



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Peoria Flex Academy
Fall 2019

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

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit 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 3PM-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: I've learned a lot;

Related Comments: Q: I learned a lot from today's dose and will remember this for future incidents

A: Thank you for participating! We hope that you gained some valuable knowledge and tools for building healthy friendships and relationships that will help you both now and in the future! If you want to become more involved with BLOOM365, check out our website at bloom365.org. For more information on our Peer Advocate Crew, check out or contact us on our [@bloom365pac](https://www.instagram.com/bloom365pac) Instagram account!

Q: I enjoyed this a lot;

Related Comments: Q: I like how you are coming in to talk about these important topics!

Q: It's a good thing you're teaching this because some/a lot of people need this

Q: I like that we can finally talk about these topics

Q: I think the students liked when they wrote in each other's books

A: We are overwhelmed by all of your #blooming feedback! Thank YOU all so much for being open to our facilitators and for allowing us to talk to you about these important topics. If you would like to stay involved, we encourage you to sign up for our Peer Advocate Crew (PAC!) You can read more about PAC and the opportunities available on page 10 of your workbook, or at www.bloom365.org. To get involved or for more information, please contact us on Instagram [@bloom365pac](https://www.instagram.com/bloom365pac) or email Jess at jess@bloom365.org!

Q: please post the dates for community events we missed the dates

A: You can always find the events that we host on our [website](#) or on [Eventbrite](#). If you want to, you can also contact us in the ways listed above or on our social media accounts to ask about what is happening next!

Q: How do you help an abusive friend?

Related Comments: Q: What can we say to our friends if we notice them putting down or abusing their significant other

A: Teen dating abuse is a difficult subject to discuss with a friend, but it is so important to talk about. Speaking up could help save a life. Telling a trusted adult about what you have witnessed or heard is the best and safest option.

If you are comfortable and feel safe talking directly to your friend, here are a few suggestions to start the conversation:

- Draw their attention to their behavior
 - You can try saying:
 - "Do you realize that when you do that, it makes your partner feel bad?"
 - "Did you mean to be so rough or mean?"
- Share with them that they make you uncomfortable or tell them how you feel.
 - You can try saying:
 - "I'm surprised you're acting this way. You're better than that."

- "You're my friend, but what you are doing is not right."
 - "I'm really worried about your partners' safety."
 - You can provide comparisons to healthy v. abusive relationships.
 - Try saying:
 - "Love shouldn't hurt."
 - "If you really cared, you would not try to control your partner."
 - Breaking the cycle of abusive behavior is not easy, but it is possible if they choose to seek help.
 - You can recommend them to seek help by saying:
 - "You can reach out to a BLOOM365 if you feel like you are losing control."
 - "You could try counseling or talk to a professional."
 - You can also talk about the consequences of what they are doing.
 - "Teen dating violence is a crime."
 - "I'm afraid you'll lose control and really hurt your partner next time."
 - "You could end up in jail if you don't get help."

If your friend becomes defensive, angry, denies it, ignores you, makes excuses or makes fun of you for bringing it up, it's still important to let them know that you see what's going on. Always encourage them to talk to a trusted adult about it. You can also reach out to us or any of the resources listed above to help you.

Q: what do we do if we don't feel comfortable coming out because our family is religious

A: Thank you for being brave enough to share this with us and reaching out for help. Coming out can be a scary process for many people. You aren't alone in feeling worried, anxious, or afraid. Remember that there's no wrong way or right time to come out. It's your decision, and no one else's. There are many positives to coming out to the people around us. It can let people in your life know about an important part of your life, and help you to feel less alone by allowing you to meet new friends or even finding someone to date. However, there are also some risks to coming out, especially if you worry that your friends and family might not be accepting. The most important thing is for you to stay safe, and know that any negative reactions your friends or parents might have are not your fault – They're about them, not you.

Remember, there isn't one right way to come out, and it's your choice. We encourage you to educate the supportive people in your life on what it means to be apart of the LGBTQ+ community and the barriers that are faced by people in this community. Coming out may be a process and takes time. Some great resources that you may find helpful are the Trevor Project's ["Coming Out As You"](#) guide. I also recommend looking at their [Support Center](#) where they have answers for frequently asked questions for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies, and resources related to sexual orientation, gender identity and more!

If you'd like to come to a space where everyone is welcome and safe, we encourage you to reach out to BLOOM365 or [onenten.org](#). You can also always reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above to discuss this situation or chat online at [bloom365.org](#) for more support.

Q: What do you do to try and emotionally detach yourself from that person?

A: When you love someone in any kind of relationship, they usually become very integrated into your life. You spend time with them, they help you do things, they solve problems, and they just exist along

with you. Losing someone you had a good connection with can be very painful. Especially if we have known that person for a really long time and or had a history with them. While ending a close relationship can be tough, it can be a great time for self-evaluation and growth.

Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: Spending time with the people you love, writing in a journal, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. It's also important to be kind to yourself and to be patient and give yourself time for your heart to heal. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! We also invite you to get involved in our free Peer Connections group, which provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others. If you're still struggling with coping, you can always reach out to an Advocate at the number above for free, confidential support and a listening ear.

Q: How do I find answer to my last question I forgot

A: We hope you have found this answer! This document holds all of the questions and comments left on The Elephant In The Room Cards collected at the Peoria Flex Academy. The EITR Q&A docs for every school we are in are added to our website at bloom365.org/faqs. If you cannot find your answer, you can always contact us through the means listed above or by sending us a message on our Social Media pages!

Q: Maybe give the kids pair share or small groups to answer questions prior to asking them to share with whole group

Related Comments:

Q: More male questions

Q: Can we set out mindful coloring pages? Can we have sticky notes for those uncomfortable in speaking to groups? Different pens

Q: Show more visual things like videos

Q: Very enthusiastic! friendly/kind. Could work on being a little more fun

A: We appreciate you sharing your feedback! We use feedback from teens to help ensure our curriculum stays relevant and fun. While the information we discuss is serious, we strive to keep things interactive and interesting. We will take your comment into consideration for future Doses!

Q: It was hard talking about my insecurities

A: We are glad that you are telling us this. Talking about our insecurities is hard. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. I encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up our self-esteem. You do not have to talk about your insecurities, but these tips can help you talk about them if you decide to do so. Feel free to reach out to us at the number above if you would like to talk with a BLOOM365 advocate.

Q: learned a lot about what to do when I'm down

A: We are glad that you have been able to learn from us and your peers about what you can do when you are feeling down. Here are some additional tips to help you with achieving better self-esteem: Know that mistakes are lessons, view them as learning opportunities. Don't ever think you're inferior or less than anybody else. Nobody is perfect. Remind yourself that everyone excels at different things. Focus on what you're good at, what makes you unique and cheer others on for their success. Try new things, set goals. Take care of yourself by exercising, eating well, and sleeping properly.

If you ever need to talk, you can always contact our Advocacy Line for a non-judgmental and supportive ear. Our information and a few other resources are listed at the beginning of this document.

Q: I actually realized what I like about myself, my eyes

A: We are glad to hear that you've had this #blooming realization. Building good self-esteem can take a long time and is not always easy. Our self-esteem is of the thoughts, feelings, and opinions we have about ourselves. That means self-esteem isn't fixed. It can change, depending on the way we think. Once you're aware of that and know that the way you think is up to you, you can begin to change the way you think. Changing the way you think about yourself changes the way you feel about yourself. I encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence.

Q: Is it weird that I feel the need to see blood?

A: Your question is a bit out of our expertise area. We encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about this.

If you are thinking of or are self-harming, we want you to know that you are not alone and support is available. We encourage you to reach out to someone you trust or to one of the numbers listed above for help. You can also reach out to our Advocacy Line so that we can better understand your question to help provide a better answer.

Q: BLOOM gives me anxiety

A: We apologize if we ever made you feel this way! It is always our intention to let students know during Dose 1 that our program is a safe space for all. We recognize that this material can be difficult to talk about and can be triggering. We encourage you to do whatever you need to do to take care of yourself. That might include stepping out of the classroom, putting your head down, or some other form of self-care. Please know that our advocates are always available to talk and we'd be happy to meet with you if you need to talk to someone. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: spending time with the people you love, activities like yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! For additional information and/or guidance on coping, you can reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number listed above for free, confidential support.

Q: How do you deal with haters?

A: For one reason or another, some people will find a reason to project their insecurities, their negativity, and their fears onto you and your life, and it can be tough to deal with it. Here are some #blooming ways to deal with hate:

- First and most essential, don't be someone who hates. Don't be the person who tears down someone else's hard work. The world needs more people who are blooming and share their work and ideas. Working up the ability to do that can be hard, so support the people who display that courage.
- If you're dealing with hate, then don't let the barrier keep you from seeing the way ahead. Focus on the path ahead.
- If you choose to respond to the haters, then surprise them with kindness, do not respond back with hate. You might just win a new fan while you're at it.
- Finally, make the choices that are right for you. People will criticize you either way.

If you would like to learn some more ways, I recommend checking out this [article](#) from The Entrepreneur. It even includes other links to more lists on how to deal with haters.

Q: it seems like men are the problem but women are abusive too

A: We agree, abuse knows no bias. We say this because an abusive relationship can happen no matter sexual orientation, sex, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, etc. Anyone can be an abuser and anyone can be abused. Although they make up a smaller percentage of people who report and reach out to services, there are likely many more men and masculine identifying people who do not report or seek help for their abuse, for a variety of reasons. I encourage you to check out [this article](#) from The Domestic Violence Hotline (AKA, The Hotline) if you would like to learn more about that topic.

Q: recently my partner told me she has been sexually abused. How can I be present and show her my support?

A: There are a few ways in which you can show support for your partner. Let them know that the abuse is not their fault. Reassure them that they are not alone and that there is help and support out there. It may be difficult for them to talk about the abuse to anyone. Let them know that you are available to help whenever they may need it. What they need most is someone who will believe and listen.

Although it is difficult to learn that someone you care about has been hurt, ultimately they are the one who has to make the decisions regarding their individual situation. It's important for you to support them and help them find a way to safety and healing. If you would like to talk to us, you can always contact us at the number above.

Q: I think that all of these norms and exceptions aren't really realistic. Maybe in the past but most people care about their feelings

A: Unhealthy gender norms are very common in our society. They may seem to be disappearing, but they still exist, especially within more traditional parts of the country. This idea goes back many years and historically it has been passed from generation to generation. We know that rigid belief in unhealthy gender norms contributes to power and control in relationships. Sometimes stereotypes or norms are in

place because society wants to limit the rights of a certain group of people. The important thing to know is that these norms and stereotypes are not facts but rather some people's opinions. We can engage in productive conversations that break down some of these unhealthy gender stereotypes. Once we know what the issue is we can work together for justice and equality. As you pointed out, it seems as if we are making strides towards justice and equality.

Q: How do you say no?

A: Consent may look different for everyone, however, consent should look like FRIES:

- **Freely given.** Consenting is a choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- **Reversible.** Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime. Even if you've done it before, and even if you're both naked in bed.
- **Informed.** You can only consent to something if you have the full story. For example, if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, there isn't full consent.
- **Enthusiastic.** When it comes to sex, you should only do stuff you WANT to do, not things that you feel you're expected to do.
- **Specific.** Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn't mean you've said yes to others (like having sex).

You shouldn't need to say no specifically to not consent.

Q: How do I tell her that I get jealous easily. But I don't want her to lose her friends. I don't want to control her but I get jealous

A: Jealousy is a natural emotion resulting from feelings of rejection, frustration, fear, etc. We all experience jealousy, however we still have the ability to choose how we treat people and it is not fair for us to take out our jealousy on other people. Healthy communication is a key component of healthy relationships. We encourage you to use the communication technique we discussed during Dose 6, "I-statements," to discuss your concerns with this person. I-statements can be helpful tools for us to express our emotions and offer potential solutions without placing blame on the other person. This allows others to empathize with us and avoid defensive reactions/responses. We recommend using the format: I feel _____ (emotion) when _____ (situation) can we please _____ (solution).

Q: How do I get myself out of isolation? But I don't like people, I have no patience, my anger is bad

A: You are not alone in feeling this way. "I-statements" can be a helpful tool in talking about uncomfortable or difficult topics with people. The first step is to focus on how you are feeling. For example, let yourself know that "I am depressed" or "I am feeling lonely." The next step might be to talk about your specific situation. You can talk about how you have been feeling this way for a while or a recent event that caused you to feel this way. For example, "I have been feeling this way for a few months now" or "I heard someone else laugh about me behind my back." Then, you might consider suggesting a solution. This could be as simple as just telling your friends or a trusted adult you would like to talk. You could also come up with an idea on ways to boost your mood. For example, you could ask "Can we please talk?" or "I need to start practicing self-care strategies." A good way to set up your "I-statement" is in the format: "I feel (emotion(s)) when (situation), can you/we/I (solution)?" If you would like to explore more ways you could reach out to someone, look at page 22 in your workbook.

Additionally, “Teen Lifeline” is a great resource to talk to a trained teen about depression and other topics. You can reach them, or us, at the numbers above.

Q: How can I help support my friend if she is having problems with her boyfriend? (jealous issues)

A: Providing continual support with a friend is a good idea. Checking in and making sure they know you are there for them even after the initial conversation is a great option. Sometimes it takes more than one conversation to really get through to a friend who is experiencing abuse.

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.

Q: Would sending up some music to your boyfriend/girlfriend be a good idea? (if you are both having a hard time)

A: You are the expert in your own life, so only you can make that decision. If music is something that you and your partner enjoy or if it helps you calm down, etc., it’s definitely a nice gesture! Self-care is really important, and listening to music, together or alone, is a great example of self-care.. Self-care is any activity that we do purposely in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Good self-care is key to improved mood and reduced anxiety.

Q: self-care is important

A: Self-care is super important! Self-care is important to maintain a healthy relationship with yourself, as it can produce positive feelings, increase your confidence, and boost your self-esteem. With families, school, social lives and life in general, it’s easy to forget how important taking care of yourself is. As counter-intuitive as it seems to be, self-care can actually greatly benefit those you care the most about, as well. After all, they get the benefit of a happier you! For some self-care ideas or for help finding a method that will work for you, feel free to reach out to us at the number above.

Q: Is it a healthy relationship. Me and my girlfriend haven’t argued at all for 8 months now, so I was just wondering or it seems very healthy. We talk about things that are bothering us

A: Page 16 in your workbook explores your rights and responsibilities within a relationship. Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you to determine whether this relationship is healthy or unhealthy. If you would like to, you can also reach out to us at the number above to discuss your individual situation a bit more in depth so we can better answer your question.

Q: when does it really become verbal abuse?

A: One tool that we can use if we are ever concerned that the relationship might be unhealthy is by determining if that person is being caring or controlling. Do I feel free and equal in this relationship or is my partner holding the power? Even if someone says that they are kidding, that does not mean they get to have power and control over us.

Q: I see dead people where did you come from?

A: Your question is a bit out of our expertise area. We recommend that you to talk to a trusted adult or friend about this.

Q: How do I stop being the abusive one?; Related Question: Q: How can I stop being abusive? Q: Teach how not to be abusive (toxic)

A: By acknowledging now that your behaviors might be questionable and taking responsibility for them, you're a step ahead in beginning to correct them. According to author Lundy Bancroft, the following are some changes you could check that could indicate that you are making progress in your recovery:

- Admitting fully to what you have done
- Stopping excuses and blaming
- Making amends
- Accepting responsibility and recognizing that abuse is a choice
- Identifying patterns of controlling behavior you use
- Identifying the attitudes that drive you to abuse
- Accepting that overcoming abusiveness is a long process, not declaring you are "cured"
- Not demanding credit for improvements you have made
- Not treating improvements as vouchers to be spent on occasional acts of abuse (ex. "I haven't done anything like this in a long time, so it's not a big deal")
- Developing respectful, kind, supportive behaviors
- Carrying your weight and sharing power
- Changing how you respond to their partner's (or former partner's) anger and grievances
- Changing how you act in heated conflicts
- Accepting the consequences of your actions (including not feeling sorry for yourself about the consequences, and not blaming their partner or children for them)

As always, it's important to remember that change doesn't happen overnight, it's an ongoing process that takes work and willingness. If you would like to chat with us, our information is listed above. No matter what the situation, our advocates are supportive and remain empathetic.

Q: it's hard to just listen

A: We understand that it can be hard to listen. If you feel uncomfortable while you are going through BLOOM365 workshops or lessons, feel free to let the facilitator know or step out to take a break. If you need to, we are here to support and listen to you.

Q: I respect if someone wants to be an opposite gender but I do not like when everything has to go gender neutral to spare someone's feelings. Us women go through a lot not to be recognized and appreciated

A: We respect your feelings and opinions. The reason why gender-neutral spaces are important is because those who do not identify within the gender binary are still frequently harassed while using gendered spaces such as restrooms. If you would like to learn more, I recommend [this article](#) from [TeenVogue](#).

Q: I feel like the more days that go by the better the meetings get;

Related Comments: Q: As the lessons progress, they def are starting to be more exciting and fun!

Thanks

A: Thank you for sharing your blooming feedback with us! We are thankful that you have allowed us to talk to you about these important topics. If you would like to stay involved, we encourage you to sign up for our Peer Advocate Crew (PAC!) You can read more about PAC and the opportunities available on page 10 of your workbook, or at www.bloom365.org. To get involved or for more information, please contact us on Instagram @bloom365pac or email Jess at jess@bloom365.org!

Q: I highly enjoy the lack of bias. I had a bad mentality going into it thinking it'd just be to put males down

A: We are glad to hear that you enjoyed the 7 Doses. We know that abuse knows no bias. Anyone, from any walk of life, can be an abuser or victim of any type of abuse. However, women are vastly more likely to be seriously hurt or killed in these scenarios, which is why a lot of the examples we chose show women as the survivors and men as the perpetrators. While dating abuse is experienced by girls and young women at higher rates, boys and young men do experience abuse as well. Almost 50% of Arizona teens who have experienced dating abuse have said that they never reported it. Legally both men and women are treated equally when they are victims of these crimes.

Q: It's dope y'all trying to make a change in life

A: We are glad you think so! BLOOM365 believes in the power of your generation to help us reach the Tipping Point moment! We hope to be out of business by 2030, with your generation, paving the way for healthy and safe relationships for all. This requires us to hit the "Tipping Point," meaning 10% of youth across the United States begin to stand up against bullying/teen dating abuse/domestic violence/sexual assault and promote "blooming" healthy behaviors, which is when we will start to see change. You all have the ability to change the culture around you by giving power to the exceptions: cultivating kindness, respect, consent, peace, equality, and empathy!

Q: I think certain people can be changed. I want to say that I'm a very aggressive person and I was able to change. I think everyone has hope

A: We are glad that you believe people can change, and that you've made personal changes yourself. Change can take a long time and is not always easy. But, knowing that you want to learn how to not be aggressive and that you can improve is the first step.

Q: I have been in an abusive relationship. Ended 2 months ago

A: We appreciate you sharing with us and we want you to know that the abuse was not your fault. Experiencing abuse can impact a person both emotionally and physically and it's important to work through this experience. There are several methods available through BLOOM365 to work through what you have experienced. We encourage you to text or call an advocate at the number above. A BLOOM365 advocate can help you take the steps to heal. We are here to support you during this time.

Q: Why is it hard to leave a toxic relationship if it is impacting you in a bad way?

A: We should first 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 who is being abused. When you love someone in any kind of relationship, they usually become very integrated into your life. You spend time with them, they help you do things, they solve problems, and they just exist along with you. Losing someone you had a good connection with can be very painful, especially if we have known that person for a really long time and or had a history with them.

Q: what if you and your partner have problems but one of the two doesn't want to talk it out? (avoids the conversation, changing the subject) how can I help/make this situation better?

A: A productive argument makes use of "I" statements rather than "You" statements. When using an I statement, use the format, "I feel (emotion(s)) when (situation), can you/we/I (solution)?" This style of conflict resolution allows you to take ownership of your own feelings, allowing the other person to understand your perspective of the situation without feeling directly attacked. This prevents them from feeling like they need to defend themselves and allows for more effective communication. If someone consistently refuses to work things out within your relationship or if nothing ever changes, you might consider whether this is a relationship you want to maintain. If you'd like to talk more about your situation, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above for free, confidential support.

Q: What if nothing you do works and they keep getting more violent?

A: Everyone deserves a relationship that is healthy, safe and supportive. If you are in a relationship that is hurting you, it is important for you to know that the abuse is not your fault. It is also important for you to start thinking of ways to keep yourself safe from the abuse, whether you decide to end the relationship or not. While you can't control your partner's abusive behavior, you can take action to keep yourself as safe as possible. We can help you set up a safety plan and talk about what the next steps could look like. You deserve support, and there are many resources available to help you with your situation. You are not alone. We encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult, and our peer advocates are also available for you at the number listed above for free, confidential support and to offer helpful resources and information.

Q: hard time controlling thoughts and dealing with emotions

A: You are not alone in feeling this way. Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift our self-esteem and can help control our thoughts. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. I encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up our self-esteem. I also encourage you to write

down what you have done during the day and how you ended up feeling. I personally like to use [Daylio](#) to help me see what activities have helped me feel better. You can also reach out to us or the numbers above for help or for a listening ear.

Q: When do you realize when everything goes bad?

A: If you are not receiving the type of love you would like you can think about whether or not this is a relationship you want to be in. We have learned about healthy qualities of relationships and how to communicate or resolve conflicts. This can help you figure out what type of relationship you currently have. If the relationship is built off of power & control and we are not able to make changes by communicating in a healthy way with our partner using “I statements,” we may consider whether this relationship is one that we want to continue.

Q: I was having trouble getting over my abusive relationship and Bloom has helped me realize it's not my fault and nothing will change. I went on my first date a few days ago in 3 months

A: We appreciate you sharing with us and we want you to remember that the abuse was not your fault. Experiencing abuse can impact a person both emotionally and physically, and it's important to work through this experience. It seems like you are on the path of healing and we are here to support you through that process. Even after we leave Peoria Flex Academy for this semester, please know our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear and help whenever you need it. Also feel free to come hang and visit us at our weekly support groups! Please email teens@bloom365.org or text 1-888-606-4673 for more information.

Q: Y'all stated very relevant situations

A: We are glad that you think so! We try our best to ensure what we say is relevant and up to date. One of the ways we do that is by looking at every single feedback card and learning from what we have done well and what could be improved. Again, we are glad to hear that we are stating relevant situations.

Q: I want to see kits and be able to identify the issue/situation

A: We encourage you to look into our Peer Advocate Crew and Academy. When being apart of the Crew and going through the Academy, you expand on what you have learned in the doses to help identify and help those who may be going through crisis and abuse. If interested, feel free to email us for more information at teens@bloom365.org. You can also contact our Advocacy Line if you prefer to text.

Q: what is the best way to avoid the anxiety relationships cause even if it's a good relationship?

A: When someone loves us, they treat us with kindness, respect, empathy, affection, and so many more great qualities that make us feel cherished. When someone loves us, they are willing to treat us with equality and freedom and not power and control. It is also important to realize the we receive and give love in different manners; some people like hugging and kissing to show love, others might appreciate gifts and actions more. We should understand how we like to receive and how we show love to others. Having a partner that shows love in the same way you like to receive love can be an important aspect of a healthy relationship. While I know this doesn't fully respond to your question, we recommend discussing with your partner how you prefer to show and be shown love. This can help reduce anxiety

that you may be feeling within a relationship. Feel free to discover your language of love at 5lovelanguages.com.

Q: I can't write anything because I have dark humor and thoughts

A: We appreciate you telling us this. We understand that it is hard to talk about our emotions, and we want you to know that we are here for you if you'd like to try talking to an advocate. School social workers and counselors are a great source for information on dealing with difficult thoughts or emotions. You can always contact BLOOM365 by texting or calling the number above. You can also contact Teen Lifeline at the number above for support. We want you to know that there is always someone available and that you are not alone.

Q: for years I've held back what happened when I was 8 but recently I've finally felt okay enough to talk about it. But I need to talk about it to my parents. Just not yet.

A: First off, we want you to know that what ever happened when you were 8 is not your fault, and you are not alone. Engaging in these conversations is not easy, and ultimately the decisions surrounding this situation are yours to make. However, the best thing we can do is be honest and open about the situation with a trusted adult in our life. The most important thing to do is reach out in a way that makes you feel most comfortable and safe. Telling someone about a previous experience can be hard, but there is available support during this difficult time to help you determine the best way to stay safe. If you don't feel comfortable telling a trusted adult everything, you can just let them know that you're having difficulty coping with emotions or experiences and you could use some support.

Q: Speak up. If there is something going on, tell someone

Related Comments: Q: You aren't alone and there's people who can help you, Q: Find a hobby to get your mind off whatever you're going through, Q: do not tell them how to fix the situation

A: We appreciate all of the examples of responses and support you have written down. We recommend that you continue to think of ways in which you can help and support your peers and friends.

Q: Baby mama can't be controlling when you had a baby that's the label you gave yourself it's not even a label it's something you should enjoy

A: We understand what you are saying. Any label you use in a relationship, as long as consensual with all parties, is okay and up to whoever is in that relationship. What we try to emphasize at BLOOM365 is that some labels are rooted within wilting conditions and can normalize abuse within relationships. If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: Why are relationships hard?

A: Relationships shouldn't be hard. When a relationship is blooming, it is typically free from pressure and difficult expectations while offering comfort, understanding, or solace. We encourage you to take a look at 5lovelanguages.com to discover what you prefer within a relationship. Knowing this and having good communication can help with ensuring a relationship is blooming. If you'd like to talk with us, feel free to contact our advocacy line at the number listed above.

Q: What if your partner starts acting strange because you didn't text them back in a certain time-span (example: 3 hours)

A: We advocate for relationships stemmed in equality and freedom. In a healthy relationship, you have the freedom to your own opinions, feelings, and choice of activities. If your partner does not respect your right to your own experiences and your freedom to choose these experiences, this is a red flag that the relationship may be stemmed in power and control. We encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above to discuss your situation and determine what steps you'd like to take.

Q: My ex's little brother is in here with me so I can't make personal comments but the mental/verbal abuse reminds me of my ex and how hard it was to leave

A: We recognize how hard it can be when you've been hurt in a previous relationship, and we appreciate you reaching out for support. We also realize that it is hard to talk about previous relationships, healthy or not, in any situation. If you would like to, feel free to reach out to our number above and talk/text with a BLOOM365 advocate. You can also reach out to an adult that you trust to talk about this as well, such as a school social worker, counselor, a teacher, or a parent/guardian.

Q: I like the idea of learning this but it hurts from previously going through it

A: We recognize how hard it can be when you've been hurt in a previous relationship, and we appreciate you reaching out for support. We are glad that you have decided to learn about this information. If at anytime, you need to talk with someone, you can reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate to learn more, or so you can have a non-judgmental, listening ear.

Q: I saw red flags that I've been through & my friends.

Related Comment: Q: Noticed that some of the red flags matched my homies' previous relationships

A: We recognize that it can be hard to notice red flags that you have seen and experienced in previous and current relationship, and we appreciate you reaching out for support. If you would like to, feel free to reach out to our number above and talk/text with a BLOOM365 advocate. You can also reach out to an adult that you trust about this as well, like a school social worker, counselor, teacher, or a parent/guardian.

Q: I learned about norms/expectations for masculine and feminine

Related Comment: Q: I realized that most of the things we see and hear on social media are wilting. I will remember and pay more attention to what I see, hear, and put in my mind

A: Thank you for participating! We hope that you gained some valuable knowledge and tools for building healthy friendships and relationships that will help you both now and in the future! If you want to become more involved with BLOOM365, check out our website at bloom365.org. For more information on our Peer Advocate Crew, check out or contact us on our @bloom365pac Instagram account!

Q: If someone gets sexually harassed and doesn't say yes or no is it okay?

A: Sexual harassment, at any time, is never okay. 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. It's important to remember that sexual harassment or assault is never the victim's fault.

Q: Noticing that some kids being exposed to "Sad things" and pretending to be depressed

A: We are unsure what you mean here. We encourage you to reach out to our advocates at the number above in order to clarify and answer any questions you might have! You also have the option to remain anonymous.

Q: I have a letter I wrote to my real mother and I want ways to either get rid of it or embrace it

A: Thank you for reaching out and sharing your story with us. We encourage you to reach out to our advocacy line at the number above for individual advocacy. You have the option to remain anonymous if you'd like, and the support is free and confidential.