



# Elephant in The Room Q & A

Metro Tech High School  
Spring 2022

**\*\*This document can also be accessed at [www.bloom365.org/faqs](http://www.bloom365.org/faqs)**

### Resources:

*\*For additional resources, please visit [bloom365.org/resources](http://bloom365.org/resources)\**

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

**\*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**

**\*Stay tuned for updated Q&A responses! :) \***

**Q: How can I cope with my partner moving away to another state?**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that your partner is moving away. Practicing self-care and engaging in healthy ways to cope with emotions can be really helpful tools when we're experiencing tough situations, like this one. Some examples of self-care might include: Spending time with the people you love, practicing yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk outside. Sometimes coping with emotions can just look like taking a nap, writing in a journal, or blasting music. It can also sometimes be helpful to surround ourselves with the other people in our lives that make us feel most comfortable, safe, or happy. 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 HelpLine at the number above! Even if you simply are needing an empathetic ear, please make the call or send us a text—we are here for you!

**Q: My momma told me to marry a man but I can't decide \*bi panic\***

**A:** Who you decide to marry is a choice that only you get to make and one that you have lots of time to make. It can feel stressful or overwhelming when others have ideas of what we should do or who we should be, especially if it is from close friends or family. 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](http://oneten.org). You can also always reach out to our advocates at the information above if you want to talk more about this!

**Q: When my friend of 10 years ask me how I'm doing I said I was fine. Why? Why can't I talk to her. I trust her**

**A:** It can feel hard or scary to be vulnerable with others, even those that we've known for a long time or trust. Vulnerability is a skill that can take some time to develop and process but it can become easier to do the more we practice it. Sometimes it can be helpful to journal about how we feel or talk with others to practice being more comfortable sharing with others. If you would like to talk more about this situation or practice sharing how you feel, our advocates are here to help. You can find us at the information above.

**Q: My dad always tell me that what are women jobs are always going to stay as women jobs and this is why I don't WANT to talk to him anymore and he tells me women have to be like women.**

**A:** We are sorry that you had to hear those things. The things your dad says are a great example of unhealthy gender norms. An unhealthy gender norm is a rule or belief about how certain genders should behave, and what makes them unhealthy is that people who do not follow norms may be ridiculed or made fun of. Unhealthy gender norms are very common in our society. 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 our relationships. Sometimes stereotypes or norms are in place because society wants to limit the rights of a certain group of people. We can engage in productive conversations that break down some of these unhealthy gender stereotypes to work together for justice and equity. Thank you for sharing your experience with us and if you ever want to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to us at the information above. We are here for you!

**Q: Is there any advice to deal with gaslighting parents**

**A:** Being at home with family who engage in gaslighting or other harmful behaviors can be a very stressful and sometimes isolating experience. We encourage anyone in this type of situation to reach out for support and to take some time to find healthy coping skills or strategies that work for you. Spending time with those you love and trust and sharing what you're going through with them can make you feel more supported and less alone. Other coping skills like writing in a journal, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply spending time outside can also be helpful. Our advocates are also here to offer support. Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above.

**Q: How do you deal with a parent threatening to take you from your parents? reason: my parents are divorced**

**A:** We are sorry that you are experiencing this within your family. It sounds like you are in a tough situation and we understand if you're feeling overwhelmed. If there are trusted adults in your life or at school that you feel safe talking to, it might be helpful to reach out to them and share what is happening. BLOOM365 advocates are here to help support you, as well. If you would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to us at the information above. You are not alone!

**Q: Why are all the rape prevention posters mostly directed toward women?**

**A:** This is a very perceptive question. We are glad you asked. This could be because [statistically, women experience sexual violence at higher rates than men](#). Sometimes people and systems shift the responsibility on to women to prevent their own victimization rather than holding perpetrators of rape and violence responsible for their own actions. However, sexual assault and rape is an experience that can affect anyone regardless of gender or gender identity. It is important that there are resources and support available for all survivors.

**Q: What makes a sexual assault experience valid? Do you have to be physically touched for it to be S/A or valid?**

**A:** Sexual assault as defined by the state of Arizona is the act of engaging in any sexual contact without the explicit consent of the other party. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. All experiences of sexual assault or harassment are valid and are never the fault of the survivor. If you or someone you know is in need of support relating to a sexual assault, we encourage you to reach out to the National Sexual Assault Hotline by calling 1-800-656-4673 or call/text a BLOOM365 Advocate at 888-606-4673. We are here for you!

**Q: How do you set proper boundaries?**

**A:** Recognizing and setting boundaries can be a difficult skill to practice! Learning our own boundaries and how to communicate them to others can be a personal journey that can sometimes take time, especially if we've had previous experiences where our boundaries were not respected. But with practice and time, setting proper boundaries with ourselves and others can become easier. It can be helpful to journal or write down our boundaries or to practice saying our boundaries with others. If you would like to talk more about setting boundaries, our advocates are here to support you. You can find us at the information above.

**Q: Why is it so hard to leave someone that is bad for you but you love them :(**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out to ask this question. We understand it's not easy to leave any relationship, especially when you love that person or have hope they might change. It's important to remind yourself that you are deserving of love, safety, respect, and everything else that you want within your relationships.

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. 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. Also, 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.

**Q: How do I get my moms ex to leave us alone? He stalks my mom He assumes before asking He is everything he calls my mom (sl\*\*, bi\*\*, c\*\*, h\*\*)**

**A:** It sounds like you and your mom are going through a difficult situation. It's important to remember that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor tries to leave. If you are concerned about your or your mom's safety, please do not hesitate to call 911. You can also contact a BLOOM365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan. You can also give your mom the number for the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE(7233)) for additional support. We are here for you!

**Q: How do I feel less like my experience with S/A affects me being a trans-male?**

**A:** Thank you for trusting us with such a deeply vulnerable experience. That experience was never your fault, and we are really glad you reached out for support. Healing from sexual assault is a deeply personal journey that can look different for everyone. You are not alone as you navigate this journey. There are resources available if you'd like to talk more about this experience. The RAINN (Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) has an [online chat](#) and hotline that you can reach at 800-656-HOPE (4673). It might be helpful to also reach out to LBGTQ+ specific organizations, as being around community can be supportive to our healing journeys. The Trevor Project offers advocacy through [online chat](#), by hotline

at 866-4-U-TREVOR (866-488-7386), or by texting START to 678-678. For more local resources, there's [onenaten.org](https://onenaten.org) and of course our advocates are always here to offer support. You can find us at the HelpLine number listed above. We are here for you!

**Q: If you are still suffering from what happen in the relationship what do you do?**

**A:** Healing is a personal journey that is unique to every person. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. It's important to be kind to yourself and to be patient and give yourself time for your heart to heal. 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. If you're still struggling with coping, you can always reach out to an Advocate at the HelpLine number above for free, confidential support and a listening ear. We are here for you!

**Q: Many people in my family have experienced abuse from a partner both male and female. Luckily they seek for help and are okay now.**

**A:** We are glad to hear that your family is receiving help and they're okay now. If you'd like to talk more about this or need additional resources, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate.

**Q: Why would you be afraid to be in a relationship because of your past?**

**A:** Thank you for asking this question. Our past relationship experiences can have an impact on how we see or approach new relationships for a few reasons. Some people may feel excited about new relationships and others may have more fear or apprehension because of past experiences. It's important to be kind to ourselves and to be patient and give ourselves time for our hearts to heal after ending any relationship. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. We encourage folks to find what works for them and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you, if needed! 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 feel less like my experience with S/A affects me being a trans-male?**

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**Q: I grew up with my parents always fighting, whether it was over the phone or in person. They never got along. I've also dealt with some emotional/verbal abuse because I've been guilt tripped a lot by my dad and always criticized by my step-mom. Why do people victim blame?**

**A:** Thank you for sharing such deep and personal experiences with us. We are so sorry that you had to witness and experience such hurtful behavior. You are not alone; if you ever want to talk about what you're going through, please know our advocates are here to offer support. Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above.

While we cannot really know why people decide to victim-blame, as everyone has their own reasons for making the choices they do, we do know that victim-blaming can be something that is learned. Sometimes victim-blaming attitudes come from belief in rigid gender norms. We can combat victim-blaming by listening to and affirming survivors when they share their experiences, and calling out victim-blaming when we see it (if it's safe and we're comfortable to do so).

**Q: How to prevent my parents "toxic" behavior influence mine**

**A:** Acknowledging and changing learned toxic behavior can be an important and difficult thing to do. Changing harmful behavior can take self-reflection and time. It might be helpful to start by identifying those toxic behaviors and recognizing when we might be exhibiting them, and then making a conscious choice to change those behaviors. Talking with trusted people and journaling our thoughts and feelings can be helpful tools. But you are not alone! Our HelpLine advocates are available to listen and support you in whatever ways you may need in this journey. Please feel free to reach out to us at our HelpLine at the information above.

**Q: I feel I don't have enough freedom**

**A:** We are so sorry to hear that you are feeling this way. It can feel so constricting and overwhelming when we feel that we don't have enough freedom or space. Sometimes it can be helpful to talk about these feelings with another person. Our advocates are here to listen and support you. If you would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to us at the HelpLine number above.

**Q: Why do I not know what I feel for a person. Like I think I like them but I feel like I annoy them. I think they sometimes show me they like me but IDK.**

**A:** Recognizing and understanding our emotions can be challenging sometimes, especially when our feelings are involved with someone else's. Taking time to acknowledge and process our feelings can be helpful in better understanding how we feel. Journaling or talking to a trusted person in our lives can be helpful ways to process and understand our emotions. We know it can be intimidating, but if you're unsure how someone else feels about you, the best way to be sure is to ask them about it. If you would like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to help—feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

**Q: How do I figure out what type of person I want to be, and need to be? Reason: Family members ask, "what happened to the kid that was always happy, talked to everyone"**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out about this important question. It can be a confusing journey to figure out the type of person we want or need to be, especially when those around us have their own ideas of who

we should be. It's OK if you're not always happy or talking to everyone all the time, as long as you feel OK with that, too. Figuring out who we are and who we want to be is a deeply personal journey that will look different for everyone. Something that can help in this journey is taking time to identify skills, traits, or values that you hold important and finding ways to bring that into your daily life. You don't have to figure this out by yourself! Our advocates are here to support you. Please feel free to reach out to us at our HelpLine at our number above.

**Q: What happens if you have thought of hurting yourself but promised loved ones to not hurt yourself**

**A:** 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, practicing 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 HelpLine at the number above! Even if you simply are needing an empathetic ear or are looking for mental health resources, please make the call or send us a text! You are never alone and we encourage you to reach out if you are experiencing thoughts of hurting yourself.

**Q: How do you help a friend whos been getting abused, sexually assaulted, harassed, neglected etc. by their parents but don't want to get professional help**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out and asking this question. We can tell that you really care for your friend. If you are concerned for your friend's safety, it might be best to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on. If that's not a viable option for you, we encourage you to prioritize your and your friends safety, however that looks for you. 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 to get help, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone. While we can't force anyone to get help, we can let our friends know that we're concerned and that we are here to support them as needed.

Providing continual support with this friend is a good idea. Checking in and making sure they know you are there for them even after the initial conversation is also a great option. Sometimes, it takes more than one conversation to really get through to a friend who is experiencing abuse. While we want those we care about to access the help and care they deserve, getting help is a personal choice that only that person can make. If you think it would be helpful, you can also share the numbers for the National Sexual Assault Hotline & the National Domestic Violence Hotline with your friend if they decide they do want support. Our advocates are here to listen and support both you and your friend. We encourage you and your friend to reach out to us at the HelpLine number listed above.

**Q: Can hormones play a part in teen dating abuse?**

**A:** This is a great question! In short, it's possible. Hormones can play a part in teen dating violence because the changes caused by hormones can affect mood and behavior. However, it's important to recognize that treating others with agency, equity, and respect is a choice we can all make, regardless of our hormones or bodily changes. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you

determine what makes a relationship healthy or unhealthy. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to the HelpLine at the number listed above.

**Q: As a trans person as well as a asexual person it's hard to be in a relationship with people who aren't ace that don't understand full what can I do so I don't get sad like in the past**

**A:** Thank you for sharing this, and we're sorry to hear that you are feeling this way. It can be helpful to find a way to cope with those sad feelings. For example: Spending time with the people you love, writing in a journal, doing yoga or exercising, joining a new sports team or club, or spending time in nature. 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](http://onenten.org). You can also always reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above or chat online at [bloom365.org](http://bloom365.org) for more support. We are here for you!

**Q: Can you be abusive without realizing it? If so, what are the signs that your abusive?**

**A:** This is a great question! Yes, it is possible to be abusive without realizing it. However, it is important to make conscious choices to treat others with agency, equity, and respect, and work on changing those abusive behaviors when we notice them or when others notice them. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you determine whether you're treating others in a healthy, blooming way, or in a wilting, abusive way.

If we are concerned that our relationships might be unhealthy, we should determine if I or my partner/friend is being caring or controlling. Think about the question– “Does my partner feel free and equal in this relationship 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'd like to talk more about this, please don't hesitate to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number listed above!

**Q: All of my anger comes from others idiotic actions**

**A:** While other's actions can definitely have an impact on our emotions and how we express them, it can be helpful to learn how to cope with intense emotions. This can look like taking deep breaths, taking space from a stressful situation, or writing about and talking to others about how we're feeling. We encourage you to try some coping techniques to find what works best for you, and if you'd like to talk more about this, our advocates are here for you. You can find us at the HelpLine information on the chart above!

**Q: People have to stop being soft about cyber bullying**

**A:** We are glad that you reached out to express your views on how people react to cyberbullying. We understand that not everyone reacts to things the same way, and cyberbullying might be something that you feel confident dealing with yourself. For others, cyberbullying can have a big impact on their daily lives, safety, and self-esteem. Bullying of all kinds, including cyber bullying, should be taken seriously. If someone is being bullied and we are witnesses to that, the best thing we can do is speak up and speak out. This can look like confronting the bully directly (if it is safe to do so) or telling a teacher or trusted

adult about what's going on. We encourage you to treat others with agency, respect, and equity. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

**Q: What if you need to talk to someone but you need to talk about the relationship with the only person you trust**

**A:** Talking about what we're feeling and going through with someone, especially those we trust can be so helpful in processing our experiences. We also understand this can be challenging. Sometimes it can be helpful to practice writing out (maybe in a journal, or even in your notes app) what we want to talk about or major points we want to be sure we get across before going into the real conversation. If you'd like to talk more about your situation, BLOOM365 advocates are here to support you. Please feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

**Q: How can I protect someone I love I can't be with them**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that you are experiencing this confusing situation. If you're concerned for someone else's safety, it might be best to reach out to a trusted adult in your life for support. If you'd like to talk more about your individual situation, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate for additional support. We are here for you!

**Q: How to break up with someone online and how to convince them to delete inappropriate pictures of a person?**

**A:** You can end a relationship in a way that makes you feel comfortable. If you feel like the situation could become dangerous or even just too uncomfortable for you, you can do a couple of things-- you can make a safety plan to start with or you can decide to block this person from contacting you. We encourage you to have someone you trust nearby for emotional and safety support during and after the conversation.

Communication is an important tool we can use to help end a relationship on good terms. "I statements" are awesome for break-ups because they help you explain why you are choosing to end the relationship without placing blame on the other person. For example, you could say "I don't feel like I have enough time to commit to our relationship, so I think it would be best for both of us if we are just friends." You can also use "I" statements to communicate your request to the other person. This could be saying something like, "It makes me feel uncomfortable that you have these inappropriate pictures, could you delete them?" There could also be legal implications if this person has inappropriate pictures on their phone and those involved are under 18 years old. If your partner is unwilling to let you end the relationship and/or continues to not take you seriously, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate for assistance in safely exiting the relationship. We are here for you! Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above if you'd like to talk about this more.

**Q: When you have a toxic mother but it's hurt you and she never listen to you always ignores you and loves her boyfriend more than her own kids, but you know your dad is way worse because he walk out to be with a other family**

**A:** Living in a home where we feel neglected or ignored can be a very stressful and sometimes traumatic experience. We encourage anyone in this type of situation to reach out for support and to take some time to find healthy coping skills or strategies that work for you. Spending time with those you love and

trust and sharing what you're going through with them can help you feel more supported and less alone. Other coping skills like writing in a journal, exercising or doing yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply spending time outside can also be helpful. Our advocates are also here to offer support. Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above.