



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Sunrise Mountain High School
Spring 2022

****This document can also be accessed at www.bloom365.org/faqs**

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.org/resources

BLOOM365 HelpLine	For free, confidential support: Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST) To reach a specific advocate directly, please feel free to contact our HelpLine and tell us who you would like to speak to.
Teen Lifeline	Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.
National Teen Dating Violence Hotline	Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7
National Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
National Sexual Assault Hotline	1-800.656.HOPE (4673)
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)

***Content Warning:** For some, Elephant in the Room Cards are places where they might disclose trauma, violence, or harm. We encourage you to proceed with caution if you have experienced power-based violence or abuse of any kind. If you need support, you can reach out to the Hotlines listed above.

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

Q: Media is the root of a lot of problems

A: Thank you for sharing your perspective with us! Media of all kinds can definitely have an impact on our perception of ourselves and others, and can potentially cause problems. It is important that we create healthy boundaries when using social media because it can help lessen the impact of negative media.

Q: When I was younger my dad was always on drugs and my mom was a heavy drinker and when the state found out me and my brother went into foster care till he went to his dads and I went to our grandparents on our moms side.

A: Thank you for being brave enough to share this with us. We are sorry to hear that you and your brother had to go through this situation. If you ever want to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to BLOOM365 Advocate with the information above. We are here for you!

Q: A friend of mine just stopped talking to me and I think they hate me and I can't ask what's wrong because I think they might hate me even more. I am the problem. Lol they hate me

A: We are sorry to hear that you have experienced these things from your friend. It may be helpful to use "I statements" for effective communication because they help you talk to your friend without placing blame. For example: Saying something like, "I feel betrayed or hurt that you stopped talking to me, can you please explain to me why we're not talking anymore?" rather than saying something like, "Why are you not talking to me?" This style of conflict resolution allows for 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. Feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate, if you would like to talk more about this, or need an empathetic ear.

Q: Why is it so hard to leave an abusive relationship

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. Deciding whether or not you want to leave the relationship with whom you have history with can be very painful. But it's important that we understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, insecurity, etc.). 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. You can check out the [red flags checklist](#) on page 41 in your workbook to become more aware. Be sure to

pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support.

You are the expert in your own life, so only you can make the decision to leave a relationship. 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. Whenever you are ready or would like to talk, please feel free to reach out to an BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above for free, confidential support and a listening ear.

Q: My parents aren't too supporting and seem homophobic as I'm gay and I wrongly came out to them as bi and my mother asked me if I wanted to suck a guys d*ck or have it shoved up my a and I said no and she said then you're not gay and denies what I know and was blaming my attractions on hormones**

A: Thank you for being brave enough to share this with us and for reaching out for help. We're so sorry to hear that your parents aren't supportive. You are deserving of respect and kindness, and you are valid in being who you are. 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: I go through these feelings every day without telling anyone.

A: We are glad that you reached out for support. It might be helpful to identify healthy coping mechanisms and forms of self-care that you can do when you're having a tough day. Some examples might include: Spending time with the people you love, doing yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk outside. If you would like to talk more about how you've been feeling, please feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above. Even if you simply are needing to vent or are looking for mental health resources, please make the call or send us a text! We are here for you!

Q: What causes parents to hate their kids

A: Unfortunately, we don't have a definite answer to this question. If you would like to talk more about a specific situation or experience, please feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above. We are here for you!

Q: My friend was raped. Brutally. I never felt it was my place to ask (in detail) what happened. I only know about it because they mentioned it in a joke. I know they use humor as a coping mechanism. I also know because they fell in my arms when they saw him. He walks freely on this campus. They told me they told their mom but they didn't believe them. What do I do? What do they do?

A: We're so sorry to hear this about your friend! The most important thing we can do is let our friends know that we are there for them, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone. Providing continual support to your 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. It may also be helpful to encourage them to engage in self-care activities such as dancing, eating their favorite food, practicing yoga, drawing, writing, exercising, deep breathing, volunteering, telling jokes, hanging out with friends, etc.

Some self-care activities may work best when done alone, but you can also encourage your friend to do them with you. You can ask something like, “Do you want to [self-care activity] with me?”

We highly encourage you to let your friend know that they should reach out to a trusted adult such as the school social worker or a BLOOM365 Advocate when they’re ready to talk about their experience. Also, here are some additional resources for sexual assault that you can provide for your friend, if desired:

1. RAINN (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network)

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-HOPE (4673)

[Online Chat](#)

Mobile App: [New! The RAINN Mobile App Offers Survivors & Loved Ones Another Option for Support](#)

2. Arizona Sexual and Domestic Violence Helpline (available M-F 8:30-5, Tuesdays 8:30-7)

Hotline: 602-279-2980/800-782-6400

Text: 520-720-3383

We also encourage you to take care of yourself. It’s great that you’re being a supportive friend–If you need support or additional resources for yourself, please reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate or a trusted adult for help. You are not alone!

Q: Are drunk actions sober wants/thoughts?

A: Thank you for asking this question! It is a little bit out of our area of expertise but we will answer to the best of our ability. Research on the impacts of alcohol on the brain has shown that drinking large amounts of alcohol can disrupt the part of our brain that controls decision making and rational thought. When someone is drunk, their ability to make rational decisions and thoughts is severely lower than if they were sober. While we cannot for sure say that someone’s drunk actions are their sober thoughts or wants as we can’t read anyone’s mind, we do know that when someone is drunk they are not thinking or acting in the same ways they would if they were sober.

Q: What can you do if you’re insanely awkward, dry during conversations and you’re just trying to make friends?

A: This is a great question, we are glad that you reached out and asked! Making friends and socializing with others can be challenging. Connecting with others can sometimes require you to be comfortable in using and showing different social skills. Joining groups that align with your interests or hobbies can also be a great way to make new friends and practice having conversations. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! If you need additional support or want to talk about this more, please reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above.

Q: I recently lost friends that I was close to as I was not acting like myself and being more of the abusive friend and they trusted a friend group they barely knew over a friend they knew how they acted and that it wasn’t normal but still casted them out.

A: Thank you for sharing your experience with us. We're sorry to hear you've lost friends recently and have been having some challenges in your friendships. You've taken a big step toward creating more healthy friendships by recognizing you've exhibited some wilting or abusive behavior in the past. For additional support or resources, we encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine at the number above. We are here for you!

Q: My mom was recently in an abusive relationship. Nothing was wrong in the beginning, but I always saw that there was things going on that no one else saw or knew. It took a long time for her to get out of it, because she kept going back to him. He was doing terrible things, it made me so angry and he was taking my mom's time with me & my sister away. I knew it was hard for her to leave because she still had hope that he would change. About a month & a half ago she finally was free. It was such a relief for me & the ones who saw it happening as it got worse. I feel safer, myself & I know my mom & sister feel better too. I feel that if I hadn't had an adult conversation with my mom & opened her eyes more, it might've taken her longer to leave.

A: Thank you for sharing this with us. We are sorry to hear that you and your family had to go through this tough situation, and we are glad to hear that things are better for you now. If you ever want to talk more about this experience or need additional information or resources, please feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: How can you tell if your the bad one in a relationship?

A: Thank you for asking this very important question! Some of the first signs of abuse can be a partner being overly jealous, controlling, or trying to isolate their partner. One tool that we can use if we are ever concerned that the relationship might be unhealthy is to determine if we are being caring or controlling. Does my relationship feel free and equal or am I holding the power? Another helpful tool to determine if a relationship is abusive is the [red flags checklist](#). Be sure to pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support. If you would like to talk more about this, please feel free to contact a BLOOM365 Advocate at our HelpLine number listed above.

Q: How to get a boyfriend? I need a step-by-step

A: This question is a bit outside of our area of expertise. However, we encourage you to make decisions as you are comfortable and ready. We also encourage you to build relationships based on respect and consent. If you'd like to talk more about what healthy relationships look like, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above!

Q: How do I help my girlfriend when she doesn't like to open up or talk about negative feelings

A: It is so awesome that you want to be a supportive partner and be there for your girlfriend! Having the support of those we care about can be really helpful when we are going through a tough time. Providing continual support for your girlfriend can be a good idea. Checking in and making sure she knows you are there for her even after the initial conversation is a great option. It is also important to remember that we cannot make people talk about things they don't want to talk about. But we can do everything in our power to help our loved ones feel supported. Sometimes others are not ready to

accept the support we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let our loved ones know that we are there for them when they are ready and let them know that they are not alone. Talking with your girlfriend, listening to her, and doing self-care activities together like going on walks or spending time together can be good ways to support your girlfriend. It might also be helpful to talk to your girlfriend about communication in your relationship and how important it is to you. If you would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the HelpLine number listed above.

Q: A combo between he demands to be w/ my family even if he doesn't hang out w/ mine & how he would prevent me from having w/ friends. He shouldn't have control over every aspect of my life

A: Although we don't know the full context of your card, we are glad that you utilized the card to talk about your experience. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you determine whether this relationship is healthy or unhealthy. 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. One tool that we can use if we are ever concerned that the relationship might be unhealthy is to determine if that person is being caring or controlling. Do I feel free and equal in this relationship or is my partner holding the power? Another helpful tool to determine if a relationship is abusive is the [red flags checklist](#). Be sure to pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support. If you would like to talk more about this, you can find our BLOOM365 advocates at the HelpLine number above.

Q: What if your scared of your boyfriend?

A: Thank you for reaching out and asking this important question. Ultimately, you are the expert in your own life, so what choices you decide to make in your relationship are up to you. If you are feeling scared of your boyfriend, you can think about whether or not this relationship is one you want to be in. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you determine whether this relationship is healthy or unhealthy. It can also be helpful to remember your deal-makers and deal-breakers in relationships. You deserve to feel safe and respected in all of your relationships.

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. A helpful tool to determine if a relationship is abusive is the [red flags checklist](#). Be sure to pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support. You are deserving of blooming relationships that are built off agency and equity, where both parties feel equal. If you would like to talk more about this, you can find our BLOOM365 advocates at the HelpLine number above.

Q: What if I'm being abusive to my partner but neither of us realize it yet?

A: Thank you for reaching out to ask this question! It can be useful to look at the [blooming and wilting flowers](#) to help you determine whether your relationship is healthy or unhealthy. Also, in your workbook,

you can find a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship. This list includes equality, which is important in making decisions together, as well as freedom, which is important for having opinions, expressing your feelings, and choosing activities. Blooming relationships are built off agency and equity, where both parties feel equal and free to make their own decisions. Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries.

Abusive and toxic behaviors and traits are things that can be learned which means it is also possible to unlearn abusive and toxic traits. If a person with abusive traits is willing to see their behavior as abusive, they can make the choice to change that behavior. A counselor, social worker, advocate, or other trusted adult can be there to help if the person is willing. Ultimately, it is up to you to recognize your actions and to make the choice to change your behavior. If you would like to talk more about this, you can find our BLOOM365 Advocates at the number above.

Q: If I show him love and care will he want to treat me better

A: This is a very common question and we are glad that you reached out for support. You are not responsible for other people's actions and behaviors. If a person is willing to see their behavior as unhealthy or abusive, they can make the choice to change that behavior. A counselor, social worker, advocate, or other trusted adult can be there to help if this person is willing. Ultimately, it is up to that person to recognize their actions and to make the choice to change their behavior. We cannot influence or make that decision for other people. If you are not receiving the type of love that you would like, and if you are unable to make changes with your partner by using "I" statements, it might be helpful to consider if this is a relationship you want to stay in. If you would like to talk more about your relationship, our BLOOM365 Advocates are here to support you. You can find us at the HelpLine number listed above!

Q: What does the advisor job entail, and what do you have to do? (*note from kristina: this student is referring to the LPA position)

A: Thank you for your interest in joining BLOOM365 as a Lead Peer Advocate (LPA)! As a LPA, your responsibilities include:

- Planning and facilitating Peer Advocate Crew meetings.
- Planning, promoting and implementing First Friday Awareness Campaigns in February, April, and October.
- Collaborating with peers and trusted adults to remove the barriers to seeking help faced by young survivors.
- Attending a monthly virtual national Lead Peer Advocate collaboration meeting.
- Conducting school and community outreach activities to raise awareness and activate support.

For more information or to apply, please fill out our online application [here!](#)

Q: How do you get over being sexually abused?

A: Thank you for asking this really important question. Experiencing sexual abuse or violence can be a traumatizing event and one that is never the survivor's fault. Recovering and healing from trauma is a deeply personal and unique process that can take some time to figure out. Reaching out for support and

accessing resources can be helpful in starting the healing journey. RAINN (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) is a national organization that supports survivors through an [online chat](#) or phone hotline at 800-656-HOPE (4673). There is also the Arizona Sexual and Domestic Violence Helpline that can be reached by phone at 602-279-2980/800-782-6400 or text at [520-720-3383](#). You are never alone, and there are people to offer support or resources when you need it. Our BLOOM365 advocates are also here to support you, you can find us at the numbers above.

Q: Is it okay to isolate someone even if whom is wrong

A: You are the expert in your own life, so ultimately it is up to you if a choice is okay with you or not. It can be helpful to look at the list of red and green flags in your workbook to help you better understand what you want within the relationships in your life. If you want to talk more about this, our advocates are here to listen. You can reach out to us at the numbers above!

Q: Why do people bark at others?

A: We aren't sure why some people bark at others. But we imagine it would feel a bit unsettling to be barked at!

Q: Why do gay people feel the need to openly express they're gay (wearing pride flags, clothes, always saying that they're right, they earned their flag, and are just super annoying? Gay people also have "pronouns" which is stupid by birth, you are either male or female he/him or she,her are the only pronouns period. There are only 2 genders

A: Every single one of us has our own beliefs which are shaped by our own unique lived experiences. This means that we won't all have the same beliefs, and that is okay. At BLOOM365, we believe that everyone is deserving of respect regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, or anything else. If you have specific questions or would like to discuss this further, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

Q: You may not know how to help but I am very uncomfortable with the student next to me. (...) in and out of these lessons. I have confrontational issues. Please if you can help

A: We are glad you reached out. Our advocates are here to listen and offer any support you may want, please feel free to reach out to us at the HelpLine number listed above. If there is a trusted adult at home or at your school that you feel safe talking to, we would encourage you to reach out to them as well.

Q: Me and my friends are being harassed. They take pictures of us. We were just eating lunch. They say it is because of the way we dress but I know it's because we are openly gay. They don't just take pictures, they post them and make fun of us. That page had over 70 followers. It's gone now but they still take pictures. It's not like stuff like this hasn't happened before. One of my friends was threatened with a gun because of their sexuality. I don't feel safe. I can't even eat lunch in peace. I can't stand to see another one of my friends cry.

A: We are so sorry to hear that you and your friends are feeling unsafe at school. We are glad you reached out to us. If there is a trusted adult at your school that you and your friend feel safe talking to,

we would encourage you to reach out to that adult. You deserve safety and respect in and out of school, regardless of your sexual identity or anything else. If you'd like to come to a space where everyone is welcome and safe, we encourage you to reach out to BLOOM365 or oneten.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. We are here for you!

Q: “Come back to me when you are calm” Is that phrase gaslighting and why does it make me sad

A: This is a great question! We are glad that you reached out for support. Gaslighting is a type of manipulation that creates a false narrative and can cause someone to question their judgments or reality. Gaslighting can be considered emotional abuse, and can have serious impacts on our mental health and relationships.

It can make us feel sad when we feel as though we aren't being listened to or if we feel our feelings are being dismissed. It can be helpful to communicate with others about how we feel and what our boundaries are. One way to do this is to use “I” statements. This can look like saying, “I feel sad when you tell me we can't talk until I am calm. Can we find another alternative to us talking out our differences/problems?” This style of conflict resolution allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings, while also 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. “I” statements can take some practice before feeling natural to use in conflicts. If you'd like to talk more about this or any other questions you have, we encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: I don't agree w/ the LGBTQ+ community. But I don't treat them differently than a cis straight person. Is that okay?

A: Every single one of us has our own beliefs which are shaped by our own unique lived experiences. This means that we won't all have the same beliefs, and that is okay. At BLOOM365, we believe that everyone is deserving of respect regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, or anything else. If you have any questions or would like additional support, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above.

Q: What can I do if my friend is making me talk to my ex even if I don't want to? And she is making me feel like it was my fault that they don't talk anymore

A: This sounds like a tough situation, and we are glad that you reached out for support. It might be helpful to use “I” statements when talking to your friend about how this situation is affecting you. For example, saying something like, “I feel uncomfortable talking to my ex and this is not something I want to do. Can you please talk to them or hang out with them when we don't have plans?” rather than saying something like “Why don't you listen to me?” This style of conflict resolution allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings, while also 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 you have additional questions or would like to practice using these “I” statements, feel free to call or text our Helpline at the number listed above.

Q: My boyfriend threatens to break up with me

A: We are sorry to hear that your boyfriend is doing this. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you determine whether this relationship is healthy or unhealthy. 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. It can also be helpful to take a look at the [red flags checklist](#). Be sure to pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support. If you want to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate by **calling/texting 888-606-4673**. We are here for you!

Q: How can I feel pretty when everyone tells me I am ugly? Why don't I get any boys if “I am pretty”?

A: We're sorry to hear that you are feeling this way. Building self-esteem and feeling good about ourselves can be a process that takes time. Focusing on the things we like about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift our self-esteem. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. We encourage you to take a moment to remember the things that make you unique (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, also.

Q: How do you know if someone is hurting themselves and how do you help them?

A: We're glad you reached out for support. Some indications that someone is self-harming might include fresh scratches or cuts, scars, bruises, broken bones, dangerous or impulsive behaviors, spending a lot of time alone, mood swings, withdrawing from activities and relationships, as well as increased feelings of anxiety, guilt, or shame. If you believe your friend might hurt themselves or someone else, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about why you're worried. We also highly encourage you to let your friend know that they should reach out to a trusted adult, such as the school social worker or a BLOOM365 Advocate, as soon as possible so they can get support for what they're experiencing.

Also, if you'd like some resources for suicide and depression, we encourage you to contact Teen Lifeline and/or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline listed above. Self-harm is sometimes used as a coping skill. It might be helpful to identify healthy coping mechanisms and forms of self-care that they can do instead when they have those thoughts or urges. For your friend, it may also be helpful to encourage them to engage in self-care activities, such as: dancing, eating their favorite food, practicing yoga, drawing, writing, exercising, deep breathing, volunteering, telling jokes, hanging out with friends, etc. Some self-care activities may work the best when done alone, but you can also encourage your friend to do them with you. You and your friend are not alone! If you need additional support or want to talk about this more, please call/text our HelpLine at **888-606-4673**. We are here for you!

Q: I used to mentally abuse myself cruelly. It made me suicidal. Didn't bother to seek help at the time, which never did. Fortunately I actually got my cr*p together and got better

A: Thank you for sharing your story with us! We are so happy that you are healing from that time in your life. We understand sometimes it can feel like things are hopeless or too big to deal with. If you are ever wanting support or someone to talk to, please know our BLOOM365 advocates are here to help at the number listed above. We also work alongside a few organizations that specifically help youth experiencing depression, including Teen Lifeline and the Suicide Prevention Lifeline— you can find those hotline numbers listed above if you need support in the future. We are here for you!

Q: What should I do when family is being toxic?

A: Thank you for asking this super important question. We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out for support. We understand it can be difficult to navigate toxic family situations. If possible, it can be helpful to spend time away from those toxic family members and maybe take part in a sport, a school club, or even just spending time at another friend's house. Sometimes the best place to start is reaching out to those we trust to talk about our experiences and how they are making us feel. If you feel unsafe, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on. BLOOM365 Advocates are here to listen and offer any support you may need. Please feel free to reach out to us at the numbers above. We are here for you!

Q: How and why does something that only happened in a fake memory affect someone?

A: This is a good question, and a little out of our area of expertise. However, to answer this to the best of our abilities, memories are complex. Fake memories may seem quite real and can even be highly emotional. The fake memory may lead to affecting others because the person experiencing the fake memory believes that it is true and really happened. If you'd like to discuss this further, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: When my dad passed my mom became more verbally abusive and I still love her and know she is just going through stuff but it still hurts

A: We are sorry to hear that you are experiencing this. Our condolences to you and your mother. It sounds like you are going through a really tough situation, and we want you to know that you are not alone. You deserve safety and respect in all of your relationships. If it is safe to do so, you can try talking to your mom using "I Statements". "I Statements" can help to explain our feelings about a situation to the person we are having conflict with, what the situation itself is, and a solution we can come to together. The formula for these I statements is: "I feel __, when __, can we __?" If you do not feel it is safe to try using the "I statements" with your mom, we encourage you to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above to talk through better options with a BLOOM365 Advocate. If you feel unsafe or if the situation becomes dangerous, please contact 911 or another trusted adult ASAP for additional support. We are here for you!

Q: My friend gets abused every day. He goes to this school. Yesterday his dad punched his mom in the face. I don't want to be involved but what should he do, his family forces him to eat only a piece of bread everyday and he cries when my homeboy mentions mickey mouse it's a sad thing

A: Thank you for sharing this with us. We highly encourage you to let your friend know that they should reach out to a trusted adult such as the school social worker or a BLOOM365 Advocate as soon as possible. We understand your friendship and trust is important, but it might also be a good idea for you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on so that your friend stays safe. Our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear whenever you need it.

The most important thing we can do is let our friend 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. 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. It can also be helpful to encourage your friend to engage in self-care activities such as dancing, eating their favorite food, practicing yoga, drawing, writing, exercising, deep breathing, volunteering, telling jokes, hanging out with friends, etc. Some self-care activities may work the best when done alone, but you can also encourage your friend to do them with you. Please feel free to reach out to our Helpline for free and confidential support, Mon-Fri 3-9 PM (call/text 888-606-4673).

Q: What if someone is trying to make you break up with your boyfriend so you can get with them

A: This sounds like a tough situation. It might be helpful to use "I statements" with this person to let them know where you stand. "I Statements" can help to explain our feelings about a situation to the person we are having conflict with, what the situation itself is, and a solution we can come to together. The formula for these I statements is: "I feel __, when __, can we __?" This style of conflict resolution allows for 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 you would like to practice using "I Statements" or would like additional support, please feel free to reach out to our Helpline for free and confidential support, Mon-Fri 3-9 PM (call/text 888-606-4673).

Q: How can I help my friend with their problem without them losing trust in me?

A: 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. It can also be helpful to encourage your friend to engage in self-care activities such as dancing, eating their favorite food, practicing yoga, drawing, writing, exercising, deep breathing, volunteering, telling jokes, hanging out with friends, etc. Some self-care activities may work the best when done alone, but you can also encourage your friend to do them with you. If you are concerned for your friend's safety, it might be best to contact 911 or a trusted adult, depending on the situation, even if it means compromising your trust for a bit. If you'd like to talk more about this or a specific situation, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: What do you do if you get abused?

A: Thank you for asking such an important question. What you do if you experience abuse will vary for each individual person, and will often depend on who it is that's causing the abuse (whether a parent, a romantic partner, a peer, or someone else). In all cases, the most important thing is the physical and emotional safety of those involved.

We strongly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult if you experience abuse. This could be a family member, a school counselor or social worker, or a BLOOM365 Advocate. If you don't feel as though you have a trusted adult that you can go to about this, and only if you feel safe doing so, you could try using "I" statements with the people who are being abusive to you. "I" statements are brief, non-blameful descriptions of the behavior you find unacceptable, your feelings about the behavior, and the effect of the behavior on you. For example: Saying something like, "I feel hurt and scared when you yell at me. Can we try to talk things out instead?" This style of conflict resolution allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings, allowing the other person to understand your perspective of the situation without feeling directly attacked. In certain situations, this may not be safe for the abused person to do. If you experience abuse, we encourage you to create a safety plan to ensure you remain safe after the initial incident of abuse.

If you would like to practice using these "I" statements before doing so in-person, feel free to call or text our Helpline at the number listed above. We can also provide non-judgmental, confidential support and additional information + resources. We are here for you!

Q: What do you do if you are having a conflict and are trying to communicate and compromise but the other person isn't making an effort to fix it at all, when you know it can be solved.

A: Thank you for asking such an important question. "I" statements can be a good tool for addressing conflict in a healthy and productive way. This can look like saying something like, "I feel sad when you ignore me. Can we talk about what's wrong?" rather than saying something like, "Why are you ignoring me?" This style of conflict resolution allows for 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. Navigating conflict within our relationships can be hard; if you'd like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to support you. You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

Q: How do I get my mom and dad to stop comparing me and my brother to other kids?

A: We are sorry that you are going through this. We can only imagine how those comparisons make you feel. One way to address this with your parents might be by using "I" statements rather than "You" statements. For example, saying something like "I feel hurt/sad/insecure when you compare me to other kids. Can we focus on what makes me unique or what I'm doing well, instead?" This type of communication allows for you to take ownership of your own feelings, while also allowing the other person to understand your perspective of the situation without feeling directly attacked. If they are able to see how their behavior is affecting you and your brother, they can make a decision to change that

behavior. We want you to know that you are not alone—please feel free to reach out to one of our advocates by calling or texting our HelpLine at **1-888-606-HOPE (4673)** Mon-Fri 3-9pm.

Q: How do I get my parents to stop telling my little brother that he needs to be a man or he's a boy, he should be strong?

A: Thank you for reaching out! This is so important to address. The idea that boys/men need to be strong is an example of an unhealthy gender norm. This is a rule or belief about how certain genders should behave. Unhealthy gender norms are very common in our society and are often passed on from generation to generation. If you feel comfortable and safe doing so, you could address your concerns with your parents by sharing information on the effects of unhealthy gender norms on individuals and/or relationships. You can also share with them that having a rigid belief in unhealthy gender norms is something that can be a risk factor for having power and control over other individuals. If you'd like to talk more about this or any other questions you might have, we encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: I know someone who was asleep and either almost got sexually assaulted or did. They were wearing a dress, and they were only 8-9 years old. They woke up to a friend (who was 16) putting their hands up their dress. They stopped and left. Also is it ok to jokingly fight with my boyfriend (not physically) like argue with him.

A: We are very sorry this person was assaulted, we can only imagine how traumatic that might have been to them! Please feel free to share our contact information with this person in case they would like to talk to someone anonymously about their experiences. Please let them know that they are not alone! We are here to help and can provide additional resources or information that might be helpful for this person. We can also support you through this experience—witnessing or hearing of others' experiences with interpersonal violence can be traumatic, as well. Our HelpLine can be reached by call/text at:**1-888-606-HOPE (4673) M-F 3-9PM or through online chat at bloom365.org.**

When it comes to jokingly fighting with your boyfriend, it is important to realize that we often receive and give love in different manners. This means that what might be a joke to you might not be a joke to your boyfriend. It could be helpful to ask his opinion/thoughts about those jokes to get a better understanding of how it affects him. You are the expert in your life, so you know your relationship best. We do encourage you to treat your partner with respect, kindness, and empathy, and all of the other BLOOMing qualities exhibited in the [Blooming Flower](#). If you're unsure if your relationship is more on the healthy or unhealthy side, we encourage you to look at the [Blooming and Wilting flowers](#) to help you determine if you feel your relationship needs some extra nurturing. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: My mom says to pray the gay away but I don't know how. What should I do?

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out for support. At BLOOM365, we welcome everyone as they are—regardless of sexual identity, gender, race/ethnicity, or anything else. Unfortunately, praying is outside of our area of expertise. If you're looking for support in praying, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted member of your faith community. If you're looking

to come to a place where everyone is welcome and celebrated, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate, or visit oneten.org for more information on LGBTQ+ specific information and resources!