



# Elephant in The Room Q & A

Deer Valley High School  
Fall 2019

\*This document can also be accessed at <https://qrco.de/dvhseitr>

### Resources:

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

<p><b>BLOOM365 Advocacy Line and Support Groups</b></p>	<p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support.  <b>Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)</b>  <b>Advocacy Line Hours of Operation:</b>  <b>Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST)</b></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 <a href="https://bloom365.org/peersupport">bloom365.org/peersupport</a> for specific dates and times.</p>
<p><b>Teen Lifeline</b></p>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</p>
<p><b>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</b></p>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p>
<p><b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b></p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<p><b>National Sexual Assault Hotline</b></p>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<p><b>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b></p>	<p>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p>

**Q: Student**

**A: BLOOM365 Advocate**

**Q: The Elephant in the Room is a weird metaphor**

**A:** The phrase “elephant in the room” is commonly used to refer to a topic or question that people may feel uncomfortable talking about or asking. Urban dictionary describes this phrase as a big issue that everyone is aware of, but that nobody really wants to talk about. An elephant in a room would be a pretty big issue to not be aware of, right? We used this phrase because these are serious issues that many teens have questions about but often don’t feel comfortable asking out loud!

**Q: Has every advocate in BLOOM365 gone through abuse or has witnessed abuse? (Including the creator of BLOOM365).**

**A:** 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. However, each and every one of us here at BLOOM365 is passionate about this work and believes that YOUR generation has the ability to UPROOT abuse! In the beginning pages of your workbook, you can read more about Donna Bartos, the founder and executive director of BLOOM36, and her experience with dating abuse.

**Q: I like it**

**A:** We aren’t sure what you’re referring to, but if you’d like to talk to us about it, please reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above!

**Q: Hey; Related Q: I loved this it’s really interesting; Q: I liked the activity of drawing the line; Q: What I learned in class was good; Q: The activity for dose 1 was interesting; Q: This is a good class.**

**A:** Hello! We appreciate all of your #blooming feedback. We hope that everything you learn throughout the Bloom It Up program is helpful for you both now and in the future!

**Q: To validate someone, you said not to help them and just listen, what if they ask you?**

**A:** To help and validate someone, we want to make sure we are listening to them. If we are here only to help someone, we could make the situation worse. We want to listen and provide a supportive and non-judgemental ear because we don’t completely know how they are feeling or what they have gone through. Also, if we start providing help they do not want or need, it can remind them or make them feel as if they lost control of themselves. Since teen dating abuse and other reason why someone may reach out causes someone to lose power, we want to ensure we can give back as much power as we can back to them. However, if they ask for help, ensure you help them to the best you can while respecting their boundaries since they are reaching out for your support and help.

**Q: Chevy or ford? Circle one...**

**A:** ①

**Q: Is a sex slave considered an abusive relationship?**

**A:** Sexual slavery and sexual exploitation are attaching the right of ownership over one or more persons with the intent of coercing or otherwise forcing them to engage in sexual activities. Since sexual slavery and sexual exploitation is non-consensual, it is considered as an abusive relationship.

Consent may look different for everyone, however, consent should look like FRIES:

- **F**reely given. Consenting is a choice you make without pressure, manipulation, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- **R**eversible. Anyone can change their mind about what they feel like doing, anytime. Even if you've done it before, and even if you're both naked in bed.
- **I**nformed. You can only consent to something if you have the full story. For example, if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, there isn't full consent.
- **E**nthusiastic. When it comes to sex, you should only do stuff you WANT to do, not things that you feel you're expected to do.
- **S**pecific. Saying yes to one thing (like going to the bedroom to make out) doesn't mean you've said yes to others (like having sex).

**Q: How would you get out of an abusive relationship if they have you trapped and you can't leave?**

**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, you can have that conversation in a relatively public space like a park, and of course you could always have someone you trust nearby for emotional and safety support for during and after. These types of situations can be difficult for a lot of people. We encourage you to explore the coping strategies we discussed during dose 6 and find one that best suits you. This could be spending more time with friends, or dedicating time to a new hobby or skill.

If you have any questions or need to talk to someone, please reach out to some of the numbers above. You can always reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at 1-888-606-4673.

**Q: I deal with a lot of external/internalized homophobia & I'm terrified of coming out to my parents**

**A:** Thank you for being brave enough to share this with us and reaching out for help. Coming out can be a scary process for many people. You aren't alone in feeling 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. There are many positives to coming out to the people around us. It can let people in your life know about an important part of your life, and help you to feel less alone by allowing you to meet new friends or even finding someone to date. However, there are also some risks to coming out, especially if you worry that your friends and family might not be accepting. The most important thing is for you to stay safe, and know that any negative reactions your friends or parents might have are not your fault – They're about them, not you.

Remember, there isn't one right way to come out, and it's your choice. We encourage you to educate the supportive people in your life on what it means to be apart of the LGBTQ community and the barriers that are faced by people in this community. Coming out may be a process and take time. Some great resources that you may find helpful are the Trevor Project's "[Coming Out As You](#)" guide and "[Coming Out Constellation](#)." 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 to discuss this situation or chat online at bloom365.org for more support.

**Q: Is it easy to be in a relationship or being in a healthy relationship?**

**Related Q: How do you go about having a healthy relationship?**

**A:** There shouldn't be a difference between just a relationship and a healthy relationship. Blooming relationships are built off equality and freedom, where both parties feel equal. When someone loves us, they treat us with kindness, respect, empathy, affection, and so many more great qualities that make us feel cherished. When someone loves us, they are willing to treat us with equality and freedom and not power and control. It is also important to realize that we receive and give love in different manners; some people like hugging and kissing to show love, others might appreciate gifts and actions more. We should understand how we like to receive and how we show love to others. Having a partner that shows love in the same way you like to receive love can be an important aspect of a healthy relationship. Feel free to refer back to the Blooming Flower to see what a healthy relationship looks like.

**Q: What if someone is in a relationship that maybe seems like it's abusive but I am not sure, what should I do?**

**A:** Page 16 in your workbook explores your rights and responsibilities within a relationship. Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. If you determine the relationship is abusive, we should first understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, and insecurity). Think of these barriers as hooks. It's not easy to un-hook them all at once and we understand that it can be difficult to leave an abusive relationship, especially when we have hope that the abuser will change or eventually stop. It's important that we don't blame the victim. In your packet, you can reference the "5 Ways to Help a Friend Going Through Dating Abuse" to start a conversation with the survivor. You can also tear out the extra red flag checklist on page 41 in your workbook and talk to your friend about why you are concerned.

**Q: How can an abuser know they're abusing? Even though they think there's nothing wrong with what they're doing because they were never taught the correct way**

**A:** It can be tough for an abuser to know if they are abusing the people they have relationships with. For them, it may seem normal because that is what they have seen being done at home, in the media, or with their friends. It also may be their first relationship as well.

One tool that the abuser can use if they are ever concerned that the relationship might be unhealthy is by determining if they feel as if their actions are caring or controlling. Do they think that the other person they are in a relationship with feels free and equal in the relationship or are they holding the power over their partner? Another tool that they can use is the Blooming and Wilting diagram that you can find in your workbook. They can also use the red flags checklist [here](#) to see if they may be causing any flags.

If the abuser is willing to see their behavior as abusive, they can make the choice to change that behavior. A counselor, social worker, advocate, or other trusted adult can be there to help if the perpetrator is willing. Ultimately, it is up to the perpetrator to recognize their actions and to make the choice to change their behavior.

**Q: I feel sad a lot but I don't know why**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we appreciate you reaching out for support. Sadness is a natural emotion, and we all feel it at times. Finding ways to care for ourselves can be really helpful. Some examples of self-care include regular sleep, eating healthy, journaling, doing yoga, or do something else you enjoy. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! If you're still struggling with coping, please reach out to a bloom365 Advocate at the number listed above.

**Q: I have had an experience with my ex-bf threatened that he was going to kill himself if I broke up with him (He is good and we're over but he ruined my self-confidence)**

**A:** You are very brave for sharing your story and we want you to know that you are not alone. If someone threatens to kill themselves if you end the relationship, we encourage you to share this information with an adult that you trust as this is one of the red flags that increases your risk of being seriously hurt. If you ever feel threatened, you can also call 911 and ask about an Order of Protection. Because the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when it is about to end, we highly recommend reaching out to a BLOOM365 Advocate for help in creating a safety plan. You can reach our Advocacy Line at the number above. We can also help you explore healthy coping mechanisms, self-care, and ways to boost your self-confidence.

**Q: Nobody loves me. Everyone hates me**

**A:** First off, we want to thank you for being brave enough to reach out for support. You are not alone in feeling this way. A lot of times our society encourages us to focus on the things we don't like about ourselves and things we are insecure about. We encourage you to think about the things that you like about yourself and that make you unique. Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. We recommend watching [this video](#) on daily affirmations. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up self esteem. Some other tips are:

- Surround yourself with positive, supportive people
- Focus on thinking more positively about yourself. Changing the way you think about yourself changes the way you feel about yourself!
- Mistakes are lessons, view them as learning opportunities!
- Don't ever think you are inferior or less than anybody. Nobody is perfect!
- Remind yourself that everyone excels at different things. Focus on what you're good at and what makes YOU unique.
- Try new things and set goals.
- Remember to take care of yourself and spend time doing what makes you happy.

If you'd like additional support or resources, please reach out to our Advocacy Line by texting the number above.

**Q: Hi you're a good speaker!**

**A:** We (Kristina & Avi) were not in the classrooms, but we will be sure to pass along your #blooming compliment!!

**Q: Do you know where I can get in touch with a therapist?**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out to us. Since this is a private matter, we recommend you reach out to one of our Lead Advocates or a trusted adult in your life. School counselors, social workers, teachers, or a family member may be able to connect you with some mental health professionals. If you contact our Advocacy Line on Instagram, on bloom365.org, or at 1-888-606-4673, we will be happy to connect you to a Lead Advocate who may be able to help you get in touch with a therapist.

**Q: You should do more questions with the iclicker**

**A:** We appreciate you sharing your feedback! We use feedback from teens to help ensure our curriculum stays relevant and fun. While the information we discuss is serious, we strive to keep things interactive and definitely not boring. We will take your comment into consideration for future Doses!

**Q: I hate good!**

**A:** We aren't sure what you are saying here. Please feel free to reach out to an advocate at the number above or chat with us online to provide more information!

**Q: It is nice to have found help and that I can now talk to someone that will understand me**

**A:** We are very glad to hear that you've found help and understanding. At BLOOM365, we believe that all people are deserving of healthy, blooming relationships. If you'd like additional support or resources, you can contact our Advocacy Line at the number above for confidential, non-judgmental support.

**Q: I still have a fear of getting hit by another car**

**A:** Although we are unsure of the context of your submission, we understand that it can be frightening and uncomfortable when faced with something that has hurt us in the past. We encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about how you are feeling. A school counselor, social worker, parent, or other family member might be able to help you work through what you're feeling so you're more comfortable doing your daily activities. You could also reach out to a trusted adult, including a BLOOM365 Advocate, for resources on coping with the feelings you're having. You are not alone, and we encourage you to reach out for help if you feel you are struggling.

**Q: Whenever I get yelled at for a small thing, I shut down and think I did something really bad**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that you have experienced this, but are glad you reached out for support. Self-care looks different for everyone, but some examples of healthy coping mechanisms are: Spending time with the people you love, yoga, journaling, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. It's also important to be kind to yourself. 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 weekly, free Peer Support groups, where we often discuss topics like coping and self-esteem. 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. If you are experiencing abuse or believe you may be in danger, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult such as a school social worker, teacher, or an advocate. If you are in immediate danger, please call 9-11.

**Q: A friend of mine was abused by her stepfather. He beat her, her mom, and her little brother even locking them in cages at times. After 10 months we told DCS who did nothing other than question her. He is still in the house and I want him gone. I am not sure what to do**

**A:** First and foremost, we want to thank you for being brave enough to share this with us. We are sorry to hear that your friend had this experience, and want your friend to know that it was NOT their fault! Nobody deserves to be abused, and it is NEVER the victim's fault. It's unfortunate that people are not educated about these issues. At BLOOM365, we are working to train trusted adult allies so that adults and people who interact with youth know how to respond and provide unbiased guidance, support and safety to youth who disclose experiencing or witnessing verbal, physical or sexual violence.

We encourage you to talk with a trusted adult, friend, or a BLOOM365 advocate about your experience. We also encourage your friend to talk to a trusted adult when they are ready, so that they can begin the healing process and remain safe. After experiencing abuse, talking can be a step towards rebuilding trust within yourself and in others. Recovery can be a slow and an individual process. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. Some examples of healthy ways to cope include: 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 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, weekly Peer Support groups, which provide 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. If someone is in immediate danger, we always recommend calling 911.

**Q: When I was 11 I was almost raped by a 14 year old dude at a hotel room. I didn't know what to do, I didn't tell him to stop. I don't know why. I guess it is because I didn't know what to do and when I was younger I didn't want to be "that person." I am not going to go into what happened, but that is where most of my problems started. Then I had my first relationship I was in the 7th grade. But I don't consider him a bf because he stopped talking to me and our relationship was really only on text. And I only texted him first. So when I went to break up with him it turns out he was going to break up with me on the same day, and he told a lot of people. Then near to end of 7th another guy asked me out but I said no (I will think about it). He did drugs and told a lot of people about me. He stopped hanging out with me because I got annoyed that his sister kept prank calling me. Then in 8th grade there was another guy who was just like the 2 guys before him. The last guy was like the other guys combined. But he is dating someone else now, which is my friend. And whenever he sees me, he will say something rude with his friends. These aren't very big but this is where I get my PTSD, depression. I started hurting myself too but the thing is, I'm not suicidal. I just have so much stress. I want to date someone but when someone comes up to me I get scared.**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are thankful that you are reaching out for support. We also want you to know that none of what you have experienced is your fault. We encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 Advocate to discuss the situation and ensure you receive the support you need. You can also contact the National Sexual Assault Hotline at the number listed above.

Self-harm is sometimes used as a coping skill. It might be helpful to identify healthy coping mechanisms and forms of self-care that you can do instead when you have those thoughts or urges. Finding healthy ways to cope with traumatic experiences is so important. For example: spending time with people you love, joining a new sports team or team or club, or simply going for a walk or spending time in nature are all healthy ways to cope. It's also important to give yourself time to process your feelings and emotions. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. Some people find it helpful to talk to trusted friends or family members or engage in healing arts like painting or yoga. Other coping mechanisms include: going for a walk or listening to music. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed!

Although we do not specifically work with teens with depression or experiencing suicidal ideation, we are always here to listen! We do work alongside a few organizations that specifically help youth experiencing depression and suicide, including Suicide Prevention Lifeline. You can contact them at 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You can always reach a BLOOM365 advocate by texting or calling the number above for a listening ear or if you would like additional resources.

**Q: Hey Courtney, where did you get that cute "EqualTY" rainbow sticker that is on your laptop?**

**A:** All of our BLOOM365 Merchandise can be found at our Blooming Point office, some items can be purchased and other items are free! We also often carry prizes, stickers, and other merchandise at our tabling events and give them out as prizes for spinning our prize wheel, so make sure to stop by a BLOOM365 table if you see us at an event! If you're interested in getting a specific item, you can ask one of our Advocates in the classroom if they are able to bring one into class for you or help you purchase the item you're interested in. For more information, feel free to reach out to our Advocacy Line and we can assist with your individual request.

**Q: Hi there random person scrolling through the Elephant in the Room cards, have a nice day. :)**

**A:** Hello! Thank you for your kind words!! I hope you have a nice day, too :) -Kristina

**Q: Bruh, what a liberal. This class is epic, comrade. Cheers to communism**

**A:** We are unsure what you're saying here. Feel free to reach out to our Advocacy Line to clarify.

**Q: I enjoy you guys coming; Similar Q: You guys are doing great at your job keep up the good work; Q: Hey, just saying that I appreciate what you're doing and thank you <3; Q: Good Afternoon**

**A:** Hello! Thank you for your #blooming feedback! We enjoy being in your school! 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/peeradvocatecrew](http://www.bloom365.org/peeradvocatecrew). To get involved or for more information, please email [kathryn@bloom365.org](mailto:kathryn@bloom365.org).

**Q: Again I like that I now have someone to talk to about my problems. Although I kinda wish that when I text them I would get one person, not just transfer between people. And in the circle I took a step for most norms. I liked the activity. But if like I am proud of myself, because even though most of those things happened to me I still keep a good attitude :)**



**A:** Thank you for sharing your feedback with us! We (Kristina & Avi) are currently the only two Advocates who run the Advocacy Line, therefore we share our work and work in shifts. However, you always have the option of requesting to speak directly to one of us or to get in contact with a specific Advocate, if you'd like. Also, we are very glad to hear that you liked the activity and that you keep a positive attitude! We are proud of you, too. If you'd like additional support or to speak to an Advocate, feel free to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above.

**Q: I just got broken up with. It really hurts**

**A:** We want you to know that we are here for you. When you love someone in any kind of relationship, they usually become very integrated into your life. You spend time with them, they help you do things, they solve problems, and they just exist along with you. Losing someone you had a good connection with can be very painful, especially if we have known that person for a really long time and if we had a history with them. While ending a close relationship can be tough, it can be a great time for self-evaluation and growth. 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. It's also important to take care of yourself both mentally and emotionally. Eating healthy foods, taking a bath, taking a break-- however self-care looks for you, it's important you listen to your body. 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! 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: I have 450+ wins in Fortnite Battle Royale. :)**

**A:** That is awesome and we are super happy for you!

**Q: Do you have any advice for someone who is insecure?**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad you reached out for support. Building good self-esteem can take a long time and is not always easy. But, knowing that you want to learn how you can improve is the first step. Our self-esteem is based on 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. Once you're aware of that, and know that the way you think is up to you, you can begin to change the way you think. Changing the way you think about yourself changes the way you feel about yourself.

A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. One way we can stop this is by trying to encourage ourselves to take a moment every day to remember the things we love about ourselves (our strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down as well and having them easily accessible can help build our confidence. You can also watch [this video](#) on daily affirmations. Doing our own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make us happy can be helpful tools in building up our self-esteem. 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: My aunt is in a (bad?) dangerous relationship. Where can I find the 7 Doses for adults like her?**

**A:** In your workbook on page 20 or on [our website](#), you can find a “How to Help a Friend” list, as well as a Red Flags Checklist and some other helpful resources. It’s important that we first understand the barriers to leaving an abusive relationship (fear, love, dependency, and insecurity). It’s also important that we don’t blame the victim. The “Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend” can be a helpful way to start the conversation with your aunt about why you are concerned. We cannot make people get help if they do not want to, but we can do everything in our power to help our friends or family members feel supported. If your aunt is 24 or under, you could give them our Advocacy Line number if they need someone to talk to or help creating a safety plan. If they are over 24, you might consider giving them the number to the Domestic Violence Hotline (listed above). Sometimes people are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let them 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. If you recognize the top 5 risk factors on the Red Flags List, it's important to tell an adult you trust because this means that your family member could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. If you need additional support or resources, please don’t hesitate to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above.

**Q: I have this urge to cut but I can’t and I’m scared that I might do something I’ll regret. I just really hate myself and I don’t feel like I’m able to trust my peers. I was sent to a hospital and my parents treat me like I’m fragile which I hate. I also have pure hatred against one student and I 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 mechanism. 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, doing yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free weekly support groups, where teens can get information and resources on self-care, depression, self-esteem, and many other topics. If you’re struggling with finding effective coping tools or would like to talk more about this, please feel free to text or call our Advocacy Line at the number above! If you simply are needing an empathetic ear or are looking for mental health resources for yourself or a friend/family member, please send the text! You are never alone and we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult such as a school counselor, a teacher, a family member, or a BLOOM365 Advocate if you are experiencing depressive, suicidal, or violent thoughts. Teen Lifeline is also a great local organization that specifically works with youth experiencing depression. You can reach them at the number above.

**Q: A guy who sits next to me in one of my classes always hits me and tries to touch me even though I have told him several times to stop and threatens to expose me and make lies about me and he said he would hurt me if I told anyone**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that you are experiencing this, and we are thankful you reached out for support. No one should ever feel uncomfortable or unsafe at school. We encourage you to speak to your teacher or a trusted adult on your campus to see how they might be able to support you and address this

situation. If you would like an advocate to assist you, please feel free to text/call the number above. We are here for you.

**Q: I have a lot of panic attacks but I don't really know how to prevent some of them**

**A:** Unfortunately this is outside of our speciality. However, we'd be happy to help connect you to the appropriate resources, and we want you to know that you are not alone. Please feel free to text/call our advocacy line to discuss your situation further.

**Q: (I can do this anonymously right?) Growing up my stepdad was abusive and I'm pretty sure I have some PTSD from it because some songs he used to like are triggering and make me cry and I don't know how to cope with it and it's changed me and made me more reserved in ways I don't like and I really want to change but I'm scared I'm gonna get hurt**

**A:** You always have the option of remaining anonymous or leaving your information when submitting EITR Cards or contacting our Advocacy Line. We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are happy that you have reached out for support. What you have experienced is not your fault. Experiencing abuse can emotionally and physically impact a person, and it's important that this is dealt with properly to help the survivor move forward. Although it can take time, learning to cope and heal is absolutely possible. The healing journey is different for everyone. We highly encourage you to text or call our Advocacy Line to discuss your situation and the steps you can take to begin healing.

**Q: I still cry about my dead dog**

**A:** Losing a pet is a very difficult experience. We understand how painful it can be, and we want you to know that you are not alone. We recommend using the coping strategies provided in your workbook in Dose 5. While general sadness following a significant loss is to be expected, symptoms of depression could be a cause for concern. If you notice the following warning signs/symptoms present for more than two weeks for most of the day everyday, this may be a result of depression: Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed, withdrawal from friends/family, changes in appetite/weight, preoccupation with death/dying, difficulty concentrating in school, feeling tired or irritable, and sleeping too little or too much. If you believe you might be depressed, we highly recommend you reach out to a trusted adult, a BLOOM365 Advocate, or your school social worker for support. A BLOOM365 Advocate can help connect you with resources and provide free, confidential support. You can also call Teen Lifeline at the number above.

**Q: The gender wage gap doesn't exist**

**A:** The gender pay gap is the gap between what men and women are paid. Most commonly, it refers to the median annual pay of all women who work full time and year-round, compared to the pay of a similar cohort of men. There are many different ways that groups have done studies on the gender pay gap. The [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) found that "in 2018, women who were full-time wage and salary workers had median weekly earnings of \$789. That was 81.1 percent of the \$973 median for men who were full-time wage and salary workers." A [PayScale](#) report found that women still make only \$0.79 for each dollar men make in 2019. They also found that when men and women with the same employment characteristics who do similar jobs, women are still paid two percent less.

We invite you to complete your own research to come to your own conclusion.

**Q: I identify as an attack helicopter**

**Similar Q: Is it possible to identify as an attack helicopter?**

**A:** The thing about gender is that it's totally personal to you, so no matter what you say your gender is, you are right. You can't be wrong. Being non-binary isn't as difficult or complicated as it might seem. It may be hard to think outside of the box that society constructed, but ultimately, non-binary is a term that is welcoming and accepting of whatever you need for it to mean to you. It's something you can create for yourself. I welcome you to learn about the non-binary identity, and try to understand how the people in our own lives identify. It helps us to become more supportive friends, partners, family members, and human beings.

**Q: I want to come out to my dad but I'm scared**

**A:** Coming out can be a scary process for many people. You aren't alone in feeling 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. There are many positives to coming out to the people around us. It can let people in your life know about an important part of your life, and help you to feel less alone by allowing you to meet new friends or even finding someone to date. However, there are also some risks to coming out, especially if you worry that your friends and family might not be accepting. We encourage you to check out the Trevor Project's ["Coming Out As You"](#) resource that can help you navigate your own coming out experience in a safe, thoughtful way. Remember, everyone's experience is unique! You can also reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above to talk with an advocate about what you're feeling and experiencing.

**Q: I think toxic masculinity should be touched on more/(on Mon?)**

**A:** We are unsure if you're saying you'd like this topic touched on more, or on Monday, but either way, we really appreciate your feedback! Our goal with Dose 3 is to shed light on the unhealthy gender norms that are ingrained in our culture and how rigid beliefs in these norms is something that puts someone at a higher risk for having power and control in their relationship. While there is nothing wrong with being masculine, hyper-masculinity becomes an issue when it causes the hyper-masculine partner to hold an unequal amount of power in the relationship, which can lead to unhealthy relationship stemmed in power and control. Hyper-masculinity is "The exaggeration of stereotypical male behavior with an emphasis on strength, sexuality, and aggression." While dating abuse is experienced by girls and young women at higher rates, boys and young men do experience abuse as well. Almost 50% of Arizona teens who have experienced dating abuse have said that they never reported it. Sometimes due to the stigmas surrounding gender norms, young boys and men don't feel comfortable reaching out for support because they fear they're be told to "tough it out" or "be a man." Abuse DOES NOT make any person less of a man or a human being, and we encourage all victims of abuse to seek support from a trusted adult or BLOOM365 Advocate. If you'd like to discuss this further or if you have any questions, we encourage you to ask an Advocate in class, or you can reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above for free, confidential support.

**Q: I think I need help. I don't know how else to say it. I mean I started cutting myself again. I started in 8th grade then I stopped. It started again after a dude who liked me, he told me to watch porn, called**

**my best friend \*\*\*\*\* (this very much hurt me after what happened to me), talked inappropriately about me, and claimed he loved me. After/because of him I started cutting myself. Why do most bad things happen to me because of guys?! Then it just leads me to hate my body, myself, everything about me, I know that people have it harder than me but does that mean I shouldn't cry, I shouldn't be very depressed. And then that just leaves me to cut myself. Why?**

**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, doing yoga, taking a bath, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free weekly support groups. If you're struggling with finding effective coping tools or would like to talk more about this, please feel free to text or call our Advocacy Line at the number above! If you simply are needing an empathetic ear or are looking for mental health resources for yourself or a friend/family member, please make the call! You are never alone and we encourage you to reach out if you are experiencing suicidal or depressive thoughts. Teen Lifeline is also a great local organization that specifically works with youth experiencing depression. You can reach them at the number above.

**Q: Established where more power comes from males & girls can then feel underpowered & Rose established all this very well.**

**A:** We appreciate your #blooming feedback! In society, boys and men are often taught to be more aggressive and/or violent because of Unhealthy Gender Norms. Times are changing, and we have hope that future generations are able to change the norm. Women are vastly more likely to be seriously hurt or killed in abusive scenarios, which is why a lot of the examples we chose show women as the survivors and men as the perpetrators. While dating abuse is experienced by girls and young women at higher rates, boys and young men do experience abuse as well. Almost 50% of Arizona teens who have experienced dating abuse have said that they never reported it. Sometimes due to the stigmas surrounding gender norms, young boys and men don't feel comfortable reaching out for support because they fear they're be told to "tough it out" or "be a man." Abuse DOES NOT make any person less of a man or a human being, and we encourage all victims of abuse to seek support from a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate. Legally, both men and women are treated equally when they are victims of these crimes.

**Q: I'm always mentally tired and I hate people and school**

**A:** We are sorry that you are feeling that way. We understand how overwhelming it can be when we have a lot going on. Things like school, sports, and other responsibilities can take a lot of our time and energy. It's important to remember to take care of your mental health, as well as your physical health. Some self-care activities may include: Taking a bubble bath, listening to soothing music, reading, writing in a journal, taking a nap, taking a walk or spending time in nature. These are just a few, but you can take some time to find what works for you. We also encourage you to spend time with positive people in your life. Spending time with people and doing the things we love can help us to create lasting memories and positive experiences. When and if you feel comfortable reaching out to someone, please know that anonymous support is also available if you text a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**Q: My girlfriend endured abuse her whole life. Sometimes things are great, other times she is cold, distant, and cut off... I hate her stepdad**

**A:** It can be very difficult to watch someone you know as a victim in unhealthy or abusive relationships, and we understand wanting to help them. There are some ways you can help if you choose to. For one, you can serve as a supportive person in their life. Let them know that you are there for them. You can also find ways to spend time alone with them doing activities you both enjoy. If you feel comfortable, you can give them the number to a BLOOM365 Advocate. Don't be discouraged if they are not ready to reach out. Remember the importance of not blaming the victim and understand it can be very difficult to cope with daily stressors while simultaneously enduring abuse at home or elsewhere. You can continue to let them know you are there for them, and that the Advocacy Line is available whenever they are ready to make the call. We also encourage you to reach out to an advocate yourself, as we would like to talk with you more about this situation. If you fear for the safety of your friend, it is crucial that you reach out to a trusted adult as soon as you are comfortable doing so.

**Q: Last year I was in a relationship with someone who didn't treat me well at all. He would never pay any attention to me and when he did he never really spent any quality time with me. I would always try to talk to him and he either ignored me or told me how I always have the wrong opinion/answer, tell me how weird my hair looks, etc.. Until this day, I haven't been confident in myself and have had low self-esteem. I have thought about what it would have been like to attempt suicide but I have never tried to do so.**

**A:** Thank you for sharing your story with us. We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are very glad that you reached out for support. It is never easy ending a relationship that one sided and or toxic. It is important to remember 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, practicing yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk are all great ways to cope with difficult feelings or experiences. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds.

Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift your 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. You might also find it helpful to watch [this video](#) on daily affirmations. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up your self esteem. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! If you're still struggling with coping, please reach out to a Bloom Advocate at the number listed above. You can also reach out to Teen Lifeline, as they specifically work with teens experiencing depression or suicidal thoughts. You are not alone, and support is available when you are ready.

**Q: At the beginning of my last relationship it was really good and then he started using me for what he wanted but I wanted to go back because I still liked him**

**A:** Thank you for sharing your story with us, and we want you to know that you are not alone. BLOOM365 believes that everyone is deserving of healthy, safe, blooming relationships. We recognize how difficult it can be to leave an unhealthy or abusive relationship. If you'd like to talk more about your situation, we encourage you to reach out to an Advocate at the number above for free, confidential support.

**Q: How does one stop homophobia?**

**A:** BLOOM365 believes that every person deserves to have healthy and safe relationships. We believe in equality for all people regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or anything else. If you see or hear someone being homophobic and if you feel safe to do so, you could intervene in whichever way you see fit (direct, distract, delay, etc.). How one goes about stopping homophobia will probably vary by situation. If you'd like to talk more about this or a specific situation, we encourage you to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above.

**Q: My brother and his GF have been pressuring me into getting a BF. Especially with someone I don't like in that way. I have told them multiple times to stop because I don't appreciate it, but they don't listen. Any ideas on how I can make them stop or tell them I'm not ready?**

**A:** No one should pressure anyone else into doing anything that they don't want to do. In Dose 5, we discussed the "I" statement method for facilitating healthy, effective communication and conflict resolution. Using "I" statements can be helpful in communicating our feelings and allowing the other person to empathize with us. This also can help prevent them from feeling like they are being attacked, which often results in a negative or defensive reaction. We recommend using the format: I feel \_\_\_\_ (emotion) when \_\_\_\_\_ (describe situation), can we please \_\_\_\_\_ (resolution)? This style of conflict resolution allows you to take ownership of your own feelings, allowing the other person to understand your perspective of the situation without feeling directly attacked. If they continue to pressure you, it might be helpful to talk to a trusted adult in your life so they can intervene. Please know that BLOOM365 Advocates are here to support you. If you need additional support or resources, feel free to contact our line at the number above.

**Q: Communism rules suck it liberals**

**A:** Everyone is entitled to their own views/opinions, and we encourage you to respect others and their opinions or views, as well. If you'd like to talk more, feel free to text or chat us at the number above.

**Q: Enjoy your day, bloom365 advocates!**

**A:** Thank you for your #blooming message! We hope you enjoy your day, as well!!

**Q: Thank you... you have help me I have been through a lot. I wanted to talk and just cry. I've been holding a lot of pain inside. Now I am better. I won't ever let someone touch me and bring me down. I am strong now, once again thank you.**

**A:** Thank you for sharing with us, and we are very glad to hear that we have been able to help you! 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! If you'd like to talk about any of your experiences, feel free to reach out to our Advocacy Line at the number above for additional support or resources.

**Q: You are beautiful. Never let others make you think otherwise :) <3**

**A:** Thank you for sharing your kind message with us! Keep on #blooming :)

**Q: I didn't realize how big of a problem sexual harassment is, but I'm glad I know now.**

**A:** Many people are not aware of how significant of an issue these things are, and it can often be considered a "taboo" subject because it's not always comfortable to talk about. At BLOOM365, we hope to change that. By sharing what you have learned and being a positive role model for younger generations, you have the opportunity to be someone who creates real change in society! If you have any questions or want to talk more about what you've learned, you can connect with an Advocate at the number above for free, confidential support.

**Q: not having much fun :(**

**A:** We apologize that you had this experience. We strive to make each dose fun and interactive. However, student participation is crucial in order for that to be possible! We welcome your suggestions for how we can make our curriculum more teen-centered and fun while still remaining educational. Feel free to send us a text or chat with us online!

**Q: I hate this girl.**

**A:** We understand that it can sometimes be difficult to deal with people that we don't like very much. If you'd like to talk more about your situation, you can reach an Advocate at the number above for free, confidential support. We are here for you.

**Q: What if you know someone that does stuff just because she doesn't want to lose the guy what should you do, or tell that person so you can help her? And what if you told your friend that it's not the right thing to do but they don't wanna listen to you because they think you're wrong and they don't care about what other people say. And also the guy she is with tells her everything that she should wear and stuff.**

**A:** We are glad you reached out for support, and we want you to know that you are not alone. During the Bloom It Up program, we explored the many barriers to leaving an unhealthy or abusive relationship (things like fear, love, dependency, and insecurity). It's also important that we don't blame the victim. In your workbook or on [our website](#), you can reference the "How to Help a Friend" list to start a conversation with your friend about your concerns. You can also tear out the extra red flag checklist in your workbook and talk to your friend about why you are concerned, being really mindful to come from a place of support and not judgement. You can encourage them to reach out to BLOOM365, but recognize that we cannot force someone to seek help or leave if they are not yet ready. If you are seriously concerned for their safety, or if you recognize the top 5 risk factors on the [red flags checklist](#), we encourage you to tell a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate because this means that your friend could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. If you'd like additional support, you can reach out to us on our Advocacy Line at the number above. We are here for you!



**Q: If someone is sexually assaulted, will they really never be able to recover? Will they ever be able to lead a normal life?**

**A:** If someone is sexually assaulted, they have experienced trauma. Trauma affects everyone differently. The effect of what they experienced from trauma can surface immediately following the assault or arise years after the attack. Due to this, recovery and the impact on trauma is different for everyone. However, recovery from sexual assault takes time, and the healing process can be painful. But survivors and victims can regain their sense of control, rebuild their self-worth, and learn to heal which can help to refine a normal sense of life. If you want to learn more about sexual assault recovery, I recommend [this website](#).

**Q: My mom has been treating me really bad lately. My friend abused me yesterday. I am not in a good mental state right now, never have been.**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we appreciate you reaching out for support. Everything you have experienced is not your fault. If you are currently experiencing abuse, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 Advocate to ensure your safety. If you feel that you are in immediate danger, we encourage you to call 911. If you have been physically abused in the past, you can contact BLOOM365 at 1-888-606-HOPE(4673) and we will connect you with someone who can assist you in taking the necessary steps in your situation. We can also provide you with additional resources, information, and support. If your mom is not a threat to you, communication is very important. If you refer to the 'I feel...' statements in Dose 6, these are a great way to communicate to express your concerns and identify the power and control within the relationship. This can help take away the confrontational stance and allow your mom to empathize with you. If you are experiencing extreme distress or suicidal thoughts, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult in your life, such as a teacher, family member, the school social worker, or a BLOOM365 Advocate for support. Our Advocacy Line is open Monday-Friday from 3-9 PM (MST) and we are always here to offer free, confidential, non-judgmental support.