



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Irene Lopez (7th)
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****This document can also be accessed at www.bloom365.org/faqs**

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.org/resources

<p>BLOOM365 HelpLine</p>	<p>For free, confidential support: Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST)</p> <p>To reach a specific advocate directly, please feel free to contact our HelpLine and tell us who you would like to speak to.</p>
<p>Teen Lifeline (24/7)</p>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</p>
<p>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline (24/7)</p>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522</p>
<p>National Domestic Violence Hotline (24/7)</p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<p>National Sexual Assault Hotline (24/7)</p>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7)</p>	<p>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p>
<p>ACESDV: Arizona Sexual and Domestic Violence Helpline</p>	<p>Call: (602) 279-2980 or (800) 782-6400 SMS Text: (520) 720-3383 Arizona Relay Service 7-1-1 Monday-Friday, 8:30a – 5:00p with extended hours on Tuesday 8:30a – 7:00p</p>

***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: Are there words tied to dating abuse?

A: There aren't specific words tied to dating abuse but words can be used to cause abuse to others. Verbal abuse can take many forms such as put downs, humiliation and threats. We recommend checking out 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 anyone experiencing those to reach out to a trusted adult or bloom365 advocate.

Q: Can outside situations affect relationships negative/positive?

A: Our environments can definitely have an affect on our relationships and ourselves. Coping tools like writing in a journal or talking with others about what we're feeling can be helpful in processing our experiences and environments and how they might be affecting us. If you would like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to offer support. Please feel free to reach out to us as our HelpLine at the information above!

Q: Is there a timeline when anger turns to abuse?

A: There isn't a timeline for when anger turns to abuse however, unprocessed anger can transform into violent or abusive behavior. Anger is a natural human emotion to feel but when expressed in harmful or hurtful ways, anger can be very unhealthy. Finding coping mechanisms that support calming down such as going for a walk, taking a break from an intense situation, or journaling/talking about our anger can be productive ways of processing feelings of anger. We encourage anyone who may be struggling with feelings of uncontrollable anger to reach out to a trusted adult, advocate, or counselor for additional judgment free support.

Q: Are there people who are just born with wanting power and control?

A: Wanting power + control and using toxic or abusive behaviors to attain that is not a trait that people are born with but a choice that someone chooses to make. It can be helpful to look at the [wilting flower](#) to see the different root causes of abusive behavior and some examples of how power + control can show up in relationships. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

Q: Is the easy access to media in the present day making more people abusive?

A: Thank you for asking this important question! Seeing violent behavior in the media can have an influence, but behaving in abusive ways is a choice that each person decides to make.

Q: What kind of mental issues that are left behind after an abusive relationship?

A: Experiencing something traumatic like an abusive relationship can have an impact on a person's mental health in various ways. Some of these impacts can include experiences of depression, anxiety, or post traumatic stress. We encourage anyone who is struggling with these concerns to reach out to a trusted adult or bloom365 advocate at the information above. We are here for you!

Q: Is society a core reason people become abusive?

A: There are aspects of society, like unhealthy gender norms, that can contribute to toxic or abusive behavior. But when we engage in productive conversations that break down some of these aspects, we can work together to end cycles of abuse.

Q: What is the % that people who are LGBTQ+ or disabled that reach out?

A: Thank you for asking this question. We do not have those numbers on hand to share but we at bloom365 are committed to creating inclusive, welcoming spaces for everyone. :)

Q: Are there any other ways that people try to gain their trust in an abusive relationship?

A: Trust can be something that is built through time and intimacy. Sometimes within an abusive relationship, that trust can be used or manipulated by an abusive partner. The [red flags checklist](#) and the [blooming + wilting flowers](#) can be helpful in identifying those behaviors. You can also reach out to our advocates at the HelpLine information above to talk more about this.

Q: Are people who are abusive in relationships always looking for power and control?

A: As you can see in the [wilting flower](#), there are several root causes for why someone might be abusive toward someone else. Commonly, these root causes do stem from a desire for power and control, although there could also be cases where abuse is happening due to other factors. If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

Q: How many types of jealousy are there?

A: Jealousy is a natural, human emotion that many people have felt at some point. Jealousy can be felt and expressed in different ways depending on the person. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. Jealousy becomes unhealthy or abusive when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling. Taking some time to consider whether our relationships are built on trust and respect, communicating our feelings with others in healthy ways, and journaling or other coping skills can be helpful ways of processing jealousy in a healthy way. Our advocates are also here to listen and offer support, you can reach out to us at our HelpLine information above!

Q: How to test a toxic relationship?

A: You are the expert in your own life, so only you can make that decision. 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. To talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

Q: Could victim blaming be a reason people are afraid to reach out?

A: This is such an important question, we are glad you asked it. Victim blaming can definitely contribute to creating environments where people can feel afraid to reach out or share about their experiences. It’s why it’s so important that we are supportive of survivors who share their stories or reach out for help. When we engage in productive conversations about victim blaming, we can break down those negative assumptions and create a space where everyone feels safe to share their stories and get the support they need. Our advocates are here to offer judgment free support - please feel free to reach out to us at the information above.

Q: What is the most abusive time in a relationship?

A: One of the most dangerous times in an abusive relationship is when a survivor tries to end the relationship. If a partner is unwilling to let you leave and/or makes threats toward you, themselves, or someone else, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate for assistance in creating a safety plan and safely exiting the relationship.

Q: Some people could be bad influence and could turn abusive

A: You are so right in that there may be some people we meet who may not be the best influence on us. The blooming and wilting flowers can be helpful tools in determining whether a person or relationship is healthy for you. You can always reach out to our HelpLine advocates if you want more support in figuring that out. You can find our HelpLine at the information above!

Q: When you have anxiety and stress having to go through every day!!

A: We are so sorry to hear that you are feeling such anxiety and stress. Those can be such overwhelming feelings. If you would like to talk more about these feelings, our advocates are here to listen! You can find us at our HelpLine information above.

Q: What if your parents have a toxic relationship and it affects you mentally?

A: Witnessing a toxic relationship, especially your parent’s, can be a very stressful and sometimes isolating experience. We encourage you 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 can people with anger cope with it? I control it but it's hard to, I don't have anger issues just asking

A: Anger is a common human emotion and like other human emotions, using coping skills to process anger can be helpful in dealing with it. Supportive coping skills can be journaling about how you're feeling, using calming techniques such as breathing exercises or going for a walk, or talking to a trusted friend or adult. Take some time to find what works best for you and know that our advocates are here if you want to talk more about this. Please feel free to reach out to us at our HelpLine at the information above.

Q: Do these people ever feel alone?

A: Loneliness can be a feeling that many people experience. If you have additional questions or would like to talk more, our advocates are here to offer support! You can reach out to us at our HelpLine at the information above.

Q: How are teens getting weapons?

A: This is out of our area of expertise so we don't know the answer to this question. But we strongly encourage anyone who knows or hears of someone who has access to a weapon and they are showing threatening behavior to call 911 or reach out to a trusted adult immediately.

Q: How do you help someone with suicidal thoughts?

A: It can be scary if someone you know is thinking about suicide. It is very important to show empathy and support to that person, and to let them know that they always have someone to turn to and they are not alone. It can be helpful to encourage the person to find a trusted adult such as a school counselor who can help them find available resources to help them, and it's also a good idea for you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on for support, also. If the person having suicidal thoughts would like to talk to someone, they could also contact us here at BLOOM365 by calling or texting **1-888-606-HOPE (4673)**. We would love to help give them support. Also available 24/7 is the Suicide Prevention Lifeline—you can call **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** or chat online [HERE](#). They are always available to help at any time of the day or night.

Q: Is there only 1 person in an abusive relationship?

A: In an abusive relationship, it's possible that more than one partner is being abusive, and it's also possible that only one partner is being abusive toward the other. No relationship is perfect, but in an abusive relationship one person tries to gain power and control over the other in various ways. If you think you, or someone you know, could be in an abusive relationship you can look at our [red flags checklist](#) and [Blooming and Wilting flowers](#) to learn more about healthy and unhealthy relationships. If you have any other questions or would like support feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate.

Q: I wonder why people still normalize bad things only for men but not women?

A: Unhealthy gender norms and stereotypes can have a huge impact on what type of behavior becomes normalized. These ideas go back many years and historically have been passed from generation to generation. We can engage in productive conversations that break down some of these unhealthy gender stereotypes to work together for justice and equity. If you'd like to talk more about this or if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the HelpLine number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: Are more people who murder people in abusive relationships hurt women because they are "easier" to take advantage of?

A: This is an important question and we are glad that you asked it. Ideas like "women are weaker or easier to take advantage of than others" are examples of unhealthy gender norms which can be very common in our society. These ideas go back many years and historically have been passed from generation to generation. We know that rigid belief in unhealthy gender norms contributes to power and control in our relationships, and also in society. 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. If you have additional questions, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above.

Q: What is coercion?

A: Coercion is using intimidating behavior, whether physical or verbal, to persuade someone into doing something they may not want to do. Saying no should be as simple as just, well, saying no. In reality, some might feel pressured, guilty, manipulated, or coerced when they say no. Everyone deserves to have their boundaries respected. Saying no can be hard especially when you're saying it to someone you care about. It can be helpful to practice asking and giving consent so that it becomes easier to enforce and respect boundaries. If you would like to talk with a BLOOM365 advocate further, feel free to reach out to our number listed above.