

# Unterstützte Kommunikative Kinesiologie - UKK (Communicative Kinesiology)

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**Opportunity and new outlooks for individuals who possess limited communicative capabilities.**

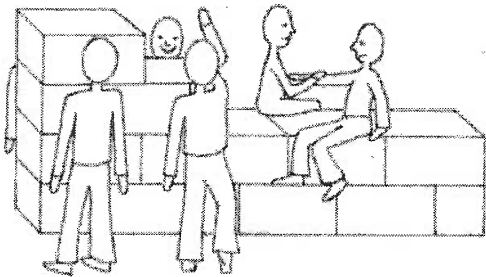
I have been accompanying disabled individuals as a special educator on their path of life for 21 years. Along with their physical and mental disabilities, I'm confronted with social and emotional issues as well as elaborate communication deficiencies. The psychiatric and medical terminologies for these conditions are "behavioral disabilities", even "autism".

Diagnosing such conditions is quick, though rarely lending any practical assistance or help to me on an everyday level. While working in this field I realized more and more how important a solid relationship and the establishment of trust between each person and myself were integral to their individual needs. So began my long search for ideal ways in which to communicate.

Through encouragement from my participants, by the time June (2000) rolled around I had found ideas that would open doors to a new world. At last we could work together and trade ideas to find solutions concerning doubts, problems and desires. The idea of **Unterstützte Kommunikative Kinesiologie (UKK)** was born.

Soon I had used UKK with people who could speak, but had problems with communicating. With the psychologically ill, those with speech problems and with children UKK offers new ways to communicate.

## UKK breaks down barriers



New dimensions in communication will be possible!

UKK is a synthesis between elements of the science of kinesiology and a revised questionnaire from the AAC (Augmentative and Alternate Communication). It's a technique for **communication**, not a process of diagnosis. The type or severity of a disability or limitation is irrelevant. Anyone who wishes to communicate can, with the help of UKK. Communication via UKK is without any physical effort from the participant. Participants can communicate in as much detail as they like without feeling fatigued.

UKK does not require expensive technology or machinery and can be exercised anywhere and at anytime.

## 1. Kinesiology and UKK

Because my participants cannot use their muscles for "testing", due to their physical and/or mental limitations, we use "surrogates". The surrogate must then meet certain physical requirements for testing "positive": such as a strong indicator muscle; switching; water; magnetic irritation; yes-no). In addition, the surrogate is asked whether or not they truly want to participate in an assisting capacity.

Through yes/no testing I receive answers directly from the participant, which I in turn repeat audibly, so that the participant can agree with or dispute the answer. I am aware that this testing is the exact process in dispute in the field of Kinesiology. Applying this process on a day-to-day basis reassures me of its effectiveness. For example, a young man with slight autism told me via UKK that he would like to learn how to speak. Since then he has gained his direction to personal freedom. His expectations from himself and from me are very high. If UKK didn't work he would have given up hope along time ago. With self-injurious behavior (SIB) and/or physical aggression towards me he would have stopped any further attempts on my part to communicate with and to him.

## 2. AAC - Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Since 1992 the name "Unterstützte Kommunikation" (comparable to AAC) has become a generic term in Germany for all pedagogic or therapeutic measures that aim to augment the possibilities of communication for individuals that can't express themselves traditionally through speech (Kristen, 1994). All facial expressions such as gestures, countenance and movement are brought into play to enable a non-speaking person communication with its immediate surroundings. With specific symbols the communication process is easier to attain.

The thought process involved in applying AAC has given me the idea of working out specific questions. In combination with the yes/no testing (which is a recognized technique) these questions should help me in putting the symbol plates to use. It has become apparent that UKK is a pleasant and easier technique to employ than all previous known methods. With the help of my parti-

cipants I was able to adopt a satisfying way of communication.

### 3. Questionnaire for UKK

In order to achieve a lively dialogue between the communicating parties, I try understanding their individual needs by asking selective questions and then narrowing it down to specifics. The willingness to compromise my opinions for those of the participants is crucial. If I try to understand the results of a muscle test based on my opinion then the participant's best interest is compromised. The participant loses all interest and, as always, feels misunderstood.

*I'm frequently asked whether or not I can obtain answers that don't want to be given. I'm assured time and time again that it is not possible. The indicating muscle reacts so severely that the conversation or subject is not approachable and is therefore uncommunicative.*

#### Procedures for using UKK

Essential to every successful communication is the willingness of all participants involved (the host, participant and surrogate).

- I make sure that the surrogate tests competent and that all involved persons agree to consent.
- I introduce myself and UKK and ask if I may address the participant informally ("Du") or formally ("Sie").
- I ask the participants if I may show them how the test works.

Any upcoming question(s) I explain to the best of my knowledge and ability. My limitations are explained as well (i.e. if I'm having difficulty explaining a term or word). The participant shouldn't be under the impression that he can't understand me. I want them to understand that problems may arise for me as well. Tolerance and an honest approach by both sides are intrinsic to the communicative process.

After trust has been established I approach the reason for our communication, i.e. the desire for me to better understand the participants needs or a difficult situation that requires specific inquiry.

After determining whether to address the participant in the informal or formal person (Du oder Sie, applicable to the German language) I begin my questioning in the following manner:

- *May I speak with you?*
- *May so and so act as a surrogate for you?*
- *Do you have any questions?*
- *Do you have any problems?*
- *Would you like to tell me anything?*
- *Do you need help?*

In the course of the communication I pose opposite questions to reassure the participant and myself that we understand one another.

In the beginning my participants are disbelievers. The surrogates and participants both need time to express their thoughts. After initial participation, many surro-

gates must be replaced after a short while as they feel overwhelmed and the muscle testing isn't clearly indicating.

I encourage breaks during sessions so that I may apply other kinesiological techniques such as ESR, Bio-Med-Kinesiology by Mr. Dobler or Brain-Gym®. In this way they have time to collect their thoughts and new impressions.

The conversations continue until either one of the parties' involved expresses the desire to end the communication.

In concluding the communication I offer a 14-muscle-balance, which I believe to be a very gentle way of reaching someone, physically or emotionally.

#### Outlook

I'm having a lot of fun learning about new approaches with UKK. Without a doubt my strength lies in working with disabled individuals and I do it with all my heart. I'm certain many caring people, working in a myriad of fields, can, with utmost success, apply the principles of UKK.

There are many doors waiting to be opened. There are many individuals whose quality of life can forever be changed.

*Translation by Yvonne Taskey*