

For further information, please contact:

**TransBareAll Retreat,
United Kingdom**

**Trans & Bare Weekend,
Netherlands**



**TransBareAll &
Trans & Bare
Weekend**

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This toolkit is a part of the information leaflet, provided at the workshop *Proud of our Bodies: the positive impact of TransBareAll and Trans & Bare Weekend* at the TGEU Council in Bologna, Italy, in 2016.



Toolkit



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These are some initial ideas, thoughts and questions you may wish to consider if you would like to create your own Trans Bare Retreat.

Name of weekend

- Think of a good name for your weekend.
- Think about stating "bare" in the title, or not: bare might be confronting, but makes clear what you do. Tip: also "bare" isn't just about baring your body, but also your mind.

Leaders

- Do you choose only workshop leaders who are trans themselves? Or are you open to cis workshop leaders as well?
- Do you invite workshop leaders for a workshop? Or are all workshops provided by the leaders of the weekend? (We only use workshop leaders that are present all weekend because of group building and safer space).
- Make sure you have at least two people leading the weekend.
- Make sure you have leaders who have experience with leading groups (or at least knowledge about this).
- Make sure you have leaders who are social and empathic.

Target group

- Who is your target group: trans men, trans women, trans people, non-binary people, partners and/or carers?
- Do you choose to limit to any transition: in a medical sense, in a social sense? Or regardless any transition?
- Do you choose to limit to any transitional phase: seekers, starters, transitioning and/or veterans. Or regardless any phase?

Access

- Decide about the participation fee: What fee can participants afford to pay? Do you offer a payment plan option and/or sliding scale?
- Decide about access needs: What do people need? What do you want to offer? What are you able to offer?
- Decide about dietary needs: What do people need? What do you want to offer? What are you able to offer?
- Decide about age: From what age are people welcome? Tip: For legal reasons it might be advisable to set the minimum age at 18.

PR

- Clear communications throughout promoting, booking and the event itself are key. Many people are nervous about attending a weekend like this, so sharing information about access, workshop outlines, timings for the weekend events etc can all help. People often have lots of questions and contact us by email leading up to the retreat and making sure we respond and listen helps them feel valued and more relaxed.
- Build a website about this weekend.
- Choose your social media: Facebook, Twitter, ...
- Make a press release for T and LGB community, so people know about this weekend.
- Go to trans groups to tell about this weekend: In the beginning people might be shy.
- Make news posts about the weekend on your website and social media.
- Using Facebook groups for people to connect and get to know others, ask questions and organise lifts has been really valuable to us in the past. Remember that not everyone is on Facebook though, so you might want to use another online social space if that works better for you.

Funding

- Ask for funding, if possible.
- You can choose for a sponsorship/donations on your website and/or social media: This enables people to financially support your weekend.
- You can choose to add an optional question to your booking form: An extra sponsorship fee from participants. We find that a number of wealthier participants are happy to pay extra, which enables less wealthy participants to join as well.



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Rules of conduct

We strongly suggest to set rules of behaviour for the weekend in general and bare in particular, to ensure a safer space. These rules can be discussed at the beginning of the weekend. Any rules that participants like to be added, can be added. These rules should at least include:

- Respect other people and their experiences.
- Beware of your own limits.
- Challenge yourself, but not too much.
- Respect other people's limits.
- Questions are okay, but no need to answer.
- Take responsibility for yourself and help others.

These rules can be discussed at the beginning of the weekend. Any rules that participants like to be added, can be added.

Remember:

- It is impossible to create an absolutely safe space, as we can never know what is happening in people's heads.
- Creating ground rules & naked etiquette as a group is really important, as this ensures that people all understand expectations of each other and the space, and can discuss any concerns or thoughts. It helps people overcome some fears and take responsibility for themselves.
- Listening to people's needs, and adapting the weekend, ground rules, workshops etc if needed, helps people feel that they are valued and listened to. If they feel this, they are more likely to let you know when things aren't working or if something needs changing.
- Create a code of conduct or make sure that you are showing you're an inclusive space. The main ethos of TBA and TBW is that ALL people are valued and welcome regardless of gender identity or expression, age (over 18), background, ability, impairments, ethnic background, sexual orientation etc and it's important to show this, so people know and feel they're able to attend and be in the space without fear of discrimination and exclusion.

Space

- Decide about the number of participants. We find that more than 25 at a weekend can be very hard work for leaders. And that less than 8 people at a weekend is too little for sharing experiences, and at the same time can make a weekend too intense.
- The venue should be able to accommodate the number of participants, be nicely priced and accessible to all participants.
- The venue should be a private space: No other people present, in that (part of the) building.
- The space that is used for being bare should have windows with curtains or no windows at all and should be warm.
- Decide about the importance of good access by car and by public transport.

Programme

- Talk about what you are going to do: Is there a topic or focus for your weekend?
- Think about the topic from different angles, i.e. discussions, photo's, creative, video's, physical, group work, individual, reflection, etc. Think outside the box!
- Build up the programme throughout the day, start with easier discussions and have more challenging topics/aspects later on.
- Discussion: Choose themes that you know are relevant and/or actual in your trans communities.
- Decide if participants have to attend the whole event: Can they arrive late? Can they leave early? We usually say people have to attend for the whole time to build the group relationships.

Care

- Take good care of your participants, because the weekend might have quite an impact during and/or after the weekend.
- Check if people are feeling alright during the weekend.
- Check if people are feeling alright after the weekend (after care)
- It may be useful to have a quiet space for participants to use should they need to have alone time during the weekend.

