

## BATTLE SCARS CIO FACEBOOK GROUP POLICY

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| <b>Policy information</b>                                      |   |
| <b>Organisation</b>  | Battle Scars  |
| <b>Scope of policy</b>   | Applies to on-line services   |
| <b>Policy operational date (original)</b>                      | 29/12/18  |
| <b>Policy prepared by</b>                                      | Jenny Groves – CEO<br>Debbie Riley – trustee  |
| <b>Date approved by Board</b>                                  | 31/01/20  |
| <b>Reviewed</b>  | 03/01/20  |
| <b>Amended</b>   | Yes   |
| <b>Policy review date</b>                                      | 31/01/22<br>Every 2 years.  |
| <b>Distributing</b>  | This policy will be available on the Battle Scars website and staff shared drive.<br>It will be a requirement for all trustees and staff to read the policy after appointment or after its review.<br>A summary of all relevant policies will be included in the volunteer handbook with clear signposting to the full text.<br>Volunteers will be kept up to date with any changes that might affect their role.   |
| <b>Introduction</b>  |   |
| <b>Purpose of Policy</b>                                       | Battle Scars is committed to safeguarding the members of the private on-line support group <i>Battle scars survivor led self-harm support group</i><br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/182423148780739/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/182423148780739/</a><br>and this policy lays out how to achieve this.<br>['private' means that nobody outside the group can see who the members are or the posts]   |
| <b>Those affected</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the group</li> <li>• Admins and moderators</li> <li>• People applying to join the group</li> </ul>  |
| <b>What is the difference between an admin and a moderator</b> | Facebook group admins can make changes to the group that moderators cannot, such as changing the group's description and other settings. For the purpose of monitoring, both admins and moderators have the same powers.  |
| <b>Procedure</b>   |   |
| <b>Key rules for the protection of group members</b>           | We insist that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all contact is kept within the group; no personal messages or other contact outside of the group between the group members is allowed unless members already know and trust each other or have contact by attending the Battle Scars peer support groups or similar.</li> <li>• Members do not criticize other members.</li> <li>• Graphic photos, for example of recent injuries, are not posted in the group.</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Private messaging admins/moderators</b>                                  | Members are encouraged to private message admins/moderators if they have concerns they would hesitate to post in the group. Also to report a post that they deem as inappropriate. This is the only private messaging that is allowed.   |
| <b>How will the key points of this policy be initially known to members</b> | All those applying to join the group are asked to agree to the group rules. If they have not within 24 hours of requesting to join the group, the request is rejected (but the member is not blocked and therefore able to reapply at a later time). Frequent reminders of the key rules and about reading the rules post (see below) are posted.  |
| <b>Approval of members</b>  | Anybody applying to join must agree to the rules. If they do, the member of the admin team who has seen it will check the person's profile page. If they have any concerns, they can discuss it with the other admins/moderators and a joint decision will be made. In case of serious concerns, the person's application will be rejected and they may also be blocked from re-applying.  |
| <b>Full rules for Facebook group members</b>                                | <p>Group rules MUST be followed. Breaking them will result in a warning (only one is given) or even instant removal from the group.</p> <p>DO NOT POST GRAPHIC PHOTOS (e.g. of recent injuries) PLEASE CONSIDER THE OTHER MEMBERS. Posting of graphic photos will result in instant removal from the group. If you need to post photos of healed scars (if asking for advice, for example) please make sure they are in the comments and not in the main post.</p> <p>DO NOT CRITICISE. We are here to support each other.</p> <p>KEEP ALL CONTACT WITHIN THE GROUP. Do not personal message, speak via messenger or similar, or exchange phone numbers or offer to do any of the above with members unless you already know and trust them. THIS IS FOR SAFETY OF EVERYBODY WITHIN THE GROUP.</p> <p>NEEDED: TRIGGER WARNINGS and/or KEY WORDS about the post's content (e.g. "abuse", "sh", "suicide", "flashbacks", "wound advice needed", "alcohol" etc.) AND writing main post a few lines lower (use dots or any letter, do NOT only press Enter). CONSIDER OTHER MEMBERS by giving them a better choice whether to read or not.</p> <p>MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY AND ANY ACTION TAKEN.</p> <p>This group is a PEER SUPPORT group and is NOT RUN by mental health professionals. We cannot physically help you. If you're in crisis or need medical help please contact a local helpline (e.g. CONNECT if you live in Leeds, or Samaritans in the U.K.), your GP or go to A&amp;E. Please check out the files (tab above) for international directory of support.</p> |

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|                                      | <p>WE RECOMMEND YOU DO NOT ACCEPT FRIEND REQUESTS from group members unless you know and trust them.</p> <p>NO ADS ALLOWED. Sharing of events relevant to the group is allowed with admin's permission. If you wish to conduct RESEARCH please contact me or email Battle Scars info@battle-scars-self-harm.org.uk</p> <p>ADMINS CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE POSTS OF MEMBERS OR FOR INCIDENTS HAPPENING OUTSIDE OF THE GROUP (in private messages etc.)</p> <p>ANY COMPLAINTS OR CONCERNS PLEASE CONTACT ADMIN so we can look into it. We are always keeping an eye on all posts to make sure they're appropriate.</p> <p>Admins/moderators and members are NOT obliged to respond to any post. Please only help others if you feel up to it.</p> <p>If you post ASKING FOR SUPPORT make sure you ENGAGE with those who are trying to help.</p>   |
| <p><b>Who enforces the rules</b></p> | <p>We aim to maintain the ratio of 1 admin/moderator per 200 members. 3 admins with the ability to change group settings are adequate to allow for cover, all others are moderators. Admins/moderators will be recruited from volunteers (and it will be added to their role description) and from existing group members. An ad will be posted in the group when more are required. We will check out all interaction within the group of anybody interested which must be at least similar to the Battle Scars ethos of acceptance and genuine support. If they have not interacted much, they will be asked to wait for a decision until we're happy they interact in this way. Every effort is made to comply with our Equal Opportunities policy by recruiting people of all ages and from different parts of the world. Good communication skills in English are required. New admins/moderators are added to the BS admin Messenger thread and the BS admin private group. Joint decisions are made through these and new members of the admin team can learn the process and thinking behind the decisions. New members of the team are not expected to make such decisions until they feel more confident and every member of the team is encouraged to seek the rest of the team's support. All admins/moderators also have the option to contact the Battle Scars CEO. No formal supervision is offered to the admins/moderators unless they are also registered volunteers but they have the option to become volunteers if they wish to. References do not need to be obtained in this case.</p> |

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|   | <p>If there are serious concerns about an admin's/moderator's activities after taking on the role the rest of the team may wish to discuss this and consider removal. A longer serving admin will discuss the issues with that particular admin/moderator and either give them a chance to improve or explain the reasons for removal.</p> <p>Admins/moderators can step down at any time.</p>   |
| <b>What the admin team look out for</b> | <p>Offers to have private conversations outside of the group: "private message (pm) me" or "inbox me" or similar.</p> <p>Graphic photographs of injuries. Photographs of healed injuries (scars) are allowed as they can also be a way to discourage others to cause such damage to themselves. Members are encouraged to post such photos in the comments instead of the main post.</p> <p>Judgemental comments.</p> <p>Suggestions of self-harm methods, step-by-step instructions or ways to increase the damage.</p> <p>Suggestions on ways to achieve suicide, i.e. how many tablets are required.</p> <p>Any encouragement to attempt suicide.</p>   |
| <b>How will the rules be enforced</b>   | <p>Admins/moderators monitor every post and comment within the group. If there are any concerns about a member's post or comment or if any of the rules are broken, the admin/moderator can take action if confident, such as issuing a warning, hiding or deleting the post or removing and blocking the member.</p> <p>If the admin/moderator needs advice they can discuss it with the other admins/moderators in the Battle Scars admin Messenger thread. The decisions made by the team, apart from the above, may include monitoring the member's future activity or private messaging to find out if there are any issues that should be discussed out of the group. The risk to the other members of the group must be assessed. This is a task for the more experienced admins/moderators and even though it may be safer for more than one member of the admin team to together contact the group member, this could also be very intimidating. Since more can join the conversation at any point, that remains an option.</p> |
| <b>Warnings</b>                         | <p>One warning only is issued if the 'no private messaging' or 'no graphic pictures allowed' rules are broken. If the member breaks any of these again, they are removed and blocked.</p> <p>In certain cases where the breach is severe (for example, if very graphic photographs of new injuries have been posted without even a trigger warning), warning from the admins/moderators does not need to be issued and the member can be instantly removed and blocked. This especially applies to members joining after 06/10/18 when they have had to confirm to abide by the rules upon requesting to join.</p> <p>If a member is given a warning the admin/moderator who issued it must post in the BS Admin group with the name of the member and the reason the warning was issued. Thanks to the search facility in groups it's quick to check if a member has already been issued with a warning and if removal and blocking is required.</p>  |

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| <p><b>Dealing with safety concerns</b></p> | <p>Members in the <i>Battle scars survivor led self-harm support group</i> can be from anywhere in the world. Unless specified on their public profile, we do not know where they are from or how old they are.</p> <p>When a member posts or comments and we become aware that they are in danger of seriously hurting themselves or of killing themselves we will try to engage them in conversation and offer whatever support we can within the group (it may include finding and providing helpline numbers in their area). In some cases, we will try to find out if this person is an adult or a child (under 18) and where they live (city, country). If they live in the UK one of the experienced admins/moderators may private message them to try to obtain more information. When urgent intervention is needed the admin/moderator will try to get the member's location, exact age and full name (as it may differ from the name they're using in Facebook) so that the emergency services can be contacted.</p> <p>Since this kind of intervention requires the member's cooperation being able to act the way we need to act is difficult and most often, impossible.</p> <p>The admin team will pursue the matter as far as possible but hold no responsibility for the member's actions. The admin team will support each other through this and it may require more than one admin/moderator to engage in a joint thread with the member.</p> |
| <p><b>Reporting posts</b></p>              | <p>If members are not happy about a post or comment, have been triggered by it or are concerned for the posting member's or other member's safety they are encouraged to report to admin. In some cases, urgent action is required (such as removal of graphic content that hadn't yet been seen by the admin team) and the admin/moderator can act by hiding or deleting (as well as removing and blocking the member who put the post/comment up), or they may wish to consult with the rest of the admin team.</p> <p>If no action is taken because the post/comment is deemed acceptable, this will be explained to the member who reported it and support will be offered to them.</p>   |
| <p><b>Other</b></p>                        | <p>The admin team are under no obligation to respond to any post but acknowledging posts by 'liking' (or similar) if there has been no other activity is good practice. Then no member feels ignored.</p> <p>Any monetary exchange is discouraged whether between members or between admins/moderators and members. The admin team hold no responsibility if members decide to, for example, loan each other money.</p> <p>Any ads will be removed as soon as spotted.</p> <p>If a member posts about events linked to self-harm and mental health they will be allowed in good faith. Links to other groups or pages will be checked by the admin team if possible. If allowed to remain the admin team will renounce any responsibility for the link and its content.</p>   |

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|                             | Battle Scars and the Facebook admin team hold no responsibility for members sharing information outside of the group as there is no way to monitor this.                                 |
| <b>Revising group rules</b> | Group rules are periodically revised in order to make them as clear as possible or to add new ones if certain incidents have warranted such action. This policy will be updated as well. |
| <b>Policy review</b>        |  |
| <b>Responsibility</b>       | It is the responsibility of the CEO to review this policy unless the task has been delegated to an appropriate volunteer or employee before the policy review date.                      |
| <b>Procedure</b>            | All volunteers and employees can have input in this policy's review via their supervision.   |
| <b>Timing</b>               | The review must be completed within a month of the review date.  |