my goal is that they have a good experience which helps them in their sexual development, fulfill their sexual needs and supports their sexual health.

In what case you would not recommend sexual assistance?

If it's not the answer to their actual question, you have to find that out. Sometimes it's presented as a question for sex but it turns out to be a question for only touching, or just release tension. A good knowledge of the question is necessary.



Freya has its 5th birthdays, what would you wish for Freya for years to come?

Keep on doing your important work. Do your work together with the clients, caretakers, and their parents. Don't forget schools in your mission. It starts with talking about sexuality, to give words to this sometimes private and delicate subject. We have sexual rights in the world for our people with ID, so we are obligated to give them the information and the skills to handle it. It's not only about sexual abuse, sexual health and pleasure is an important focus. Give lectures at educational institutes where the caretakers get their education. It starts there. Sexual assistance is necessary, it can do a lot of good, but handle it with care and first learn our people to handle their own sexuality, solo sex can be a good, sometimes the best alternative.