



*Miquel de Jong*

# Spotlight on Rolfing® Association of the Netherlands

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## 1. Tell us about the Rolfers® in the Netherlands.

What is nice about the Dutch Rolfers is that we have three generations. We have old-school Rolfers who have more than twenty years of practice, then there is a good middle block, and there is now a group of new Rolfers as well. It is almost one-third in each group. We are not sure about who was the first Rolfer, but the Dutch pioneers were Paul Henri van den Berg and Henk van Dijk.

## 2. When did the regional association Rolfing® Nederland form and who were the key people at the time? Who are the key people now?

The start of our regional association was in December 2010, and the founders were Henk van Dijk, Marielle Kemna Toledo, Paul Henri van den Berg, Rosa Vreeling, Janco Volk, Miquel de Jong, Martin Reed, Angelika Gürtler, and John Armstrong. The regional association got official status in the Netherlands in 2018, from the work of Janco Volk and Eileen McEwan. About half of the Rolfers in the Netherlands have trained for an additional medical certificate that qualifies them to be a part of a Dutch professional organization that works with health insurance. These days, the chair of our regional association is Miquel de Jong, Kostas Stavridis is the secretary, and John van Roosmalen works with us as well.

## 3. What inspired the group to come together? Do you have continuing education together?

Growing the Rolfing community was one of our goals, exchanging experiences in the Netherlands is also important, and of course, making Rolfing® Structural Integration (SI) more well known here as

well. Janco Volk organized workshops for us to come together as Rolfers, to give us continuing education in the Netherlands, and to connect with other disciplines of manual bodywork. We are interested in cross-pollination with colleagues in related professions, to address the isolation that Rolfing SI has suffered, we want to be open and grow together.

## 4. Where is Rolfing Nederland located?

Rotterdam, Netherlands.

## 5. What are the main issues that your regional association focuses on?

Publicity and sharing our experiences with each other. We like to stay up to date in the bigger field of health, to be current about insurance and reimbursement regulations, and to be a recognized professional organization (<https://vbag.nl>).

## 6. How did the Rolfers in the Netherlands manage their businesses during the last two and a half years of COVID-19 conditions?

We had frequent online meetings between us Rolfers, to support each other. We focused on having more visibility online, with our Instagram postings and Facebook pages. We did our best to keep in contact with our clients.

## 7. What are the goals and aspirations for Rolfing Nederland in 2022 and 2023?

We have been involved in the new educational pathways that the European Rolfing Association e.V. (ERA) has launched. Our small association held a Level 1 training in Amsterdam this fall, we've coordinated with an established massage school as our facility. Rolfers

are health care providers in alternative medicine, here in the Netherlands, several laws apply to our work, and in order to meet those regulatory requirements, Rolfers need additional medical credentials. An important topic for us now and in the future is to work together with other structural integration practitioners, like the Swiss association has been doing, to build recognition of SI as our professional category, and our method.

## 8. What would you like our colleagues around the world to know about Rolfing SI in the Netherlands?

Rolfing Nederland is a group of Rolfers with experience and expertise in many other professions, and we draw from our backgrounds to enrich our work as Rolfers. For example, in our professional group, we have people with backgrounds in dance, music, psychology, photography, physical therapy, culinary arts, and engineering. One of our members is on the board of directors of the ERA. And when we have our annual meetings, 75% of our membership shows up for the get-together. ■



Rotterdam, Netherlands (Photo by Niels Kehl on Unsplash).