Please acknowledge that this is incomplete.
Add or comment, please do not delete.

Welcome to BATS

[Anyone: Read the paragraph]
Hi, welcome to BATS. My name is _____ and I use _____ pronouns. BATS is a "leaderless" group which governs through Values Based Consensus and there are some duties, such as being the moderator. Would anyone like to be the moderator today? **[Give the binder to the moderator, a more experienced moderator must co-moderate when available]**
[Moderator: Read the Rules & Policies]

Rules

1. **Confidentiality** - Who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here. When you see BATS members outside of the group, do not assume they use the same names and pronouns, do not assume the person is out to the people they are with. We do not want to accidentally out someone.
2. **Safety** - Be considerate of others. Do not bring weapons or hazards to BATS. When discussing traumatic events or problematic behaviors please use general language and stay away from graphic details because many behaviors are contagious and descriptions can be triggering. Adhere to people's limits when they are set.
3. **Inclusivity** - There is no one way to be trans, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, or queer. We are all different and valid in our identities. If we were all the same life would be boring.
4. **Names & Pronouns** - BATS is an excellent place to try out new names and pronouns! If you want to change part way through the meeting, let us know and please try to refer to people by their name and pronouns. This ensures mutual respect and that we are seen authentically.
5. **Support** - We want to support you most effectively! When bringing up topics, please tell us what you want from the group (**Validation, Problem Solving, Implementing a Solution, Venting, etc**.) and repeat your name and pronouns. Resource questions like doctors, clothing stores, social supports, etc. should be direct to the Facebook Group/Website to give more room for dynamic topics.
6. **Respect** - Be respectful. Do not have side conversations or cross-talk when others are speaking. Silence phones, videogames, music and other noisy elements as much as possible. Allow us to focus on the group.
7. **Stacking** - Topics are chosen by stacking, the moderator forms and maintains an order of people who each speak their topic in turn. Speaking within topics may function this way under moderator discretion/ability although is not required. This allows everyone to have a voice and prevents member suppression.
8. **Substances** - Do not come to BATS under the influence of drugs or alcohol or consume substances at the meeting. If you do come to BATS while under the influence, act as if sober. Support is available regardless of sobriety yet acting sober allows the group to continue to function and effectively provide support to yourself and everyone else.

Facebook Group

Coming to one meeting is the requirement to join the Facebook Group. The group is a secret group and will not show up on your profile or be visible to your friends and family not also in the group. Ask a moderator or someone who looks experienced to be added! **DO NOT** add anyone who has not attended at least one BATS meeting to the group to ensure the safety of our members.

Other Considerations

- We all come to BATS for our own reasons, and we all have our own styles and approaches. Please try to understand that everyone is doing their best and wants to improve.

- This is hard stuff, to have a support group, and sometimes in large numbers, please exercise patience.
- To help cover heating and electricity we collect a $0 - $5 donation at the end of the meeting. Zero is COMPLETELY acceptable.

BATS Support Meeting Format

[Moderator: Follow this schedule!]

- ❏ **Assign Duties (6:55pm)** - write down names of persons responsible (See duties page)
- ❏ **Names & Pronouns (7pm)** - Go around the group clockwise, each person saying their name and pronouns. If a new person doesn't provide their pronouns please ask.
- ❏ **Check-ins** - Go back around counter-clockwise, each person repeating their name/pronouns and giving a brief update on how they're doing and how things have been going, trans related preferred. No one is required to give a checkin and can pass to the next person.
- ❏ **Reiterate assigned duties** - Remind everyone who is doing which duty.
- ❏ **Topics** - People bring up things they want to talk about, remember to have the person tell the group what they want from bringing the topic up!
- ❏ **Dinner Decision & Break (8 - 8:10pm)** - Have the group decide on where to go to dinner, make sure to mention distance, seating, food choice (vegan, allergies), cost, alcohol and bill splitting. Refer to the Restaurant Locations chart later in the binder. Have a break afterwards for stretching/bathroom.
- ❏ **Topics** - Bring up further topics, try to see if people new/shy have had something waiting, give space to people who need it. If no one has any topics, try using the Empowerment Questions.
- ❏ **Admin Meeting Recap (8:50pm)** - Go over what happened in the admin meeting
- ❏ **Donation (8:55pm)** – Pass around a container to collect donation
- ❏ **Facebook Additions** - Add new members to the Facebook Group
- ❏ **Dinner** - Go to dinner, or don't. Remember to **turn off the lights, AC/Heater and close the door**.

Moderator Tips

- ○ Read the binder as an introduction!
- ○ As moderator your are taking a leading role. You will succeed more often than not when you take ownership of the discussion. This is your group tonight to help direct and heal.
- ○ Check in with individuals asking questions. Use your discretion -- how long has the conversation gone on? Does the person look like they are satisfied? Ask him/her/them/etc. whether that helped, or if they were just looking for support or advice.
- ○ Moderator can respond with one or more clarifying/ follow up question(s) to get more insight and help further support the membership.
- ○ Give people time to say I want to moderate during intro intro
- ○ Transitional sentences help to go from one segment of the meeting to another.
- ○ If you're feeling overwhelmed or lost, look to your co-moderator!
- ○ As moderator you have ownership to direct the conversation. I know it is scary, so think of this as a learning experience, a chance to grow, and if you make a big mistake trust someone will talk with you about it later.
- ○ If you are new to stacking, it might help to write down the stack if it gets unruly for your memory. Keep the binder with you and turn to a fresh page. This might also help remember names and to use names when calling on people.
- ○ Co-moderator, try to help nudge the moderator when possible instead of taking over. Such as reinforcing rule adherence and actively engaging the primary moderator to follow policy.
- ○ Ask members to speak loudly. Especially if A/C is on or large group.

Crisis Checklists
What to do in the event of a crisis when you are unsure, this is not policy, only guidance

DBT Crisis Strategies Checklist

- ❏ Moderator attends to emotion rather than content.
- ❏ Moderator explores the problem now.
  - ❏ Moderator focuses on immediate time frame.
  - ❏ Moderator identifies key events setting off current emotions and sense of crisis.
  - ❏ Moderator formulates and summarizes the problem.
  - ❏ Moderator focuses on problem solving.
  - ❏ Moderator gives advice and makes suggestions.
  - ❏ Moderator frames possible solutions in terms the member understands.
  - ❏ Moderator predicts future consequences of action plans.
  - ❏ Moderator confronts group maladaptive/unhealthy ideas or behavior directly.
  - ❏ Moderator clarifies and reinforces group's adaptive/healthy responses.
  - ❏ Moderator identifies factors interfering with productive plans of action.
- ❏ Moderator focuses on affect tolerance - being able to tolerate a range of emotions without becoming overwhelmed by them.
- ❏ Moderator helps group commit itself to a plan of action.
- ❏ Moderator assesses group members' suicide risk (if necessary)
- ❏ Moderator anticipates a recurrence of the crisis response.

DBT Suicidal Behavior Strategies Checklist

When threats of imminent suicide or self-injury are occurring, and the moderator cannot turn management over to an individual therapist.

- ❏ Skills trainer assesses the risk of suicide and of self-injury
  - ❏ Moderator uses known factors related to imminent suicidal behavior to predict imminent risk.
  - ❏ Moderator knows the likely lethality of various suicide/self-injury methods
  - ❏ Moderator consults with emergency services or medical consultant about medical risk of planned and/or available method(s)
- ❏ Moderator follows the crisis plan already prepared if one is available.
- ❏ Moderator removes, or gets member to remove, lethal items.
- ❏ Moderator emphatically instructs member not to commit suicide or engage in self-injurious behavior.
- ❏ Moderator maintains a position that suicide is not a good solution.
- ❏ Moderator generates hopeful statements and solutions for coping.
- ❏ Moderator keeps contact when suicide risk is imminent and high (until client's care is stabilized)
- ❏ Moderator anticipates a resurgence (before care is stabilized) and takes action to maintain member safety such as hospitalization or monitoring.
- ❏ Moderator communicates member's suicide risk to current or new individual therapist as soon as possible

When a self-injurious act is taking place during contact or has just taken place, such as in the bathroom during the break.

- ❏ Moderator assesses potential medical risk of behavior, consulting with local emergency services or other medical resources to determine risk when necessary

- ❏ Moderator assesses client's ability to obtain medical treatment on their own.
- ❏ If medical emergency exists, call emergency services.
- ❏ Moderator stays in contact with client until aid arrives
- ❏ Moderator calls individual therapist (if there is one)
- ❏ If risk is low, moderator instructs member to obtain medical treatment, if necessary, and to call their individual therapist (if in therapy)

Empowerment Questions

These questions are designed to bring happy healthy and recovery as concepts to every meeting. Alongside offering support to people in need, a support group should also have some focus on the positives of this journey/process/transition. Depending on the question, short stories are okay, and try to tease out and describe the revelations/abstract conclusions you discovered in going through that experience.

- Ask the group if they have any questions which would lead to positive stories/ examples

- When has someone in your life surprised you with their support/ understanding/ acceptance?

- What was your aha moment like when you learned to love yourself, to transition, etc?

- Do you have any mantras or phrases you use to help cope with dysphoria and trans angst?

- When has a stranger surprised you with love acceptance understanding?

- Any recent powerful gestures you did for yourself that helped you take steps forward?

- What techniques do you use to help yourself during a downward spiral?

- Fun stories when your gender was affirmed surprisingly?

- Who has helped you with your transition and life, and how might you express gratitude to them?

- How does social media help with your trans angst or dysphoria?

- Describe a time you helped another member of the trans* community

- What is something you like to do for yourself to affirm your identity?

- What are some things you're good at?

- What is something you love about yourself?

- Who is your role model (trans or otherwise)? Why?

- What is something you want to learn about in regards to transitioning? (Mostly for new folks)

- Describe something unexpectedly beautiful, fun or cool that you saw or did recently

Dinner Locations

- Dinner is a social thing to help new people and make friends and feel safe presenting and stuff in public. Come if you want to hang out, try to make friends, or present in public without the same level of fear. When we're together as a group, we're safer.
- If you are going to a smaller group dinner, do not broadcast in meeting.

REMOVED FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

BATS Admin Section
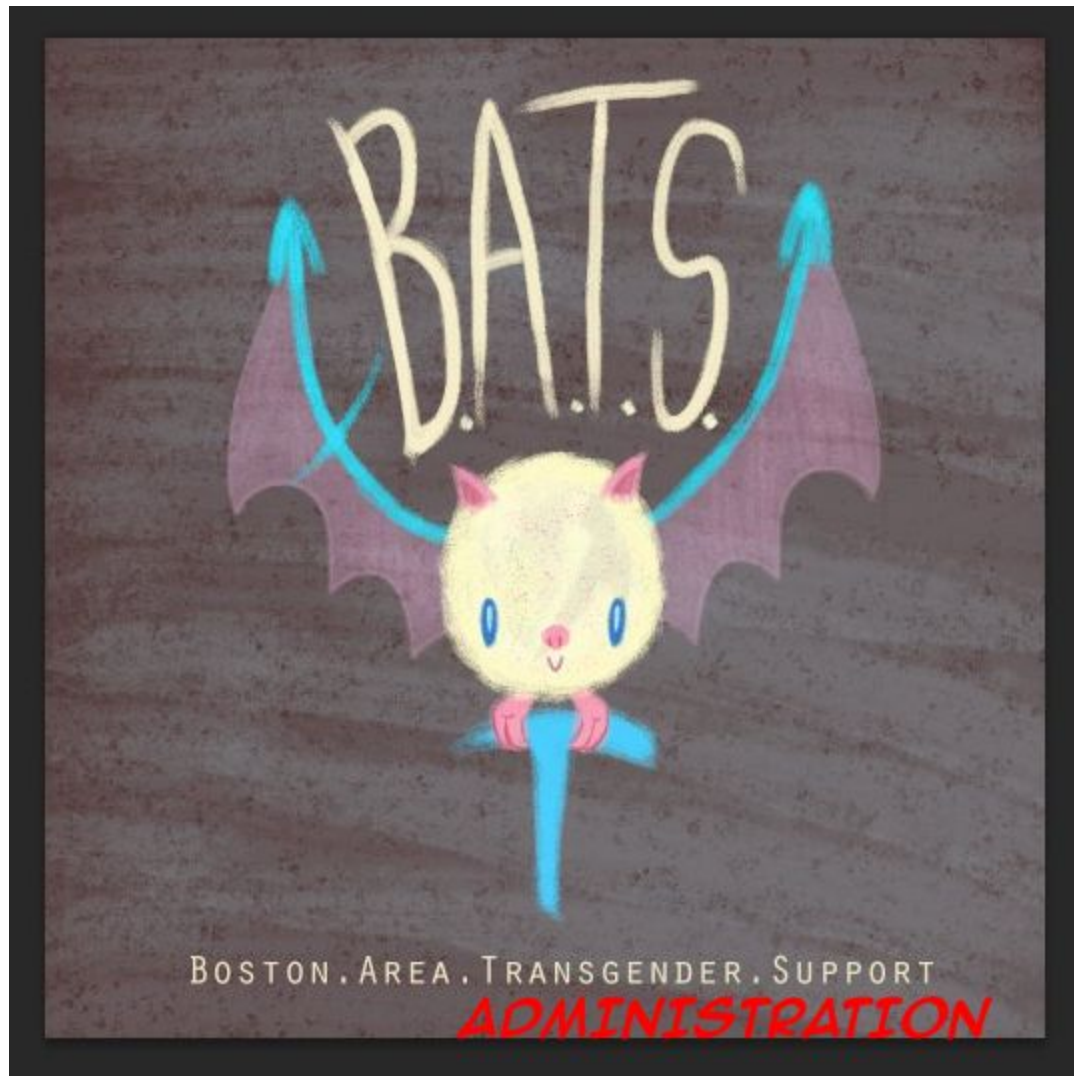
When I teach my graduate students—who work with complex, difficult-to-treat individuals at high risk for suicide—I always remind them that they can choose whether to look out for themselves or to look out for their clients, but they cannot always do both. If they want to look out for themselves at a possible cost to their clients, I remind them that they are in the wrong profession.

I dedicate this book to all those who have found the courage to carry on this work at a possible cost to themselves.

-Marsha Linehan

VALUES of Boston Area Trans Support
Est March 20th 2018

Autonomy | BATS is directed by attendees and independent from external organizations

Community | A space which fosters a feeling of belonging and acceptance.

Connection | To provide an environment conducive to individual relationships.

Dialectical | Willing to see and accept more than one perspective and compromise on finding a middle path between extremes.

Effectiveness | Moves BATS towards its own goals in light of its own values.

Inclusivity | Includes trans*, Non-Binary and Gender-nonconforming people regardless of race, age, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual identity, religion, economic situation, immigration status, physical or mental ability or political affiliation. Excludes cisgendered people from the group.

Safety | To keep BATs members safe from physical and emotional harm.

Stability | Ensuring the continuation of meetings and community

Support | The intention and ability to decrease the suffering of BATS members.

Transparency | To have administrative decisions and group functionality clearly visible to all members

Duties of Boston Area Trans Support

What needs to happen every meeting for the meeting to function smoothly, these duties may be done by one or more individual. Delegating these tasks can aid individuals in feeling useful and part of the community.

In Meeting (Support)

Opening
Unlocking the door to the building and turn on the lights. Responsibility of the Key-Holders.

Binder Keeping
Get the binder from wherever it may be and return the binder at the end of the meeting.

Moderation
Moderate the support group by utilizing stacking for topics/speaking, making sure the group follows schedule and rules/policies. Frequently this person carries out most BATS duties.

Door Keeping
Respond to door buzzer, greet members (new members especially) as they enter and redirect non-members.

Verification
Ask individuals what meeting they are looking for in the church and verify that they are in the correct room.

Redirection
Redirect others to their desired locations when they incorrectly enter the BATS meeting room.

Seating
Pause the discussion as new members arrive, welcome the new person and get them seated before resuming discussion.

Dinner Decision
Decide where to go for dinner and how many people are going.

Donation Collection
Collect a donation at the end of the meeting.

Facebook Adding
Add new members to the Facebook Group.

Closing
Turn off the lights, put back chairs, turn off AC/Heat, check for stragglers, close the door(s).

In Meeting (Administration)

Moderation
Make sure the admin meeting follows schedule, utilize full stacking and both support & administrative rule-sets.

Out of Meeting

Join Response
Respond to BATS Join requests through email. See standard email format.

Facebook Moderation
Moderate the Facebook Group in accordance with BATS Support Rules.

Website Reliability
Ensure the availability and reliability of the website.

BATS Admin Meeting Rules

1. All BATS Proper Rules apply.
2. All talking functions by stacking which is the responsibility of the Admin Meeting Facilitator.
    a. Stacking is creating an order of people who speak and are given time to speak, a timer can be used to keep pace.
3. Signage to reflect the start of the meeting, those who do not want to join should wait inside, outside the meeting room.
4. Late members should be seated quietly and will not be given time to be updated.
5. A note taker should keep notes and post them to the Facebook Group

BATS Admin Meeting Format (50 min)

1. Pick Admin Meeting Facilitator & Co-Facilitator (5 min - 6pm)
    a. Decide which member will hold facilitator responsibilities, try to have it rotate.
2. Quick Check-in (5 min - 6:05pm)
    a. Pick a color relating to your present state:
        i. Red: Not good, not ready to participate fully, 0%
        ii. Yellow: Half-here, dealing with some stuff, 50%
        iii. Green: 100%, ready to go, present and in control
3. Proposal Segment (15 min - 6:10pm)
    a. The segment wherein proposals can be made using the established proposal format to be scheduled for the following meeting.
4. Consensus Segment (25 min - 6:25pm)
    a. The segment wherein proposals are put up for consensus.
5. Break (10 min - 6:50pm)
    a. Break between Admin Meeting & BATS Support

Proposals in Values Based Consensus

Proposals let members suggest new policies or actions for the group. All changes to BATS should take the form of proposals first.

How to bring a proposal up for consensus

1. Come to at least two (2) BATS Support meetings within six (6) months
2. Fully complete a proposal document using the form
3. Come to an admin meeting and present the proposal
4. Proposal will be put forward that meeting for consensus to start work on the proposal
5. The proposed change(s) must be shared to BATS at large for a minimum of two weeks
6. Consensus is performed to ratify proposed changes.

Exceptions to this procedure can occur in emergencies. Emergencies include instances when BATS members are at risk, the group as a whole is at risk, or similar situations.

Consensus Process

- Read proposal as written
- Ask for consent, abstain, block
- If blocked, decide whether this would be a long discussion, or a short one.
  - If a short one, deliberate and try to resolve it
    - If resolution to block requires modification to the proposal, the proposal can still be consented to as long as no major modifications have occurred.
    - If resolution to block requires MAJOR modification, restart the process, or make a new proposal
  - If a long one, table it for online discussion/out of group meeting
- If consensus is achieved, proposal is approved! Begin forming a committee.

Block Process

In order to block you must say "I block" during the consenting process.
A block can be resolved in a few ways:
  The blocker can be convinced to remove their block
  The proposal can be modified so the blocker removes the block
  The block can be bypassed if an individual demonstrates that the proposal does not violate values and or that the block is not based on values if the remainder of the group excluding the blocker finds consensus.
If a block remains, it may be healthy to table the proposal for another two weeks while people think and deliberate.
It only takes one person to stop a proposal, it takes everyone or almost everyone to make anything happen.

How We Track Proposals

Proposals will be tracked within the BATS binder. They will be separated by dividers. When or if this becomes unmanageable we will re-evaluate how to handle this.

Proposal states

A. Proposal Ready
B. Approved, not completed
C. Completed

Proposal Form

Proposals must include the following information before being presented at an admin meeting.

Title	A single sentence description of the proposal
Description	In detail, describe the action or change you wish to facilitate. Be clear and concise.
Time Estimate	# of hours it will take to implement the proposal
Completion Goal	Either 2 or 4 weeks
Urgency	CRITICAL / IMPROVEMENT
Notes	Feel free to add any thoughts, concerns, or otherwise

Title

Concise. Make it an action, a verb. Create a thing. Do a thing. Send a thing.

Description

Describe what your proposal is and why you are bringing it forward. How will this proposal affect BATS? What does this proposal requires of BATS members, including all minor actions such as documentation? Documentation is our greatest weapon against lack of momentum.

Time Estimate

Make a serious effort to estimate how many hours it will take to accomplish the goals in this proposal. Time estimation is hard. Make sure to include documentation updates and reporting to the group as part of the time estimate. Be mindful of how much availability and time your potential committee members have.

Why: Time estimates help ensure we get things done. They also help us determine how many people are needed to complete the proposal goals.

Completion Goal

Every proposal needs a deadline of either 2 weeks or 4 weeks. If you feel a proposal will take longer than 4 weeks, consider breaking apart the goals into more than one proposal. Exceptions can be made, try to keep them to a minimum.

Why: This is super important. It is hard to stay focused on volunteer work because life gets in the way, and we understand that. By pushing ourselves to come up with proposals which are small and completable, we help ensure they get done, and we keep our momentum. Wouldn't it be awesome if every admin meeting we approve a proposal, and at the very next admin meeting the committee chair says the goals are complete? Yeah, it will feel awesome.

Urgency

How urgent is it that BATS complete the actions in this proposal?

- MISSION CRITICAL: This task must be done to ensure the survival of BATS as a whole.
- IMPROVEMENT: This task facilitates the overall improvement of BATS.

Approved proposals which are deemed critical will always be brought up at every meeting until a committee is formed.

Committees

A committee is a group of individuals working together. Committees form when an approved proposal requires action/work. The committee will exist until the proposal goals are completed, with exception to a few permanent committees.

Committee Structure

1. Approved Proposal
2. Committee Chair
3. Committee Members
4. Updates
5. Results/Completion

Chair Responsibilities

Ensure the goals of the proposal are completed through communication, motivation, and inspiration. Chairs take on the responsibility of scheduling out-of-group meetings if necessary and report to the admin meeting. Progress updates at admin meetings are required and may be delegated to a member if you are unable to attend.

Member Responsibilities

Put time into achieving the goal of the committee and communicating with the chair so progress can be tracked. Expect to have at least one in person meeting, to schedule time to work, and learn and utilize new communication methods. Members may be appointed to share progress at admin meetings.

Updates

Every BATS admin meeting, the committee chair will report what their committee has done, what is planned, and how it will be accomplished. If the chair is unable to report in person, they are required to delegate the responsibility. **If the chair is not present to report and has not delegated, we will choose a new chair.**

How to choose a Committee Chair

The first chair candidate is the Proposal's author. If the author does not wish to be chair or is unsuitable, another chair must be chosen before the committee can be formed. Once a potential chair is chosen, seek consensus. Repeat until a chair is found.

How to choose members for a committee

All Committee members MUST be BATS members. Members will be chosen during the admin meeting right after a proposal is approved. The proposal author is encouraged to find potential members for the committee and bring them to the admin meeting where consensus is expected, especially if the author desires to be chair. If not enough members are found during the meeting, the Chair is responsible for finding more members before the next admin meeting. A committee only needs enough members to effectively complete the goals of the proposal. A Committee should have no more than eight (8) members unless otherwise stated in the proposal.

Riot.im Mobile App Instructions

1. Install Riot.im
2. Open the app and tap the register button. Pick a username and password. Ignore the custom options.
3. . If you want your account to be recoverable, supply either a phone number or email otherwise tap the skip button.
4. It may ask you to prove you aren't a robot (we can't really, google thinks we can).
5. Tap on the + button on the bottom right, tap on "join room" option. Type in '#GROUPNAME' minus the single quotes.

Static Roles

Key Bearers

There are keys. Whoever has them should be expected to show up regularly and on time to meetings to ensure that a BATS member is there to open the door for people. Regardless of how others treat the door, we should follow this practice. If you have a key, your name will be placed on the contract so we collectively can keep track of who has them. Although you will not be necessarily legally liable for anything. That responsibility lies on the Emissary. Can be changed via consensus.

Key 1: Florence L Forbush
Key 2: Luna Umbra

Emissary

The Emissary is the individual legally liable for the group's meeting space. Responsible for communication between the group and the space owner(s) by making sure information is sent and received between both parties. Maintain confidentiality when communicating information to the space owner(s) and advocate effectively in line with group values. Can be changed via consensus.

The importance of this role cannot be overstressed, if we do not have a location to meet, there is no group. If the Emissary is unwilling or unable to maintain positive or neutral relations between the space holder(s) and the group, then they are likely a threat to the groups continued existence and overall stability. Having a place to meet is more important than the guidelines of what we do when we meet. If we cannot meet, we cannot support one another as a group.

Currently: Florence L Forbush