

## Laudatio

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**I**f one person deserves to be an honorary member of the Dutch CBT association it is Isaac Marks. He is a psychiatrist and one of the founding members of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. He has been very influential in the implementation of behaviour therapy not only in the UK, but also in continental Europe and many other countries around the world. There is not one continent in which Isaac Marks has not been a visiting professor. Isaac Marks has done many clinical studies and he is one of the most cited behaviour therapists. In the Encyclopedia of Behavior therapy and Cognitive Behavior Therapy (Edited by Hersen) only four biographies from leading psychologists and psychiatrists from Europe are included, one of these four is Isaac Marks.

Looking back at his career it is difficult to decide which of his numerous studies has been the most influential. I and a number of other colleagues in the Netherlands have been inspired by his now classic book *Fear and Phobias* published in 1969 in which his earlier research at the Bethlem-Maudsley hospital in the sixties of the last century was presented. In this book, it is already described that many roads lead to Rome, but that the most effective routes are based on some sort of exposure. Since then, at least 12 other professional books and nearly 500 scientific papers have been published. Going through all these publications here and now is undoable. Personally, I think that three studies are particularly important.

In one of these studies published in 1980 in the *British journal of Psychiatry*, it was demonstrated that clomipramine is useful for compulsive ritualizers with depressed mood, but may need continuation for over a year and combination with exposure *in vivo*. Exposure *in vivo* remained the treatment of choice for rituals without depressed mood.

In another highly important study published in 1998 in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*, it was shown that not only trauma-focused exposure but also cognitive restructuring was effective in PTSD. And the third study, published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry* in 1993, involved a large cross-continental trial in which it was found that both alprazolam and exposure were effective, but exposure had twice the effect size of alprazolam. During taper and follow-up, gains after alprazolam were lost, while gains after exposure were maintained.

Results of these studies and many other studies of Isaac Marks have been integrated in Multidisciplinary Clinical Guidelines in many countries around the world.



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Apart from his scientific work, Isaac has been an advocate 'avant la lettre' of evidence-based psychotherapy. In the sixties and seventies of the last century in which psychodynamic and experiential therapies were still very popular among practitioners he continued to stress that there should be a solid evidence for interventions before they would be given.

Although he did a lot of studies into the effects of pharmacotherapy which were funded by large pharmaceutical companies, he continued to be critical of the use of pharmacotherapy in anxiety disorders and depression, so critical that large companies became reluctant to support his studies. Apart from his scientific work, Isaac Marks was a devoted clinician and he travelled around the world to train novices and experienced therapists in exposure based treatments.

Although you would not guess so given his young sporty look and his continuous stream of publications, Isaac Marks is over 75, but still going strong. His most recent work involves the study and implementation of computer-aided psychotherapy. In this field also, he has been one of the forerunners and is in good companion of Freddy Lange, who is also an honorary member of the VGt.

Throughout his career, Isaac Marks has tried to implement treatments in the community. He was one of the first who investigated the effectiveness of nurse practitioners in implementing evidence-based treatments to reach more individuals in the community. Similarly, one of his most recent publications involves a study into the effectiveness of problem solving therapy in deprived South African communities.

Therefore it is an honor to present professor Isaac Marks with the honorary membership of the VGt and we are proud that he has accepted.

*Professor Paul M.G. Emmelkamp, Ph.D.  
Academy Professor Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences  
University of Amsterdam  
and honorary member of the VGt*

