



Elephant in The Room Q & A

South Mountain High School
Spring 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 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 have a job and it makes me soooo stressed, but I don't want to leave it because I need the money for my expenses. What could I do?

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad you reached out for support. Although this topic is a bit outside of our speciality, we can offer a few tips to help you cope with this stressful situation. If you haven't already, it might be helpful to look into job openings at places that seem appealing to you, rather than any place that happens to be hiring. If you don't enjoy the actual work that you do, it is sometimes helpful to be able to enjoy the setting in which you work. If you are unable to find a different job, you might find it helpful to talk to your supervisor or mentor about ways you could make your shifts a bit easier or less stressful. Don't be afraid to ask for help or support in whichever ways you might need it. Additionally, it might be helpful to ask for some resources from a teacher or school counselor, or to look into some online resources such as: [AZ Youth Job Seekers](#). In the meantime, we encourage you to practice self-care strategies to help you process those stressful shifts/days. Some examples of healthy self-care practices include: taking a bath, spending time with family or friends, spending time alone, eating your favorite meal, playing a video game, or working out. 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: I've begun self-harming again and don't know what to do

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are thankful you reached out for support. Self-harm is sometimes used as a coping skill. It might be helpful to identify healthy coping mechanisms and forms of self-care that you can do instead when you have those thoughts or urges. Some examples might include: Spending time with the people you love, yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. If you're struggling with finding effective coping tools or would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above! If you simply are needing an empathetic ear or are looking for mental health resources for yourself, please make the call or send us a text! You are never alone and we encourage you to reach out if you are experiencing suicidal or depressive thoughts. Although we do not specifically work with teens experiencing depression, Teen Lifeline is a great local organization that specifically works with youth experiencing depression. You can reach them at their respective number above, too.

Q: I like the class

A: We are so happy to hear that! If you are interested in getting involved and helping create change, we encourage you to join our Peer Advocate Crew (PAC!). Check out page 8 in your workbook or visit bloom365.org/peeradvocatecrew for more info! You can also email kathryn@bloom365.org to learn more about opportunities to get involved!

Q: Choice is in both flowers because you choose to be in a good or bad relationship

A: You are right, 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: Why are people so evil in relationships?

A: Not all relationships are abusive, and not all people become evil or abusive in relationships. People become abusive when they believe that they have the right to gain and maintain power and control over another person. Choosing to have power and control over someone else or to have equality and freedom in our relationships is a deliberate choice that we all make. People do not usually begin a relationship as overtly abusive or controlling. There is a gradual progression of power and control. It can first show up as possessive jealousy, or even in comments about your choice of clothing or friends. Oftentimes if we were raised in an environment where abuse was present, the early signs of an unhealthy relationship can be really tough to spot because they could be viewed as okay or normal (taught abusive behavior). Sometimes it takes direct education, like the 7-Dose Bloom It Up curriculum or a friend's concern to notice what's really going on. In Doses 3 and 4, we explored additional root causes of abuse (patriarchy, oppression, unhealthy gender norms, insecurity, etc.). If you or someone you know is in an unhealthy relationship, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult for support. You can also reach a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: I'm gay

A: We are glad that you are proud to be who you are. Remember, how you identify is completely up to you!

Q: Hi :)

A: Hello!

Q: Why did both of you join bloom?

A: All of us at BLOOM365 have different reasons for why we chose to be involved with BLOOM365. Some of us have experienced or witnessed dating abuse or domestic violence in our own lives or the lives of our friends, while others have not. You can read more about BLOOM365 and our history by visiting www.bloom365.org/story.

Q: Today, I realized lots of things.

A: We are glad that you learned a lot! 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 email info@bloom365.org.

Q: I'm ready to GRADUATE! :)

A: We are glad that you are ready and excited to graduate. We wish you a blooming future.

Q: love what you guys doing

A: Thank you for listening! We hope you learned a lot and continue to integrate blooming characteristics into your life. If you want to become more involved with BLOOM365, check out our website at <https://www.bloom365.org/peeradvocatecrew> for more information on our Peer Advocate Crew!

Q: I didn't want to say my music because I thought people would look at me weird but I listen to a lot of the artist named NF my favorite song by him is If You Want Love.

Related Comments: Q: Listen to Ryan Beatty "Boy in Jeans" is my favorite album "Cupid" is my favorite song Q: Song recommendation "Black Swan" by BTS *preferably lyric video

A: Thank you for the suggestions! These are great songs to reflect on utilizing what we discussed during Dose 4! Understanding the impact media (music, TV, etc.) can have on our lives and relationships is important. We encourage you to analyze the lyrics of these songs- Does it sound more like power and control or equality and freedom? Do you recognize any of the root causes or root solutions? By being critical and aware of what you are consuming, you can identify and recognize when something is wilting or when the messages are blooming! Over time, we can work towards consuming and promoting more positive, blooming media.

Q: Why do people like to demand there partner doing something they don't like to do?

A: Communication and keeping boundaries is key in every blooming relationship. Saying no should be as simple as just, well, saying no. In reality, someone might feel pressured, guilty, manipulated, or coerced when they say no. Everyone deserves to have their boundaries respected. While we recommend using I-statements ("I feel ___ (emotion) when _____ (situation), can you/we please _____ (solution)?), it may not always be easy to say.

Although "No" is such a simple word, saying no can be hard when you're saying it to someone you care about. Here are some tips on turning down sex/consent:

- Be confident and know what you want. This means thinking through why you want to wait before you're in a sexual situation.
- Say "no." You don't owe anyone, even someone you love, an explanation for why you don't want to do what they want you to do. You can explain if you want, but you don't have to.
- Tell them what you do want to do: kissing, touching, watching a movie together, etc.
- Be clear and direct. Look them in the eyes and use a serious tone of voice.
- You can also let them know that you really do like or love them, but you're just not ready for sex.

If your partner pressures you or threatens to break up with you because you don't consent, it's a sign that you're in an unhealthy relationship. If you would like to talk with a BLOOM365 advocate further, feel free to reach out to our number listed above.

Q: It's been hard for me to gain a sense of self-worth and respect for myself. I felt manipulated to do what they wanted and be what they wanted me to be for them. I haven't felt worthy of anything else other than what I was used as. My body hasn't been mine.

A: It's important to remember that abuse is never your fault. You are not alone in feeling this way. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. We know this can be hard. 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: When people call me ugly I use it as encouragement

A: We understand, everyone deals with negative comments and feedback from others in different ways. Building good self-esteem can take a long time and is not always easy. But, knowing that you want to learn how to have better self-esteem and that you can improve is the first step. Our self-esteem is 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. Focusing on the things we love 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. 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.

Q: I wonder what the best cartoon relationship is?

A: This is a great question! We encourage you to consider your favorite cartoons (either currently or from the past) and whether their relationships are healthy or unhealthy. Do they exhibit more words from the blooming flower, or the wilting flower? If you come up with a few examples, whether blooming or wilting, feel free to reach out and share them with us!

Q: Everything hurts!- emotionally. Feel my worst when I'm not with my parents, they are my safe place.

A: We are sorry that you're hurting right now, and we want you to know that we are here for you. We are glad that you reached out for support. It can be difficult to cope with new situations and surroundings, especially when those people or things we rely on for support, such as our parents or friends or pets even, are unable to be close-by. It might be helpful to see if there are any changes or activities you could try in order to feel more comfortable when you're not around your parents. We also encourage you to practice self-care activities so you are prepared to take on each day, even if it includes being away from your safe place. If you'd like to talk about this in more detail, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.