



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Barry Goldwater High School Fall 2020

****This document can also be accessed at <https://www.bloom365.org/faqs>**

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit [bloom365.com/resources](https://www.bloom365.com/resources)

<p>BLOOM365 Advocacy Line and Support Groups</p>	<p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support. Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Advocacy Line Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday from 9AM-9PM (MST)</p> <p>To reach a specific advocate directly, please feel free to contact our advocacy line and tell us who you would like to speak to.</p> <p>Join us on Monday, Tuesday, and/or Thursday evenings for one of our drop-in support groups (Holidays excluded)! Visit bloom365.org/peersupport for specific dates and times.</p>
<p>Teen Lifeline</p>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</p>
<p>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</p>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p>
<p>National Domestic Violence Hotline</p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<p>National Sexual Assault Hotline</p>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</p>	<p>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p>

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

Q: Do you think there's a possibility to be in a real healthy relationship after being in an abusive relationship?

A: Understanding those differences can be confusing, thank you so much for reaching out to us. Ending relationships is never easy, and it can be even harder to heal from past experiences. People change everyday. It is a part of growing older and gaining more maturity for being an adult. BLOOM365 believes that someone who has experienced abuse isn't only a victim, but a survivor. Even if you were the one doing the abuse, it starts with questions like this to start the healing process. Abusive relationships are hard on anyone and once someone is out of one, healing can start. It is your choice to start any future relationships or how you would like them to look. If any other questions occur please reach out to our advocates or peer support groups for additional help.

Q: ok so like my boyfriend will say he's breaking up with me, which causes me to just beg him not to leave me and then he says he won't leave after all and it scares me and i cry about it every time it happens because i don't know if i'll be able to talk him into staying once more. is that a form of mental abuse or....

A: That situation sounds frustrating, I appreciate you taking the time to share your experiences. From this statement, it sounds like you care deeply for your partner which can bring out some emotional responses. At BLOOM365, we believe everyone deserves happy, healthy, and safe relationships no matter the age or gender identity of those involved. Reaching out for help is a hard step, but we are here to support you during any complicated times. We also encourage you to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to determine if your relationship is healthy or not. If you'd like to talk more about making this distinction, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above.

A partner can become an integrated part of your life and it's okay to feel pain or fear when they hurt you. Sometimes a partner is oblivious to how their actions or words will affect you and are dealing with their own personal struggles. It's 100% okay to communicate with your partner that it makes you upset when he talks to you that way. Or sometimes a partner does know talking like that upsets you, but chooses to do so for power and control of the relationship. That is a big identifier in our wilting flower that mental abuse is happening. Understanding how you are receiving this information emotionally is important because you are the expert on yourself. None of what you experienced is your fault and you are not alone with your feelings. If you are thinking that this may be intentional, there are further resources at BLOOM365 to help. There are weekly peer support groups to allow teens to work through the healing process together. Also, our chatline advocates are available too, if speaking one on one is more comfortable. If you decide that's not what you'd like to do, that's okay too. If you'd like to talk more about this topic or anything else, feel free to reach out to an advocate. We are here for you!

Q: let's say you and your S.O are planning to meet up with your best friend and your going to his house and you see your S.O already at his house and there's the beginning of the elephant in the room

A: We encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above to talk more about this situation. We are here for you!

Q: why would people want to abuse/control their partner?

A: There are a number of root causes for abuse that we explored during doses 3 & 4. Some people may be abusive to their partners because they were exposed to violence in their homes as a child and taught that this behavior was normal or acceptable. Insecurities and rigid gender norms can play a role in abusive behavior, as well. If someone lacks confidence, they may try to gain power or control over their partner in an attempt to feel secure. Abuse and violence are a choice. If you look at the roots of the two flowers, you'll see that "choice" is in both. This is because we ALL have a choice in how we are going to treat people-- with equality and freedom or with power and control. If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above!

Q: how to use condoms correctly

A: Unfortunately, this is a bit outside of our speciality. We encourage you to talk to a trusted adult or your health teacher for more information.

Q: do you guys help only with teen abuse

A: The quick answer would be no! BLOOM365 offers a variety of services that are made specifically for teens and adults who help with teens. Uprooting abuse is our mission, but educating teens to be peer advocates is another important goal of ours. We want to see teens supporting each other and taking the lead on topics that involve them personally. Please reach out if joining our cause sounds right for you!

Q: Do we have to do something that we are not comfortable with?

A: No, you never have to do something that you are not comfortable with. Consent is so important because no one should ever be forced to do anything that they do not want to do. Consent is a huge part of freedom and all the rights that we have as individuals.

Q: we should talk about what to do and not to do online

A: This is an awesome suggestion! One organization that we work alongside is loveisrespect and they have some great tips on their website for how we can stay safe online when it comes to dating and just in general! Here's a couple websites that talk about Internet Safety for teens: <https://staysafe.org/teens/> and <https://www.loveisrespect.org/personal-safety/safety-online/>

Q: that i don't know how to work these computer that's why my grades are low

A: I am sorry to hear that you are having a difficult time working your computer. You may be able to find useful tutorials on YouTube that can help you learn how to use your computer. In addition, you can reach out to your teacher(s) and they may be able to offer you technical support.

Q: Is depression even real

A: Yes, depression is real. Globally, more than 264 million people of all ages suffer from [depression](#), according to the World Health Organization. There are several factors that can contribute to the onset of depression. Some of these factors are genetic, and others can be the result of trauma, medications, injuries, and many other experiences. Some signs that someone might be experiencing depression include: Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed, withdrawal from friends/family, sleeping too little or in excessive amounts, and sometimes more drastic changes in behavior. If you or someone you know needs support, or if you'd like to talk more about this topic, feel free to reach out to our advocacy line at the number listed above.

Q: what about rape? do you guys help people who have been raped?

A: We do offer support for youth who have experienced sexual violence (this can include rape, sexual harassment, sexual coercion, and many other things). Some of the support services that we offer include our free and confidential Peer Support hotline (1.888.606.HOPE(4673)) where you can connect directly with an advocate who will provide you with any type of support you may need--whether that is emotional support, validation, or resources. We also offer weekly Peer Support groups for survivors that focus on building self-esteem, self-care, and social connections to help along the healing journey. We do offer more individualized advocacy and support services as well if you would like more information about victim rights, goal setting, resources for support, and many other things as well. You can find additional information about our support services on our website: <https://www.bloom365.org/help>

Q: When did abuse start?

A: Historically domestic and sexual violence date far back and it is unclear when abuse began because it was not always illegal. To talk more about this or any other questions you might have, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above.

Q: in a healthy relationship do you have to always tell the truth?

A: This is a great, but definitely complicated question, so thank you for asking! Firstly, it's important to note that YOU are the expert in your relationship, which means that YOU know what is best for you and in your relationship. We each have our own individual rights and responsibilities in a relationship which includes our right to set boundaries and our right of freedom to have and express our own opinions, so this is something else we can consider when it comes to our own personal relationships and how much or little we feel comfortable sharing. With that being said, if we look at the Blooming flower that represents healthy relationships, we can see that Honesty is a really important component in the center of that flower. We like to call these characteristics in the center of that flower our "Green Flags"-the signs that the relationship is stemmed in equality in freedom and is BLOOMING. If you'd like to talk more about this or a specific situation, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above.

Q: Depression; Similar Submission: Q: Stress

A: We're not sure exactly what you meant by this question but we want you to know that if you are experiencing depression, stress, anxiety, or anything else that is similar, you are not alone! Although this is not exactly our area of expertise, there are some great resources available that you might find it beneficial to reach out to, including Teen Lifeline and the Suicide Prevention Line. Practicing self-care and finding things that we can use to cope are also beneficial ways we can manage our depression or stress. Self-care can include doing a lot of different things, such as taking a nap, getting some exercise or fresh air, spending time with people we love, listening to music, or even putting on one of your favorite movies! If you are feeling depressed or overwhelmed, we want you to know that you are not alone. You can reach a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above to talk more about this or any other topics. We are here for you!

Q: Is it bad to be scared of anything

A: We're not sure exactly what you mean by this question, but having fears is something that everyone experiences--so it's totally normal to be scared of things (I'm TERRIFIED of snakes!) A lot of young people also might experience fears when it comes to dating, school, or maybe even our insecurities too. We encourage you to reach out to one of our advocates through our Text/Chat line if you want to talk about this question a little more in depth!

Q: At this point in my life as kid i have grown up at lot because of what i have been through and my mental illness most of it is how my brain works and it is like teaching a old dog new tricks

A: I appreciate you taking the time to share your experience and story with us. Having a mental illness is something that can definitely be difficult and is also something that a lot of people (including myself!) deal with--so you are not alone! Although we are definitely not the experts when it comes to mental illness, there are a lot of great resources that are available to you if you ever want additional information or support. Teen Lifeline offers free, confidential, 24/7 support for youth who are going through similar situations and can also help link you to other resources that may be helpful as well.

Q: Is it bad to be scared of being judged outside of your home

A: I'm sorry you are experiencing this. People sometimes go through phases where their confidence levels go up and down. That's completely normal! If what you're choosing to do is safe and makes you happy, I'd say go for it and if someone judges you that's their issue. Haters are always gonna hate, unfortunately especially if you're happy. Any other reasons that are causing you fear, please contact our crisis resources. We'd be happy to help you make a safety plan that can make leaving the house more comfortable. Please remember you're not alone in dealing with this and our peer groups can be a way teens to talk about this safely together.

Q: pls dont trigger to hard

A: We recognize that a lot of the topics we talk about during the 7-Doses can be triggering, especially if it's something that you have witnessed or experienced and we are really sorry if anything we talked about caused you to feel uncomfortable or upset. We will continue to try our best to ensure a safe space and know that it is always okay to step away from a situation or conversation that is making you feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Some ways that we can help support ourselves if we are beginning to feel triggered or uncomfortable is by taking a break/time out, practicing deep breathing, and reaching out to a friend or trusted adult for some extra support. We also want you to know that we are here to provide support in any way that you may need through our Advocacy Line.

Q: Should I tell my friend about you?

A: If you or your friend are experiencing or witnessing any type of interpersonal violence (teen dating abuse, domestic violence, sexual violence, etc.), we are absolutely here to provide support through our Advocacy line, Peer Support groups, or individual advocacy services. We cannot necessarily make our friends or loved ones reach out for help if they do not want to, but what we can do is be a supportive friend who lets them know we are there for them and that they are not alone and make sure that they are safe.

Q: i'm confused on what this meant; Similar Submissions: Q: Whats does elephant in a room mean.; Q: What it means

A: Great question! The Elephant in the Room is an expression that basically means that something exists, it's obviously there and in plain sight (Kind of like if there were an Elephant standing in a room!) but nobody wants to mention it, ask questions about it, or talk about it. When it comes to interpersonal violence (Teen dating abuse, domestic violence, sexual violence, etc.), we often see that this is an issue that exists, it's in plain sight and impacting a lot of people, but no one wants to talk about it or ask about it because it might be uncomfortable. We use the Elephant in the Room cards because we know it can feel awkward or maybe uncomfortable to ask certain questions in the classroom, but by offering this anonymous platform, it still gives you the opportunity to ask those questions and receive some answers!

Q: I have a friend who has a boyfriend displaying the signs of wilting characteristics who says things like how bad of a bf he is and how awful he is and that he's going to hurt himself and won't listen to me that he's toxic. what do I do????

A: First of all, I want to thank you for sharing this with us. It sounds like your friend and yourself are in a tough situation. It can definitely be frustrating to watch our friends go through something like this, especially when we know that the other person is displaying some of those wilting characteristics. It's important for us to recognize that there are a lot of barriers (love, hope, insecurity, fear, etc.) that can make leaving a wilting relationship difficult and we cannot force anyone to draw the line in their relationships, or even to reach out for help.

Oftentimes the best thing we can do in these situations is continue to be a good, supportive friend. We want to make sure that we are not telling our friend what they need to do, but instead letting our friend know that we hear them, that the abuse is not their fault and they deserve to be treated with respect, and that we will be there to listen/support them if they need it. You can also share other resources, like the Blooming/Wilting Flower or the Peer Support hotline, with your friend and encourage them to reach out for support if they need to. It can be difficult to watch a friend go through this stuff, so making sure we are taking time to practice self-care is also really important.

Q: how do you deal with the effects of experienced verbal,emotional, and physical abuse? My aunt would yell at me and call me names, I was depressed all the time, she hit me. She always wanted to be in control. Whenever I told child protective services my aunt would blame it on me. Eventually someone believed me and I finally got out of that environment. Im in a great environment now but i still have effects of what happened in the past sometimes, like my depression comes back sometimes, i still have lack of confidence just some effects from the past bother me today and i was wondering if there was a way i could help these effects .

A: I want to applaud your courage in reaching out and sharing that really tough experience with us and I am so glad to hear that you are in a better environment now. It's important that you know that the abuse you experience is not your fault, you are not alone, and that help is definitely available to you. Experiencing abuse--whether it is physical, verbal, or emotional-can absolutely impact us, even when we are out of that situation. Learning how to cope with having experienced some of these things can be tough and often is a process for many survivors like yourself. Although we do not specifically work with teens who are experiencing depression, we are always here to listen and provide resources! Teen Lifeline and the Suicide Prevention Hotline are some great resources that will be able to provide additional support when it comes to experiencing depression. Another resource that you may find beneficial are our Peer Support groups! These groups are specifically for youth who have experienced or witnessed any type of interpersonal violence and the purpose of these groups is to focus on building our self-esteem, finding self-care and coping skills, and fostering social connections with our peers and in our relationships. All of these factors can influence our overall sense of well-being and help us through our healing journey. You can find more information on the Peer Support groups here: <https://www.bloom365.org/peersupport> and you can always reach out to our Advocacy Line if you would like additional information or support!

Q: when we did the draw the line thing, my boyfriend has done a lot of those and before they happened and before we met, they were definite deal breakers and since they happened, i dont know whats a deal breaker anymore. it's actually quite sad.

A: Some of the things that we discuss in the Draw the Line activity and when talking about our Deal Breakers can definitely be upsetting and I want to thank you for reaching out. We know that during that activity, some of those scenarios include the characteristics or Red Flags of the wilting flower and you are definitely not alone in having experienced some of those things before. We believe that every person, including yourself, deserves to be in a healthy and safe BLOOMING relationship that fosters things like respect, kindness, love, and equality. We also recognize that “drawing the line” or ending these relationships can be extremely difficult for a lot of reasons and we want you to know that help is available. If you would like to talk more about these things, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line to connect with one of our advocates. We are here for you!

Q: my boyfriend and i joke about having "side hoes" so much that i'm not sure if its a joke anymore and we just don't care anymore. like wtf. i'll tell him not to joke about that but he still does. hmm is it a bad thing that i do what he does to try and make him feel how i feel when he does it?

A: That definitely sounds like a frustrating and upsetting situation. An important aspect of a blooming relationship is having healthy communication and conflict resolution! If you feel safe and comfortable doing so, it might be good to use “I-Statements” or “The Story I’m Telling Myself is” to let your boyfriend know how those jokes make you feel. These communication tools are a great way to let our partners or friends see our perspective on a situation, feel empathetic for us, and hopefully come up with a solution that works for both of you. An example of an I-Statement could be “I’ve been starting to feel insecure when we joke about these things, can we talk about not telling these jokes anymore?” A good rule of thumb for using I Statements is to make sure we are using “I” or “We” instead of using the word “You” which could create some defensiveness in a situation. If you’d like to reach out and practice using these “I-Statements” or talk about anything else, feel free to text/chat/call our Advocacy Line!

Q: My question is what can I do if someone is in a abused relationship but they don't want to do anything about and just stay in it

A: Only the person in that relationship can make the decision whether or not to stay. It’s important to understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency and insecurity). Think of these barriers as hooks. It’s not easy to un-hook them all at once and we understand that it can be difficult to leave an abusive relationship, especially when we have hope that the abuser will change or eventually stop. It’s important that we don’t blame the victim for staying. We cannot make people get help if they do not want to, but we can do everything in our power to help our friends feel supported. Sometimes our friends are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let our friends know that we are there for them when they are ready, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone. If you would like to talk more about this or any other questions you might have, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number listed above.

Q: I feel like people should be mindful of other people, sure yeah you like the topic but others might not like it. So before getting in a deep conversation you should try to get to know the person at least before saying things that can ruin your relationship.

A: Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us! It can definitely be helpful to build trust and check in with someone before sharing things with them, especially when it comes to tough topics. If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our advocates at the number listed above.