

Elephant in The Room Q & A

South Mountain High School Fall 2018



This document can also be accessed at <https://www.bloom365.org/faqs>

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.com/resources

<p>BLOOM365 Advocacy Line and Support Groups</p>	<p>Text or call a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support. Beginning January 7th, our advocacy line will be open for texts and calls Monday-Thursday from 3PM-9PM! To reach a specific advocate directly, visit www.bloom365.org/contact. Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)</p> <p>Join us every Monday, Wednesday, and/or Thursday evening for one of our drop-in support groups (Holidays excluded)!</p>
<p>Teen Lifeline</p>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships. Peer/Teen Counselors answer the hotline from 3pm-9pm every day, including weekends and holidays.</p>
<p>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</p>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p>
<p>National Domestic Violence Hotline</p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<p>National Sexual Assault Hotline</p>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<p>National Human Trafficking Hotline</p>	<p>1-888-373-7888</p>
<p>Crisis and Suicide Prevention</p>	<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p> <p>Crisis Text Line: Text TALK to 741741</p>

Wondering how to reach out for help/support?

Check out page 22 in your workbook or visit www.bloom365.org/resources

Q: Student
A: BLOOM365 Advocate

****Please note that any personally identifying information or details have been removed from questions****

1) Q: How can you improve yourself emotionally and mentally?

A: You are not alone in feeling this way. 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. Here are some additional tips to help you with achieving better self-esteem. Know that mistakes are lessons, view them as learning opportunities. Don't ever think you're inferior or less than anybody else. Nobody is perfect. We also highly encourage you to get involved in one of our weekly support groups! It is place where you can learn how to improve yourself alongside with others. If you still can't seem to find ways to build your self-esteem, please feel free to reach out to an BLOOM365 Advocate at the number listed above for more resources or information.

2) Q: I'm suffering with depression, and I can't get over my ex boyfriend even though he has moved on. The memories of him and I keep coming back to me and it hurts. I don't know what to do.

A: First off, we want you to know that you are not alone. While ending a close friendship and or break up is tough it can be a great time for self evaluation and growth. A great tip for coping after a break up is to remember to be patient and give yourself time for your heart to heal. Getting over a break-up could take days, weeks or even months. In your packet, you can reference the "6 Tips for Coping After a Break-Up" to find more BLOOM365 suggested tips. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free support group! Our support group provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: Spending time with the people you love, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. 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!

3) Q: What should you do if you have a boo but you caught feelings for another guy but you really love your boyfriend.

A: Healthy relationships exhibit love, trust, respect, and all of the other words you see in the center of the blooming flower. Some tips that may be helpful are utilizing communication to discuss your feelings. "I" Statements are a great way to express your feelings openly! Effective communication is a key component of healthy relationships! It may be helpful to talk to your boyfriend about what is going on and how you're feeling. We cannot tell you whether or not you should stop talking or be with this other person, that decision is ultimately up to you! However,

we want you to know that you and your boyfriend deserve to have supportive, honest relationships! Having a conversation with your boyfriend and setting healthy boundaries for the relationship, including honesty, may be a good step. We also recognize that letting go of someone you love is not easy. We encourage you to think about your own values, communicate your feelings and suggestions with you boyfriend, and make an informed decision about what you'd like to do! Please feel free to reach out to an advocate to discuss further if needed!

4) Q: What would you do if someone took your virginity and left right after then started calling you names.

A: First off, we would like to say thank you for sharing your story and speaking up. Please know that everything you experienced is not your fault. We understand these things can be difficult to talk about, and we appreciate you sharing. People bully for many reasons but it all boils down to trying to gain or maintain power and control over someone else. We encourage you to text or call an advocate at the number above who can help you take the steps to healing. We also highly encourage you to get involved in one of our weekly support groups!

5) Q: Someone bullied me because of my sexuality.

A: We apologize that you had this experience. We strive to make our space in the classroom safe and inclusive of everyone. Please know that at BLOOM365, everyone is safe and welcomed regardless of gender and or sexual orientation. Feel free to send us a text or chat with us online!

6) Q: Why is this even related to "health"?

A: Social relationships of all kinds can impact mental, emotional and physical health in both the short-term and long-term. Negative or wilting relationships can contribute to stress, loss of self-esteem, depression, and physical illness. Positive supportive and healthy relationships in which you can fully be yourself can contribute to happiness, increase in self-esteem, and longer life! We believe it is important to know how to prevent power and control within your own relationships, and know your rights and responsibilities within relationships. Healthy relationships impact us on an individual level, leading to healthier communities, and eventually healthier societies.

7) Q: How long have you been at this?

A: BLOOM started out in 2006 when Donna Bartos found her voice after her own experiences with teen dating abuse and decided to turn that voice into action. She founded the Purple Ribbon Council to Cut Out Domestic Abuse (now BLOOM365) as a way to mobilize the stories voices, and potential of everyday people to help "uproot abuse." You can read more about Donna's story and how BLOOM365 came to be on page 5 of your workbook.

8) Q: Why is this program important?

A: We believe it is important to know how to prevent power and control within your own relationships, and know your rights and responsibilities within relationships. To prevent these issues within our community and society as a whole, we really have to address the root causes: Unhealthy gender norms, social acceptance, taught abusive behavior, etc. We learned in Dose 7

that social change can take a long time, but with teens like yourself getting involved in the movement, we can see the tipping point moment happen in your generation! When 10% of your peers or a population starts to adopt healthy, blooming values, the rest of society should follow. It starts with you! We encourage you to join the Peer Advocate Crew (PAC) to help us prevent these issues in future generations! Visit www.bloom365.org/peeradvocatecrew to learn how you can get involved!

DOSE 2

9) Q: My ex used me, but I still love him. What should I do?

A: First off, we would like to say thank you for sharing your story and speaking up. Please know that everything you are experiencing is not your fault. We understand these things can be difficult to talk about, and we appreciate you sharing. We encourage you to text or call an advocate at the number above for a listening ear and support. We also highly encourage you to get involved in one of our weekly support groups. Peer-to-peer support and connections can be helpful in the healing process. Contact us for more information!

10) Q: How long have you been doing this?

A: BLOOM started out in 2006 when Donna Bartos found her voice after her own experiences with teen dating abuse and decided to turn that voice into action. She founded the Purple Ribbon Council to Cut Out Domestic Abuse (now BLOOM365) as a way to mobilize the stories voices, and potential of everyday people to help “uproot abuse.” You can read more about Donna’s story and how BLOOM365 came to be on page 5 of your workbook.

11) Q: Always know your worth.

A: We completely agree! Keep blooming!

12) Q: Should a marriage stay together even if they have been together for the longest, but one of them did wrong? And the relationship isn’t good. But they both feel like they can’t because of their children.

A: Leaving an unhealthy or abusive relationship is never easy. In dose 2 we talked about the barriers to leaving (fear, love, dependency, hope, etc.). Think of these barriers as hooks. It’s not easy to unhook them all at once and we understand that it can be difficult to leave an abusive relationship, especially when we have hope that the abuser will change or eventually stop. Please know that it is not your responsibility to “rescue” your parent/guardian or someone who is in abusive marriage, but there are some ways you can help if you so choose. 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 the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE(7233)). Don’t be discouraged if they are not ready to make the call. Remember the importance of not blaming the victim and understand there are a lot of barriers to leaving an abusive relationship. You can continue to let them know you are there for them, and that the hotline is available whenever they are ready to make the call. You can also reach out to a

BLOOM365 advocate by calling or texting the number above. We can provide you with local resources and talk with you more about helping your in-law in this situation.

DOSE 4

13) Q: I don't understand English really well but I am trying my best. I speak a little. I'm just letting you know so that you can know it.

A: Thank you so much for sharing and letting us know! If at anytime you would like for an advocate to stop and make things more clear, please don't hesitate to let us know. We also have our blooming and wilting flower translated in Spanish on the inside of the back page of your workbook. Your participation and honesty is much appreciated, and if there's anything else that we can do to help assist feel free to let us know.

14) Q: Why do people date abusers?

A: An abusive partner does not usually begin a relationship as overtly abusive or controlling. The early warning signs of abuse are often hard to catch because they are usually masked as "caring" and not "controlling." There is a gradual progression of power and control. It can first show up as possessive jealousy or even in comments about your choice of clothing or friends. Oftentimes if we were raised in an environment where abuse was present, the early signs/actions can be really tough to spot because they could be viewed as okay or normal. Sometimes it takes direct education, like the 7-Dose Bloom It Up curriculum or a friend's concern to notice what's really going on. Remember, perpetrators are usually very good at putting on an 'act' when around other people, so other people may assume everything is fine.

15) Q: How do you stop a parent from abusing their children?

A: If you are currently experiencing abuse and are in immediate danger, please call 9-1-1. If you have been physically abused you in the past and would like to talk about it or get support, please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate for free, confidential support. If you feel comfortable, we highly encourage you to reach out to discuss this situation further.

DOSE 3

16) Q: Why do people judge different genders?

A: As we talked about in Dose 3, gender norms have been ingrained in our culture. People often make assumptions based on someone's gender due to stereotypes. Not everyone fits into these stereotypes, though, and it's important as a society that we recognize and understand that your gender doesn't automatically define what you like or your specific personality traits

17) Thank you for coming and talking to us.

A: Thank you for listening! 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!

18) Q: I felt uncomfortable.

A: We apologize that you had this experience, and it is never our intention to make anyone feel uncomfortable. Our goal with Dose 3 is to shed light on unhealthy gender norms and how rigid beliefs in these norms is something that puts someone at a higher risk for having power and control in their relationship. People often make assumptions based on someone's gender due to stereotypes. Not everyone fits into these stereotypes, though, and it's important as a society that we recognize and understand that your gender doesn't automatically define what you like or your specific personality traits. We want everyone to feel comfortable being themselves, regardless of stereotypes set forth by society.

DOSE 5

19) Q: Appreciate the lesson today! So nice to see people be kind to each other, we need to see that more often .

A: Thank you for listening! We completely agree, and we ultimately envision that as well. Remember, the first step to making any change is making the change we want within ourselves. This personal change can be spread positively to our friends, family, and everyone else around us. If everyone complimented one another instead of criticizing and putting down others we could help build each other up and make a positive change in the world around us. Small changes like this can have a great impact on the world as more people practice and build healthy habits. 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!

20) Q: Very fun, I've learned a lot so far.

A: Thank you for participating! We hope that you gained some valuable knowledge and tools for building healthy friendships and relationships that will help you both now and in the future! 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!

21) Q: Thank you for coming to spread positivity. I enjoyed the little things we did. I was glad to say kind things to others.

A: Thank you for listening and we are so thrilled to hear that you enjoyed saying kind things to others. Remember developing a healthy self-esteem can take time. Self-love and self-confidence can be a life-long journey! You aren't going to wake up everyday and feel 100%, but knowing that you are worthy of love and respect can help you to bounce back. If you want to continue to bring love on others more, we encourage you to check out our website at <https://www.bloom365.org/peeradvocatecrew> for more information on our Peer Advocate Crew!

22) Q: Thanks for the class it has been an eye opener and good advice.

A: Thank you for listening! 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!

23) Q: Thank you for your advice and help.

A: Thank you for listening! Even after we leave South Mountain High School for this semester, please know our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear and help whenever you need it. Also feel free to come hang and visit us at our weekly support groups! Please email teens@bloom365.org or text 602-799-6096 for more information.

24) Q: I'm lost. I don't know what to do anymore, sometimes I feel that I don't want to live anymore (sorry I just had to let it all out there).

A: Thank you for sharing, and we appreciate you reaching out for support. If you are experiencing depression or having suicidal thoughts, please know that you are not alone. Please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or Teen Lifeline at the numbers listed above for free, confidential support.

DOSE 6

25) Q: I'm still lost.. I really want to give up in life. I don't want to be in this world anymore.

A: If you are experiencing depression or having suicidal thoughts, please know that you are not alone. Please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or Teen Lifeline at the numbers listed above for free, confidential support.

26) Q: Don't mean to fall asleep or look bored. I'm going through a lot, but this is an amazing class.

A: Thank you for listening and for your participation! If you would ever like to talk about anything just know our advocates are always available to listen and offer support. You can reach an advocate at the number listed above. Remember the importance of taking care of yourself as you are coping with difficult situations. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free weekly support groups! Our support group provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others.

27) Q: Sexual harassment is something hardly ever talked about or seen as a "real" problem. That is incredibly sad. I went to a park alone early at like 10am. Minding my own business a group of guys came up to me kept bothering me. When clearly I was ignoring them. They kept following me. Point being I felt unsafe. The fact that girls can not be alone anywhere apparently. Which is sad.

A: First of all, we are so sorry you had this experience. We agree- that is why we try and educate our students on these topics and empower you all to speak out in the community to your peers. It's also important to remember that sexual harassment or assault is never your fault. If this happens again in the future, if you're in public, we first advise you to try to move away from the perpetrator. If you can't get away due to being in a close space, then try to shift your body to displace their movements, or get out of their eyesight. If you've managed to get away, or they

have left, you have a few options that you can do. First and foremost it is important to look out after yourself. Make sure you're okay. Have a sit down somewhere, go for a walk, or text a trusted friend or adult. It is also a good idea to report these incidents. Here at BLOOM365, we never want people to feel unsafe or unwelcome in their community. Our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear and help whenever you need it, if you would care to talk about the event further. Feel free to text/call an advocate at the number above.

DOSE 7

28) Q: Thank you for coming in and talking to us about the important topics. I appreciate it and think some of the topic talked about helped people. Hope you have a great day.

A: Thank you for participating! We hope that you gained some valuable knowledge and tools for building healthy friendships and relationships that will help you both now and in the future! 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!

29) Q: I think BLOOM365 really helped a lot of people out, it definitely helped me.

A: Thank you for listening! Even after we leave South Mountain High School for this semester, please know our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear and help whenever you need it. Also feel free to come hang and visit us at our weekly support groups! Please email teens@bloom365.org or text 602-799-6096 for more information.

30) Q: This program has let me focus on things I've never bothered to think about. I was able to tell my story to my younger self.

A: That is so awesome and we are happy to hear that! We hope you 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!