



Elephant in The Room Q & A
“SCHOOL NAME”
SPRING 2018

Resources:

BLOOM365 Advocate	Text or call 928-706-8669 for free, confidential support. Please allow up to 24 hours to receive an initial response.
BLOOM365 Hotline	Call 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)
BLOOM365 Weekly Drop-In Support Group	Every Wednesday (Holidays excluded). Please email contact an advocate 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)

1) If a guy is very sexual is he abusive?

This is where consent comes into play. Consent involves: 1. A firm and enthusiastic YES!, 2. Is not coerced (meaning you are not forced, pressured, or threatened into doing something you do not like or are uncomfortable with), 3. Is not under the influence, and 4. Must be given every time. Just because someone might have said yes one time does not mean that it will be ok the next. If both partners freely

consent to all actions, then this would not be considered sexual abuse. However, if the partner does not receive consent freely, this would be considered sexual abuse.

2) How can you break up with someone without it being awkward later?

Effective communication can be helpful in this situation. Communication allows other people to understand where we are coming from without feeling attacked, which allows them to empathize with us. We highly encourage you to use “I-statements” to communicate. You might communicate to your partner by saying, “I feel we are not compatible, and I think we will both be happier if we break up.” If you want to remain in each others lives, you might say “I would love to remain on good terms. You are important to me, and I hope we can continue to be friends.”

3) My friend is in an unhealthy relationship, but her boyfriend blocked me from her account. I don't know what to do and how can I help? I am worried about her safety. Similar question: I think my friend is in an abusive relationship, but I don't know to talk about it to her because she is not that very nice. If I tell her something she just comes back with a mean comment. I can't tell her boyfriend because he doesn't like me. I'm pretty sure he would tell her anyway.

SIMILAR QUESTION: What do you do if someone you know is in an unhealthy/abusive relationship and refuses to believe they are and won't leave?

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 packet, you can reference the “5 Ways to Help a Friend Going Through Dating Abuse” to a 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 our friends are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let our friends know that we are there for them when they are ready, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone. 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.

4) How do you know if they are possessive before you are dating?

Some warning signs may be if they want to be with you 24/7, if they always need to know where you are/who you are with, and/or if they get jealous when you talk to/spend time with other people.

5) Is it abusive? If they have never met you in person, but they show signs on social media.

Abuse can absolutely occur over social media. Verbal abuse, emotional abuse, threats, put-downs, humiliation, stalking, dominance, coercion, threats, intimidation, and jealousy are all signs of an abusive relationship regardless of whether the partners spend time together physically.

6) If a guy you have liked for a while, breaks up with you, talks really bad about you, but you guys continue to get back together again and again. Is that an abusive relationship?

7) My boyfriend told me that he was in the hospital, but I called and he wasn't. He said that he tried to hurt himself, should I leave him?

8) Is it bad to go back to a bad friendship? My friend and I stopped being friends in November, but I missed her a lot and she felt the same. I already asked if she wanted to talk, and she said yeah, but I don't really know if it's a good idea. She made me happy, but I have been doing okay without her. I have cried a lot because I miss her, but I still don't know if it's a good idea.

9) My friend has cheated and lies to her friends and boyfriend/girlfriend. Her last "girlfriend" didn't even know they were dating. She is a very violent person. Her girlfriend stayed @ home today for fear. I don't know if this is abuse because she hasn't hurt anyone but we don't know what to do...

10) Abusive relationships could stop someday or will it keep going? If one of the partners have problems for example his or her parents are always getting into arguments, the father hits the mother and the child. Could it be that if the child had a relationship he or she could become abusive because they learned it from their parents?

Abusive taught behavior is root cause for teen dating abuse/domestic violence. If a person is exposed to domestic violence at a young age, they are at an increased risk for becoming a perpetrator later in life. This DOES NOT mean that they will definitely be a perpetrator or that they cannot have healthy relationships. Even though this root cause increases one's risk of becoming a perpetrator, they still can make the deliberate choice to have relationships based in equality and freedom.

11) If your parents ground you for every possible thing you do and they are always calling you bitches, rude, entitled, etc. And when you stand up for yourself but you still get in trouble for it what do you do?

12) How can you recover from abuse that was done by one of your relatives in the past? This person is gone (not in the picture), but how can you cope from this?

13) How do you prevent trying to kill yourself when you're feeling down because you're not in the right mind?

First off, we want you to know that you are not alone. School social workers and counselors are a great resource for information on dealing with depression. You can always contact BLOOM365 by texting or calling the number above, and we can help connect you to resources in your area. Another option would be to 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. We encourage you to surround yourself with positive friends and family during this difficult time, and reach out for support when needed.

14) Is it a red flag? if your boyfriend wants to get serious too fast

Wanting to get serious too quickly can be a sign for an unhealthy or potentially abusive relationship. If this is the only “red flag” present in a relationship, it is likely not a concern. What’s most important is that both you and your partner feel comfortable with how the relationship is progressing and that you are both on the same page. However, if you begin to notice more “red flags” as the relationship progresses, we highly encourage you to reach out to an advocate for a listening ear and free, confidential and non-judgemental support.

15) My boyfriend is threatening to hurt himself. I don’t want him to do that what should I do?

16) How do you know you’re ready for a relationship if you’re afraid they will hurt you? Another question is it ok to be a feminist?

We cannot tell you at what age or time you personally are ready for a relationship, because it is different for every person. However, we would suggest to start dating when you yourself feel ready, and you are able to handle the responsibilities that go along with a dating relationship. Check out page 12 of your workbook for a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship. In a healthy relationship, your partner will treat you with respect, and you should never fear that they will hurt you!

17) How do long distance relationships work?

Long distance relationships can be successful if both partners are willing to make the commitment and put in the effort!

18) How do you help someone to stop cutting? Do you think cheating is abuse? If he or she gives you a second chance? Do you think he or she will trust you again the same way? 2 people like me (love me) & want to be with me... What should I Do? Advice please!!?

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 believe your friend is in serious danger, it's important that you reach out to a trusted adult to ensure the safety of your friend. You can always reach a BLOOM365 advocate by texting or calling the number above under resources for a listening ear. There are also other great additional resources listed that might be beneficial.

Dating abuse is a pattern of abusive behaviors used to gain power and control over a dating partner. Equality and freedom are rights that you have as an individual. When someone does not respect your rights, feelings, and opinions and/or the relationship does not have an equal balance of power, it is up to you to decide what you would like to do. If you would like to talk through your options or just need a listening ear, please feel free to text or call a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above for free, confidential support.

19) Why do people feel the need to be mean? Why do people need to feel good instead of feeling sad?

Sometimes people use meanness to gain power and control. Other times it is because they are angry and are feeling rejected, betrayed, etc. Check out page 10 in your workbook to compare the differences between power and control and anger. Have you ever heard the saying “hurt people, hurt people?” Mean people, like the bully on the playground, often feel insecure and use their meanness as a way to

gain power or control. We all experience feelings of sadness at times, but when these feelings last for an extended period of time and begin to affect how we function and interact in our everyday lives, it can be a sign that we are experiencing depression. We highly encourage you to contact a BLOOM365 advocate or Teen Lifeline at the numbers above if you are experiencing these symptoms.

20) Is calling your partner mean names abuse?

Teen dating abuse is defined as “a pattern of behaviors, such as verbal, emotional, and/or physical abuse to gain or maintain power and control. Calling your partner mean names would absolutely be considered be a form of verbal or emotional abuse if it is something that occurs continuously.

21) What if he says he is going to change and he is trying to, but not as fast as you would like to.

We cannot force or expect people to change for us. That decision is ultimately up them. If your partner is displaying one or more of your “deal breakers,” it is up to you to decide what you would like to do. Let’s say my deal breaker was if someone doesn’t have goals/Isn’t ambitious and my deal maker was someone who enjoys spending time outdoors. If I start to date someone who isn’t ambitious and who doesn’t enjoy spending time outdoors, I’m probably going to constantly be nagging them to set goals/work towards bettering themselves and I’m not going to be able to enjoy doing what I love with them (spending time outdoors). If I held true to my deal breakers, my relationship would likely be much healthier and happier. We recommend taking time to identify and reflect on your own deal makers/deal breakers and remembering WHY they are important to you. Again, we should not expect or force people to change to fit our “deal makers”/“deal breakers.”

22) I have depression. I’m always sad. I need my friends. However most of them hate me. I don’t want to live. I can’t handle it anymore. I need help. **

First off, we want you to know that you are not alone. We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult. School social workers and counselors are a great resource for you. You can also schedule an appointment with your primary care provider to get a referral for therapy. Additional resources include Teen Lifeline at the number above.

23) Is it bad to think that guys are the abusers more than girls in a relationship?

While dating abuse is experienced by girls and young women at higher rates, boys and young men do experience abuse as well. Almost 50% of Arizona teens who have experienced dating Abuse have said that they never reported it. Sometimes due to the stigmas surrounding gender norms, young boys and men don’t feel comfortable reaching out for support because they fear they’re be told to “tough it out” or “be a man.” Abuse DOES NOT make any person less of a man or a human being, and we encourage all victims of abuse to seek support from a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate.

24) What are the age ranges of that peer group to help?

BLOOM365 focuses mostly on teens and young adults between the ages of 13 and 24, but we are beginning to work with younger generations as well through our middle school program and a puppet theatre program that we are currently developing.

25) People think walking your girlfriend to class is abusive, I don’t think it is.. Is it?

While walking your partner to class in and of itself wouldn't be considered abusive... If your partner insisted on walking you to class because they didn't trust you and/or they wanted to ensure you weren't talking to anyone else, that might be a red flag for an unhealthy or abusive relationship.

26) Has anyone ever died from teen dating violence?

Unfortunately, yes. During Dose 2, we explored two stories of teens who lost their lives to teen dating violence here in Arizona. Arizona also now has a law called "Kaity's Law" that allows dating partners to be afforded the same protection under the law as domestic partners. This law, which you can read more about on page 20, resulted after a teen in Arizona named Kaity was murdered by her ex-boyfriend.

27) In my opinion jealousy is good, because it shows you care. And everyone gets jealous so... My boyfriend and I have a healthy relationship and I know he would never abuse me or anyone, but we have some traits of a bad relationship. I feel it's healthy and some bad things are good. Thoughts??

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."

28) Can it be easy to get out of an abusive relationship or what happens if they keep coming back?

It's important to remember that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor tries to leave. If you are concerned about your safety, please contact a BLOOM 365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan. Otherwise, talking to your friends to make sure someone can walk with you to and from class can be helpful if they are bothering you at school. If you continue to have issues at school, you may want to reach out to a trusted school staff member about additional steps you can take. If you are experiencing issues online, you may choose to block their number and social media accounts to keep them from contacting you online.

29) Is it necessary to fit into gender norms and roles?

Absolutely not! 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. We believe everyone should feel comfortable being who they are, regardless of their gender. To make change around this issue we must first begin to break down the stereotypes that perpetuate the idea that men and women have to fit into specific roles or "gender boxes."

30) Is it bad to feel bad about yourself when people tell you negative things about your body?

SIMILAR QUESTION: What can I do to boost my self-esteem even if I am told many times that I am ugly? SIMILAR QUESTION: What is a way to help with insecurities? I'm not doing good with myself and it's starting to ruin multiple things in my life. I don't know how to feel good about myself.

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. Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift your self-esteem. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. I encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. I 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."

Remind yourself that the negative things others say about you are not true and keep yourself busy doing things you enjoy!

31) What if your partner jokes about something you're sensitive about?

We encourage you to communicate your feelings and concerns with your partner by using "I" statements. "I feel _____ when you _____, could you please _____." If communicating your feelings does not change your partner's behavior, and your partner is consistently putting you down, it is a warning sign of power and control and could lead to an abusive relationship.

32) If you're in a long-distance relationship, do you think it can still be an abusive relationship?

Abuse can absolutely occur even in long-distance relationships. Verbal abuse, emotional abuse, threats, put-downs, humiliation, stalking, dominance, coercion, threats, intimidation, and jealousy are all signs of an abusive relationship that can occur in long-distance relationships through social media/texting/etc.

Abuse has many different forms (verbal, emotional, and physical). It is not an isolated, one time incident, it's a pattern of abusive behaviors that a partner uses to gain power and control. If you recognize any of the red flags, we highly encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or trusted adult. BLOOM365 advocates are always here to listen and can also provide more clarity if needed.

33) Is having a lot of sex bad or abusive?

As we learned during the program, consent is required each and every single time an act of sex is initiated whether this is in a long term relationship or not. 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 both partners freely consent to all acts, then this would not be considered abusive. If you have any concerns about this matter please reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate.

34) What is the point of this? No one is going to say anything just cause you guys say we can. It's not that easy.

If these things are not talked about and the root causes are not addressed, then these things WILL continue to happen. Change cannot happen if the issues are not talked about and addressed. BLOOM365 believes that your generation and future generations have the ability to change the culture and create a culture where blooming, healthy relationships are the norm. We understand that it can be disheartening to see violence and unhealthy relationships as the norm, but that doesn't mean it HAS to be this way. If you think about it, all social change movements started with someone/a group of people standing up against the norm and breaking the silence. Social change cannot happen if we ignore the problem and refuse to talk about it. It's not always easy to talk about, but we truly believe that this isn't how things have to be. Starting the conversation is the first step in creating change.

35) I don't know if this is an abusive relationship or not but about 4 or 5 months ago I started talking to this guy I guess we were together but things started going downhill very fast. He started calling me names finding little ways to put me down. I tried to leave but he threatened to kill himself and hurt himself when I finally left him he started pushing me around so I got back with him. What should I do?

It's important to remember that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor tries to leave. 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. The act of killing someone can be seen as a final act of total control. The perpetrator starts to lose control of the other person. In some situations, such as with Dorothy and May, the perpetrator exerts power and control over killing themselves and/or their partner. This is why it is so crucial that we take these types of threats seriously and tell a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 advocate. If you are concerned about your safety, please contact a BLOOM 365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan.

36) Why do guys/girls abuse their partners?

Sometimes people witness abuse growing up and start to believe this is what is normal (abusive taught behavior). Other potential root 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, patriarchy, 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 equality and freedom or power and control.

37) I used to be under the care of someone who rarely fed me and rarely interacted with me. Would that be considered abuse?

Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation and emotional abuse. If you do not feel safe at home or have experienced anything listed, then we ask that you please text/call our advocate at the number above for individual advocacy.

38) If your boyfriend doesn't let you leave the relationship is that abuse?

It's important to remember that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the

survivor tries to leave. If you are concerned about your safety, please contact a BLOOM 365 advocate so that you can create a safety plan. Otherwise, talking to your friends to make sure someone can walk with you to and from class can be helpful if they are bothering you at school. If you continue to have issues at school, you may want to reach out to a trusted school staff member about additional steps you can take. If you are experiencing issues online, you may choose to block their number and social media accounts to keep them from contacting you online.

39) If a guy wants to be in control during sex is that abusive?

This is where consent comes into play. Consent is needed for any kind of physical action whether it is a kiss, holding hands, etc.. Communicating your boundaries with your partner early-on in the relationship is crucial. It's important that both partners are aware of what the other partner is comfortable with to ensure that all actions taken are mutually consented to. As the relationship develops and grows, continuous communication about boundaries is super important! Healthy relationships involve respecting our partner's boundaries!

40) I know that my best friend had asked, pertaining to my previous relationship and hopefully not future ones, what to do when you have a hard time saying no and your partner knows this yet continues to do something they know you cant or don't want to. You gave the advice to talk to them about it which I have to disagree with as I did try, multiple times and he still continued. What do you do when you have a hard time talking to your significant other about it or they don't listen when you do?

This is where consent comes into play. Consent is needed for any kind of physical action whether it is a kiss, holding hands, etc.. Communicating your boundaries with your partner early-on in the relationship is crucial. It's important that both partners are aware of what the other partner is comfortable with to ensure that all actions taken are mutually consented to. As the relationship develops and grows, continuous communication about boundaries is super important! Healthy relationships involve respecting our partner's boundaries! To determine if you have consent from your partner you might ask: "Are you comfortable?", "Is this okay?", "Do you want to slow down?", or "Do you want to go any further?" Some ways you may communicate consent are: "I feel/do not feel comfortable with this", "I want to slow down", or "I want to/do not want to go any further." Remember that consent is a clear and enthusiastic yes. The response "maybe", the lack of a yes, and silence are NOT consent! Remember that consent must be freely given and not coerced, meaning that it is NOT consent if the partner feels pressured/afraid to say no or are threatened to say yes. Consent can also NOT be given under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

41) I think I am gay what do I do?

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. Sebastian is our LGBTQ Lead Advocate in Phoenix, and he'd be happy to talk to you further. You can text or call him at 602-799-7017 for free, confidential support and information. Sebastian can also provide you with more information about additional resources available in your area!

42) My brother is in a physical and mental abusive relationship he knows in it but he wont leave. Why is that? We have tried to help him but he just wont break up with her, what do we do?

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. 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. On page 15, you can reference the "Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend Going through Dating Abuse. You can be there for your brother and let them know that you are always there to talk. This lets your brother come to you for help whenever they feel comfortable. You can try to uplift your brother by telling him positive things and spending time with them doing activities together that will take their mind away from the negatives. There are also some great resources listed above for you if you need to talk to someone or you can let your brother know about the resources if he decides he would like to talk to someone.

43) Me and a few of my friends have noticed that another one of our friends is in an abusive relationship. She won't listen to us how can we get her to realize that her boyfriend is abusive.

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. On page 15, you can reference the "Top 5 Ways to Help a Friend Going through Dating Abuse. You can be there for your friend and let them know that you are always available to talk. This will let your friend come to you for help whenever they feel comfortable. Try to uplift your friend by telling them positive things and spending time with them doing activities together that will take their mind away from the negatives.

44) My best friend, her boyfriend emotionally and mentally abuses her. She gets mad when I talk to her about him. She says she loves him and doesn't want to leave him. He tells her to delete posts of her social media accounts. Tells her "did I say you can post that?" I liked him in the beginning but not anymore. They've broken up multiple time but got back together.

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. They may not feel comfortable talking to an adult, and would rather talk to you. 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 the survivor. We cannot make people get help if they do not want to, but we can help our friends feel supported. Sometimes our friends 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 our friends know that we are there for them when they are ready, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone. If you believe your friend is in serious danger, it's important that you reach out to a trusted adult to ensure the safety of your friend.

45) My best friend is in an abusive relationship but he told her he changed so they got back together and now hes back to his old ways. He doesn't let her hang out with me so how do I help? We don't talk or see each other because of him.

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 packet, you can reference the "5 Ways to Help a Friend Going Through Dating Abuse" to start a conversation with your friend. You can also tear out the extra red flag checklist on page 41 in your workbook and talk to your friend about why you are concerned. You can encourage them to reach out to BLOOM365, but recognize that we can not force someone to seek help or leave if they are not yet ready. If you are seriously concerned for their safety, we encourage you to tell a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate.

46) I broke up with my ex because he was abusing me but now he keeps coming after me with verbal abuse and saying he's gonna hurt me really bad if I ignore him and don't get back together with him.

It's important to remember that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor tries to leave. If you are concerned about your safety, please contact a BLOOM 365 advocate at the number above so that you can create a safety plan. Otherwise, talking to your friends to make sure someone can walk with you to and from class can be helpful if they are bothering you at school. If you continue to have issues at school, you may want to reach out to a trusted school staff member about additional steps you can take. If you are experiencing issues online, you may choose to block their number and social media accounts to keep them from contacting you online.

47) If a guy you are in a relationship with calls you or messages you every 20 minutes when you told him your busy is that abusive?

Calling or texting you repeatedly to check up on you is a red flag that you can find on page 17 of your workbook. It always can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you to determine whether a relationship is healthy or unhealthy. It's also important to remember your rights and responsibilities within relationships. In a relationship, you have the right to: Make decisions together (equality), have opinions, express your feelings, and choose activities (freedom), be yourself (individuality), and safety. You also have the responsibility of respecting these rights of your partner and your partner's boundaries. Healthy relationships are stemmed in equality and freedom and exhibit the words seen in the center of the blooming flower. If you have any concerns about this matter or would like additional support please reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

48) If a guy or girl in the relationship hit their mate once and then apologized is it abuse. Yes or No How is jealousy abuse?

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.

It is important to remember that even if it was a one time event, the abuse was absolutely not your fault. Physically assaulting you is a red flag of power and control that we discussed in Dose 2. If you do not feel safe or fear that this may occur again in the future, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or a trusted adult to discuss this situation.

49) Do abusers know that they are abusers?

There are a number of root causes for abuse that we explored during doses 3&4. Some people may be abusive to their partners because they were exposed to violence in their homes as a child and taught that this behavior was normal or okay. Rigid belief in gender norms can also play a role. Insecurity is another root cause. If someone lacks confidence, they may try to gain power or control over their partner in an attempt to feel better. Remember, though, that even though this root causes increase one's risk of becoming a perpetrator, they still can make the deliberate choice to have relationships based in equality and freedom. They may not have taken the time to think or draw attention to their actions, but we all have the choice at the end of the day on how we are going to treat another person. It can be difficult for someone to change unhealthy behaviors they have developed, but they certainly can change if they want to! The first step is recognizing the problematic behavior and deciding they want to change. Reaching out to a BLOOM365 advocate is a great way to find someone who can help them identify what behaviors are harming themselves and others so that they can change them into healthy behaviors.

50) I was in an abusive relationship with this guy. He would get jealous if I talked to any of my guy friends. He'd grab me and yell at me, but he'd text me later on saying I'm sorry, I love you, I didn't mean it, I need you, etc. I ended it, but I'm scared that'll happen again. So it stops me from dating.

In this case it is important to remember that the abuse you experienced is not your fault. Often times an abusive person will minimize their behavior to shift their responsibility for their actions and try to manipulate the situation. As we discussed in Dose 2, being violently or constantly jealous is a major red flag of power and control that increases your risk for being seriously hurt or even kill. You should never feel unsafe in your relationship. If you do not feel safe or fear that the abuse may occur again in the future, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or a trusted adult to discuss this situation. A BLOOM365 advocate can help you determine what steps you'd like to take to help ensure you are safe and that you feel safe. If you already feel safe and need some assistance in beginning the healing process, we also encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate for available resources. Please text or call the number above to speak with a BLOOM365 advocate about your situation or reach out to another trusted adult in your life.

51) Is it bad to have sex at our age? Is it abuse?

This question is difficult to answer, as it is different for everyone. We cannot tell you what age is "good" or "bad" to have sex as this is really going to depend on the individual. What's important is that both partners feel ready and that both partners freely consent. Consent is needed for any kind of physical action whether it is a kiss, holding hands, etc.. Communicating your boundaries with your partner early-on in the relationship is crucial. It's important that both partners are aware of what the other partner is comfortable with to ensure that all actions taken are mutually consented to. If you have any concerns about this matter or would like additional support please reach out to a trusted

adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

52) Do some of the signs in dating abuse fit in with the signs in child abuse?

While the focus of the 7 doses is on teen dating abuse, a lot of this information is also applicable to other forms of power-based abuse and violence (i.e. domestic violence, bullying, child abuse, gender-based violence, etc.). Our advocates are also available to talk about child abuse issues!

53) I have recently found out that my dad hit my mom while I was in the womb and would call her mean things. He also yelled at me and probably would have hit me but my brother stepped in. Should I give him another chance?

We want to first start off by saying thank you so much for telling your story. It can be difficult for someone to change unhealthy behaviors they have developed, but they certainly can change if they want to! The first step helping them identify what behaviors are harming themselves and others so that they can change them into healthy behaviors. We know this can be a hard topic to talk about especially with a parent, but if you do feel comfortable doing so, you can visit page 16 in your workbook for tips on how to start the conversation. If the situation is not dangerous we can try the communication technique we learned in the classroom to express our feeling and the changes we would like to be made in the relationship using “I statements”. I feel _____ when you _____ can you please do _____ instead. If the situation is dangerous, you can call or text the number above for additional support.

54) Let’s say one of our friends keep saying that she was in an abusive relationship and yet she kept saying that she loved him and got back with him for years. What does that mean or like was she really in an abusive relationship

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 packet, 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 our friends are not ready to accept the help we would like to offer them. The most important thing we can do is let our friends know that we believe them and that the abuse is not their fault and this can ultimately help them recognize the cycle of abuse they are in. When they are ready, make sure they are safe, and let them know that they are not alone. If you recognize the top 5 risk factors on the red flags list, it’s important to tell an adult you trust because this means that your friend could be at risk of getting injured or even killed.

55) Do you believe abusers can change?

It can be difficult for someone to change unhealthy behaviors they have developed, but they certainly can change if they want to! The first step is recognizing the problematic behavior and deciding they want to change. Reaching out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above is a great way to find someone who can help them identify what behaviors are harming themselves and others so that they can change them into healthy behaviors.

56) If there is abuse in the house between a mother and father... is that considered child abuse? (physical between parents, but not physical towards the child). Is that child abuse punishable by law?

Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation and emotional abuse. If you do not feel safe at home then we ask that you please text/call our advocate at the number above for individual advocacy.

57) Do you think teens under 18 should be dating even if they have a healthy relationship?

We cannot tell you at what age you should start dating, because it is different for every person. However, we would suggest to start dating when you feel ready, and you are able to handle the responsibilities that go along with a dating relationship. Check out page 12 of your workbook for a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship.

58) How do you know when your being emotionally abused?

Some signs of emotional abuse include: Name calling/put downs, threats and intimidation, ignoring/excluding, isolation, and humiliation. Perpetrators will often also use a pattern of minimizing, denying, and blaming. For example: Minimizing the behavior by saying they are just having a bad day or that the victim is being too sensitive, denying that they ever did it, or blaming the victim by saying that it's their fault and they made them do it.

59) Why do guys get made fun of for showing emotion.

Due to stigmas surrounding gender norms, guys are often expected to "tough it out" or "be a man." This is what we consider an "unhealthy gender norm," and something we aspire to change! Everyone should feel comfortable expressing their emotions, we are all human!

60) I got into a relationship about 3 months ago and it's going really well. Lately I have been hating myself more than usual. I'm not sure why I started feeling this so suddenly. It's not because of him but its getting in the way of us being happy together cause I'm not happy and that makes him not happy.

Insecurity can definitely impact a relationship. Self-esteem is one of the root solutions to healthy relationships! Focusing on the things we love about ourselves can be one helpful way to lift your self-esteem. A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. I encourage you to take a moment to remember the things you love about yourself (your strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down and having them easily accessible can help build your confidence. I 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.

