



# Elephant in The Room Q & A

Sahuaro Ranch Elementary  
Spring 2022

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

### Resources:

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

<p><b>BLOOM365 HelpLine</b></p>	<p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support.  <b>Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)</b>  <b>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><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  <a href="http://www.thehotline.org">www.thehotline.org</a>  <b>1-866-331-9474</b></p>
<p><b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b></p>	<p><b>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</b></p>
<p><b>National Sexual Assault Hotline</b></p>	<p><b>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</b></p>
<p><b>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b></p>	<p><b>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</b></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: What if I love them too much to leave?**

**A:** You are the expert in your own life, so only you can make that decision. If you are not receiving the type of love you would like, you can think about whether or not this is a relationship you want to be in. It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you determine whether this relationship is healthy or unhealthy. If the relationship is built off of power & control and we are not able to make changes by communicating in a healthy way with our partner using “I statements,” we may consider whether this relationship is one that we want to continue. It might be helpful to create a safety plan with a BLOOM365 Advocate or another trusted adult before having that conversation so that you’re prepared with information, resources and support going into it.

Another tool that can help you to determine if you want to end the relationship is the [red flags checklist](#). Be sure to pay extra attention to the bottom 5 red flags-- if one or more of these is occurring, the situation has a greater chance of becoming dangerous and we strongly encourage you to reach out for support. Our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear whenever you need it. You can reach out to us by **phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org**, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST). There is also additional 24/7 support available, such as the National Teen Dating Violence Hotline that you can reach by **calling 1-866-331-9474, Texting “LOVEIS” to 22522 or through online chat at [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)**.

**Q: Old best friend from here & another from my old school sorta hit me– both moved though– they also said things like “your parents don’t love you” to make me feel bad which is far from true**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that you were being hurt. You deserve to be safe physically and emotionally. We appreciate you being able to talk about this and reaching out to us. If you’d like additional support, feel free to call/text a BLOOM365 Advocate at 888-606-4673 or through online chat at [bloom365.org](http://bloom365.org). We are here for you!

**Q: Do I have to have parental consent to text the helpline? Someone that is abusive has my address, what do I do?**

**A:** We do not require parental consent to text BLOOM365’s HelpLine, as our HelpLine is anonymous (unless you leave us your contact information). However, your parents or caregivers might want to know if you’re texting a new number, so we encourage you to keep your parents/caregivers informed if that’s what you normally do. If you or your parents/caregivers have any additional questions about the HelpLine or any BLOOM365 services, feel free to contact [kristina@bloom365.org](mailto:kristina@bloom365.org) or the BLOOM365 HelpLine directly at 888-606-4673 (Ext. 1).

If someone that is abusive has your address and you feel concerned for your safety, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about what's going on. It might also be helpful to create a safety plan to be sure that you stay safe if this person does something to make you feel unsafe. To create a safety plan or to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine by calling/texting 888-606-4673 or through online chat at [bloom365.org](http://bloom365.org).

**Q: Is someone able to use your own emotions, actions, or words against you?**

**A:** While we wish that people could not use our own emotions, actions, or words against us, unfortunately, sometimes it does happen. We cannot control what people say about us, so it is important that you take care of yourself. Finding ways to cope with these situations can be really helpful. For example: spending time with the people you love, joining a new sports team or club, spending time in nature, or simply going for a walk can help us process big situations and emotions. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. 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 need additional support, please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the HelpLine number listed above.

**Q: How big is the organization (as in how many people)**

**A:** The BLOOM365 team is made up of about 30 people, including staff, interns, and Lead Peer Advocates! We also have partner organizations that are part of BLOOM365 in some other states around the U.S. For more information on BLOOM365 and our origins, check out [our story](#).

**Q: If someone has neglected you, abused you, or assaulted you but has stopped for a long time, should you still report it?**

**A:** Thank you for entrusting us with such a vulnerable experience. We are so sorry that you have had to go through that. What you decide to do with this information and experience is up to you. However, we do encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about your experience so that you remain safe going forward, and so that you can heal from and process those previous experiences. If you have any additional questions or want to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above for free, confidential, non-judgmental support. We are here for you!

**Q: Sometimes when I'm with my friend I feel like I'm unwanted or they don't actually like me and I don't like telling my emotions**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that you are feeling this way with your friends. It can feel very difficult to talk about our emotions to other people, even those that we feel close to. It might be helpful to practice how to cope with those intense feelings when they come up. This can look like writing in a journal, doing yoga or another activity to move our bodies, or simply going for a walk. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. Depending on how comfortable you feel, you could try to talk to your friends about your feelings. They might not know how you are feeling, and they could be ready to support you once they do know. If you would like to talk more about this, our bloom365 advocates are available by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at [bloom365.org](http://bloom365.org), Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: I keep relapsing and idk how to stop hurting myself! How can I stop?**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out and asking for support in navigating this. Recovery from self-harm is a journey and sometimes relapses happen. 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, drawing or scribbling on paper, spending time outside, or trying a breathing exercise. There are also some [helpful alternatives](#) to self-harm that could be worth trying. If you're struggling with finding effective coping tools or would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number above! Even if you simply are needing an empathetic ear or are looking for mental health resources, please make the call or send us a text! Another great resource for support is the [Crisis Text Line](#)— you can text “HELLO” to 741741 for 24/7 support. You are never alone and we encourage you to reach out if you are struggling.

**Q: My best friend is ignoring me how do I fix that**

**A:** It can feel very confusing when we are in conflict with someone and you haven't had the chance to talk it out. Unfortunately, there's no one easy “fix” to this, and we can't force anyone to talk to us if they don't want to. It could be helpful to reach out to your friend and ask if they are open to talking to you about why they are ignoring you. If they are open to talking with you, using “I” statements is a good tool for addressing conflict in a healthy and productive way. This can look like saying something like, “I feel sad when you ignore me. Can we talk about what's wrong?” rather than saying something like, “Why are you ignoring me?”

This style of conflict resolution 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. This prevents them from feeling like they need to defend themselves and allows for more effective communication. Navigating conflict with our friends can be hard; if you'd like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to support you. You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: What do you do when you have two deal makers but a really bad deal breaker? How do you make that decision?**

**A:** Ultimately, it is your decision how you would like to respond to this deal-breaker. It could be helpful to take a look at the [blooming and wilting flowers](#) to help you determine what an unhealthy and healthy relationship looks like. There's also a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship that you can find in your workbook (in Dose 2). Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power in the relationship, freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. If any deal-breakers seem to interfere with your rights and responsibilities within relationships, you may want to consider if that deal-breaker is one to ignore. If you would like to talk more about this, our bloom365 advocates are here to listen and support you. You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: What do we do if they are moving a little too fast?**

**A:** You are the expert in your life, so how you handle this situation is your decision to make. It's important that we communicate our boundaries within our relationships so that we're on the same page with others when it comes to what we are and are not comfortable with. One way to communicate our boundaries and feelings in a healthy way is to use "I" statements. This can look like saying something like, "I feel that we are moving too fast, I would like to slow down in our relationship." If you would like to talk more about this, our bloom365 advocates are available by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: If someone is going through the loss of a close one and people are pressuring this person to hurry and move on is that a red flag?**

**A:** Losing someone close to us is a devastating event that can take some time to grieve and move on from. It is a process that does not have a timeline. While there are common red flags that we all can use to help us in navigating our relationships, there are some red flags that can be personal to us. It is ultimately up to you if that type of pressure is a red flag to you. If you would like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to offer any support you may need. Feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

**Q: How do you solve loneliness?**

**A:** This is a great question! Loneliness affects all of us at one point or another. Unfortunately, there is no one, magic cure-all for loneliness—but, we can offer a few suggestions for coping with those feelings when they come up. Depending on your interests, it might be helpful to try being more involved with groups or communities that have similar interests as you. For example, if you're into anime or manga, you could look into joining a manga club at a local library or another site that hosts anime meet-ups. You could also check out online communities relating to things you're interested in, such as a virtual yoga class for teens. If you're interested, you could also get involved with or start a new club on your campus—even a BLOOM365 PAC!

Some tips for coping with the emotions that accompany loneliness could include spending time doing things that make you feel happy and fulfilled by yourself—such as taking a bath, spending time with our pets, reading a book, or creating something artistically (drawing, painting, etc.). If you find that these feelings are too big to manage alone, we encourage you to reach out for support. BLOOM365's HelpLine and Peer Support Groups are great resources for navigating feelings of loneliness. For additional support or information, feel free to give us a text/call at the HelpLine number listed above. We are here for you!

**Q: How can I get more motivation?**

**A:** This topic is a bit outside of our area of expertise, but we can offer some resources that might be helpful in finding ways to increase motivation.

[KidsHealth.org](https://kidshealth.org) has great information for teens looking to increase their motivation.

[HealthDirect.gov.au](https://healthdirect.gov.au) has helpful tips to get started and stay motivated.

[Harvard Business Review](https://hbr.org) also offers some ideas for staying motivated.

For additional resources or information, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

**Q: What if you're too afraid to show sadness?**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out for support. It can be difficult to express our emotions for so many reasons, especially if we're not used to it. It might be helpful to try writing out how you feel before trying to verbalize it to help you ease into expressing big emotions, like sadness. Sometimes when we bottle up those big emotions, they can wear us down over time and make it harder to cope with other difficult emotions. It's important to take time for self-care so that we can be the best version of ourselves for us, and also for those important people in our lives. Self-care activities can include spending time with people you love and people that make you happy, spending time in nature, or writing down your thoughts and feelings in a journal or something similar. How you choose to self-care is up to you, but it's super important! If you'd like to talk more about this, feel free to text a BLOOM365 Advocate at 888-606-4673. We are here for you!

**Q: I want to leave I feel like crying**

**A:** We want you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad that you reached out for support. We recognize that this material can be difficult to talk about and can be triggering when you have experienced these things. We encourage you to do whatever you need to do to take care of yourself. That might include stepping out of the classroom, putting your head down, or practicing some other form of self-care. Please know that our advocates are always available to talk and we'd be happy to meet or talk with you if you need support. Additionally, we encourage you to get involved in one of our weekly support groups. Our support groups provide teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others. Finding ways to cope can also be really helpful. For example: spending time with the people you love, doing yoga, joining a new sports team or club, spending time in nature, or simply going for a walk can help us through the healing process. 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 need additional support and/or guidance on coping, please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number listed above.

**Q: Why is it so hard to speak up?**

**A:** It can feel scary to speak up, especially when it's something really big or personal. It is normal to feel scared or anxious when you feel like you have to speak up about something. Learning how to speak up can be a skill that takes time and practice to feel more comfortable doing. It is important that we speak up for ourselves and for others when we can. With more practice, it might still feel hard to speak up, but it will also start to feel easier and more second nature to do so!

**Q: Why do girls have to be a certain way when the boys sexualize them?**

**A:** This is a good example of the impact of unhealthy gender norms. Unhealthy gender norms are very common in our society. This idea goes back many years, and historically it has been passed from generation to generation. An unhealthy gender norm is a rule or belief about how certain genders should behave. These are unhealthy because people who do not follow norms may be ridiculed or made fun of. We know that rigid belief in unhealthy gender norms contributes to power and control in our society and our relationships. While it is uncomfortable when we encounter unhealthy gender norms, when we

engage in productive conversations around this topic we can break down some of the stigma and barriers. Together we can work together for justice and equity!

**Q: I am tired because I was on my phone until 12**

**A:** We understand that there are so many things to do and things happening on our phones that it can feel hard to step away from it. Getting enough sleep, especially as a younger person, is important for physical health, emotional well-being, and academic performance (Sleep Foundation, 2021). Our phones can definitely have an impact on our ability to get a good night's rest. The Sleep Foundations offers a few tips for getting a better night's sleep, which include: creating a consistent night time routine, putting away electronic devices a half hour before bed, and setting up a nice and cozy bed. We hope you are able to get a good night's rest soon!

**Q: Why do we have to talk about abuse?**

**A:** This is a very important question! We talk about abuse because unfortunately, it is a common experience for a lot of people. 1 in 3 young people will experience abusive relationships. Even if we have not experienced abuse, we may know someone close to us who has - this could be a friend, family, or community member. When we talk about abuse, we are able to address the stigma around it that may make it hard for people to receive the support or help they need. Talking about abuse can feel hard and uncomfortable at times but when we engage in productive conversations about it, we can work together to end abuse!

**Q: Nothing that huge. I just wanted to say I absolutely love what you're doing and how you guys have really no idea who answered what and just how professional you guys keep it**

**A:** Thank you for such kind feedback! We really appreciate it! :)

**Q: If you want to marry someone and if you propose and they say yes why do you need consent from the father**

**A:** The expectation to get consent from someone's father to marry them is a complex one. Some people find it a sign of respect, while others may feel uncomfortable and find that expectation to be toxic. Being curious about where these expectations come from and asking questions is great because it helps us figure out if those expectations work for us or if they don't. Thank you for asking this question!

**Q: Do y'all ever deal with what y'all teaching us?**

**A:** Everyone who works at bloom365 has their own unique experiences. There are some people who have personal experience with the topics we teach and there are some who know others who have experienced abuse or unhealthy/toxic relationships. No matter our experiences, we all work together to end abuse and give people the tools to feel empowered within their life and relationships!

**Q: When it comes to gender norms, can't they be toxic?**

**A:** Gender norms can be unhealthy and sometimes toxic. Some examples of unhealthy gender norms are the idea that women should stay home and raise kids or have long hair, and that men should be the "breadwinners" and be the "tough" ones in relationships. These are unhealthy because people who do

not follow norms may be ridiculed or made fun of. Having a rigid belief in unhealthy gender norms is something that can be a risk factor for having power and control over our partner. If someone believes that they should have power over someone because of their gender, that can create an abusive situation. When we engage in productive conversations about unhealthy or toxic gender norms, we can work together for justice and equity!

**Q: How to tell your parents you're LGBTQ+**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out for support and for being so brave to share this with us! Coming out can be a big deal for many people. You aren't alone if you're 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 you or help you to feel less alone by allowing you to meet new friends. 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.

Coming out may be a process and can take time. Some resources that you may find helpful are the Trevor Project's [Coming Out Handbook](#) and [Guide to Understanding Gender Identities](#). 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](#). 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. You are not alone!

**Q: I've seen this online but is it true that "no" is a full sentence? I believe it is.**

**A:** Yes, "no" can be a full sentence. Consent is such an important thing to talk about because no one should ever be forced to do anything that they do not want to do. Consent is a huge part of our independence and all the rights that we have as individuals. Saying no should be as simple as just, well, saying no. In reality, you might feel pressured, guilty, manipulated, or coerced when you say no. You deserve to have your boundaries respected. You don't owe anyone, even someone you love, an explanation for why you don't want to do what they want you to do. You can explain if you want, but you don't have to. If you would like to talk more about this, our advocates are here to listen! You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at [bloom365.org](#), Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: I really like this one person and i wanna tell my family but I fear they will get mad. Randomly at night I just get sad. Why?**

**A:** It can feel scary to share things with our parents especially if we are concerned that they will disapprove. It sounds like you are experiencing a lot of heavy feelings! We are sorry that you are feeling like this and we are glad you reached out for support. Sometimes when we're sad it can be helpful to talk about how we're feeling. This could be talking to a trusted person in our lives or writing in a journal. Our advocates are also here if you are wanting additional support. You can find our advocates by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at [bloom365.org](#), Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST). You are not alone as you navigate these hard feelings. We are here for you!

**Q: I was sexually assaulted a few years ago, is it too late to speak out?**

**A:** We are so sorry that you went through such a traumatic experience. What happened was not your fault. The fact that you shared this with us takes a lot of courage and we are glad that you reached out for support. You get to choose how and when you would like to share your experience, that is a choice that is yours to make. It is never too late to speak out about your experiences if that is something that you want to do. Healing from the trauma of sexual assault can be a hard process, but there are resources and people out there that you can reach out to for support, if you need it. The Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence has a helpline that you can reach out to by phone by calling 602-279-2980 or 800-782-6400, or by texting 520-720-3383. There is also RAINN that offers a Sexual Assault Hotline which can be reached by phone (800-656-HOPE 4673) and [online](#), as well as a [mobile app](#). And of course, our bloom365 advocates are always here to offer support if you need it. You can find our helpline numbers above. You are not alone!

**Q: How to take time from social media?**

**A:** This is a good question! There are many ways to set boundaries with yourself to take some time off of social media. Try finding different activities that you enjoy doing, like: spending time with the people you love, doing yoga, joining a new sports team or club, spending time in nature, or simply going for a walk. These are a few of many activities that you can do to take time away from social media. You'll have to find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed!

**Q: How to deal w/ insecurities?**

**A:** A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. You are not alone in feeling this way. Learning how to deal with our insecurities can take some time and is not always easy. Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to challenge our insecurities. We encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality, physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be useful ways to challenge our insecurities. Talking about our feelings, whether it's with others or within a journal, can also be helpful in building up a healthy self-esteem. If you would like to talk more with someone, our bloom365 advocates are here to listen. You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: I feel like my family will hate me when I come out. Only my mom knows but I'm just really scared to tell them. I feel like I'm in a dream I feel like everything is fake not real I'm tired of fighting I just wanna stop fighting.**

**A:** Thank you for entrusting us with this. We are sorry to hear that you are experiencing so many big emotions, and we are glad that you reached out for support! Coming out can be a scary process for many people. You aren't alone if you're 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. Coming out can be a positive experience for some, but 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.

Coming out may be a process and can take time, but you do not have to navigate this alone. A resource that may be helpful is the Trevor Project's [Coming Out Handbook](#). When the feelings get too heavy, there are other resources available, also, like the Trevor Project's helpline which can be reached by phone at 866-488-7386 or by texting START to 678678. 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](#). You can find BLOOM365 advocates by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at [bloom365.org](#), Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST). We are here for you!

**Q: I'm depressed**

**A:** We are so sorry to hear that you are experiencing some very deep and heavy feelings. It can take a lot to admit when you're struggling and we are so happy that you felt brave and comfortable enough to share with us. Depression can be an overwhelming and constant experience. Some signs that someone might be experiencing depression include: Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed, withdrawal from friends/family, sleeping too little or in excessive amounts, and sometimes more drastic changes in behavior. If these symptoms are present for most of the day over more than two weeks, this may be a sign that it's more serious than just feeling sad.

If you or someone you know is experiencing depression or extreme feelings of loneliness, sadness, or despair, please know that help is available. We do work alongside a few organizations that specifically help youth experiencing depression, including Teen Lifeline and the Suicide Prevention Lifeline. You can contact them at the numbers above for additional support relating to depression. There is also the [Crisis Text Line](#)— you can text "HELLO" to 741741 for 24/7 support. BLOOM365 Advocates are also available at the number above if you'd like additional support or resources. You are not alone as you navigate these hard feelings. We are here for you!

**Q: How do you know you're in love?**

**A:** Love can look and feel different for many different people! However, at BLOOM365, we believe that love encompasses many of the words seen in the center of the Blooming flower, such as kindness, peace, encouragement, negotiation, and so many other great things! In the 7-Doses, we explore the rights and responsibilities each person has within their relationships. Strong, healthy relationships involve a balance of power as well as freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. If someone loves you, you might feel more than one of these elements present in the relationship! If you'd like to talk more about your specific situation or any other questions you might have, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above for free, confidential support.

**Q: I'm insecure that I don't look like (name removed)**

**A:** Thank you so much for reaching out and sharing this with us. It takes a lot to open up and talk about our insecurities. It is important that you know that you are not alone in feeling this way. We are all different and that is what makes each of us unique. When going through those hard times, something

that may help is focusing on what we love about ourselves. It may not be our looks; however we all may have one or more things that we like about ourselves. Those things may be your strengths, a personality characteristic or even an activity or talent that you are good at. Having a journal or writing those things down can help you build up your confidence. Building up and keeping our self-esteem may take some time, and it may not always be easy. Changing the way you think about yourself can change the way you feel about yourself. If you would like to talk more about this, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number above for additional support. You are not alone!

**Q: Is an abuser always considered a bad person?**

**A:** Thank you for asking such an important question. Abuse is based on power and control and someone who abuses makes a choice to do so. This is why “choice” is in the roots of both [the blooming and wilting flowers](#). Sometimes people witness abuse growing up and start to believe this is what is normal (also known as “taught abusive behavior”). Other potential causes for why someone may abuse another person are those other “root causes” we explored in doses 3 and 4: Rigid beliefs in unhealthy gender norms, social acceptance, oppression, etc. While these root causes increase one's risk for perpetuating abuse in their own relationships, it's important to recognize that everyone still has a choice in whether they are going to treat someone with equity and agency or power and control. If you'd like to talk more about this or anything else, feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above.

**Q: How am I supposed to forgive and forget when I can't do either**

**A:** You are not alone in feeling this way. Forgiveness can be a difficult thing to do, and there is no cutoff time for when you should forgive. It is your decision when you are ready to do so—and if you decide not to forgive or forget, that's totally OK for you to decide, also. We encourage you to reach out to our HelpLine for additional support. We are here for you!

**Q: When someone lies to you, what do you do?**

**A:** It can feel like a big shock and betrayal when someone that we trust lies to us. Lying can break down our trust and can take some time to heal from. Sometimes it can be helpful to communicate with the other person about our feelings. “I” statements are a great communication tool that allows you to say how you feel without the other person feeling defensive or blamed. This can look like saying, “I felt sad and betrayed when you lied to me.”

It may also be helpful to take some time to take care of yourself and cope with how the lying has impacted you. 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. This could be writing in a journal, talking to someone you trust, or going for a walk. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! You can find our advocates by phone at phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at [bloom365.org](http://bloom365.org), Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: What do I do when a friend of mine is “doing” the dating abuse, and they don't know it?**

**A:** This is a very good question and we are glad you reached out for support. It sounds like you really care for your friend. Sometimes, it can be hard to recognize abusive behaviors and their impacts, especially if

we do not have information about healthy and unhealthy relationships. If you feel comfortable and safe doing so, it could be helpful to talk to your friend about your concerns. “I” statements are a great tool for communicating hard emotions. Saying something like, “I feel uncomfortable when I see you act in this way because it seems controlling” rather than saying something like, “Why do you act like that?” 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. You could also share our resources with your friend if they’re open to it. If the person causing harm 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 you or your friend through this situation also, if needed. Ultimately, it is up to the person causing harm to recognize their actions and to make the choice to not be abusive.

**Q: What do you do when older people message you inappropriate things on instagram?**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out about this important issue. We are so sorry that you had this experience and you deserve to feel safe on your Instagram. Your online safety is just as important as your physical, mental, and emotional safety. Instagram, like other social media, has privacy measures that people can use to block unwarranted attention. You can block the profiles and that will stop them from being able to look at your profile or message you. You can also report the profiles to Instagram for inappropriate content. We also encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about the situation, as they can offer additional support and ideas for keeping you safe. Our advocates are also here to talk if you would like additional support. You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: I don’t know my sexuality and it’s really confusing**

**A:** Thank you for entrusting us with this vulnerable experience. Figuring out your sexuality can be a deeply personal and confusing experience at times. You aren’t alone if you’re feeling worried, anxious, or afraid. It may feel like you need to know or have the right words to describe your sexuality immediately; However, you can take however long you need to figure out your sexuality. Sometimes it can be helpful to do research and learn more about the spectrum of sexualities. PFLAG offers an amazing resource manual with definitions, resources and answers to common questions about diverse sexualities - you can find that manual [here](#). You are not alone as you navigate this process! You can reach out to organizations like [onenten.org](#) and/or talk with one of our BLOOM365 Advocates at the numbers above for additional support. We are here for you!

**Q: I know a friend and his father hits him**

**A:** Thank you for reaching out to us. We are very sorry that your friend is experiencing this. If you feel comfortable and if it is safe to do so, we encourage you to share the contact information for BLOOM365 or the National Domestic Violence Hotline with your friend so he knows some resources available to him if he wants to use them. While it is important to respect your friend’s confidentiality, it’s also important that your friend stays safe. If you feel concerned about your friend’s safety, we encourage you to talk to a trusted adult about what’s going on for additional support. For free, confidential, anonymous support, feel free to reach out to our Helpline at the number listed above. We are here for you!

**Q: What do I do if someone is spreading pics of your body and you told them not to and to stop but they don't?**

**A:** We are sorry to hear that you are going through this situation. We highly encourage you to talk to a trusted adult such as a school counselor or social worker, a parent or teacher, or a BLOOM365 advocate to assist and support you.

We are not lawyers or experts on this topic, but it's important for teens to know 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. 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.

Consent is so important because no one should ever be forced to do anything that they do not want to do. Consent is a huge part of agency and all the rights that we have as individuals. If you feel comfortable talking to the individual, it might be helpful to be direct— let them know that you are not OK with them sending those pictures around, and what they are doing is against the law, and you need them to stop. If you don't feel comfortable talking to the individual, or if they continue to send these images, we recommend reaching out to a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate for support. You can text/call our HelpLine at the number above!

**Q: My dad is a terrible person. Even as a baby, he would hurt me + my brother both physically and emotionally**

**A:** We are so sorry that you and your brother went through such a traumatic experience. What happened was not your fault. We understand that it can be challenging to live with an abusive parent, and it can also be dangerous at times. If you feel unsafe, we encourage you to call 911 for help. It might also be helpful to talk to another trusted adult in your life about what's going on and how you're feeling about it. If you want to talk more about this or anything else that's on your mind, feel free to text/call our Helpline for free, confidential, non-judgmental support. We are here for you!

**Q: What if someone causes someone to want to abuse them for dominance due to teasing, making one feel angry all the time**

**A:** Feeling angry, especially about teasing, is a normal human emotion. Anger is a natural emotion that can be abusive or hurtful when it is not processed in a healthy way. Being teased can be a very hurtful and isolating experience that no one deserves to go through. Sometimes it is helpful to talk with people who we feel comfortable with or trust about our feelings and experiences. Talking about how we feel can help us feel less alone and can sometimes even help us figure out solutions to our feelings or problems. This could be a trusted adult, a friend, or even one of our advocates at bloom365. If you feel that you're angry very often or can't control those emotions, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult for support. Our advocates are always here to offer a listening ear and to help connect you to additional resources! You can find us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or by online chat at bloom365.org, Monday through Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST).

**Q: I haven't experienced teen dating violence but someone I know has, she is a 16 year old mom and she experiences physical abuse and humiliation. Her baby barely turned 1 month and when she got out of the hospital she was getting physically abused. Recently he tried to take away the baby while she was in the bathroom. But the good thing is that she finally reported him and moved in with her mom**

**A:** Thank you for sharing this experience with us. We are so happy to hear that this person was able to access support and safety! It is a great reminder that teen dating violence, while not always directly impacting us, can have a huge impact on those we know in our communities. It's so important that we educate ourselves and others about teen dating violence. Talking about it challenges the stigma and encourages those who need support to access resources like bloom365 and the National Teen Dating Violence Hotline. To talk more about this or any other questions you may have, feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number listed above. We are here for you!

**Q: A close friend of mine is talking about me in a rude manner and I try to bring it up and it gets turned on me. What do I do?**

**A:** Thank you for trusting us to share your experience. We are sorry to hear that you are going through this. It might be helpful to use "I" statements in this situation, rather than "You" statements. For example: Saying something like, "I feel betrayed when you talk about me behind my back because I cannot defend myself, can you please come to me with that information next time?" rather than saying something like, "Why are you always spreading rumors about me?" This style of conflict resolution 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. This prevents them from feeling like they need to defend themselves and allows for more effective communication. If you would like to work on "I" statements in a safe place or to discuss this situation, you can always reach out to a BLOOM365 Advocate at the number above or chat online at bloom365.org for more support.

**Q: My sister makes me feel like poop. I started to scratch my wrist. She has mental illnesses so I can't blame her for it so I scratch instead of cut. She verbally abuses me she says she's working on it but she tells me to "kill yourself." I feel lonely cuz of her**

**A:** We are so sorry to hear that you are going through this difficult situation. It can take a lot of strength to share your experience of verbal abuse and self-harming. 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, squeezing ice, drawing or writing, or simply going for a walk. If you're struggling with finding effective coping tools or would like to talk more about this, please feel free to reach out to our HelpLine at the number above! Even if you simply are needing an empathetic ear or are looking for mental health resources, please make the call or send us a text!

We do work alongside a few organizations that specifically help youth experiencing depression, including Teen Lifeline and the Suicide Prevention Lifeline. You can contact them at the numbers above for additional support relating to depression. There is also the Crisis Text Line— you can text "HELLO" to

741741 for 24/7 support. You are never alone and we encourage you to reach out if you are experiencing suicidal or depressive thoughts.

**Q: Someone was stalking me and saying I was her boyfriend. What should I do?**

**A:** Thank you for sharing your experience with us, we are glad that you reached out for support. Experiencing stalking can be a really scary experience, and we encourage you to prioritize your safety—however that looks for you. 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. If you feel that’s not an option for you, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate for additional support, options, and resources. For free and confidential support, you can reach a BLOOM365 Advocate at the HelpLine number above. We are here for you!

**Q: I genuinely don’t know if you guys talk about anything other than teen dating violence. There’s just a lot going on at home with DCS/CPS and it’s hard. I recently lost friends and have no one to be supported by. The friends I do have don’t go to my school. I can’t text them because I’m grounded from social media for a year now. I use my moms phone so...**

**A:** We are sorry you’re going through this at home. We would like you to know that you are not alone, and we are glad you reached out for support. We understand that these situations can be difficult to navigate, and we understand it might cause you to feel alone or overwhelmed. We encourage you to try engaging in self-care activities, even if it’s something small like spending time with a pet, going for a walk outside, or writing out the thoughts and feelings that you’re experiencing in a journal. For additional support you can always reach out to a bloom365 advocate by text/phone at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) or through online chat at bloom365.org. If you would like to speak to a BLOOM365 advocate but don’t have access to a phone or computer, you can ask another trusted adult like a teacher or school counselor if they can help connect you to us, or any other resources that could be helpful to you. We are here for you!