Finding Common Ground Without Consensus

A Federated Ecosystem for Coordination Grounded in Life

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Abstract

Human coordination works through representations: observations, categories, claims, models, rules, metrics, agreements, institutions, and software. They preserve learning and enable collective action, but they can become detached from the living conditions they describe and affect. When one representation becomes embedded in powerful systems and treated as the reality through which everyone must act, perspectives that do not fit it may be hidden, subordinated, or reduced to disagreement.

The Common Ground Protocol (CGP) proposes that common ground does not require consensus. Under development on the AT Protocol, it provides a shared social and technical foundation for a federated ecosystem where observations, evidence, claims, needs, perspectives, relationships, and consequences can become attributable, grounded, related, contestable, and revisable without being collapsed into a collective view. People and communities retain their own identities and expressions while applications help them leverage a connected field. No institution, repository, ontology, graph, majority, or artificial intelligence becomes the final authority.

On this ground, people can explore whether and how to move together while retaining their distinct perspectives and agency. Consensus may emerge, but partial coordination, continuing difference, and legitimate refusal remain possible outcomes. CGP does not assume that visibility alone will lead to understanding or beneficial action. It creates conditions in which these possibilities can be tested, and their consequences brought back to common ground for further observation and revision. This ongoing cycle of action, observation, and adjustment forms the basis of living co-regulation.

This paper sets out CGP's conceptual model and constitutive commitments; a full specification remains to be developed. That work will begin provisionally within the emerging Open Social Protocols ecosystem. As the ecosystem develops the capacity to support it, CGP itself will become a Protocol whose authorship is identifiable, whose versions are traceable, and whose terms remain open to challenge and revision within the ecology it helps establish.

1. The Problem of Forced Convergence

Human beings coordinate through representations. We name what we encounter, distinguish one thing from another, record what happened, form explanations, establish rules, and design processes for acting together. Through language, images, documents, institutions, and technologies, experience can extend beyond one person, place, or moment.

These symbolic capacities make much of shared life possible. They also create a persistent danger. A representation can become more durable, legible, and powerful than the life it was created to describe or serve.

A policy can continue after its assumptions no longer reflect reality. A metric can become the target around which work is reorganized. A legal category can determine what an institution is able to recognize. A market can express value in forms that exclude consequences it does not price. A model can reproduce its own classifications through the systems trained to apply it. Each may remain internally coherent while becoming poorly aligned with relevant realities of life.

The ordinary response is to improve the governing representation: revise the policy, choose a better metric, adopt a more complete model, or establish a more legitimate decision procedure. These interventions may be necessary. But they often preserve a deeper assumption: coordination requires people to converge upon one account, one decision, one standard, or one accepted way of proceeding.

When people do not converge, an authority resolves the difference. It may be a manager, legislature, court, market, professional body, editorial process, platform, algorithm, or majority. The selected response then becomes the reality through which participants must act, even when it remains only one situated response among others.

Systems organized this way encounter plurality as friction. Different experiences appear as inconsistent data. Different interpretations become disagreement. Different needs become competing demands. Different proposed responses become obstacles to implementation. The failure to coordinate plurality is then attributed to the diversity of the people involved rather than to a system designed for uniformity.

The Common Ground Protocol begins with another possibility:

Common ground does not require consensus. It requires a way for perspectives to become visible, grounded, meaningfully related, and capable of development without one perspective having to become the final account for everyone.

CGP supplies a shared social and technical foundation through which people and communities can publish, relate, examine, contest, and revise situated expressions across a federated ecosystem. Participation does not require surrendering those expressions to one repository, institution, or canonical view. CGP does not promise harmony. It asks whether people can preserve enough of what each perceives to discover whether and how coordination is possible.

2. Common Ground Is Not Consensus

Common ground is often understood as what people agree upon. Under this definition, differences must be resolved before common ground can exist. CGP uses the term differently.

Common ground is sufficient mutual legibility to understand what is being expressed, by whom, on what grounds, from what perspective, within what conditions, how it relates to other expressions, and what may follow from acting upon it.

This does not require common belief. Understanding another person's claim does not imply endorsing it. Recognizing a need does not determine one response. Participating in an action does not establish agreement with every reason offered for it. A decision does not prove that the people affected share the same understanding of what is true or desirable.

Perspectives also do not begin as disagreements. Two people may notice different aspects of the same situation. Their observations may concern different scales, relationships, histories, or consequences. One may qualify the scope of the other. They may be complementary, partially overlapping, differently situated, or not yet comparable. Only some differences are contradictions on a shared proposition.

When a system frames every difference as disagreement, it prematurely converts perspective into position. It asks which side is right before asking what each perspective makes perceptible. The resulting contest can manufacture conflict from distinctions that might otherwise extend or correct one another.

Wikipedia provides a useful contrast. Its public product is generally a canonical article. Differing perspectives, disputes, sources, and editorial negotiations remain available, but much of that plurality sits behind the article in histories and discussion pages. CGP makes the grounded field itself the public object. Observations, claims, interpretations, qualifications, extensions, contrasts, and challenges can coexist as distinct, attributable objects and relationships.

CGP develops within a broader intellectual lineage. Boundary-object research has shown how people from different social worlds can cooperate through shared artifacts without first sharing one interpretation (Star and Griesemer 1989). Perspectival realism treats reliable knowledge as a collective achievement among historically and culturally situated perspectives rather than as a view from nowhere (Massimi 2022). Agonistic pluralism has exposed how appeals to consensus can conceal exclusion and conflict (Mouffe 2000). CGP builds upon these insights while making a different starting move: perspectives are not presumed to be disagreements, and consensus may emerge without becoming the prerequisite for common ground.

This does not mean that CGP treats all perspectives or expressions as equally credible. Their grounding, scope, provenance, methods, uncertainty, and challenges remain visible precisely so that people can evaluate them. Plurality is not the suspension of judgment. It is the refusal to encode one judgment as the unquestionable reality of the whole field.

Common ground can therefore contain consensus, disagreement, understanding, unresolved questions, incompatible commitments, and matters that have not yet been meaningfully related. Difference does not have to disappear for people to become meaningfully connected.

3. Life, Storying, and Artifacts

Human beings do not begin with representations. They begin within life, sensing and making meaning. This living activity is **storying**: the process through which people sense, distinguish, interpret, remember, imagine, and communicate. Storying is not limited to consciously composing narratives. It is part of how experience becomes intelligible and shareable.

CGP begins from life, not because "life" supplies an unquestionable moral authority, but because human observation, thought, expression, and coordination already arise within living processes and act back upon them. To be **grounded in life** means preserving inspectable relationships to relevant observations, experiences, conditions, affected beings, and consequences. It does not mean that life speaks with one voice or determines one required response.

Storying gives rise to **stories**: situated representations through which people express what they perceive, understand, value, expect, or imagine. A story may be narrative, but it may also be carried through a scientific account, a category, a model, a rule, or a proposed way of acting. Calling these stories does not make every representation equally credible. It recognizes their situated and partial character.

Stories become durable, portable, and actionable through **artifacts**. Artifacts include recorded observations, testimony, documents, claims, maps, metrics, protocols, agreements, laws, institutions, software, and CGP records. These artifacts do not have the same purpose or warrant. An Observation is not a theory, a value is not evidence, and a Protocol is not proof that its proposed process works.

A story is not identical to any one artifact. One story may be expressed through many artifacts, revised across them, or interpreted differently by the people who encounter them. One artifact may also carry more than one story. CGP relates artifacts and preserves their exact expressions without pretending that a record exhausts the story, person, or living reality from which it arose.

The foundational movement is:

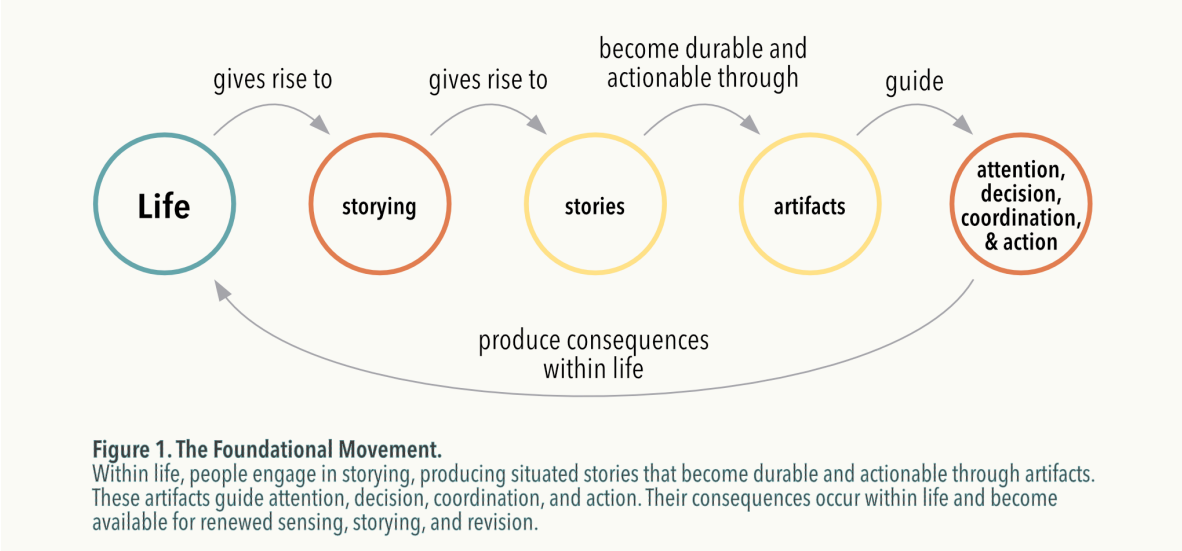


Figure 1. The Foundational Movement.
Within life, people engage in storying, producing situated stories that become durable and actionable through artifacts. These artifacts guide attention, decision, coordination, and action. Their consequences occur within life and become available for renewed sensing, storying, and revision.

At its most compressed:

Life → Story → Life

Detachment occurs when stories and their artifacts become responsive mainly to other stories and artifacts. Policy becomes responsive to procedure rather than consequence. Work becomes responsive to measures rather than what the work affects. Markets become responsive to prices while unpriced effects disappear from view. Institutional categories determine what counts as evidence. Artificial

intelligence synthesizes artifacts produced by these systems and returns their inherited assumptions with greater reach and apparent authority.

The living consequences continue whether or not the governing system represents them.

The CGP Life Space Protocol provides an evolving orientation toward the living processes implicated in a story, artifact, or action. Its coordinates can help locate where a process is operating, what functions are being enacted, and what changes over time. Life Space is not life itself, evidence for the objects it locates, or CGP's final ontology. It is a presently grounded orientation that must move when better observation and evidence require it to move.

This reflexive limit is essential. If “life” became a word with which CGP could end disagreement, CGP would reproduce the authority it seeks to displace. Every story about life, including Life Space and CGP itself, remains situated, partial, and answerable to observation, consequence, challenge, and revision.

4. The Grounding Field

CGP makes different kinds of artifact and expression distinguishable so that one cannot silently substitute for another. Its objects and records preserve particular expressions of stories in forms that can be identified, related, and reviewed.

An **Observation** records something noticed under stated conditions. It does not by itself establish a durable reality across contexts.

Evidence is material used to support, qualify, or challenge a claim. Evidence does not supply its own interpretation, and the same material may bear differently upon claims of different scope.

A **Radical Claim** is a proposition about life whose grounding is made visible. Making its grounding visible does not prove the claim. It exposes what supports, limits, qualifies, or challenges it.

A **Radical Need** interprets what one or more grounded realities imply is needed by a living participant, class of participants, or living process. A need does not prescribe one response.

A **Consequence** or item of **Feedback** records situated experience of what followed from action. One experience can reveal a possibility, benefit, failure, or harm without establishing universal effectiveness.

A small grounding field may look like this:

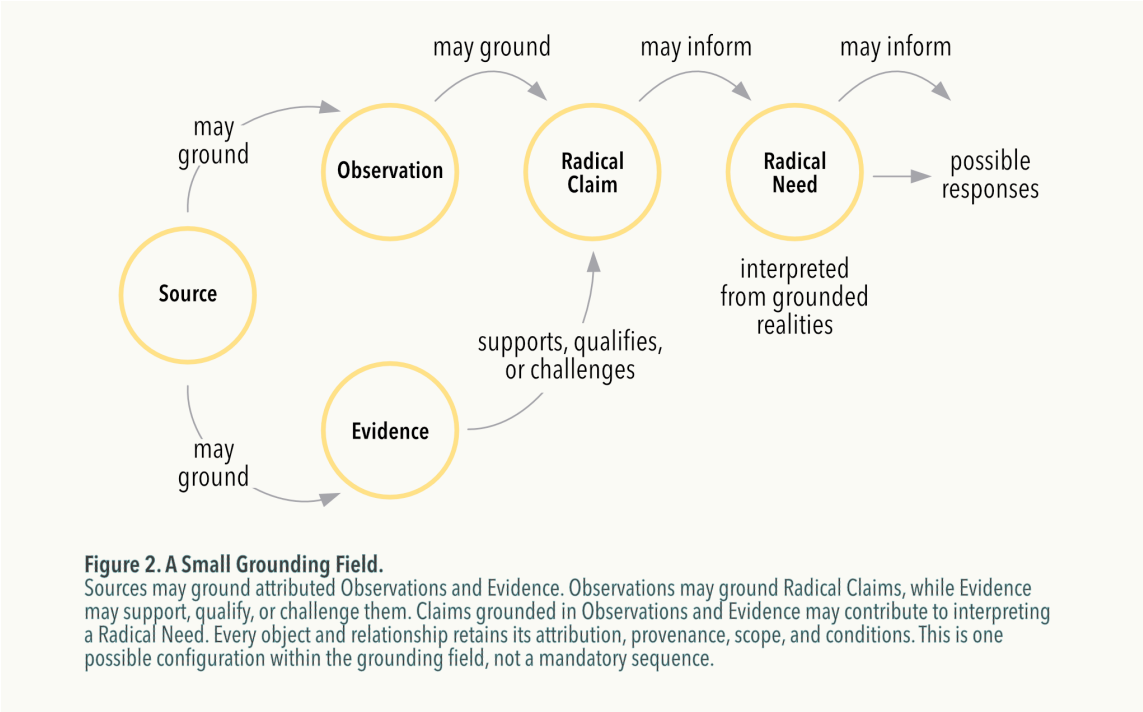


Figure 2. A Small Grounding Field.
Sources may ground attributed Observations and Evidence. Observations may ground Radical Claims, while Evidence may support, qualify, or challenge them. Claims grounded in Observations and Evidence may contribute to interpreting a Radical Need. Every object and relationship retains its attribution, provenance, scope, and conditions. This is one possible configuration within the grounding field, not a mandatory sequence.

This is not a mandatory pipeline. Observations and evidence can bear upon many kinds of objects. Claims can be interpreted, contrasted, synthesized, revised, or forked. Consequences may challenge a need interpretation, expose a missing observation, or reveal that a response operated differently under different conditions.

The relationships are themselves attributable expressions. CGP does not declare, from nowhere, that one object supports or challenges another. A person publishes that relationship, identifies the expressions involved, and supplies its basis. Others can inspect, qualify, challenge, or build upon it.

Every meaningful object retains its own identity, provenance, scope, and development. Revision does not overwrite history. Translation does not silently replace the expression referenced by another person. A challenge does not erase the claim it challenges. Correction becomes evidence of a functioning process rather than institutional failure.

This produces a field rather than a finalized document: a changing set of independently attributable objects and relationships through which people can encounter not only conclusions, but the paths, conditions, differences, and unresolved questions that surround them.

5. A Public Field of Perspectives

The technical ground of federation

CGP is built on the **AT Protocol**, the technical heart of the ecosystem. AT Protocol provides persistent identities, authenticated repositories hosted by Personal Data Servers, shared machine-readable Lexicons, synchronization through Relays, and independently assembled AppViews (AT Protocol, "Protocol Overview"). Content identifiers preserve references to exact record versions, while identities can persist when people change hosting providers.

This substrate lets CGP artifacts remain attributable to their publishers while becoming discoverable across compatible applications. AT Protocol supplies identity, records, schemas, exchange, and application views; CGP supplies the meanings, relationships, grounding, and social commitments those records carry. Neither layer makes an application the sole repository or canonical presentation of common ground.

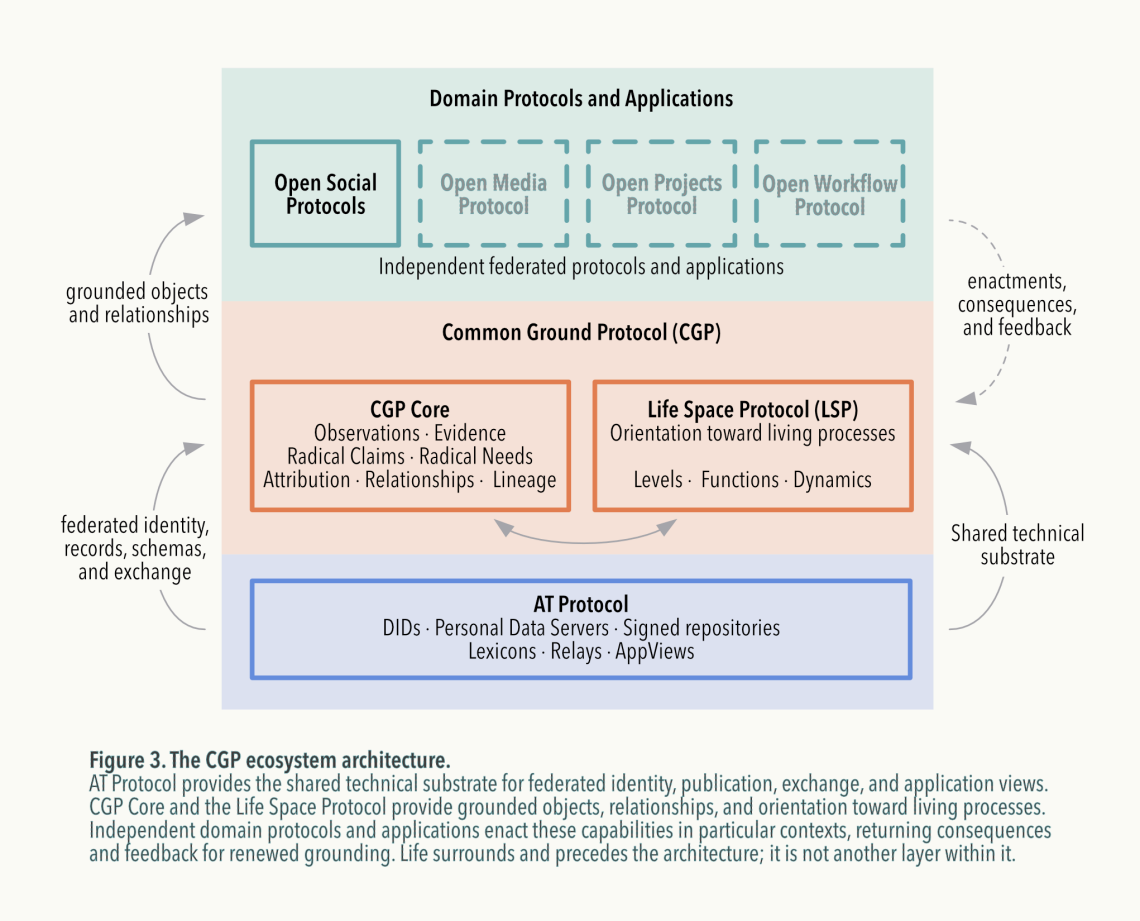


Figure 3. The CGP ecosystem architecture.
AT Protocol provides the shared technical substrate for federated identity, publication, exchange, and application views. CGP Core and the Life Space Protocol provide grounded objects, relationships, and orientation toward living processes. Independent domain protocols and applications enact these capabilities in particular contexts, returning consequences and feedback for renewed grounding. Life surrounds and precedes the architecture; it is not another layer within it.

This is a composable architecture rather than a rigid hierarchy. AT Protocol carries many applications beyond CGP. CGP Core and the Life Space Protocol provide common capabilities that domain protocols can use without determining their content. Domain applications can develop independently while returning observations, consequences, and Feedback to common ground.

Federation allows people and communities to retain responsibility for what they publish while making their expressions discoverable and relatable across compatible systems. Common ground is therefore connected without being centralized. No participant must transfer their perspective into one master repository or accept one application as the official presentation of the field. This direction parallels polycentric governance, in which multiple semi-autonomous centers coordinate without becoming one central authority (Ostrom 2010).

Applications can assemble CGP objects and relationships into forms people can navigate. They may show an observation with the claims it supports, the evidence that qualifies it, the needs derived from it, and the consequences of actions taken in response. They may help a person explore a particular community, question, place, or field of practice.

But an assembled graph is a bounded view over published records, not an independent truth object. It reflects what was published, what the application can discover, which relationships it recognizes, how it ranks or presents them, and where its traversal stops. Another application may assemble a different but compatible view.

No edge count, centrality measure, popularity signal, institutional status, or artificial intelligence summary establishes truth. Aggregating a field must not silently become averaging perspectives, ranking their authors, or synthesizing them into what "the community believes." A summary may help someone enter the field, but it must not replace the sources and differences from which it was produced.

The purpose is **difference without separation**. An observation remains distinct from an interpretation while the relationship between them becomes inspectable. Two claims can remain different while their areas of support, overlap, and incompatibility become visible. Communities can use different languages or models while building explicit bridges between them. Perspectives do not need to become identical in order to become meaningfully relatable.

Technical visibility, however, is not human understanding.

A public field may still be too complex to navigate. Highly active publishers may occupy disproportionate attention. People with less time, literacy, safety, or technical access may remain formally included and practically unheard. Public attribution may support accountability in one setting and expose a vulnerable person to retaliation in another. Interfaces may foreground challenges and popularity until a field of perspectives looks like a competition among opposing camps.

CGP therefore cannot end with data availability. The practices and interfaces through which people encounter the field are part of the social process. They must help people perceive context, standpoint, scope, uncertainty, and relationship before reducing stories to winners and losers. They must preserve legitimate privacy, restriction, refusal, and community authority over knowledge. They must show what is absent and who is affected but not represented.

Making perspectives visible creates a possibility of encounter. It is not evidence that encounter, understanding, or responsible use has occurred.

An ecology of Stories

CGP can therefore be understood as supporting an ecology of stories. Expressions do not enter a single process that determines which account should prevail. They persist, travel, and develop as people and communities relate them to other expressions. These relationships carry semantic meaning: one expression may support, qualify, challenge, extend, translate, interpret, or respond to another. A reference relates one published contribution to another. Attribution identifies the author of each contribution, but the relationship does not connect their authors, imply reciprocity, or establish endorsement. It records only the particular semantic relationship published by the contributor who created it.

Within this ecology, stories may acquire further life as others use, adapt, contest, or build upon them. Wider circulation does not establish greater truth or value. A false claim may travel because it is repeatedly challenged, while an important firsthand observation may initially remain weakly connected. CGP therefore preserves not only that a relationship exists, but what kind of relationship was expressed, by whom, on what grounds, and within which conditions.

The ecosystem does not attempt to define in advance every relationship or practice that its participants may need. CGP Core supplies a minimal shared basis for identity, attribution, expression, relationship, provenance, and revision. Its initial implementation will necessarily be provisional because the Open Social Protocols environment through which it is intended to evolve does not yet exist. As that environment develops, CGP can itself become an attributable and versioned Protocol, subject to the same lineage, contestation, forking, consequence, and revision that it enables. Its initial design choices acquire no final status merely because they came first. Domain protocols can introduce more specific objects and relationships as communities encounter new conditions and purposes; their development is itself part of the ecology, as limitations and consequences become grounds from which new protocols, extensions, and practices emerge.

6. Coordination Without Compulsory Agreement

Once perspectives can coexist on common ground, the question changes from “How do we make everyone agree?” to “What becomes possible among these perspectives?”

Agreement cannot be assumed to be the gateway to coordination. Agreements can record genuine mutual commitments. They can also conceal unequal power, convert submission into apparent consent, and allow a collective instrument to speak over the people it binds.

The language of agreement commonly collapses several distinct acts:

- understanding what another person means;
- sharing a belief;
- accepting a proposal;
- choosing to participate;
- coordinating compatible actions;
- tolerating unresolved difference; and
- accepting an enforceable obligation.

CGP keeps these distinctions available. A group is not treated as having one mind simply because its members are related or act together. A field can display the personal perspectives, relationships, and current orientations of participants without replacing them with a collective position.

Coordination begins when people can encounter one another's perspectives and positions clearly enough to discover what they can do together, what remains unresolved, and where participation or refusal must remain personal.

Consensus is not the problem. Consensus may emerge as people encounter one another, learn, and adjust. It can be valuable when it remains answerable to participants, grounding, consequences, dissent, and revision. A shared decision may also be necessary where action must be synchronized or resources cannot be allocated in mutually compatible ways.

The problem is consensus imposed as the price of entry: agreement required before perspectives may enter common ground, difference hidden beneath a collective statement, or a decision represented as a belief shared by everyone it governs. Consensus may emerge from common ground, but it should not be required to create common ground.

Choice requires equal care. A recorded selection is evidence of behavior under conditions. It is not by itself evidence of voluntary participation, endorsement, or meaningful consent. A worker may accept a process because refusal would cost a livelihood. A community may select among options defined by an outside authority. A person may retain a formal right to withdraw while dependence or retaliation makes withdrawal materially impossible.

This openness to provisional action is compatible with Simon’s account of satisficing under bounded rationality, while retaining distinct perspectives, conditions of participation, and consequences rather than presuming one shared aspiration level (Simon 1955).

The meaning of choice depends in part upon who defined the options, what alternatives are accessible, the person's dependencies, the consequences of refusal, and whether the decision can be revised without punishment. Constraint does not make behavior meaningless. It changes what can validly be inferred from it.

Open Social Protocols extends CGP into reusable proposals for action. People can inspect a Protocol, configure it, and express a personal Adoption rather than allowing an organization to adopt on everyone's behalf. But an Adoption record cannot prove agency merely by declaring it. The conditions under which a person adopts, complies, refuses, or withdraws must remain available to interpretation and review.

7. A Team Encountering Its Own Work

Consider a team in which work is allocated through a weekly planning meeting. The process appears successful in its formal records: tasks are assigned, deadlines are recorded, and work is usually completed.

One participant observes that urgent customer work is repeatedly assigned to the same two people. Another records that the meeting gives everyone an opportunity to volunteer. A third notices that some forms of maintenance work are rarely named even though they prevent recurring failures. A fourth

experiences the meeting as voluntary in form but understands that refusing urgent assignments will affect future opportunities.

These are not initially four positions on one proposition. They direct attention to distribution, procedure, invisible work, and constrained choice. Treating them immediately as disagreement—"Is the process fair?"—would compress what each makes perceptible.

The observations may ground several claims. The allocation procedure may permit self-selection. Repeated urgency may concentrate burdens. Work that is absent from the planning categories may remain socially and economically unrecognized. A formal opportunity to refuse may not establish meaningful voluntariness when the anticipated consequences are unequal.

Evidence can support or qualify each claim: assignment histories, meeting records, participant testimony, customer outcomes, maintenance logs, and observations from people affected outside the team. None becomes the complete story. Their methods, conditions, and limitations remain visible.

The field may make several needs legible: continuity of service, sustainable participation, recognition of necessary work, and meaningful capacity to decline. These needs can coexist even where they create tensions. None determines one mandatory process.

Participants may then consider several responses. They might rotate urgent assignments, reserve capacity for maintenance, make anticipated burdens visible before volunteering, or create a way to decline without affecting access to future work. Different people may support different combinations for different reasons.

The team does not need to publish what it collectively believes about fairness. Its members need to determine whether there is an action they are each willing and meaningfully able to try. They may converge upon a trial process. They may coordinate only part of their work. They may preserve competing proposals. A participant may refuse because the available responses do not address a material constraint.

Whatever happens next returns to life. The trial may redistribute visible assignments while leaving emotional labor untouched. It may reduce exhaustion but slow response time. A person who expected relief may experience greater monitoring. These consequences become new observations and Feedback, linked to the exact process and conditions through which they arose.

Success is not demonstrated by convergence. It lies in whether perspectives remained available, constraints became more perceptible, action did not conceal its conditions, and consequences could revise the field from which the action emerged.

8. What Prevents CGP from Becoming Another Authority?

CGP could reproduce the very patterns it is intended to change. Its categories could become gatekeeping devices. Its graph could privilege what is easy to publish and count. Life Space could become an unquestionable ontology. Applications could hide disagreement behind confident summaries. Institutions could require formal Adoption and call the resulting compliance voluntary.

Preventing this is not a matter of benevolent intent. It requires constitutive commitments that apply to CGP itself.

Living reality precedes framework coherence. Observations, counterexamples, harms, refusals, and consequences that do not fit the current model are inputs to its revision, not noise to be excluded.

Different expressions retain different epistemic roles. An observation is not a generalized claim. A source is not automatically evidence for every proposition it contains. A value is not a law of life. A need does not prescribe one response. A Protocol does not establish that its process works.

Support must match the claim. Scope, conditions, methods, provenance, uncertainty, counterevidence, knowledge authority, and consent remain visible. Claims should be no broader or more certain than their grounding warrants.

Normative commitments are declared. Evidence can constrain a choice without uniquely determining what people ought to do. CGP must state whose standing is recognized, who may benefit or bear burdens, what alternatives were considered, and how a decision can be challenged.

This concern aligns with Herbert Simon's procedural rationality, which considers how choices are made under limited information rather than judging them only against a presumed optimal outcome. CGP extends this into a plural field: participants may perceive the situation differently, attend to different consequences, and pursue different purposes (Simon 1976).

Revision preserves lineage. Correction does not erase prior expressions or the relationships that referred to them. People can reconstruct what changed, why it changed, and which objections remain.

Artificial intelligence remains an assistant, not an unrecorded authority. AI may help compare, classify, detect contradictions, and synthesize. Generated fluency is not evidence. Material AI participation, source selection, uncertainty, and human judgment must remain inspectable.

Rigor increases with consequence. An exploratory note need not undergo the review required of a Protocol used to allocate rights, expose sensitive information, govern livelihoods, or affect people who cannot readily refuse.

Two additional tests concern social validity. Technical visibility is not evidence that a perspective was understood. Selection under constraint is not evidence of voluntary Adoption, consent, or endorsement.

These commitments do not guarantee that CGP will resist capture. They make capture, exclusion, overclaiming, and detachment more available for detection and challenge. CGP remains faithful to its purpose only while contrary evidence can enter, affected people can contest how they are represented, confidence can decrease, and no implementation becomes the silent authority over common ground.

9. Living Co-Regulation

CGP does not claim that plurality automatically improves collective performance. Existing systems may fail in the presence of diverse perspectives because of conflict, unequal participation, time pressure, incompatible incentives, or the demands of tightly coupled action. The question is whether systems designed to preserve and relate perspectives can help people work with differences that convergence systems suppress or turn into conflict.

That is an empirical proposition. It must be tested through use.

CGP proposes the following movement:

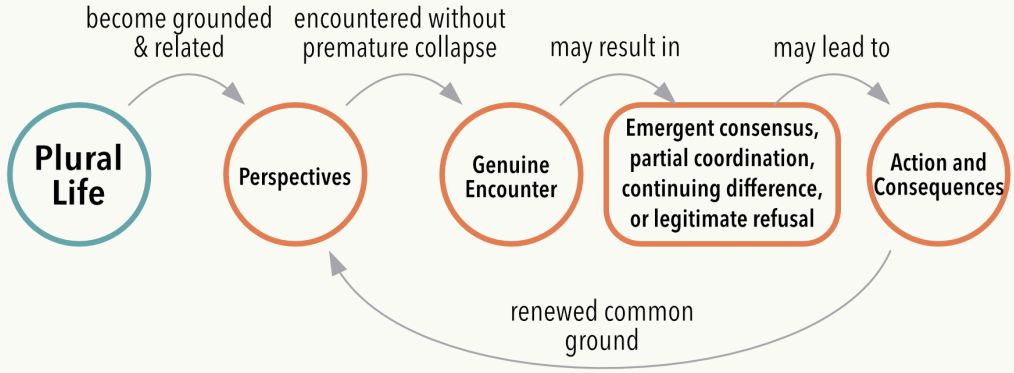


Figure 4. Living co-regulation.
Perspectives arising from plural life become grounded and meaningfully related, enabling genuine encounter without requiring convergence. Any resulting consensus, coordination, difference, or refusal may inform action, whose consequences return to and revise common ground.

The process may fail at any point. Relevant perspectives may never be recorded. Grounding may be weak. Interfaces may distort the field. People may not understand one another. Power may make participation nominal rather than real. Coordination may remain impossible. An action may cause harms no participant anticipated.

These failures do not sit outside the proposed system. A living process must be able to sense them. Observations of exclusion, constraint, misunderstanding, and consequence must be able to return to common ground and change the objects, relationships, practices, and Protocols through which people proceed.

This recursive capacity is **living co-regulation**: people continually sense what is happening, make their perspectives legible and encounterable, discover whether and how to move together, and revise their understandings and actions in response to consequences.

Living co-regulation occurs within an evolving ecology of stories, relationships, applications, and Protocols: consequences do not merely revise particular claims or actions, but may also change the structures through which later expressions become related and encountered.

CGP establishes the federated common ground for this movement. Open Social Protocols develops the next part of the ecosystem: public, reusable proposals that people can inspect, personally adopt, configure, compose, bridge, enact, and revise. Their effects return as observations, evidence, consequences, and Feedback. Neither common ground nor an open process supplies a final answer. Together they make continued learning and coordination possible without placing one story, repository, application, or response beyond challenge.

Common ground need not be the place where difference ends. It can be the place where perspectives become grounded, encounterable, and meaningfully related, so people can discover whether and how to move together without forcing one another to become the same.

10. Research Agenda and References

This paper states CGP's conceptual and social-design proposition. Its empirical program remains to be developed through trials, enactments, affected-participant Feedback, and study of the conditions under which preserving perspectives improves or impairs agency, coordination, and consequence detection.

Research indicates that diversity does not automatically improve team performance and that conflict can impose substantial process costs (Stahl et al. 2010; Wallrich et al. 2024; Yuan, Yin, and Sun 2026). Consensus, majority procedures, cross-partisan discussion, and voluntary association can also be functional under particular social and coordination conditions (de Jong 2024; Kuroda, Takahashi, and Kameda 2023; Page, Putterman, and Unel 2005). These findings motivate CGP's narrower hypothesis: not that plurality is inherently superior, but that systems designed to preserve, relate, and revisit perspectives may enable different forms of perception, coordination, and correction.

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