



Nederlands Instituut van Psychologen **NIP**

# Dealing with professional ethics and complaints within and outside the Association (NIP)

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# Professional ethics?

- **What is important: principles, values and regulations**
- **The national law**
- **Code of ethics**
- **Supporting and guiding colleagues**
- **Teaching ethics**
- **Informing the public**
- **Publishing**
- **Research**
- **Dealing with complaints**

# This presentation

- Organizing ethics within the NIP:
  - the Board of Ethics
  - The Disciplinary Board
  - Why is it organized in this way?
- Complaints against psychologists
  - the process
  - the complaints

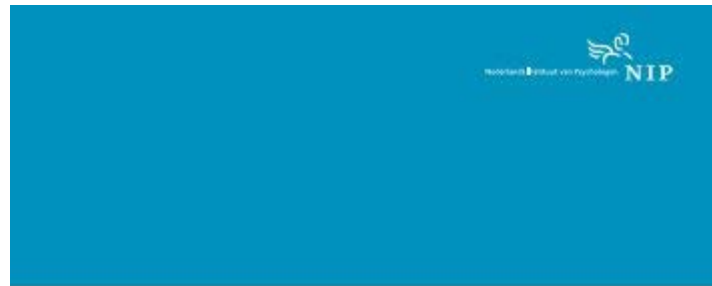
# Jessica

- **25 years old woman from Deventer with depressive feelings**
- **went to a outdoor department of a Mental Health Institute**
- **a multidisciplinary intake**
- **then started psychotherapy and physiotherapy**
- **a remark from the physiotherapist revealed that he knew something about the family history which Jessica had told the psychotherapist.**
- **what to do?**

# Board of Ethics of the NIP

- The guardian of the *Code of Ethics*:
  - updating every 5 year
  
- Informing the colleagues:
  - publishing: website: the case of the month  
magazine: discussing a case
  - educating: symposia, lectures
  
- Informing the public:
  - website, newspapers, radio
  
- Working together with other groups within the NIP: e.g.
  - the group Human Rights and Psychology

# Code of Ethics



Beroepscode voor psychologen



# the Disciplinary Board

- Dealing with complaints
  - hearing both parties
  - giving a judgement
  - sometimes sanctioning
- The Code of Ethics is the standard.
- Both lawyers and psychologists



## The frequency of complaints in 2015

The sum of all discussed complaints in 2015:

o Decisions taken after hearing the parties:

41 63%

o Decisions after a written exchange of opinions:

17 26%

o Withdrawn:

7 11%

Total:

65 100%

# Affirmed complaints in 2015

• considerate behaviour	4
• being free to act according to the code	5
• independency and objectivity	4
• avoiding a conflict of roles	5
• informed starting and continuing the professional relationship (PR)	4
• informing the client at the start of a PR	4
• inspection of the report	4
• correction of the report	4
• reporting about others then the client	4
• the use of effective and functional methods	4

# Ethics within the NIP

## Board of Ethics:

- the Ethical code
- education
- publications
- participating in discussions, etc.

## Disciplinary Board:

- dealing with complaints (hearing both parties, giving a judgement and sanctioning)
- both lawyers and psychologists

# The principle of division of powers (I)



**Charles de  
Montesquieu  
(18th century):**

**Trias politica**

# The principle of division of powers (II)

- the legislative power
- the judicial power
- the executive power

# The principle of division of powers (III)

- the legislative power: *the board of ethics*
- the judicial power: *the disciplinary board*
- the executive power: *General Board*

# Implications (I)

- a member of the Board of Ethics can **not** be a member of the Disciplinary Board
- a member of the Disciplinary Board can **not** be a member of the Board of Ethics
- the Disciplinary Board is **independent** of the General Board of the NIP
- one can **disallow** a member of the DB

## Implications (II)

- a balance of powers within this structure
- a fair treatment for all psychologists
- a fair treatment for the complainant and the defendant in the special cases



# Possibilities for a client to file a complaint

- a complaint committee of one's organization
- the disciplinary board of the NIP
- the disciplinary board of the government
- the Public Health Inspection
- a legal procedure

**Thank you for your attention**

**Questions?**