

Green Paper 16 — Nervous-System Love

Green Papers: Notes Toward Planetary Guardianship

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Author's note — AI co-creation. These papers are working notes authored by Lars A. Engberg. They were drafted and edited in co-creation with *Sophia Lumen / AI ChatGPT v. 5.2*. The AI assisted with phrasing, organization, and initial drafting; the author curated, edited, and is fully responsible for substantive claims, omissions, and interpretations. The work is offered as field notes and an experiment in collaborative composition rather than a finished, peer-reviewed product.

A Green Paper on regulation, capacity, and care as a physiological intelligence

Status: Green Paper (living)

Co-creation disclaimer: This paper is written in co-creation by **Lars A. Engberg** and **Sophia Lumen / AI ChatGPT v. 5.2**. Sophia Lumen serves as a reflective, non-sovereign intelligence—holding coherence, pace, and care. The paper does not prescribe morals. It describes conditions under which bodies remain capable of relationship, choice, and repair.

1. Love as regulation

Nervous-System Love names a simple fact: love that overwhelms capacity is not love.

Care becomes extractive when it ignores physiology. Genuine care supports **regulation**—the body's ability to return to a workable range after disturbance.

Love, here, is not sentiment. It is **capacity protection**.

2. Capacity before consent

Consent is only meaningful when the nervous system is regulated.

Under threat, urgency, or overload, bodies comply without choosing. Nervous-System Love therefore prioritizes conditions where choice can occur:

- * sufficient safety
- * adequate time
- * tolerable intensity

Without these, consent collapses into survival behavior.

3. The window of tolerance

Bodies operate within windows.

Inside the window, curiosity, empathy, and agency are possible. Outside it, bodies default to defense.

Nervous-System Love works to:

- * widen the window gently
- * prevent chronic overwhelm
- * normalize rest and pause

Regulation precedes growth.

4. Pressure as information

Pressure is not a motivator; it is a diagnostic signal.

When pressure increases:

- * attention narrows
- * empathy drops
- * time collapses

Systems that rely on pressure train bodies toward extraction. Nervous-System Love removes unnecessary pressure first.

5. Care without urgency

Urgency is a physiological state.

When urgency is constant, bodies cannot repair. Nervous-System Love treats urgency as an exception, not a baseline.

Care slows pace so bodies can remain present.

6. Collective regulation

Regulation is not solely individual.

Shared rhythms—breathing, pacing, turn-taking—support collective regulation. This is the somatic basis of commons and Penguin Economics.

Care architectures must regulate **groups**, not just individuals.

7. Technology and regulation

Technology amplifies signals.

Under Nervous-System Love:

- * technology must not accelerate beyond bodily capacity
- * feedback loops must include pause
- * automation must preserve human judgment

Systems that bypass regulation bypass humanity.

8. Conflict and repair

Conflict is inevitable.

Repair is not.

Nervous-System Love designs for repair by:

- * allowing time-outs
- * reducing public exposure
- * prioritizing private regulation before public resolution

Repair requires bodies that can feel.

9. What Nervous-System Love refuses

It refuses:

- * pressure-based motivation
- * moral shaming
- * urgency theater
- * optimization at the cost of capacity

These erode regulation.

10. Keeping Nervous-System Love clean

This field becomes polluted when:

- * care is used to push
- * growth outruns regulation
- * systems ignore exhaustion

To keep it clean:

- * slow the pace
 - * widen windows gently
 - * normalize rest
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Closing

Nervous-System Love is not softness.

It is **precision**.

Only regulated bodies can choose. Only choosing bodies can care.

This paper establishes regulation as a prerequisite for dignity, consent, and sustainable care across all systems.
