



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Mountain Ridge High School
Fall 2021

****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)

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| BLOOM365 Peer Support Helpline | <p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support.</p> <p>Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)</p> <p>Helpline Hours of Operation: 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> |
| Teen Lifeline | <p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</p> |
| National Teen Dating Violence Hotline | <p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p> |
| National Domestic Violence Hotline | <p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p> |
| National Sexual Assault Hotline | <p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p> |
| Suicide Prevention Lifeline | <p>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</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: Why does something as serious as domestic abuse have gender norms?

A: Thank you for asking such an important question! Unhealthy gender norms are unfortunately very common in our society and can influence many things - like our behavior, how we see others, and relationships. Gender norms can influence things that are as serious as abuse or as small as what we choose to wear. We know that rigid belief in unhealthy gender norms contributes to power and control in our relationships. If someone believes that they should have power over someone because of their gender and their understanding over gender roles, that can create an abusive situation. However, by recognizing and engaging in productive conversations about unhealthy gender norms, we can break those stigmas and work together for justice and equity for all.

Q: There was a guy I used to like. He was sweet and caring, or so I thought. 4 months after talking he became violent. We would fight a lot and he would tell me he wished I would die, I ended up never talking to him again. Every now and then he tries to talk to me

A: Thank you for sharing such a vulnerable experience with us, we are glad that you felt safe enough to do so. We're so sorry that you experienced such a scary and violent situation. What you have experienced is not your fault. If someone is repeatedly calling or texting another person's phone or is constantly "checking up" on the other person, this could be a red flag for a potentially dangerous situation. If you or someone you know is experiencing these things, we highly encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on. For free, confidential support, you can reach a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above. We are here for you!

Q: I want to know how you would get out of a dangerous relationship safely?

A: This is a very important question, we are so glad that you asked it. 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 safety, please contact a BLOOM365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan. If you do not fear for your safety, you may try to communicate how you feel using "I statements," letting them know that you believe this relationship isn't beneficial for you and you'd like to go your separate ways. If your partner is unwilling to let you leave 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.

Q: How do you politely reject a friend?

A: This is a bit outside of our area of expertise, but we will try our best to answer this question! It could be helpful to use “I” statements when communicating about uncomfortable topics. This style of communication 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. That could be saying something like, “I am not interested in a relationship right now but I value our friendship and I hope we can continue to be friends.” Thank you for asking this question, we hope this answer is helpful to you!

Q: Is teen dating always a bad idea?

A: Dating and relationships are not always bad - they can be opportunities to practice healthy ways of connecting with others and to get to know yourself better. Loving and healthy relationships can be a great source of support! Because of how important relationships can be to us, when they are unhealthy or abusive it can have a real impact on us. It could be helpful to explore what healthy relationships can look like so that when we are dating someone, we can have all the benefits of a loving relationship. In your workbook, you can find a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship. Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, as well as freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. With support, practice, and self-reflection we can create the healthy and loving relationships we deserve.

Q: I was forced to do something that I didn't want to do and them getting mad at my friend when she said no because I was scared to and getting blocked for a day or two

A: We are sorry you've experienced this. You have the right to say no and enforce boundaries; Consent is important, and we are sorry you were forced to do something you didn't want to do. If you'd like to talk more about this experience or anything else going on, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above. We are here to support you!

Q: What are some red flags that aren't visible?

A: Some examples of red flags that might not be easily noticeable are: wanting to get serious too quickly, treating you better when others are around, controlling/extreme jealousy, or even someone mentally intimidating you. A list of additional red flags, including the 5 most serious red flags, can be found [here](#). It might also be helpful to look at the [blooming and wilting flowers](#) to consider whether a relationship is built on power and control or agency and equity. For more information, or for free, confidential, non-judgmental support, we encourage you to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above.

Q: Could it be considered abuse if they're just using you for sexual activities?

A: An abusive relationship is stemmed in power and control and exhibits the words seen in the [wilting flower](#): Isolation, jealousy, dominance, verbal or emotional abuse, put-downs, sexual assault, and/or humiliation. Healthy relationships are stemmed in equity and agency, and exhibit emotional respect, kindness, fairness, encouragement, etc. If someone is using you, this may not be a healthy relationship/friendship. If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: Will we be talking about just dating abuse or all the types of abuse

A: While the focus of the 7 Doses is on teen dating abuse, a lot of this information is also applicable to other forms of power-based abuse and violence (i.e. domestic violence, bullying, gender-based violence, etc.). Our advocates are available if you need support or have questions on any type of interpersonal violence.

Q: Did you start teaching others about abusive relationships because it happened to you?

Related Submission: Q: Why did you start this business thing?

A: All of us at BLOOM365 have different reasons for why we chose to be involved with this work. Some of us have experienced or witnessed dating abuse or domestic violence in our own lives or the lives of our friends. We are all extremely passionate about this cause because we recognize that is a significant issue that can be prevented. For more information on BLOOM365's story, [check out our website!](#)

Q: If a partner does everything right and they're perfect or seem perfect for you but just once or twice or 3 times does or shows a deal breaker should you break it off or stick with it? Possibly get them help? Or help them yourself?

A: You are the expert in your life, so only you can decide your deal-makers and deal-breakers, and at what point you would draw the line with a partner. We encourage you to utilize the [blooming and wilting](#) flowers to determine if your relationship is more 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. If you are concerned for the safety or well-being of yourself or your partner, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 Advocate for support. If it doesn't feel unsafe and if you feel comfortable doing so, you can try to offer resources or support to your partner. It's important to remember that we can't force anyone to change or to seek help, but we can offer support and seek support for ourselves if things get too tough or confusing. To talk more about this or any additional questions you might have, feel free to contact our Helpline for support!

Q: I was in a bad relationship 2 years ago but I feel nothing about it now even though it hurt me a lot back then. Why do I feel fine?

A: Thank you for reaching out to us, we are so happy to hear that you're out of a relationship that was bad for you. Healing from the impacts of a bad relationship or experience can sometimes be a long or complicated process. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. It sounds like you may have found ways of coping with that bad relationship that worked for you. It can be so helpful to find ways of coping that work for you. Please know that BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! We also invite you to get involved in our free Peer Connections BLOOM group, which provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others.

Q: If you are in an abusive relationship how would you get out of without being hurt or humiliated?

A: Thank you for asking such an important question. Leaving an abusive relationship can be a very hard and scary choice at times. 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 safety, please contact a BLOOM365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan. If you do not fear for your safety, you may try to communicate how you feel using "I statements," letting them know that you believe this relationship isn't beneficial for you and you'd like to go your separate ways. You can have this conversation in any way that makes you feel safe and comfortable. This can include sending a text or email, or breaking up in a public place with a trusted friend nearby. If your partner is unwilling to let you leave 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. Leaving an abusive relationship can feel complicated, and if you would like the space to process this decision more, please feel free to reach out to our advocates by phone/text at [866-606-HOPE](tel:866-606-HOPE) or by online chat at bloom365.org.

Q: What is the right way to ask for consent?

A: Thank you for asking such a good question! Consent may look different for everyone and how someone asks/gives consent can vary. It's so important to understand how to ask and give consent because no one should ever be forced to do anything that they do not want to do. Consent is a huge part of freedom and all the rights that we have as individuals. When asking for consent, it's important that you ask before engaging in anything with another person and to be specific and clear about what you're asking so that the other person can answer a clear yes or no. For example, this could look like asking "can I hug you?" instead of going straight for the hug. The National Sexual Violence Resource Center has a fantastic flyer on how to ask for consent. You can find that resource by clicking on this [link](#).

Q: How do I help a friend being emotionally abused by another friend when he is convinced it's his fault?

A: Thank you for reaching out with your question. It's very obvious that you care greatly for your friend. Your question is an important one and a very common one, as well. It's important that we understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, insecurity, etc.) It's also important that we don't blame the victim for staying. 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. 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. Being there for someone who is navigating an abusive dynamic is one of the most supportive things you can do! If you need additional support, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 Advocate at our Helpline number listed above.

Q: When I was in 1st grade there was this boy who moved from another class and came into my class. He was nice to everybody but me. That is when the bullying started. I told everybody but nobody did anything to stop it. I was miserable and lost all my friends. I was lonely for 7 years. But I'm okay now but I get sad from time to time thinking about it

A: Thank you for sharing your experience with us. We are so sorry to hear that you had to endure bullying for so long. You did not deserve to have that happen. Bullying can have such a negative effect on the person being bullied. We are so glad to hear that you are feeling okay from that experience, but do know that there are people to listen and support you, if needed. If you ever want to talk more about that experience, please feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at our Helpline by phone/text at 888-606-HOPE or online chat at bloom365.org.

Q: I was bullied for many years for my weight and how I look. But I never really cared until I realized that I have a binge eating disorder. And I don't know how or when to stop eating

A: Thank you for sharing such a vulnerable experience with us, it can feel so scary to share our experiences and we are glad that you felt safe with us to share. We are so sorry that you experienced bullying. You did not deserve that. Bullying can have negative effects on those who are bullied and a recent diagnosis of an eating disorder can feel very confusing and shocking. If you would like to talk about the bullying you experienced or get support for your eating disorder, there is support available to you. The National Eating Disorder Association has a Helpline that you can reach by online chat, text, or phone - you can find their contact information at this [link](#). And of course, you can always reach out to a bloom365 advocate by text/phone at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online chat at bloom365.org. You are not alone!

Q: I used to be friends with this girl from 1-6th grade. The time I realized it was toxic was the end of 6th grade. She would hit me and blame me for everything and we would fight every single day. There was one time when she called me while we were in a fight saying she was going to kill herself and hung up. I went over to her house and she was fine, I could tell she was lying about it and just wanted attention. She would always lie about everything and I proved it many times. She once said her dog died but I saw it the next day, she just did it for attention. In 6th grade I told her I didn't want to be friends anymore and she got very mad and pushed a chair down very aggressive toward me and it scared me. She would call me names mostly ***. I am currently dealing with trust issues, anxiety, and depression. I have told my family and a therapist but nothing helps. When i see her around my school my legs will start shaking and I feel awful**

A: Thank you for reaching out and sharing your experience with us. We are sorry you've experienced this. You deserve to feel safe and to be treated with respect in all of your friendships and relationships. It sounds like this friendship really affected you, and we understand still feeling awful when you see this person. We encourage you to continue talking to your family and your therapist (if you're still seeing one) about how you've been feeling. It's important to seek support when we need it, especially on days where those big emotions are extra challenging to cope with. Another coping mechanism that might help you get those feelings around her is the "5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique"—You do this by identifying 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste. The idea is to ground ourselves and become more present when we feel our bodies starting to panic or feel anxious. Another helpful way to cope is [Starfish Breathing](#)—tracing the shape of your hand with your other hand, inhaling as your finger traces up and exhaling as your finger traces down. We encourage you to try some different methods and see if any help you feel less anxious. If you want to

explore additional ways to cope, or for additional support, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: How do I get people to stop misgendering me? Non-binary they/them

A: 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 challenging and hurtful when our pronouns and identities are not respected. How you choose to handle each situation is totally up to you. We encourage you to prioritize your physical and emotional safety & well-being. If you feel comfortable and it is safe to do so, it might be helpful to remind those who are misgendering you of your pronouns when you hear them use the wrong ones. Sometimes it can be helpful to educate those around us of the importance of pronouns and what they mean to us. Depending on your comfortability, it might be helpful to talk to a trusted adult, such as a teacher or coach, if this is happening in a school setting and it's making you uncomfortable. If you want to talk more about this, or if you need additional support, please reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above.

Q: I am afraid of coming out to my parents and I am scared that my girlfriend's parents will say something about us dating to my parents and it scares me

A: Thank you for sharing this with us. Coming out can be a scary process for many people. You aren't alone if you feel worried, anxious, or afraid. Remember that there's no wrong way or right time to come out. It's your decision, and no one else's. When you do choose to come out, there are many positives like giving people in your life the opportunity to know an important aspect of your life and helping you feel less alone through the opportunities to meet new friends. However, there are some risks to coming out, especially if you worry that your family or your girlfriend's parents might not be accepting or disappointed. Regardless, the most important thing is for you to stay safe and know that any negative reactions from your family or your girlfriend's parents may have, are not your fault.

If you're comfortable doing so, we encourage you to educate the supportive people in your life on what it means to be a part of the LGBTQ+ community and the barriers that this community may face. One great resource that you may find helpful is the Trevor Project's "[The Coming Out Handbook](#)" guide, which will provide additional support and information about coming out. 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: How do I tell someone, especially a parent, that I don't feel comfortable with the way they are treating me and who I am?

A: We're sorry that you are experiencing this. If you feel comfortable, you may try to communicate how you feel using "I statements," letting them know how this situation is making you feel. If you aren't comfortable with that, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate, by text/phone at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online chat at bloom365.org for additional support. We're here to support you!

Q: How do I forgive someone that caused me trauma in the past? (my dad)

A: We are sorry that you have experienced trauma by your dad. Forgiveness is a very personal decision and it can also be a process that takes time. We know that trauma caused by a family member such as a parent could have a very negative impact on our whole self. When abuse is not healed, we could carry it for years. You have the power to decide to forgive in a way that feels comfortable and best for you. Forgiveness can be an act of kindness to yourself, giving yourself permission to start healing by understanding that what was done to you was not your fault. We would like you to know that you are not alone, and that we are here to help you walk through the healing process. For additional support coping with trauma, you can always reach out to a bloom365 advocate by text/phone at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online chat at bloom365.org. You are not alone!

Q: What should you do if you develop an emotional + physical dependence on your abuser?

A: It's important that we understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, insecurity, etc.). It could be helpful to think of these barriers as hooks. It's not easy to unhook 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. If you are struggling with emotional and physical dependence on your abuser, it might be helpful to reach out for support from others. Support can look as simple as talking to a trusted friend or advocate about what you've experienced. Talking about it and feeling like you have support can make you feel less alone and help remind you of the care that you have outside of your abuser. If you would like to talk to an advocate more about this, please feel free to reach out to us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online at bloom365.org. You are not alone!

Q: I want to be a makeup artist but my family wants me to be a doctor and I don't want to disappoint them

A: Thank you for reaching out and sharing this with us. It sounds like you're feeling pressure from your family about what to do in the future. If you're comfortable and feel safe doing so, it might be helpful to talk to your family about how important makeup artistry is to you, and why you want to become a makeup artist. It might also be helpful to utilize "I" statements to communicate with your family about how their pressure or comments, etc. make you feel. This might look like saying "I feel (dismissed/sad/pressured/disrespected/etc.) when you tell me I should be a doctor. Can you please (respect/support/acknowledge/etc.) my plan to be a makeup artist?" If you'd like to talk more about this, we encourage you to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: I think my dad is emotionally abusive. I don't know what to do

A: We are so sorry to hear that you have and are currently experiencing this. It can be very difficult to come to the realization that someone we know and care about is a victim or perpetrator in an abusive relationship. It can also be a very disorienting experience and we understand feeling confused about what to do next. Please know that it is not your responsibility to "change" your dad, and you are not responsible for your dad's behavior. You are not alone as you navigate this information and experience. Advocates at bloom365 are here for you for any support you need. Feel free to reach out to us by

phone/text at [1-888-606-HOPE](tel:1-888-606-HOPE) (4673) or online at bloom365.org Mon-Fri 3-9pm for additional support. We are here for you!

Q: Why do people get so mad and offended with who someone else loves or how someone else identifies? (homophobia & transphobia)

A: Unhealthy stereotypes about different sexualities and gender identities can influence how others see people in the LGBTQ+ community. Sometimes stereotypes or norms are in place because society wants to limit the rights of a certain group of people. While we can't get inside other's heads to know why they think, feel, or behave in certain ways, we can engage in productive conversations that break down some of these unhealthy stereotypes to work together for justice and equity for everyone. For additional information or support, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above!

Q: Is it okay that I made out with a junior as a freshman after my parents said no

A: Thank you for reaching out. This question is a bit outside of our area of expertise. We encourage you to make #BLOOMing choices that reflect the elements listed in the [Blooming Flower](#). For additional support, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support.

Q: for the video: I think you should put an “implied SA” caution warning–some of the things re triggering for SA Victims

A: Thank you for the feedback about the video! We will keep this in mind for our future presentations.

Q: Why do I feel like it's my fault and is it?

A: We're sorry to hear that you are feeling this way. Everyone has the power to choose to treat others with agency and equity or power and control. If you've experienced any type of abuse or trauma, we want you to know that it was not your fault. If you ever want to talk about this, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by text/phone at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online chat at bloom365.org. We're here to support you!

Q: My dad is gay

A: Thank you for trusting us with this information. Families can be so diverse and can look so many ways. There are many families with LGBTQ+ members that have close and loving relationships. All families are valid and important! There are others who have families that look like yours and you are not alone in having this unique experience. There are resources and support for children who have LGBTQ+ parents. Colage and QueerSpawn Resource are two of the longest organizations that support children of LGBTQ+ parents. You can find out more information about them [here](#) and [here](#). And of course our bloom365 advocates are here to listen and offer you any support you may need as you navigate this new family structure! You can find us by phone/text at [1-888-606-HOPE](tel:1-888-606-HOPE) or by online chat at bloom365.org. You are not alone!

Q: I want to be able to have a good self-esteem but it's so difficult. I've been told so many things but they don't work. :(

A: Thank you for sharing this with us! Building good self-esteem can be so difficult. It's such a deeply personal journey that is unique to each person and it can sometimes take time to figure out what works best for us. Finding what tips and tricks work for us can sometimes be a little bit of trial-and-error, and it is normal to feel discouraged at times. While it may be hard or confusing at times to build healthy self-esteem, that does not mean it's impossible or that it'll never happen—It can take a bit of exploring! The fact that you want to have good self-esteem and are being so honest about the challenges shows a lot of bravery and commitment. We hope that you'll continue this journey of self-love! You are not alone as you figure this process out and we at bloom365 are here if you'd like to talk about this further. Please feel free to reach out to us by phone at [1-888-606-HOPE](tel:1-888-606-HOPE) (4673) or online at bloom365.org, we are happy to provide support!

Q: I feel like I'm always in my room waiting for someone to text me and no one does and I feel like a burden to text someone first and feel like I'll be judged by the way I text.

A: Thank you for sharing this with us. You are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out for support. We understand that sometimes we feel like we could be a burden if we text or call someone first. Experiencing feelings of loneliness can be difficult, and we encourage you to reach out to your friends or family if it's challenging for you. For additional support or just someone to talk to, you can also reach out to one of BLOOM365's advocates by calling/texting 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or through online chat at bloom365.org, Mon-Fri 3-9pm MST. We are here for you!

Q: What is the most common type of abuse among teenagers?

A: That's a good question! According to the CDC, "Nearly 1 in 11 female and approximately 1 in 14 male high school students report having experienced physical dating violence in the last year" and "About 1 in 8 female and 1 in 26 male high school students report having experienced sexual dating violence in the last year." If you want to learn more, you can click [here](#).

Q: I do not know how to help someone that doesn't want help

A: Thank you for reaching out. Even when we have good intentions, we cannot make people get help if they do not want to. Sometimes our friends are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. It might be helpful to have a conversation with this person about your concerns and offer to support them getting help when they are ready. Checking in and making sure they know you are there for them even after the initial conversation is a great option. If you would like to talk more about the person you're supporting or would like to get support for yourself, our bloom365 advocates are available by phone, text or web chat to help you navigate this. We are here for you!

Q: Is it cat-calling if you whistle when someone looks good to hype them up, and it's someone you know?

A: This is a great question, thank you for asking us. Catcalling is a type of harassment which usually involves an individual directing unwanted sexual comments, gestures, and/or whistling toward someone else. If you're unsure how the whistling or the way you're hyping someone up makes them feel, it's best

to check-in with them on their comfortability with you expressing the hype through those ways. This is a great way to learn more about this person's boundaries and how to respect them! We hope this was helpful!

Q: When I was younger someone said that they would kill me and my family if I didn't send them nude photos of me. Police got involved but do you teach kids what to do in this situation?

A: Thank you for trusting us with such a vulnerable experience. We are so sorry that you experienced such a huge violation of trust, you did not deserve that. It is so important to talk about consent and what options and support are out there if that consent has been violated. Although we are not lawyers and this is not something we are experts on, we would like to state that Arizona has a specific statute regarding teen sexting: [Arizona Revised Statutes Section 8-309](#). According to this law, it is illegal for someone under 18 years of age to knowingly use a device to view or transmit photographs or videos of someone under 18 years that depicts explicit sexual material (including nude pictures). It is also against the law for someone under 18 years to knowingly possess explicit sexual material involving someone under 18 years, even if the person sent it to the individual. The only time these actions aren't a crime is if the one didn't solicit the material or if one reasonably tried to delete or destroy the material. If you find that you are ever in need of support as you process this experience, please know that our bloom365 advocates are always here to lend a hand. You can reach out to us by phone/text at [1-888-606-HOPE](tel:1-888-606-HOPE) (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org.

Q: How do you tell someone you like them?

A: This is a question that is a little outside of our expertise but we will try to answer it as best we can! While a lot of the tips and tools we share are mostly shared within a relationship context, these same tools could be used in other aspects of our lives, as well. For example - the ability to communicate in healthy ways is important in creating Blooming relationships, but that ability can also be really useful in communicating effectively with others in our lives. The use of "I" statements can be helpful in effective communication and creates an environment where others can see your perspective without assumptions of defensiveness. You could use this same tool to say something like, "I like you and I wanted to tell you that." We hope this helps!

Q: What happens if you know the victim & abuser? What do you do?

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out to ask these important questions. Your emotional and physical safety is a priority, so we encourage you to look out for yourself first if you decide to get involved. It's important to remember that we can't force anyone to get help or to leave a relationship, but we can check-in with them and let them know we are concerned for them. Sometimes it takes more than one conversation to really get through to someone who is experiencing or perpetrating abuse. If the situation is dangerous or if you're concerned for someone's safety, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on. If you're comfortable, it might also be helpful to share BLOOM365 resources with the victim and abuser, including our [Blooming and Wilting Flowers](#) and [Red Flags Checklist](#). For additional information or resources, please text/call our Helpline at 888-606-4673 or chat with a BLOOM365 advocate at bloom365.org Mon-Fri 3-9pm.

Q: How do you stop being friends with someone who blackmails you into hanging out with them?

A: We're sorry to hear that you're going through this, and we're glad that you reached out for support. You can end a friendship in a way that makes you feel comfortable. "I statements" are awesome for ending a relationship 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 do not like how I am getting treated. I think we should go our separate ways." 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 have that conversation in a relatively public space like a park, and you could always have someone you trust nearby for emotional and safety support during and after. These types of situations can be challenging to navigate. If you need additional support, please feel free to reach out to a bloom365 advocate, by text/phone at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online chat at bloom365.org. We're here to support you!

Q: What if you hate yourself so you feel like you could never love someone else or no one will love you. And you are protecting yourself from getting hurt since you think no one could love you

A: Thank you for reaching out, we are so sorry to hear that you are having these feelings. These feelings sound like they might be overwhelming, and it is very brave of you to share this with us. We are so glad that you did! Finding self-love and building self-esteem can be a hard and sometimes confusing process. Self-esteem doesn't come easy for everyone and that is okay, and it does not mean we aren't worthy of love. Sometimes it just takes us a little bit longer to come to that realization about our worthiness and capacity for love. Talking about these heavy feelings with others can make us feel less alone and can also give others the chance to show us the compassion and love that we are all deserving of. It can sometimes be helpful to build a healthy self-esteem with ourselves— this can look like doing things that make us feel good and acknowledging the aspects of ourselves that we love. What works for you will be unique to you and that's okay! If you would like to talk more about these feelings with someone, our bloom365 advocates are always here to listen and offer any support you may need. You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online at our website at bloom365.org.

Q: If someone doesn't want "tea" one day, can you ask again on a different day?

A: This is a great question! Asking someone what they want or don't want is a great way to learn more about their boundaries and how to respect them. Asking someone if they want "tea" before giving it to them is a great way of respecting boundaries and asking for consent. You could ask someone again on a different day, but there is a possibility that the answer might be the same and it is important to respect that boundary. It could also be helpful to ask someone, "can I ask you about tea again later?" as that could give the other person the opportunity to state a boundary and a chance for you to better know and respect that person's boundary. We hope this was helpful!

Q: My abuser is someone I can't get out of my life, what do I do? Especially since my family continuously tells me to forgive them?

A: We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out for support. If you feel unsafe, we encourage you to talk to another trusted adult about what's going on. You are the expert in your own life, so only you can decide what you would like to do and if you want to forgive that person.

Forgiveness is a very personal decision that can take time and might be different for everyone. Since this abusive person is someone you can't get out of your life, we encourage you to think about what options are available that could potentially make you feel more safe or comfortable. For additional support or to discuss different options for your situation, we encourage you to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above. We are here for you!

Q: My girlfriend says she still likes her ex but likes me more because we're dating. What should I do cause I really like her too?

A: Thank you for reaching out! Ultimately, you are the expert in your own life, so only you can decide what decision is best for you. It could be helpful to take some time to think about what makes you feel loved in a relationship and what type of love you would like to receive, or your "deal-makers" and "deal-breakers." If you realize that you are not receiving the type of love you would like, or that you're not being treated how you want to be, you can think about whether or not this is a relationship you want to continue. It can also be useful to look at the [blooming and wilting flowers](#) to help you determine whether this relationship is one you want to continue. If you would like to talk further about this, our bloom365 advocates are here to listen and support you. Feel free to reach out to us at the contact information above!

Q: Is it right to tell your partner to stop talking to your old abusive ex?

A: Thank you for asking this question. Ultimately, we can't control another person's actions or who they talk to. However, you can have your own boundaries around certain behaviors or situations. While you can't control your partner's actions, you can decide what is best for you and make choices that you feel reflect that. This might look like talking to your partner about how you're feeling about them talking to this ex, or taking some time and space for yourself to process how you're feeling before deciding what you'd like to see change. If you would like to talk more about this situation, BLOOM365 advocates are here to support you. Feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the contact information above!

Q: Much of the things I do in my aren't for me, but for my parents or friends. Somehow I feel I disappoint the people around me

A: We're sorry to hear that you are feeling this way, and we want to remind you that you are not alone. It sounds like you're feeling some heavy things right now, and if you want to talk more about it, support is available. It might also be helpful to spend some time taking care of *you*, doing things that make you feel happy, safe and comfortable. To discuss this further, please give us a call or text for free, confidential, non-judgemental support. We are here for you!

Q: What should one do if this happens... A friend is causing the violence and tells you but you want to help them and their partner, but now they tell you to not tell anyone or else they will harm you. Basically what would someone do if the perpetrator is doubling down on you and their partner?

A: Thank you for reaching out about this, we are so glad that you did. We're so sorry to hear that you and your friend's partner are experiencing something that can feel so scary and traumatic. You are deserving of safety in your relationships! It sounds like this is a pretty intense situation. It might feel

scary, but we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on to ensure everyone stays safe.

It's also important to acknowledge that we can't help another person if they are not ready or willing to make a change. The process of changing abusive behavior starts with a decision that the person causing abuse must make for themselves. Your safety is important and we encourage you to make decisions that will keep you safe. If you are concerned about your safety, please contact a BLOOM365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan for how you will safely interact with this friend. If you do not fear for your safety, you could try to communicate how you feel using "I statements," letting them know that you are concerned about their relationship with their partner and your friendship with them. This can be a lot to navigate, and if you would like to talk more about this situation, please feel free to reach out to us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or online chat bloom365. We are here for you!

Q: Why is it when someone tells you that they're there for you but when you tell them what's been going on they don't listen or push away from you. What do I do when I know my friend is in an abusive relationship but they can't break up with their partner or their partner will unalive themselves or become more abusive

A: There are a lot of possibilities why someone might push away from us when we vent to them—many of which have more to do with what's going on in *their* lives than something that has to do with *us*. It might be helpful to check in with a friend before venting to them. This could look like asking, "is this an okay time for me to vent to you?" or, "I could really use your support, do you have time to talk with me about what's been going on?" If you feel that over time your friendship is more one-sided, where you're always supporting your friends but don't feel like they support you, it might be helpful to talk with them about those feelings so you can strengthen your friendships, or you can decide if it's a friendship you no longer want to be part of.

It sounds like you're concerned for your friend and their relationship, and we're glad that you reached out for support. It might be helpful to talk to your friend about why you're concerned, and encourage them to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 Advocate for safety and support. When anyone makes threats or actually follows through with hurting themselves or others, it is very important to take these threats and actions seriously. Someone threatening to kill their partner or themselves if they end the relationship is one of the [Top 5 Red Flags](#) that increases the risk of a partner in a relationship being seriously hurt or even killed. In a situation where someone is threatening to or has already hurt themselves or someone else, the best thing to do is call 911. We encourage you to talk to a trusted adult such as a school counselor or social worker, a parent or teacher, or a BLOOM365 Advocate for additional support.