

VERBAL HEARING OF EXPERT WITNESSES

At the request of the Extra Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry 2020 (BPOC2020), I, Dr Frank Stadermann, heard today as an expert witness a person who identified herself as:

Name: Sheila Jeannette Neijman

Date of birth: 16 February 1965

Birthplace: Leiden

Occupation: positive psychologist (drs.) and also HBO nurse

The expert witness stated the following:

I have been trained as a positive psychologist. This university study focuses on all aspects that make life pleasant and make people happy. This course of study complements the 'normal' psychology study, which focuses on diseases and abnormalities. Here I charge a little. Positive psychology is a serious university study, but unfortunately it is sometimes dismissed as pseudoscience. I started my own business 15 years ago and from there I developed an HBO professional education. It teaches students how they can develop people into happier employees in work situations. "Happiness" is a factor that is also receiving increasing attention in business and government. There are even officials charged with the task of looking after and ensuring conditions in which employees can function as happier people. From my expertise, I can say that the experience of happiness is hugely important to human health. Physical health, mental health and spiritual health are strongly correlated with happiness. Happiness leads to longer life, happy people are generally more empathic and they are more pro-social by which I mean that they connect more easily with other people. And finally, very important: happiness is very important for a strong immune system. Someone is then much more protected against disease.

Every year, the United Nations publishes a so-called World Happiness Report. This charts the experience of happiness in 156 countries. The Netherlands, too, of course, is included in this survey. In fact, the Netherlands has always been among the top 10 countries with a happy population in this annual report. And that was also the case in the 2019 report. The report on 2020 is, of course, yet to be published, and so we do not know what it will contain. However, interim reports from the Global Health Innovation of Imperial College London show that this experience of happiness has fallen at a record pace in some 20 countries. This enormous drop in the perception of happiness is directly attributable to the measures taken by the governments, and therefore also by the Dutch Government, in connection with the corona crisis. I can say that so emphatically because that is what was said in that report. This ICL report shows that people collectively suffer from the following complaints: they have anxiety, depression, they are traumatised, and have high symptoms of stress and post-traumatic stress disorder. They sleep very badly or they sleep a lot. There is a lot of loneliness as a result of social isolation. Domestic violence has increased by 60%.

For children who grow up in such a situation of domestic violence, this has the consequence that the prefrontal cortex grows less, so the brain remains smaller. And because it is precisely in this prefrontal cortex that emotions are regulated, these children will have more problems with emotions as adults. As a result, they can develop post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. So if I conclude that domestic violence has increased by 60% as a result of the Corona measures, you can understand what that means for the extent of the psychological problems that are now being created in children. The loneliness that people feel as a result of the corona measures also leads to health damage; it weakens the immune system, can lead to depression, increased risk of heart disease. It may even lead to the onset of Alzheimer's disease, but more research needs to be done in this area.

The increased loneliness resulting from the measures also leads to more suicides. As far as I am aware, there are no figures on this at the moment. However, as a psychologist, I can assure you that this year, during the crisis, there will be significantly more suicides. As far as I am concerned, there is no doubt that the World Happiness Report for 2020 will reveal this in the near future. Not just for the Netherlands, but worldwide.

A recent report by the American Institute of Stress also shows what stress does to people. Stress leads to heart disease, dysfunctional immune systems, cancer, liver disease, lung disease, more accidents, decreased intelligence and increased use of alcohol and drugs. In my opinion, therefore, the corona measures taken also lead to an increase, as a result of stress, in all these complaints.

Stress does even more; if the stress lasts long enough, it leads to 'learned helplessness'. This is a term derived from positive psychology. Let me give you an example. Take a dog; you can condition a dog very easily by means of a pain stimulus. You leave a light on and immediately after that you provoke pain on him. The dog then walks to the other side of the room. The dog learns this very quickly. So as soon as the light comes on for the third or fourth time, the dog will move to the other side of the room again. If in such an experiment, an obstacle is then erected so that the dog can no longer escape, he then surrenders himself to fate. He then can do nothing more. We call this learned helplessness. This is no different for humans. If we cannot escape, we also start to behave helplessly. And that is exactly what we see happening with the measures that have been taken. If the stress lasts long enough, people can fall into learned helplessness. Their conscious thinking is turned off. Stress constricts the blood vessels in the frontal lobe of the brain. The energy thus saved can be used for more primary functions. As a result of the brain falling back to primary functions due to the stress, we fight and flee (that is the stress reaction). But when fighting and fleeing is no longer possible, we become more docile. This learned helplessness leads people, because they no longer think, to adapt to their environment and do what they are told. People then give up.

The above applies to all the measures; when people fall into that learned helplessness, they follow measures such as the social distancing, the lockdown, the mouth masks.

People all over the world are now surviving in this corona crisis. And that leads to chronic stress and makes them easier to manipulate. By this I mean that it is easier to get people to do things they don't really want to do (because that's manipulation). People then actually do everything they are told to do. This is called slavish submission. In itself this is nothing new; it has existed for centuries. In science we speak of dark psychology.

We see this manipulation on a daily basis. Every day we are bombarded with figures and numbers about diseases and infections, and we are talked into enormous fears. And then we are told that we have to wear a mouth mask. Such an obligation to wear a mouth mask is purely manipulative, because mouth masks have no useful effect; they are harmful to the health of the person wearing them. For example, scientific research has shown that people wearing a mouth mask are 13 times more likely to fall ill with the flu. The mouth masks shields the vagus nerve. The vagus nerve ensures that you can perceive other people well. So by sealing it with a mouth mask, that nerve loses its usefulness. This is difficult for everyone, but especially for people with an autistic spectrum disorder. People who have experienced sexual abuse or a robbery with a balaclava can also be triggered again. You tell me that I am a psychologist and you ask me why I think I have special knowledge in this area. I answer that I have done a meta-analysis on the literature relating to the mouth masks. And it is on this basis that I think I can say about mouth masks the things I just said. That is why prescribing the wearing of a mouth mask is manipulation because you make people do something they do not want to do when there is no good reason for it and you give them a false sense of security.

I also see this manipulation in the terminology used by the authorities, such as 'Only together will we get corona under control' and 'The freedom of one must not be at the expense of the health of the other'. There is a kind of guilt program; you could infect an elderly person who dies as a result. I find these kinds of statements quite a lot. From a psychological point of view it has a huge impact on people.

The manipulation is also reflected in the view that we will only be safe with a vaccine. No attention is paid to lifestyle; critics are defamed/framed. Doctors who are looking for an alternative are being silenced by the government. There is a very aggressive strategy of censorship. And that is harmful to everyone, it affects freedom.

The social distancing is not a good basis for this either. I dare to say that because I have also done literature research on the subject and have been in contact with the RIVM. There is no scientific publication showing that the social distancing is suitable as a measure to combat the virus.

Finally, I would like to make this point. People who are faced with fierce events during this corona crisis may suffer from them for years to come. Think of the situation where someone could not say farewell to a parent who was dying, separated in a care home. Or think of an entrepreneur who sees his business break down. These people could suffer for years to come from what they have experienced.

Leiderdorp

7 November 2020

Read out, confirmed and signed,

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Sheila Neijman

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Dr. F. Stadermann

Translated from dutch