



Who Is Armand C. Hagedoorn, MD, senior physiatrist: my chronicle

Lived and trained all my younger years in Holland. Given the choice what to study, I saw a technical career as well as a medical career as the two possibilities, narrowing it down to aircraft engineering or psychiatry. After 1½ years of intense university training in aircraft engineering I didn't see myself my whole life designing some minor parts of aircraft in a team of engineers under some layers of bosses; I changed to the study of medicine. Some eleven years later, I graduated as medical specialist in Rehabilitation and Physical Medicine, with special training in Spinal Cord Injury, Head Injury, amputation rehab, neuro rehab, pain management and outpatient rehab.

Just before starting the specialty training, I met the love of my life, in Mexico. We married well within a year (when convinced, no need to linger).

In preparation for our project to set up a private rehab center in Mexico, we were able to go to Saudi-Arabia: an incredible adventure, at almost three years cut short by the Gulf War. We then set up our own out/inpatient rehab center in Cuernavaca, Mexico: one of its kind, developed completely from scratch; we went from tiny to small, saw all kinds of patients, including devastating accident victims, head injured, para- and tetraplegics, strokes and others; patients from all walks of life, from indigent to richer-than-rich. In the end, we had to let it go: too little (financial) security or future, too much chances for security disasters. Back to Holland, to safety and to walking a relatively narrow path of regulations and fair limitations: thirteen years of (albeit high- scaled) employee-dom. Earlier, my parents had built their ideal homestead on the Canary Island La Palma.

By the time we returned to the Netherlands, their life had crumbled under a slowly progressing vascular dementia of my mother; they decided to come back to the Netherlands. We all got to experience the well indented but (especially for the free-minded) reductive, socialized elderly care system, and it was not pretty. It all ended in a tragic separation of the two, an equally tragic suicide of my father while my mother lived for ten more years under our intense care.

This is when my idealistic ideas of a better, mostly secondary-preventive education- and training system was born. I founded the Mendel Foundation in 2011; I wrote a bunch of articles, devising the systematics, giving talks, and more recently I made several You-Tubes. It found no real resonance, really, to date.

With one nice exception: under the Mendel-banner I was thrilled to help and develop a really new way of practicing outpatient rehab in the Netherlands. We developed small, close-at-home, truly interdisciplinary rehab centers out of large physical therapy centers: all in all, some seventeen of them. The first few were named "Mendel Rehab Centers".

It was so beautiful and gratifying to see all these teams develop, ripen and flourish; all delivering beautifully effective and patient-empowering rehab, largely for complex problems like post-stroke and -injury, chronic pain, degenerative ailments. To date, we help so many patients bounce back, once they learn to respect their limits and correct their course in life.

We, as a family, consider ourselves incredibly fortunate to really live in three different “worlds”: the neat, structured, safe world of the Netherlands; the indescribable optimistic, abundant and free-for-all USA; and the colorful, culture-strife and extremes-abundant Mexico with all its warmth, cultures, flavors and wealth.

What a wonderful challenge to try and develop systematics “to get real old, real well” for all three worlds!

So far, all of the Mendel Foundation and its aspirations has been extremely low-budget, smaller-than-small scaled, a team of one and a very few supporters; lots of ideas and initiatives. Clearly, I have no knack for setting up an expanding team or firing up the dynamics to have it all take flight – yet.

Recently, especially after developing undeniable borderline hypertension *and* feeling fairly lost after retiring myself, I decided to put all I know so far and all the new knowledge of not-so conventional medicine I learned in the past few years, to the test: to really “walk the talk”.

And Boy, oh Boy: what a happy surprise this brought me!

I am Happy, Grateful, Puzzled, Excited, Fearful, in short, Blissed...
...to tell you about my current state of health:

Zero overweight

Zero prescription medications, zero “medical issues”

No pains that limit me

Rigorous exercise 90+ mins every day

Eating two unlimited colorful, tasteful and delicious meals per day

Drink what I desire

Sleep like a rose, Wake refreshed and joyful

I am in my seventieth' year; biological age between 34 and 46 (depending on the questionnaire) ...

I am profoundly fortunate and grateful to describe myself as highly energetic, warm, sensitive, positive, optimistic; sticky for the positive & Teflon for the negative; fearless and productive; a natural team player, here enjoy and to be of service.

On a mission: lets' HealthDance!

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