



**Elephant in The Room Q & A  
Deer Valley High School  
Fall 2017**

**Resources:**

BLOOM365 Advocate	Text or call 602-799-7017 for free, confidential support. Please allow up to 24 hours to receive an initial response.
BLOOM365 Hotline	Call 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)
BLOOM365 Drop-In Support Groups	Every Monday (Holidays excluded). Please email <a href="mailto:teens@bloom365.org">teens@bloom365.org</a> for more information.
Teen Lifeline	Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships
National Teen Dating Violence Hotline	Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7
National Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
National Sexual Assault Hotline	1-800.656.HOPE (4673)

**Q: Student**

**A: BLOOM365 Advocate**

**Dose 1**

**1) Do you also talk about signs of them hiding or doing things, such as cheating or lying?**

Although we do not specifically discuss cheating or lying throughout the 7 doses, our advocates are always here to listen if you need someone to talk to about these issues. You can text/call a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**2) People can be really abusive to the person they say they love.**

It's important to remember that someone who loves you will treat you with equality and freedom. Healthy, loving relationships exhibit the characteristics seen on page 28.

**3) How do I tell an ex of mine that I'm concerned and she should call the abuser hotline? I feel like it would be awkward.**

We understand that this is a difficult situation to be in. If you do not feel comfortable reaching out to her yourself, you may find it useful to reach out to a trusted adult or a friend of hers who can have the conversation with her themselves. She may be more receptive to the information and getting help if it comes from someone she is close to. You can provide this person with the red flags checklist and the above resources so that they can have the conversation with her. If you believe she is in immediate danger, please call 9-11. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above to discuss this situation further.

**4) I had a boyfriend who would time me until I said 'yes' to having sex with him. Every time I refused he would hit me, kick me, and when I tried to leave him, he would cut me. I've never been able to tell anyone and I don't feel comfortable saying this so I would like to stay anonymous. Thank you.**

First off, we would like to say thank you for sharing your story and speaking up. These things can be difficult to talk about, and we appreciate you sharing. If you are still in this situation, we highly recommend reaching out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 advocate for help. We can also help you to file a report if you so choose. If you are no longer in this situation, but still fear for your safety, a BLOOM365 advocate can also help you to create a safety plan. BLOOM365 has weekly support groups every Monday for those who have experienced abuse or violence, please email [teens@bloom365](mailto:teens@bloom365) for more information!

**5) How do you know if you are an abuser?**

In abusive relationships, the abusive partner often tries to gain power and control over their partner through tactics such as: Threats, coercion, isolation, dominance, humiliation, emotional abuse, put-downs, or physical violence. Refer to page 9 in your workbook for definitions of these terms. If these "symptoms" are present, this relationship is potentially unhealthy or even abusive. It's important to remember that you have a choice: Are you going to make the intentional choice to treat someone with equality and freedom or the choice to gain power and control? A great resource for determining abusive characteristics is also the Red Flag Checklist. Feel free to reach out a BLOOM365 for support and a listening ear at the number above.

**6) Why do people think it's okay to do this and why are people laughing about it? It's not funny at all...**

These conversations can sometimes be difficult and uncomfortable to have, and some people may use humor as a way to lighten the mood. Some people who have experienced abuse and violence in their lives use humor as a method of coping with these difficult situations. Others are unaware of how serious these issues can be.

**7) My dad gets drunk and beats my step mom.**

It can be very difficult to watch your parent as a victim or even a perpetrator in an abusive relationship. Please know that it is not your responsibility to “rescue” your parent, but there are some ways you can help if you so choose. For one, you can serve as a supportive person in your step-mom’s life. Let her know that you are there for her. You can also find ways to spend time alone with her doing activities you both enjoy. If you feel comfortable, you can give her the number to the National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE(7233)). Don’t be discouraged if she is 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 her know you are there for her, and that the hotline is available whenever she is ready to make the call. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by calling or texting 602-799-7017. We can provide you with local resources and talk with you more about helping a parent in this situation.

**9) I can’t tell if my Guardian is abusive or not.**

Although we mostly focused on teen-dating violence throughout the 7 doses, you can apply the majority of the information to all types of power-based violence and abuse. Sometimes it can be difficult to recognize whether something is abusive or not. One way to determine whether something is abusive is to ask yourself if it looks like power and control or equality and freedom. An abusive guardian may use threat, intimidation, physical violence, verbal or emotional abuse, put-downs, or any of the other “symptoms” seen in the center of the wilting flower to gain or maintain power and control. If you recognize that your guardian may be abusive or are still unsure, please feel free to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above. An advocate would be happy to discuss this further with you and help you determine what you would like to do.

**11) Someone I’m very close to was sexually assaulted and I know who did it.**

We highly encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or a trusted adult in your life. It’s important that this situation is handled properly to ensure everyone is safe and receives the support that they may need in dealing with this difficult situation. You can also provide this person with the number to the National Sexual Assault hotline and/or a BLOOM365 advocate at the numbers above.

**12) How can you tell if your ex was abusive without being biased?**

A great resource for determining abusive characteristics is our Red Flag Checklist, which you can find on page 17 of your workbook.

**14) Why do you believe this is a major issue?**

We know that teen dating violence is a major issue because 1 in 3, or 33%, of teens will experience some form of dating violence before their 18th birthday. This is a pretty significant number, which is why we

believe it's so important that teens go through this program to learn about the red flags and how to help a friend. We believe teen dating violence exists because of the root causes we explored during Doses 3 and 4.

**15) Is LGBTQ+ safe here? Numerous students in this class believe against the community, and I do not feel safe.**

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. We even have a staff person dedicated to LGBTQ youth. If you ever need anyone to talk to about it do not hesitate to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**16) I might be experiencing verbal abuse and dominance (aggressive) with my family, what can I do?**

Someone trying to take power and control over their family member can be just as dangerous and hurtful as dating abuse. The red flag checklist in your workbook and on [bloom365.org/fore-teens](http://bloom365.org/fore-teens) can apply to any type of relationship including friendships, sibling, parent, and romantic relationships. If some or all of the red flags on the checklist are present, it's a good idea to talk to your parents or another trusted adult. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by phone at 1-888-666-HOPE or text at 602-799-7017.

**Dose 2**

**17) I was kind of jealous when my ex talked to other guys when I knew they were hitting on her, but I never made her stop talking to them. I would just make it obvious I was with her. When she broke up with me, I almost committed suicide. Does that make me an abuser?**

Jealousy is a natural, human emotion. Most humans have felt or experienced jealousy. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. When jealousy becomes unhealthy or abusive is when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling. The first step is recognizing our jealous tendencies and addressing them with our partner or friend so that they know how we feel. You can communicate your feelings and concerns in future relationships by using "I" statements. Something you could both talk about is how you may be able to build up your trust and decrease your feelings of jealousy. If you experience persistent jealousy, it is a warning sign of power and control and could lead to an abusive relationship. The red flags checklist may be helpful in recognizing potentially abusive characteristics. Remember that you always have a choice in how you will treat someone. You can choose to try and gain power and control over someone or you can choose to treat them with equality and freedom.

**18) Would you call relationship abuse something if someone really close to you verbally abuses you, but your not in a romantic relationship with them. But you are forced to go back to them.**

Verbal abuse is absolutely still considered abuse whether or not you are romantically involved with that person or not. Abuse can occur in any type of relationship or friendship. In a friendship, this is often considered bullying rather than dating abuse. Regardless, this is a form of power-based violence and can be harmful. We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult in your life if you are experiencing

any form of abuse or violence. You can also reach out a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above for a listening ear.

**19) I am so heartbroken, it was hard all weekend for me to even take and shower and eat.**

First off thank you so much for sharing, and we want to let you know that you're not alone going through this. Most people experience a break-up at some point in their lives. During Dose 6, we explored coping skills that you could use to cope with during this difficult time. You may find it helpful to share your feelings with a friend, a BLOOM365, or someone you are close to. Be kind to yourself: Remember what makes you happy, your own strengths, and the things you love about yourself (reflecting on the orange and green sticky notes you wrote on during Dose 5). It's also important to take good care of yourself. A broken heart can be very stressful, but self-care can be beneficial and ultimately give your self-esteem a boost. Do the things you normally enjoy, such as fun things to take your mind off the negative feelings for a while. Lastly, give yourself time. Be patient with yourself, and let the healing begin. 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.

**20) I recently have been very jealous towards my bf, but my bf was talking to a girl that tried to break us up, I told him not to talk to her, is that ok?**

Jealousy is a natural, human emotion. Most humans have felt or experienced jealousy. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. When jealousy becomes unhealthy or abusive is when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling. We should consider whether the relationships we have currently are built on trust and respect. If we don't have a trustworthy partner or friend, that could lead us to be jealous. The first step is recognizing our jealous tendencies and addressing them with our partner or friend so that they know how we feel. You can communicate your feelings and concerns with your partner by using "I" statements. "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you talk to her, could you please \_\_\_\_\_." You cannot force your partner to stop talking to someone, but it might be helpful to let him know how it makes you feel and why. Something you could both talk about is how you may be able to build up your trust and decrease your feelings of jealousy. Together, you can come up with a solution or compromise to help deal with this situation.

**21) What does mental abuse do?**

Mental or emotional abuse can have lasting effects on the mental health of the victim. Oftentimes their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth are damaged. Mental abuse can hurt and cause damage just as physical abuse does. If you are currently experiencing this type of abuse, please know there is help and resources out there for you. If you need to contact someone right now, please contact a BLOOM Advocate at (602) 799-107.

**22) What do I do if I am being abused (relationship wise), but I'm afraid of telling someone in fear of it getting talked about and the situation getting worse? Also, same question but family-wise?**

As we learned in the program the most dangerous time is when the victim tries to leave an abusive relationship. You can use the safety plan that we worked on in the classroom to map out a safe strategy for exiting the relationship. If you feel there is immediate danger calling 911 is the most

important step to take so that no one is harmed. You can reach out to the trusted adults in your life or the school social worker for help in creating a safety plan and to determine your available options for relationship or familial abuse. We understand that you may not want to tell an adult for fear that the situation may get worse. In this case, we encourage you to reach out to BLOOM365 advocate to discuss what you can do to help deal with this situation.

### **23) Can sexual assault happen with a friend of the same gender?**

As we learned during the program, consent is required each and every single time an act of sex is initiated. Any act of sexual nature that is not consented to can be considered sexual assault, regardless of gender. Sexual assault can occur between two people of the same gender. If you have any concerns about this matter please reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. You can also call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at the number above.

### **24) What if your friends hit you in a playful way, is that abuse?**

If there is any physical touch that you do not like, you should let the person know that you do not like being touched in that way and ask them to respect your boundaries by not doing this again. Using 'I statements' can be an effective tool to help your friend understand your perspective and provide a solution. If this playful hitting does not physically hurt you and does not bother you, then it would likely not be considered abuse.

### **25) How can people keep a good relationship together?**

Remembering that a healthy, blooming partnership stemming from equality and freedom is one way to start with helping to keep a good relationship together. However, referring to page 28 in your workbook is another great resource which lists the core characteristics of what a healthy, blooming relationship should look like. Perhaps, reading this page and examining these characteristics with each other can help you realize where you are at and then spark a conversation on how you can continue to create a healthy relationship together.

### **27) If the number of BLOOM365 doesn't work can we call 911 instead?**

If you reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above, you should always receive a response within 24 hours. You can also reach our hotline or the National Teen Dating Violence hotline for more immediate support. If you are in immediate danger, please call 9-11 as soon as possible.

### **28) Is it okay to be jealous?**

Jealousy is a natural, human emotion. Most humans have felt or experienced jealousy. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. When jealousy becomes unhealthy or abusive is when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling. We should consider whether the relationships we have currently are built on trust and respect. If we don't have a trustworthy partner or friend, that could lead us to be jealous. The first step is recognizing our jealous tendencies and addressing them with our partner or friend so that they know how we feel. You can communicate your feelings and concerns with your partner by using "I" statements. "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you get jealous, could you please \_\_\_\_\_." If communicating your feelings does not change your partner's behavior, and you are experiencing persistent jealousy, it is a warning sign of power and control and could lead to an

abusive relationship. If you are the one experiencing jealousy, you can also communicate with your partner using “I statements”. Something you could both talk about is how you may be able to build up your trust and decrease your feelings of jealousy.

**29) What do you do when you’ve been abused but everyone thinks it’s a joke?**

Sometimes people do not recognize or understand the severity of these situations. Other times people have experienced trauma themselves and use humor to try and deal with it. Thank you for being brave in speaking up about your situation, and we apologize that you were not taken seriously. If you have been abused and would like to report it, please reach out to a trusted adult or the school social worker. They will work with you to determine the best way to report the abuse and to ensure you are safe. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate for assistance in making a report or to explore your options.

**30) Why do the videos only show relationship abuse in straight couples?**

BLOOM365 values inclusivity and we want to include the perspective of all people. We will have opportunities coming up within the new year to film our own videos, and it is our goal to include various perspectives and types of relationships. If you or your friends are interested in being part of the film, like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/uprootabuse>, follow us on twitter @uprootabuse, and/or follow us on instagram @BLOOM365 to keep an eye out for when the opportunities appear! If you’d like to join our interest list, you can also email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org)!

**31) What do you do when your mom is in an abusive relationship and won’t leave after five years?**

It can be very difficult to watch your parent as a victim in an abusive relationship, and we understand wanting to help them. Please know that it is not your responsibility to “rescue” your parent, but there are some ways you can help if you so choose. For one, you can serve as a supportive person in your parent’s 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. 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 a parent in this situation.”

**32) When you are trying to leave, what do you do to make people believe you?**

First off, we want to start off by saying we are sorry if you have ever reached out to someone in your life or spoke up about your situation and were not believed. You should never have to convince someone that you are being truthful about what you have experienced. We at BLOOM365 are trying to increase conversation about these topics and help others recognize that this is a serious issue that should be taken seriously. If you are trying to leave an abusive relationship, we highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a school social worker. They can help you determine what your options are, what steps you want to take, and help to ensure your safety. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate

for assistance in creating a safety plan or if you would like someone to talk to about this situation. Another resource is the National Teen Dating Violence Hotline, which is listed above as well.

**33) What inspired you to join BLOOM365?**

All of us at BLOOM365 have different reasons and experiences that lead us or inspired us to become involved with BLOOM365. The common thread among all of us, though, is that we are all passionate about this cause. You can read about what inspired Donna Bartos, our executive director, to found BLOOM365 on page 5 of your workbook.

**34) What is the suicide rate in Arizona?**

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP, 2016), an average of 4,600 teens within the U.S. commit suicide each year. Among 15 to 24 year old, suicide is the third leading cause of death. In 2011, 39 Arizona youth under 18 committed suicide in 2011. 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.

**35) How is a non profit organization able to function?**

A non-profit organization relies on funding from various grants and donations from donors in order to function.

**36) Do you have to be directly affected by abuse to join BLOOM365?**

Absolutely not! While some of our staff, interns, and volunteers have experienced some form of power-based violence in their life, some of us have not. If you are passionate about this cause, we would love to have you join us a volunteer, peer advocate, and/or bloom crew member!

**37) What if nobody else loves me? I believe the abuser is the one who really shows me the love I was never shown.**

One of the manipulation methods for an abuser is isolation, making the victim feel alone and in some cases unlovable by others. You are loved by many including friends and family. They might not always express this verably, but they love and care about you. People give love in different manners; some people like to give hugs and show personal affection to show love, others might like to give gifts or do things for others to express their love. It's also important to remember that when someone love us, they are willing to treat us with equality and freedom and respect our boundaries.

**38) I wanted to talk to someone about some things I have been through I do not think it is safe to talk to you, Sebastian, because I don't want anyone getting in trouble?**

BLOOM365 is always here to support you, and we want you to feel safe. You can email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) to contact us through email or to ask for the number of an additional advocate. You can also text the advocate number above to reach Sebastian. If you do provide your name, you can remain anonymous until you feel safe enough to share identifying information. You can also call the National Hotline or our local hotline at the numbers above.



**39) If you've grown up and abuse was always exposed to you or you've been a victim since you were young, how do you get away from it or escape it?**

While exposure to violence growing up increases a person's risk for perpetuating it in their own relationships, this does not automatically mean you will be an abuser. Remember how choice is in the roots of both the blooming and wilting flowers? You always have a choice in whether you choose to have power and control over another person or whether you choose to treat them with equality and freedom! It's important to also deal with any emotions or effects that your exposure to violence and your own experiences may have left. We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult in your life, the school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate to talk about available resources. It may be beneficial for you to seek additional resources in dealing with your past experiences, and a BLOOM365 advocate would be happy to discuss what your options and help walk you through the process. We also highly encourage you to remember the things that make you happy, engage in self-care frequently, and spend time doing the things you enjoy.

**40) How do I stop my abuser from physically hurting me?**

We highly encourage you to share this situation with a trusted adult in your life, a school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. It's important that this situation is handed properly to ensure your safety. A BLOOM365 advocate would be happy to talk with you about your available options, available resources, and work with you to determine the best way to report the abuse. If this person attends school with you and it is happening on campus, it is important for you to share this situation with your school social worker or another adult on campus that you can trust.

**41) What are the signs that a parent is abusive?**

The red flag checklist in your workbook and on [bloom365.org/fore-teens](http://bloom365.org/fore-teens) can apply to any type of relationship including friendships, sibling, parent, and romantic relationships. If some or all of the red flags on the checklist are present, if possible it's a good idea to either talk to your other parent or another trusted adult. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by phone at 1-888-666-HOPE or text at 602-799-7017.

**42) What if I don't know what people are going through or my friend is going through and they are scared to tell me, what do I do?**

Something you can do is just be there for your friend and let them know that you are always available to talk. This will let your friend know that they come to you for non-judgemental support if they ever need help. You can also let them know of available resources, such as the number to reach a BLOOM365 advocate. If you suspect that your friend is going through something, you can also try to uplift them by spending time with them doing activities together that will take their mind away from the negatives.

**44) How can I help my sister, I know who took advantage of her but she doesn't want to say anything?**

We should 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. In your pocket, you can reference the "5 Ways to Help a Friend Going Through Dating Abuse" to start a conversation with the survivor. We cannot make people get help if they do not want to, but we can do everything in our power to help our

friends feel supported. 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. You can also reference the five ways to talk to a friend who is a victim page in your Bloom packet in order to get the conversation started. Especially 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 friend could be at risk of getting injured or even killed. While the information in the packet refers to friends you can apply that information to any type of relationships that you are not directly involved in.

### **Dose 3**

#### **45) If there is jealousy in a relationship does that always mean it's bad?**

Jealousy is a natural, human emotion. Most humans have felt or experienced jealousy. It is not necessarily a bad thing, unless we act out based on our jealousy. When jealousy becomes unhealthy or abusive is when it is possessive, obsessive or controlling. We should consider whether the relationships we have currently are built on trust and respect. If we don't have a trustworthy partner or friend, that could lead us to be jealous. The first step is recognizing our jealous tendencies and addressing them with our partner or friend so that they know how we feel. You can communicate your feelings and concerns with your partner by using "I" statements. "I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you get jealous, could you please \_\_\_\_\_." If communicating your feelings does not change your partner's behavior, and you are experiencing persistent jealousy, it is a warning sign of power and control and could lead to an abusive relationship. If you are the one experiencing jealousy, you can also communicate with your partner using "I statements". Something you could both talk about is how you may be able to build up your trust and decrease your feelings of jealousy.

#### **46) Wouldn't men getting higher pay than women count as a male heterosexual dominance?**

Yes; While it's not specific for just heterosexual men, it does fall under the category of male dominance. Male dominance is not always something men do intentionally or with purpose but it is a system that is built to benefit men.

#### **47) What happens when both of the people in the relationship are abusive?**

It's important to recognize that while it sometimes might seem like both partners are abusive, typically there is one partner that holds much more power and control over the other. Often the victim is taking on their perpetrator's tactics as a way to try and defend themselves and gain back their own power, but not as a way of trying to exert power and control over their partner who is the primary aggressor. With that being said, sometimes two partners can try to control each other. In this situation, we recommend reaching out to an advocate at the number above.

#### **48) How do I stop abuse?**

If you are experiencing abuse, we highly encourage you to share this situation with a trusted adult in your life, a school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. It's important that this situation is handled properly to ensure your safety. A BLOOM365 advocate would be happy to talk with you about your available options, available resources, and work with you to determine the best way to report the abuse. If this person attends school with you and it is happening on campus, it is important for you to share this situation with your school social worker or another adult on campus that you can trust.

**49) Should I be proud of who I am?**

Being proud of who you are can help you to have a healthy self-esteem, which can also contribute to healthy relationships and friendships. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. Remembering the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.) and being proud of these things is something to be admired. Being proud of who you are is absolutely something we stand behind and try to encourage for all people!

**50) Why can't you know if a guy likes you even if they take away your first kiss and continue to do so in secret?**

Using "I-statements" can be helpful in these types of situations. This will allow you to express how you feel, and open up the conversation for him to share his feelings.

**51) I want to run away from home but I feel like if I do I will get caught, help?**

Your safety is our number one priority. If you feel unsafe in your home, we encourage you to reach out to a school social worker or a BLOOM365 advocate. They can talk to you about your situation, provide you with resources, and help you determine what your options are. If you feel like you are in immediate danger, please call 911. If your reasons for running away are not based on safety, we encourage you to contact a BLOOM365 advocate or Teen Lifeline to discuss further.

**Dose 4**

**52) I know that it isn't always the boys but why do they think they can just objectify girls?**

Society often portrays the idea that our physical appearance is one of the most important qualities we have, which leads a lot of us to become critical of others and ourselves. Rating girls on a scale from 1 to 10 and girls slut-shaming one another are both forms of objectification. Men and women both contribute to objectification. Unhealthy gender norms and social acceptance both contribute to objectification.

**53) I've felt threatened in this class for being LGBTQ+ and have heard others be targeted, is BLOOM365 a safe space?**

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. We even have a staff person dedicated to LGBTQ youth. So in short, YES we are absolutely a safe space, and if you ever need anyone to talk to about it do not hesitate to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at 602 799 7017.

**54) Is texting for hours a form of abuse?**

The answer to this question depends entirely on your individual situation. If both partners are comfortable with communicating through text continuously and the desire to text for hours is mutual, this is likely not abusive. If one partner is blowing up the other person's phone or is constantly "checking up" on the other person, this could be a red flag for a potentially unhealthy or abusive relationship.

**56) I am afraid to talk to my mom because sometimes she can be such a jerk, what do I do?**

If someone is putting you down and you can't avoid spending time with them, it's important to make sure that the voice in your head is being kind since those around you are not. If you still have it, take your Hello I Am sheet and orange Post It note (three things you like about yourself) and keep them somewhere that you see everyday to remind yourself of the things that you like about yourself. Remind yourself that the negative things others say about you are not true and keep yourself busy doing things you enjoy! You can also reach out to another trusted adult in your life or a BLOOM365 advocate if you need someone to talk to and don't feel comfortable going to you.

**57) My family makes me suicidal and I wish they would at least pretend to care. How do I get rid of these thoughts and urges without talking to a hotline or friends?**

First off, we want to let you know that you are not alone. If you do not yet feel comfortable seeking help, some ways you may be able to cope with your emotions and deal with these thoughts are to engage in self-care. It's important to take care of not only your physical health, but your mental health as well. 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 find what works for you. We also encourage you to spend time with positive people in your life. Although a lot of times we tend to isolate ourselves and spend time alone when we are in a low place, it's important that we don't isolate ourselves from the positive people in our lives. Spending time with people and doing the things we love can help us to create lasting memories and positive experiences. When and if you do feel comfortable talking or reaching out to someone, please know that anonymous support is also available if you text a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above. You do not have to provide your name if you do not wish to do so. We do encourage you to reach out to a trusted person in your life if these urges and thoughts are more than you can handle or do not go away on their own.

**58) How long would it take to heal an abusive relationship?**

This questions depends on whether you mean trying to fix a relationship that you are currently in that is abusive or heal from a previous relationship that was abusive. Healing is a process, and it may take some people longer than others. Some people find it helpful to talk about their situation and what they went through as a way of healing. BLOOM365 offers weekly support groups for those who have experienced any type of power-based violence. You can also text or call an advocate at the number above for a listening ear or for information on other resources available that can help in healing process. If you are trying to fix an abusive relationship, there really is not definite answer for how long it will take. In order for this to be possible, though, the abusive partner must recognize that their behaviors are abusive and make the choice to change their behaviors, seeking professional support if necessary. We cannot force our partners to change, they have to make the choice themselves.

**DOSE 5**

**59) Making friends is difficult for me, how can I make some friends?**

A great way to make friends is to find people who have similar interests as you. For example, if you like listening to a certain type of music and playing video games, you might try sparking up a conversation

with someone who you've heard talking about video games or the same type of music. Another great way to make friends is by joining clubs, organizations, or a sports team that you are interested in. Stepping outside of our comfort zones can allow us to grow and develop new friendships.

**60) I am in the dance concert for school and someone put me down. How can I improve my self esteem after this has happened?**

If someone is putting you down or if they have put you down in the past, it's important to make sure that the voice in your head is being kind since those around you are not. If you still have it, take your Hello I Am sheet and orange Post It note (three things you like about yourself) and keep them somewhere that you see everyday to remind yourself of the things that you like about yourself. Remind yourself that the negative things others say about you are not true and keep yourself busy doing things you enjoy! You can do daily affirmations which take about a minute in the morning and can aid in the development of greater self love and confidence. You can also surround yourself with positive friends and family who remind you of the great qualities you have and don't put you down.

**DOSE 6**

**61) When two people are under the influence and has sex, who gets in trouble?**

When under the influence, legally you cannot give consent. If both/all parties are the under the influence, then none of them can give consent. The issue then becomes if either person wants to press charges, either person could get in trouble.

**62) Is it rape if you're both crying?**

It is hard to provide a definite answer to your question because there can be a number of reasons for why one or both partners may cry. Depending on your reasoning, you can determine for yourself whether the sexual act was a form of sexual assault. As we learned during the program, consent is required each and every single time an act of sex is initiated. For a person to give consent they cannot be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This means an act is deemed as rape if a person is physically forced to have sex, if a person is threatened or manipulated into having sex, and if the person is unable to give consent (under the influence of drugs or alcohol). If you have any concerns about this matter please reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, the National Sexual Assault Hotline, or a BLOOM365 advocate at the numbers above.

**63) What made you want to get into this kind of stuff like were you faced with these kind of things because I mean I was in an abusive relationship and I know it's hard to deal with and get out?**

Everyone here at BLOOM365 has different reasons for getting involved, some was because of an interest sparked in college, others because they have witnessed or experienced some form of power-based violence in their own lives. The one thing we all have common at BLOOM365 is that we are all passionate about preventing teen dating abuse and creating a more blooming society.

**64) Are video games a good way to resolve conflict or focus your mind during a break up?**

Video games are a great coping skill, they are a good distraction. However, video games do not resolve conflict but instead get your mind temporary off the issue. To better resolve conflict look at your packet

at conflict resolution and 'I statements'. We encourage you to also explore other coping methods such as those listed on page 32.

**65) Is asexuality unnatural?**

This is something you will have to determine for yourself based on your own beliefs. You can explore the research on this topic and then come to your own conclusions on whether you believe it to be natural or not.

**66) Why are people abusive to their partners?**

This is a good question that doesn't really have an easy answer. Most often abuse happens when someone wants to control their partner and they use emotional, physical, sexual, financial, and/or verbal abuse to get that control. When people act abusively, they are making the choice to be abusive. Abuse is never acceptable, and it is never the fault of the person being abused. If someone realizes they're acting abusively, it is possible for someone to change their behavior. Changing abusive (or unhealthy) behavior isn't easy, but if people work at it and find support they can learn new and healthier ways of being in a relationship. If someone has used abuse they can talk about how they are feeling with a guidance counsellor, trusted family member, teacher, friend, or a phone line like the Bloom365 Hotline (1-800-606-HOPE), or an Bloom Advocate at (602) 799-7017.

**67) Can women be abusive in a relationship?**

Yes, women can be perpetrators of abuse in relationships. Due to stigmas surrounding gender norms, male victims are often treated differently because they are expected to "tough it out" or "be a man." Unfortunately, due to these stigmas, male victims are much less likely to reach out. Being abused does NOT make any person less of a man or human being. If you are experiencing abuse in a relationship or if you are a sexual assault survivor, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**68) Are you a feminist?**

Feminism by definition is: the social, political and economic equality of the sexes. Our organization believes in equality, consent, empathy, kindness, and peace for all people.

**69) How can I be there for my older sister who has been through an abusive relationship?**

We cannot force people to get help, that decision is ultimately up to them to make. What we can do is be there to listen to them and provide support. If you look in your packet, you can find a list of the "Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend Going through Dating Abuse": This list can provide some helpful tips on how to start a conversation with your sister. Sometimes people are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do in these situations 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 believe your sister is in serious danger, it's important that you reach out to a trusted adult to ensure her safety. If she is no longer in the relationship, you might try spending time with her doing things you both enjoy and helping to lift her self-esteem.

**70) What do I do if I relapsed (self-harm) and want to tell someone but don't know who to tell?**

School social workers and counselors are a great resource in this situation. You can also always contact a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above for a listening ear as well as to receive information about available resources. If desired, you can also schedule an appointment with your primary care provider to get a referral for therapy. We want you to know that there is always someone available and you are never alone. Teen Lifeline is also a potential resource for a listening ear and to learn about resources in your area.

**71) I am scared because I want to come out to my grandparents and tell them I am a lesbian but they are homophobic and always talk down on the LGBT community; What do I do?**

We encourage you to educate your grandparents on what it means to be apart of the LGBTQ community and the barriers that are faced by people in this community. Coming out to your grandparents may be a process and take time. We encourage you to text or call our LGBTQ advocate at the number above to discuss this situation.

**72) How can you be happy with love?**

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, happy relationship. Although we may view love negatively after heartbreak, love in itself is a happy emotion. When love is experienced as both an emotion and a verb, love can promote feelings of happiness.

**DOSE 7**

**73) I have never felt good about myself. I don't know what to do. I need help with becoming okay in who I am and what I do. What should I do?**

A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. We encourage you to take a moment to recognize things you like or love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. We also recommend watching the following video on daily affirmations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cgw8OFVHzd4>. Doing your own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make you happy can be helpful tools in building up our self esteem." When dealing with low self-esteem, some people find it helpful to talk with a school counselor or a therapist who may be able to help you work through the process of improving your self-esteem and becoming more confident in who you are. You can always reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate for information about available resources in your community.

**74) I am gay and I don't know how to tell my family members, what should I do?**

We encourage you to educate your family on what it means to be apart of the LGBTQ community and the barriers that are faced by people in this community. Coming out to your family may be a process and take time. We encourage you to text or call our LGBTQ advocate at the number above to discuss this situation.

**75) I feel like an outcast and do not fit in, what should I do?**

Being a teenager is a difficult time. As a teenager, feeling accepted by a social group is a common concern. Feeling like you don't fit in or belong is difficult not only for teens but for people of any age. The group that you interact with the most might not have similar interests as you, we suggest that you try to make friends with people who have similar interests. Joining a club, organization, or sports team that interests you may help you to find others with similar interests and make new friends.

**76) I don't know what to do people call me beautiful but I hate when they say it, what's wrong with me?**

Feeling uncomfortable when people call you beautiful does not mean something is wrong with you. We all have our own personal boundaries, and it's important that others are aware of our boundaries so that they can respect them. If this is a common issue among your friend group, family or a specific person, you might try communicating your feelings using "I-statements." For example, you can say "I feel uncomfortable when people make any type of comment about my appearance, and I would feel better if people did not make these comments."