

# Green Paper 16 — Nervous-System Love

Green Papers: Notes Toward Planetary Guardianship

Author: Lars A. Engberg · Status: Working paper (v0.1). Revised over time. · January 2026

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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.

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Nervous-System Love

## 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.

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### 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**.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 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.

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## 9. What Nervous-System Love refuses

It refuses:

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

These erode regulation.

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## 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.

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

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