KODIAK
– a psychological model for de-escalation in everyday police operations

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1 Introduction

Violence is a part of everyday police work, whereby routine operations encompass any kind of deployment that police officers without any specializations handle daily. These include for example, interventions in cases of domestic violence, handling of traffic accidents and offenses, and various forms of conflict resolution. The police are called upon to intervene or initiate criminal proceedings because one or more persons are using any form of violence against one or more other persons. On the other hand, police officers use violence to enforce measures or ensure the safety of citizens or other first responders. This violence is legitimized by law.

Police officers also experience violence when attacks are directed against them (Ellrich and Baiser, 2022; Leuschner et al., 2023; Taylor, Liu and Sheridan, 2023; Tiesman et al., 2018). Defending oneself, repelling dangers from others, and enforcing measures against citizen resistance are, therefore, everyday police tasks. The use of force is

Zusammenfassung

Gewalt zu vermeiden und zu verhindern, erfordert viel. Einsatzkräfte erleben jeden Tag Situationen, in denen Gewalt präsent ist. Sie in die Lage zu versetzen, Gewalt zu verhindern und zu vermeiden oder nur mit geringer Intensität einzusetzen, ist Ziel von Deeskalation. Zu deeskalieren kann und muss gelernt werden. Dieses Lernen soll durch das Modell kommunikativer Deeskalation in alltäglichen Konfliktsituationen (KODIAK) unterstützt werden. KODIAK möchte Polizeibeamt*innen helfen, Fertigkeiten zu entwickeln, um Konflikte in alltäglichen Einsätzen zu bewältigen. KODIAK bietet Orientierung für zielgerichtetes Deeskalieren in solchen alltäglichen Einsatzsituationen. Der hier vorgelegte Beitrag führt in KODIAK und sein wissenschaftliches Fundament ein.

Deeskalation, Einsatzkommunikation, Eigensicherung, unmittelbarer Zwang, Gewaltprävention.

Abstract

Preventing and avoiding violence requires a lot. Every day, law enforcement officers encounter situations where violence is present. The goal of de-escalation is to empower them to prevent and avoid violence or to use it with minimal intensity. De-escalation can and must be learned. This learning is intended to be supported by the Model of Communicative De-escalation in Everyday Conflict Situations (German: Modell kommunikativer Deeskalation in alltäglichen Konfliktsituationen [KODIAK]). KODIAK aims to assist police officers in developing skills to manage conflicts in everyday operations. It guides targeted de-escalation in such deployment scenarios. The present article introduces the KODIAK model against the current research landscape surrounding police de-escalation, providing explanations for its background. The model offers a practical approach to a sphere that has seldom been evaluated in police practice.

De-escalation, police communication, safety, violence prevention, use of force.

legitimized, but always in a delicate balance, as the two sides (violence against police officers and by police officers) seem to depend on each other (Lauber and Welscher, 2023; van Reemst, Fischer and Weerman, 2022). Using less force can result in police officers being victimized. Excessive force is a crime and turns the police officer into an offender. The responsible task of using force in the line of duty requires a lot and can have severe consequences for individuals as well as for the general population, as events such as those following the death of George Floyd in the USA (Campbell, 2021; Skoy, 2020), the debate following the fatal shooting of a 16-year-old in Germany in the summer of 2022 (Bauernfeind, 2022), and the riots in France in 2023 after the killing of a 17-year-old by the police (Joeres, 2023) have shown. Ultimately, trust in the police also seems to depend on the delicate matter of the excessive use of force (Baier and Ellrich, 2014; Nägel and Lutter, 2023; Staubli, 2023), which can then shape future interactions between citizens and the police. Therefore, both for the prevention of police violence and as a means to reduce violence against emergency responders, de-escalation is demanded (Rau and Leuschner, 2018). This corresponds to both the German Police Regulation 100 (PDV 100), the European Code of Police Ethics (Council of Europe Ministerial Committee, 2011), and the guiding principle of the police in the USA, the National Consensus Policy on Use of Force (IACP, 2017, p. 3):

1. *An officer shall use de-escalation techniques and other alternatives to higher levels of force consistent with his or her training whenever possible and appropriate before resorting to force and to reduce the need for force.*
2. *Whenever possible and when such delay will not compromise the safety of the officer or another and will not result in the destruction of evidence, escape of a suspect, or commission of a crime, an officer shall allow an individual time and opportunity to submit to verbal commands before force is used.*

Lorei and Balaneskovic (2023) define de-escalation as follows: "De-escalation is behavior (verbal and non-verbal communication, tactical measures) that does not allow conflicts to degenerate into increased use of force (conflict resolution with violence), but avoids them, stops their development, or reverses them, and includes all measures that can achieve this", which essentially corresponds to the definition of the National Consensus Policy on Use of Force (IACP, 2017, p. 2).

2 Effectiveness of de-escalation and de-escalation training

Numerous techniques and tactics exist to serve de-escalation purposes (Lorei and Balaneskovic, 2023). However, when and whether these are successful is empirically little examined or substantiated (Du et al., 2017; Gaynes et al., 2017; Roberto et al., 2012; Spencer, Johnson and Smith, 2018; Spielfogel and McMillen, 2017; Todak and White, 2019). Nevertheless, police officers use these techniques every day (Lorei, 2020; Todak and James, 2018; Todak and White, 2019; White et al., 2021). In most cases, citizens are treated respectfully, measures are transparently explained, and words are chosen to be easily understandable (Todak and James, 2018). Listening is also a widespread strategy in daily police work (Todak and James, 2018). It is relatively rare to systematically attempt to calm down an agitated citizen and show them empathy (Todak and James, 2018). Neglecting such de-escalating techniques can lead to escalations. Victims of police misconduct report being treated disrespectfully and rudely by the police and that the police measures were not adequately explained (Abdul-Rahman et al., 2023). However, it remains uncertain when and if de-escalation techniques work. Similar uncertainties about effectiveness exist for de-escalation training, which, like other police trainings, are rarely evaluated (Giacomantonio et al., 2019). Evaluations, when conducted, are often methodologically weak (Leach et al., 2019). De-escalation trainings are also mostly not standardized and vary significantly in terms of content, scope, objectives, and pedagogy (for the USA: Leach et al, 2019; Pontzer, 2021; for Germany: Lorei et al., 2023a, c, d; for the EU: Lorei et al., 2023b, e). Sometimes, the effect of such trainings lies primarily in the realm of knowledge and changes in personal attitudes (Spencer, Johnson and Smith, 2018). Participants in a Canadian de-escalation training were very satisfied with the training (Giacomantonio, Goodwin and Carmichael, 2019). They could also remember the content well and were convinced and motivated to apply the learned skills (Giacomantonio, Goodwin and Carmichael, 2019). This was also observed in operational simulations; however, many participants retained various behaviors and did not change their behavioral habits in some areas (Giacomantonio, Goodwin and Carmichael, 2019). A transfer effect of the training to police practice could not be demonstrated (Giacomantonio, Goodwin and Carmichael, 2019). This corresponds to the findings of Leach et al. (2019), who surveyed the research on de-escalation and found that de-escalation trainings did not make violent or aggressive events less frequent. However, it did

make it easier for the affected individuals to deal with them through more knowledge, self-confidence, and techniques. Engel, McManus and Herold (2020) summarized 64 evaluations of de-escalation trainings, mainly originating from the field of nursing or dealing with mentally ill individuals. The trainings had generally positive effects, but the studies were always afflicted with methodological deficiencies (Engel, McManus and Herold, 2020). Here, too, the trainings were mostly effective in terms of knowledge, attitude, and participants' self-confidence (Engel, McManus and Herold, 2020). Rarely was an effect on behavior in corresponding situations measured (Engel, McManus and Herold, 2020). However, some studies show a clear effect on police practice. Goh (2021) found that following training, the number of operations in which police officers used violence decreased. Engel et al. (2022) also found such an effect. Their evaluation of de-escalation training showed a significant decrease in the use of violence (-28.1 %) as well as in the number of injured police officers (-36.0 %) and citizens (-26.3 %).

3 Potential influence on de-escalation

Techniques and tactics of de-escalation do not universally work, regardless of the situation and the individuals involved. They are not an algorithm that reliably resolves conflicts. Instead, they are more of a heuristic and a course of action. Their effectiveness can depend on various factors, which are discussed below.

3.1 Personal safety

The concept of de-escalation is often misunderstood within the police force, with some subsuming measures that are passive or solely aimed at weakening one's position under it (Schmalzl, 2011). Accordingly, critics argue that police officers face increased danger when they choose to de-escalate rather than use force. Consequently, they fear violence against police officers may rise (Engel, McManus and Isaza, 2020; Landers, 2017; White et al., 2021; Zaiser, Staller and Koerner, 2023). However, evaluations (Engel et al., 2022) and analyses of attacks on police officers (Ellrich and Baier, 2015) tend to show the opposite, namely that de-escalation promotes the safety of police officers. However, if one were to accept the critics' view that de-escalation increases the risk for police officers, de-escalatory behavior would hardly be accepted, and attempts at it would be hesitant. Self-protection, conversely, is not contradictory to de-escalation; instead, it is of utmost importance. Personal safety is considered a central

aspect of de-escalation (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Oliva et al., 2010; Richmond et al., 2012; White et al., 2019).

3.2 Ratios of training

Police officers are authorized and trained to use violence in various forms to ensure the safety of citizens and themselves, as well as to enforce police measures against resistance. Violence ranges from verbal measures and threats to physical actions and the use of tools such as pepper spray and batons to the use of firearms. For the use of this violence to be efficient and by the principle of proportionality, police officers must be trained and educated in this regard (Adang, 2012). However, de-escalation must also be practiced. The question arises as to the relationship between training for the use of violence and training for the prevention of violence through de-escalation. Do they compete with each other, or do they not influence each other? If competition is assumed, then care must be taken to ensure that there is no significant imbalance, which would result in de-escalation being used less frequently in police practice than it may seem possible (Dayley, 2016). Empirically, it is evident that in everyday operations, communication and de-escalation occur much more frequently than the use of violence. Deveau (2021) states that in Canada, 98 % of all police emergency calls involve de-escalation, and only 2 % require the use of violence.

Conversely, training for the use of violence takes up significantly more time and space in training and advanced in-service training than de-escalation training (Dayley, 2016; Giacomantonio, Goodwin and Carmichael, 2019; Deveau, 2021; Lorei et al., 2023a, b, c, d, e). Dayley (2016) found a ratio of approximately 9:1 in his analysis of police training in the US. Abanonu (2018) confirms this ratio. Lorei et al. (2023a, d) find similar results for the training and advanced in-service training of police officers in Germany. However, there is significant heterogeneity within the European Union (Lorei et al., 2023b). The skewed ratio of the two trainings also appears to affect practice. Lee et al. (2010) also find a positive correlation between training volume and the use of violence.

3.3 Personal factors

Whether and how de-escalation techniques are used also appears to depend on various personal characteristics of police officers. Attitude plays a crucial role here. Attitude refers to the overall evaluation of an object, person, or action. This evaluation includes cognitive (beliefs, thoughts, and attribute assignments regarding the object), affective

(feelings associated with the object), and behavioral components (Haddock and Maio, 2023). Attitudes help quickly and economically assess objects (situations, persons, etc.) and make decisions. The attitude of police officers regarding de-escalation appears crucial. Suppose their attitude includes a dislike towards de-escalation, the likelihood of fewer de-escalation techniques being applied during operations, and a greater tendency towards using violence increases. However, because some police officers are skeptical about the effectiveness of de-escalation techniques and fear that de-escalation exposes them to increased danger (Engel, McManus and Isaza, 2020; Landers, 2017; White et al., 2021), their attitude towards de-escalation may be less positive.

Consequently, they may behave less de-escalatory. Noppe (2016) found, accordingly, that police officers with a positive attitude towards the use of violence were more likely to use violence when provoked than police officers whose attitude towards violence was less positive. Kop and Euwema (2001) and Ellrich and Baier (2015) found that police officers with stronger citizen-oriented conduct experienced less violence during operations. Accordingly, police officers must be convinced of the effectiveness of de-escalation strategies and techniques in dangerous situations (White et al., 2021).

3.4 Not knowing what to do when...
De-escalation techniques are often listed as a collection of different methods, tactics, and strategies (e.g., Lorei, 2021; Lorei and Balaneskovic, 2023), and their use is seen correspondingly punctually within the framework of a conflictual situation. Thus, de-escalation appears as an isolated measure rather than a process. However, this does not correspond to an interaction process. Analogous to and extending the first axiom of Watzlawick et al. (2011), "one cannot not communicate," police interaction must be understood as a process that is always, from the beginning, associated with both escalation and de-escalation. There is, thus, no communicative action of a police officer that does not also affect the course of the conflict. De-escalation or escalation is, therefore, always taking place. This means that when interacting with citizens, de-escalation must already be acted upon and cannot be "initiated" only during the interaction. This fundamental understanding may explain why de-escalation techniques sometimes appear ineffective. For example, a technique such as calming may not work if the police officer attempting to calm appears frantic and is shouting. Likewise, empathy cannot be credible if the police officer has previously behaved in a manner that demonstrates no respect for or interest in the citizen. De-escalation techniques do not always work for everyone, as they depend both on the target individual and the current situation. Police officers also appear to tailor their de-escalating behavior to the specifics of their police counterparts (Todak and James, 2018). However, aspects of the situation sometimes seem to be less focused upon. For example, it raises the question of whether police officers use the appropriate technique based on the situation and communicative goal or whether this happens more randomly and based on personal inclination (Todak and James, 2018). This randomness could then explain the only partial effectiveness of de-escalation and also the uncertainty of police officers about its effectiveness (White et al., 2019, 2021). Here, specification and structuring are necessary, allowing police officers to orient themselves in the process of de-escalation and suggesting appropriate techniques for the current situation. This would also enable targeted action by police officers. This is common in other police situations. Various models have been established for negotiations, for example, in hostage situations, barricades, and suicide threats, with specialized units and trained negotiators. For example, the Crisis Negotiation Unit (CNU) of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) formulated the Behavioral Influence Stairway Model (BISM) (Vecchi, Van Hasselt and Romano, 2005). It comprises five stages (Active Listening, Empathy, Rapport, Influence, and Behavioral Change) to achieve the negotiation goal. The stages must be worked through sequentially. Another orientation for negotiations is provided by the S.A.F.E. model (Hammer, 2008), which describes the four essential perspectives in negotiations between perpetrators and negotiators. The model is intended to help negotiators identify aspects of these four perspectives so that they can be considered in negotiations. The S.A.F.E. model also advocates stages that must be reached sequentially to develop a solution for the operational situation. The Structured Tactical Engagement Process (STEPS) model is a model for understanding a person's behavior (Kelln and McMurtry, 2007). In this model, a perpetrator goes through various stages with the help of negotiators, developing the motivation to surrender peacefully. The establishment of these models in specialized units shows that models for police operational behavior in connection with very challenging interactions can be helpful. For everyday operations of non-specialized police officers, it can, therefore, be assumed that a model designed for them for de-escalating everyday conflicts can be just as helpful, thus supporting de-escalation in routine operations. Moreover, police

operational action often involves teamwork. This is particularly true for situations that can potentially escalate and involve police with multiple persons (reinforcement). However, task division (e.g., one person securing while another communicates) requires coordination among team members, as operational action must be coordinated within the team to be effective. However, in escalating situations, there is little potential to explicitly align goals and sub-goals, as well as the paths to them, within the team to then achieve them together and in a coordinated manner. Instead, in this context, a shared goal system or a shared mental model of the situation ("shared mental model" in human factors research) and its potential solution appear to be helpful. This makes teamwork more purposeful, coordinated, and thus more efficient (Lim and Klein, 2006; Mathieu et al., 2000).

4 The model of communicative de-escalation in everyday conflict situations (KODIAK)

The model of communicative de-escalation in everyday conflict situations (German: Modell kommunikativer Deeskalation in alltäglichen Konfliktsituationen [KODIAK]) aims to provide police officers with guidance for de-escalating conflict situations so that they can act systematically and purposefully, achieving the police operational goal without neglecting officer safety. It attempts to reduce and structure the multitude of different complex dynamic situations to the essentials for police action. This is intended to increase both the conviction of the effectiveness of de-escalation (knowing when to do what) and promote acceptance, as de-escalation does not lead to reduced safety.

4.1 Fundamentals

Various basic assumptions appear necessary as general framework conditions for de-escalation to succeed in everyday policing. These form an axiomatic understanding and are prerequisites for successful police action.

De-escalation aims to avoid the use of violence or at least to minimize the intensity of violence (minimalization of violence), even if this requires extra effort in terms of exertion, time, or patience. Conflicts are, therefore, always to be resolved without violence if possible. If violence is unavoidable, only the minimum amount of violence should be used. The self-understanding of KODIAK thus also includes the recognition that not all conflicts can be resolved without violence by the police. The po-

tential necessity of violence in such situations is part of the de-escalation concept because the maximum possible violence-free resolution applies to all parties involved in a conflict. Violence-free or violence-minimization applies to both citizens and the police, which is why the basis for any de-escalating behavior by the police is self-protection: Without an acceptable level of safety, de-escalation cannot take place.

The interaction in a conflict situation is always understood as a process in which every action can affect the course of the situation. Consequently, any police interaction is either escalating or de-escalating. In a police interaction, one cannot begin de-escalating after some time has passed; instead, it always starts with the initial contact and continues throughout the entire interaction. Therefore, police communication in conflict situations must always be oriented toward de-escalation from the outset. This is also supported by Rho et al. (2023), who found that escalation patterns and coercive measures could be predicted solely by the first sentences uttered by a police officer during a vehicle check, regardless of the reason for the stop. The check tended to escalate if these initial words were more authoritarian directives. Similar findings are observed in Germany, where an early demand for obedience to police authority is associated with escalating the situation (Laumer and Welscher, 2023).

Police action is not random or solely reactive to the behavior of the civilian. Rather, police officers should continuously pursue a police objective or intermediate goals to achieve the operational goal. They have the duty to repeatedly attempt to resolve conflicts using de-escalation methods and to take proactive steps rather than passively waiting and hoping for the counterpart to relent. As the professional group trained explicitly for such conflicts and situations, they are responsible for the course of events. This means acting responsibly and attempting to steer the situation to resolve it with minimal violence. Ultimately, this also serves their own safety, as not only can the situation be more or less controlled, but also information about the counterpart's state of mind and needs can be gathered, allowing for a better assessment of the escalation and de-escalation potential of the situation.

The police organization has an obligation to enable police officers to act according to the above principles through selection, equipment, and training, as expected by the society that has established the police as an organization. Since professional policing is not an innate talent but

must be learned and trained, the organization must ensure that police officers have the necessary competencies. This means that the police organization must extensively train and qualify police officers in areas such as de-escalation as well as the use of force (physical violence, use of force tools, and firearms) through training and ongoing education.

4.2 The multi-stage model KODIAK

The KODIAK model assumes that during de-escalation, the five stages – "safety," "relationship," "calmness," "situation clarification," and "solution search" must be sequentially achieved to implement a police measure at a sixth stage called "solution implementation." At each stage, it is necessary to assess the current situation. If this assessment concludes that a lower stage is not adequately fulfilled, then the officer must return to that stage. For example, if during the "calmness" stage, the situation changes and "safety" is no longer sufficient, the officer must revert to the "safety" stage and take self-protection measures. Only then can they resume working on the "relationship" stage and subsequently return to the "calmness" stage. Suppose the interaction is at the "Solution search" stage, and the police counterpart suddenly becomes very agitated again. In that case, they must return to the "calmness" stage to calm the counterpart, then clarify the situation (the "situation clarification" stage), and resume searching for a solution (the "solution search" stage). Throughout an operation, progress is made through the stages and, if necessary, returning to an earlier stage (see Figure 1).

### 4.3 The stages and their techniques

In the following sections, each stage will be described and justified. A selection of central de-escalation techniques and strategies will also be described, each aimed at helping to achieve the respective stage.

4.3.1 Stage "safety"

The central goal of de-escalation is to ensure that all parties involved, including both police officers and citizens, emerge from the encounter without physical or psychological harm. While this may not always be possible, it is nevertheless the aim. Therefore, safety is of utmost priority and serves as the foundation for further de-escalation efforts (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Oliva et al., 2010; Richmond et al., 2012; White et al., 2019). Techniques for officer safety ensure the safety of police officers. However, officer safety does not begin only upon encountering the individual targeted in the operation but starts even before contact is made. This includes coordination with colleagues, mental preparation, readiness with equipment, and attentive approach, which are fundamental for the course of the interaction (Binder and Scharf, 1980; Scharf and Binder, 1983).

In addition to the safety of law enforcement personnel, citizens' safety must also be considered. It will be difficult for citizens to focus or engage in conversation if they perceive themselves as in danger. Sometimes, the safety of the police officer and the safety of the citizen may influence each other in opposing ways: when one has a higher sense of security, the other may feel less secure.

Figure 1: Temporal progression with the attainment of de-escalation stages and the return to earlier stages during a de-escalation operation
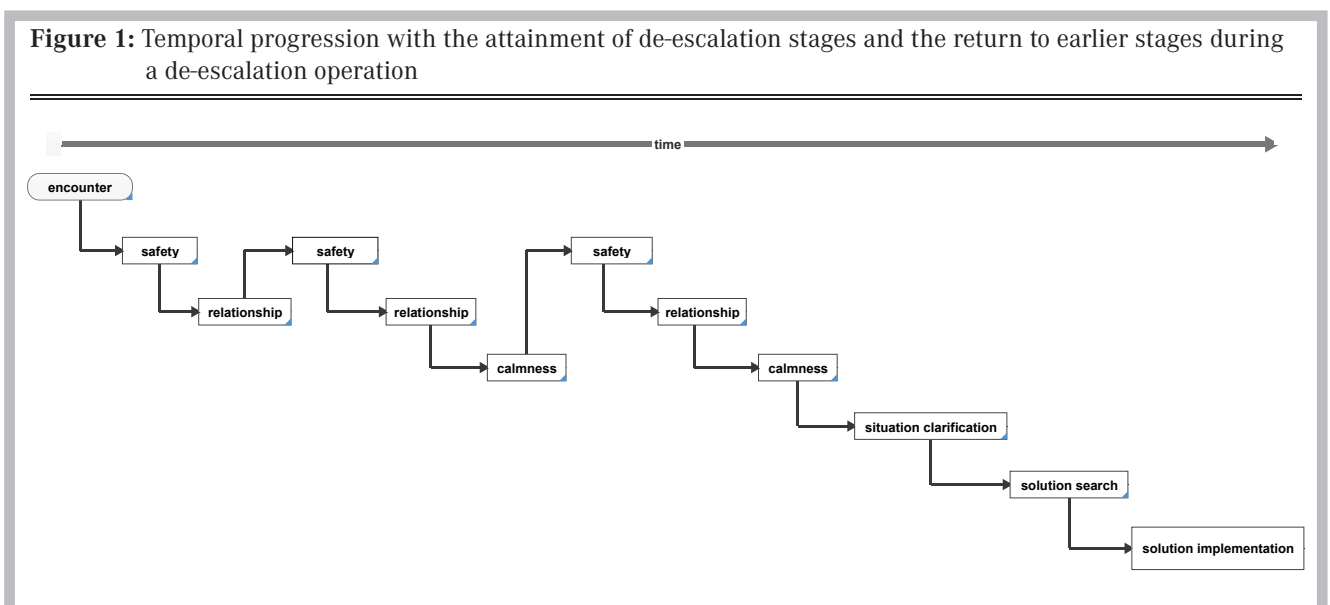
In such cases, a compromise acceptable to both parties must be found. The level of safety required by a police officer is their subjective decision based on their own standards and personal beliefs. Notably, the officer's personal competence belief regarding self-protection and the use of force will play a role. Suppose an officer is convinced that they can safely manage the situation even with reduced safety due to their high level of competence. In that case, they may tolerate a lower level of personal safety compared to an officer who fears losing control of the situation during escalation. This implies that officers tasked with de-escalation must also possess high competence in self-protection and the application of force. Only those who feel sufficiently secure because they are well-prepared for dangerous situations can de-escalate confidently (from a position of strength).

During contact with the individual involved in the incident, the situation must be "scanned," meaning an initial assessment of the situation is made, primarily focusing on evaluating the safety and taking self-protection measures. This involves verifying whether the information received during the assignment is accurate and to what extent the initial situational assessment needs modification. Self-protection is achieved by observing the individual and visually monitoring their hands. Choosing an appropriate position, considering the use of cover options, and maintaining an adequate distance are all important. Maintaining distance ensures the safety of both officers and the individuals they interact with. This is particularly crucial for individuals with mental health issues, for whom breaching the comfort zone is often more critical and can trigger actions more readily than for others. Once sufficient safety for both parties is ensured through these basic self-protection techniques, the "Safety" stage is reached, and the officer can focus their actions on achieving the next stage. If, at any point during the interaction, the officer no longer perceives safety to be adequate, they must first restore the "Safety" stage through self-protection measures before pursuing the subsequent stages as goals.

4.3.2 Stage "relationship"

A suitable relationship between the interacting parties is the foundation for successful communication and conflict resolution. Both communication theories and models for police negotiators consider this relationship fundamental (Grubb, 2023; Hammer, 2008; Vecchi, Van Hasselt and Romano, 2005; Vecchi et al., 2019;). In everyday police operations, the relationship between police officers and citizens is crucial for any interaction and, therefore, essential for de-escalation (Price and Baker, 2012). Similarly, this applies to interrogations (Kelly et al., 2013). Fundamental techniques include respectful interaction, kindness, and politeness (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Richter, 2006; Todak and James, 2018; Todak and White, 2019). Respect involves demonstrating equality, appreciation, and interest. It is also shown by considering the other person's feelings (e.g., patiently waiting for reactions, repeating sentences). Additionally, asking empathetic questions about the needs and issues of the other person, acknowledging them as important, responding to their questions, and listening attentively all contribute to de-escalation. Thus, showing empathy is a crucial de-escalation technique (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Price and Baker, 2012; Pontzer, 2021; Todak and James, 2018, 2019; Todak and White, 2019; Vecchi, Van Hasselt and Romano, 2005; Vecchi et al., 2019; White et al., 2019), as is (active) listening (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Grubb, 2023; Oliva, Morgan and Compton, 2010; Price and Baker, 2012; Richmond et al., 2012; Richter, 2006; Spielfogel and McMillen, 2017; Todak & James, 2018; Todak & White, 2019; Vecchi, Van Hasselt and Romano, 2005; Vecchi et al., 2019; White et al., 2019). In the tactic of personal connection, a communicative relationship is built by highlighting similarities and commonalities between the interacting parties. Under certain circumstances, shared goals and interests can also be exchanged, especially for the current operation. Empathetic behavior can strengthen this relationship. Additionally, agreeing with the other person's aspects may contribute to this direction (Richmond et al., 2012).

4.3.3 Stage "calmness"

In police operations involving violence, all parties involved are often excited and highly emotional. This applies to both sides of the interaction, including citizens and police officers. For example, the police officer may feel tense due to the uncertainty of the situation and the risk of an attack. The victim of violence experiences high stress and fear due to the violent experience. The perpetrator of violence, or the person for whom the police were called, may be angry at the victim or fearful of the consequences of their actions. Alternatively, it could be an agitated individual who is causing disturbance and fear among others, prompting the police intervention (Simpson, Sakai and Rylander, 2020), thereby placing all interaction participants under heightened stress. Elevated stress levels can impair performance and decision-making (Grubb, 2023; Regehr and LeBlanc, 2017). To mitigate this and promo-

te more rational behavior amidst emotional turmoil, it is necessary to calm all parties involved and manage stress, which can serve as a basis for negotiations (Grubb, 2023). It is essential to both calm these individuals and regulate the police officer's own stress levels and emotions (Todak and White, 2019). Calming and reducing stress levels are crucial de-escalation goals (Grubb, 2023; Price and Baker, 2012; Richmond et al., 2012; Richter, 2006; Todak and James, 2018; Todakand & White, 2019; White et al., 2019). Techniques to control one's stress levels during high-stress phases may include breathing techniques (cf. Ahmed, Devi and Priya, 2021; Röttger et al., 2020) and positive self-instruction (Lange et al., 1988). Merely telling others to calm down may not suffice and can even be counterproductive. Statements like „Calm down now!" and „Be reasonable!" do not reduce agitation and may even exacerbate it. Initially, it is crucial for the responding officer to convey calmness and composure, although this should not be mistaken for indifference or arrogance. Conversely, the police officer should not display signs of high stress, as this can be contagious ("stress contagion") and, therefore, exacerbate stress (Dimitroff et al., 2017; Peen et al., 2021). Additionally, taking time and allowing the individual time to calm down or make decisions (tactical time management) is essential, as reducing time pressure reduces stress. Thus, patience and composure contribute to both self-regulation and the stress regulation of the individual involved, serving as another crucial de-escalation technique (Richmond et al., 2012; van Reemst, Fischer and Weerman, 2022; White et al., 2019).

4.3.4 Stage "situation clarification"
Once the situation is relatively safe, a rapport has been established for interaction, and the excitement and stress of all involved individuals have been reduced, efforts can begin to address the conflict itself. To do so, it is necessary to gather information to understand the situation, what has happened, who is involved in what role, and what needs to be done. Key techniques for gathering information include asking questions and (actively) listening. These not only help clarify the situation but also have a de-escalating effect (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Grubb, 2023; Oliva, Morgan and Compton, 2010; Price and Baker, 2012; Richmond et al., 2012; Richter, 2006; Spielfogel and McMillen, 2017; Todak and James, 2018; Todak and White, 2019; Vecchi, Van Hasselt and Romano, 2005; Vecchi et al., 2019; White et al., 2019). Once again, empathetic behavior can de-escalate the situation (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Pontzer, 2021; Price and Baker, 2012; Todak and James, 2018, 2019; Todak and White,

2019; Vecchi, Van Hasselt and Romano, 2005; Vecchi et al., 2019; White et al., 2019) and strengthen the relationship. Additionally, information from previous stages, such as building rapport, can be utilized here. In this context, allowing the citizen the opportunity to explain themselves and articulate their position is helpful. Equally important is speaking in a way that is understandable to the citizen, not overwhelming them linguistically, and avoiding the use of police jargon (Ayhan and Hicdurmaz, 2020; Richmond et al., 2012; Todak and James, 2018; Todak and White, 2019; White et al., 2019).

4.3.5 Stage "solution search"
After essential information has been gathered and is available from the previous stage, the next step involves attempting to shape the further course of the operation together with the police counterpart. If a need for action binds the police officers and has no room for maneuver, the implementation can at least be developed together with the citizen. If police action is not strictly tied to a measure, what to do can also be discussed with the counterpart. By involving the counterpart, acceptance of the measure can be increased, resistance becomes less likely, and cooperation de-escalates (Herr et al., 2023; Price and Baker, 2012; Richmond et al., 2012). Common sub-goals can also be discussed here, such as ending the measure quickly. Similarly, this prevents or reduces reactance (Brehm, 1966). Also, through the joint search for implementation paths, potential obstacles and problems can be identified before they arise, thus avoiding surprises. Additionally, it is important to announce, explain, and justify police measures. This transparency in police action is central to de-escalation (Richmond et al., 2012; Todak and James, 2018; Tyler and Folger, 1980). Typical conflict management strategies or aspects of negotiation models can then be employed in the search for conflict resolutions. With all approaches to solutions, efforts should be made to ensure that the police counterpart can save face and avoid any threat of status loss. Saving face means that self-esteem, self-image, social identity, and thus "face" (according to the concept of "face" in Ting-Toomey's Face Negotiation Theory, 2015) are not attacked. This also includes "social face," meaning social status and reputation in front of others. Experiencing humiliation or disrespect, especially in front of socially significant third parties (peers, partners, children), can be triggers and part of the justification for assaults (Fecher, Leuschner and Lutz, 2023; Jaccard and Cojean, 2023; Price & Baker, 2012; Ting-Toomey, 2015). Preserving the counterpart's self-esteem is essential for further de-escalation.

4.3.6 Stage "solution implementation"
In this stage, the focus is ultimately on implementing the decided police measures. To continue to de-escalate during the implementation of conflict resolution or police actions, it is important to maintain transparency about police actions (see the concept of ongoing communication during the operation). This can involve mentioning or announcing implementation steps. Similarly, it is important to ensure that the citizen does not lose face (socially). Patience remains crucial here and aids in de-escalation.

4.4 Switching to the use of force
The use of force in the form of immediate coercion can occur during an operation for two main reasons. Firstly, violence, for example, in the form of physical techniques or the use of tools or weapons, serves to repel dangers to oneself or others and thus establish a safe state (see figure 2). Secondly, violence may be necessary to enforce a police measure against the resistance of a citizen. In each case, the principle of proportionality (legitimate purpose of the measure, suitability of the measure to achieve the purpose of the measure, necessity, and appropriateness) must be observed. Although de-escalation always seeks to avoid the use of force, this will not always succeed. However, since acceptable safety is the basic prerequisite and, therefore, the first stage of the de-escalation model, it may be necessary to use force to some extent. If the level of (subjective) safety is not sufficiently met and it also appears not feasible, for example, because several attempts to make the situation safer have not been successful (e.g., requests to the counterpart to drop a dangerous object and maintain the required distance), the proportionality of the use of force is assessed. The three relevant evaluations thus occur before the use of force at the "sa-

Figure 2: Temporal progression with the attainment of de-escalation stages and the return to earlier stages during a de-escalation operation
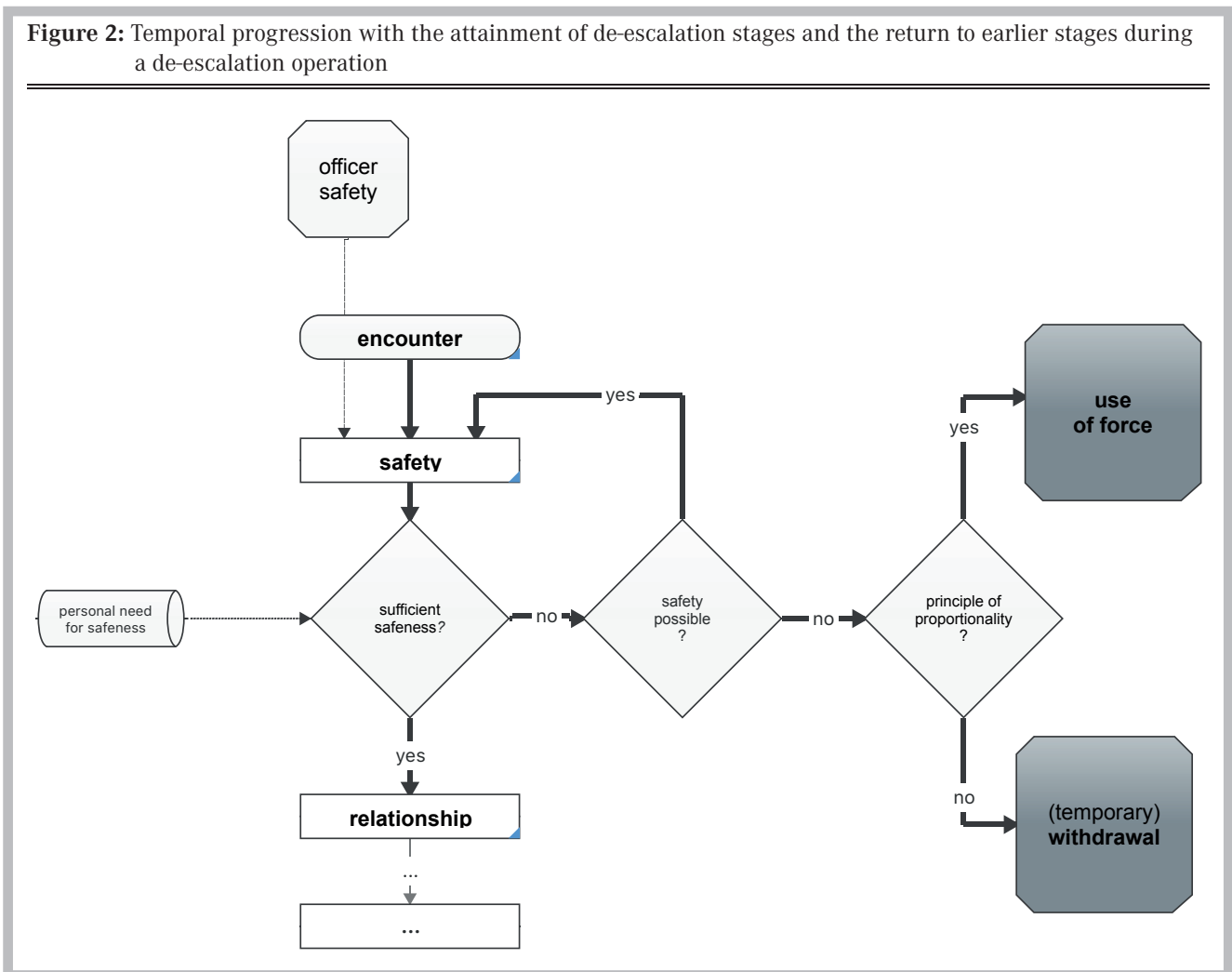
fety" stage. The criteria for the respective evaluations are more or less subjective but by no means arbitrary. Depending on the legal situation, facts and information (not emotions, gut "feeling," or thoughts of revenge) must justify this evaluation. Similarly to the evaluation of security, the prognosis regarding security development (i.e., the question of feasibility of safety) is challenging. It will indeed not be based on extensive consideration and will not be perfect. However, violence cannot be justified if safety could have been easily achieved without the use of force (e.g., by using cover or increasing the distance from the citizen). This sometimes requires the repeated threat of violence. If security is perceived as massively endangered and proportionality is not given, a (temporary) withdrawal may be considered.

As described above, possible solutions to the situations and potential conflicts are sought in the stages of problem-solving and solution implementation. If the police counterpart opposes all possible measures and attempts at solutions, according to the legal situation, the use of force to enforce a required police measure may be considered and, if necessary, carried out. If no solution can be found that is accepted by the police counterpart or if they explicitly resist it, force is then used.

Although the complexity of the decision to use force has only been briefly outlined here, and the tactical, ethical, and legal aspects of the situation assessment have only been sketched out, it should be clear that the use of force in the KODIAK model is an integral part and, above all, not contradictory to it.

5 Conclusion

To promote the use of de-escalation techniques and reduce the use of force, police officers must be convinced of the effectiveness of these techniques while ensuring safety. In this context, fostering a positive attitude towards de-escalatory behavior is crucial. Ultimately, police officers need guidance on when each technique can be successful. It is precisely for this purpose that the Model of Communicative De-escalation in Everyday Conflict Situations (KODIAK) was developed. KODIAK enables law enforcement officers to act systematically and purposefully, achieving their policing objectives without neglecting personal safety.

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