

Getting Started

First Steps & Glossary for the Newly Politicized Trans Person





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🔥 FIRST STEPS IF YOU'RE NEW, SCARED, OR PANICKING

This section is for you if you're feeling overwhelmed, angry, terrified, or like you're about to collapse. Welcome. You are not alone. Here's how to start building your resistance from wherever you are.

1. Take a Deep Breath, Then Ground

- Drink water. Eat something. Text a friend.
- Place your hand on your chest. Remember: *I am real. I am sacred. I am not disposable.*
- Panic is a valid reaction. So is rage. So is grief.

2. Know You're Not Crazy — It *Is* Happening

- The state is criminalizing you.
- The media is dehumanizing you.
- Fascists are organizing.
- But you are not powerless. There are already **thousands** organizing, fighting, and surviving.

3. Start with Mutual Aid

- Plug into a local or online mutual aid group (check Signal, Discord, Mastodon, or trusted IG pages).
- If none exist near you, ask "How can I trade care, food, shelter, information with others?"
- Mutual aid isn't charity. It's a **combat network of survival**.

4. Secure Yourself Digitally

- Download **Signal** for encrypted texting.
- Use **ProtonMail** or **Tutanota** for sensitive emails.
- Get **Tor Browser** or **Brave**.
- Turn off location tracking. Ditch Face Recognition logins.

5. Start Building Your Go Bag

- Backpack with:
 - Water.
 - Copies of ID.
 - Emergency cash.
 - 3 days of meds.
 - Backup phone charger.
 - First aid kit.
 - A small, printed map.
- Don't wait for collapse — build for it.



6. Link Up with Others

- Resistance is collective. Isolation kills. One trans person alone is vulnerable. **Ten trans people together is a militia of care.**

7. Read Strategically, Not All at Once

- You do not need to master all the guides today. Start with:
 - Survival as a Trans Person Under Oppressive Regimes*
 - Digital Security & Privacy Toolkit*
 - Mental Health & Safe-Care Field Guide*

8. Understand the Core Principle: Trans Liberation = Anti-Fascist Survival

- This is not about visibility or assimilation.
- It's about **staying alive and defending each other** when the world wants us gone.



WHO DO I FOLLOW?

There is no centralized leadership in the Trans Army movement. There are no generals. No elected officials. No hierarchy. There are no saviors coming, and no permission will be granted. Leadership is emergent, collective, and situational. It forms when needed, fades when the need passes, and resurfaces in new forms.

This is not a bug; it's a defense mechanism. Centralized leadership makes movements brittle. It gives the enemy a single head to sever. Instead, we choose hydra tactics: many heads, many hearts, many hands.

This is by design. Centralized leadership is vulnerable to surveillance, arrest, and infiltration. When movements rely on figureheads or formal chains of command, they become easy to dismantle. A single doxxing, a single raid, a single bad opsec mistake, and the whole thing collapses. We've learned from Black Panthers, from ACT UP, from antifascist networks in Chile and Hong Kong. Power flows horizontally here. We do not march in lines, we move like water, and water cannot be led.

Instead, we organize through:

- Cells** — Small, local, often anonymous groups of trans people with trust and purpose. Cells operate independently but may coordinate loosely with other groups. Each cell builds its own protocols, risk thresholds, and tactics based on local conditions and member capacity. This makes them highly adaptable, nearly impossible to dismantle in one strike, and capable of rapid action without waiting for centralized approval. Cells can focus on anything: direct action, medical support, street patrols, media, or mutual aid. A cell might be three people in a living room, or twenty across neighborhoods, but the principle is the same, low visibility, high trust, and high impact.
- Care Webs** — Mutual aid constellations built on trust, trauma literacy, and rapid response. They are networks of people who take care of one another's needs without relying on the state. Care webs ensure no one is left behind. They can be formal (Google Sheets, Signal threads) or quiet and instinctual (who brings food when you're sick, who knows where your meds are hidden).



They are the connective tissue of our movement built on reciprocity, accountability, and the belief that healing is a tactical necessity.

- **Signal Chains** — Encrypted relays of coordination, not command. These are temporary, flexible communication networks built for secure updates, check-ins, and action alerts. Signal Chains rely on end-to-end encryption tools like Signal, Element (Matrix), Session, and encrypted emails to relay urgent information between cells and care webs without creating a vulnerable central node. These chains are not decision-making bodies; they are pulses, pings, distress calls, and deployment notices. They exist to move information at the speed of trust and disappear when no longer needed.

So, who do you follow? **You follow the people who show up, the ones who bring food when you're hungry, who show up at court, who stand between you and the police line, who check in after the raid. You follow the ones who carry grief and joy and water bottles and burner phones. You follow the ones you trust, the ones who've earned it. You follow each other.**

You are the leader now, not because you asked to be, but because the moment demands it. Leadership isn't a title, it's a practice of showing up, holding ground, and building forward. Share what you learn with your kin, even if you're still learning. Teach others how to disappear, how to care, how to hold a line.

Protect those beside you like your own breath. Listen more than you speak. Pass the torch when you're tired. Step forward when the need arises. Disappear when needed, for safety, for strategy, for rest. Reappear in force, linked arm to arm with others who remember why we fight.

GLOSSARY: CORE TERMS YOU'LL SEE IN THE MANUALS

Mutual Aid

Solidarity-based support systems: food shares, bail funds, rent pooling, medical teams. Not charity. It's survival infrastructure.

OpSec (Operational Security)

Methods of reducing the chance you're tracked, watched, or infiltrated. Includes digital safety, movement discretion, and trust boundaries.

Dead Drop

A method of anonymous info exchange — like leaving a USB in a known spot, no direct contact.

Cell-Based Organizing

Structure of small, independent teams that operate with minimal communication to avoid total collapse if infiltrated.

Counter-Surveillance

Watching who's watching you. Identifying plainclothes cops, stalkers, or surveillance devices.

Grey Market Logistics

Non-legal but nonviolent acquisition and transport of resources — like hormone sharing, street meds, food smuggling.

**Narrative Warfare**

Control of story, media, symbols, and representation. From memes to art to testimony. It shapes reality.

Soft Target / Hard Target

Soft = low surveillance, high vulnerability. Hard = reinforced, protected, hardened. You can *harden* a soft target with planning and resistance.

Digital Hygiene

Cleaning up your data trail. Using encrypted apps, deleting old social media, de-Googleing your life.

Survival Doctrine

The philosophical and tactical core of these guides: *trans people survive through strategy, solidarity, sabotage, and sacredness.*

Extraction Plan

Your emergency exit strategy. Know how to leave your house, your city, or your state if it gets hot. Includes contacts, routes, backup plans.

Tactical Compassion

Radical empathy combined with strategy. Caring for others is a combat skill.

Digital Dead Zone

An area where you intentionally drop offline: no phones, no signals, no data. Used for safety or planning.

Information Poisoning

The practice of flooding surveillance systems with false, misleading, or contradictory data to reduce their accuracy.

Care Web

A distributed network of people who commit to checking in, responding, and supporting each other materially and emotionally.

More coming. You don't need to be a soldier. You just need to stay alive, stay linked, and stay learning.

You are not alone.

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