



**Elephant in The Room Q & A  
Camelback High School  
Spring 2018**

**Resources:**

<b>BLOOM365 Advocate</b>	<b>Text or call 602-799-7017 for free, confidential support. Please allow up to 24 hours to receive an initial response.</b>
<b>BLOOM365 Hotline</b>	<b>Call 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)</b>
<b>BLOOM365 Drop-In Support Groups</b>	<b>Every Monday (Holidays excluded). Please email teens@bloom365.org or text 602-799-6096 for more information.</b>
<b>Teen Lifeline</b>	<b>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</b>
<b>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</b>	<b>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</b>
<b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b>	<b>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</b>
<b>National Sexual Assault Hotline</b>	<b>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</b>

**Q: Student**

**A: BLOOM365 Advocate**

**Dose 1**

**Q: How do you end a bad friendship?**

**A:** If you feel comfortable, you might start by having a conversation with your friend about how you're feeling and why you're feeling that way. Using "I statements" can help you to take ownership of your own feelings and allow your friend to feel empathy. This may help your friend to recognize that your friendship isn't currently healthy and what can be done to improve your friendship. If you believe you

are better off ending the friendship, you may also want to have a conversation with that person to express why you think that this friendship is making you “wilt”, and that you feel you will be able to really “bloom” more if you end the friendship.

**Q: What happens if you dated someone that hit you and screamed at you but right now you are dating someone.**

**A:** If you feel that you would benefit from talking through your experiences, please feel free to text/call an advocate at the number above for free, confidential support. We also would love for you to join our BLOOM365 drop-in support group,s which are held every Monday (holidays excluded). Please email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) for more information. Making use of healthy coping strategies can also be helpful in moving forward. You can find some examples in Dose 5 of your workbook.

**Q: I’m scared of opening up to my boyfriend who is now my ex/best friend and I’m scared of opening up. He flirts with me and treats me like a princess, and I’m so confused I don’t want to lose him I don’t want him to feel like I’m hiding anything. I always open up to him. I tell him everything. And I love him a lot, he means a lot to me. I don’t want to lose him or anything.**

**A:** It can be scary to open up about our feelings sometimes, and you should up open only when you are ready. If you do not want to talk to your boyfriend, you can speak to BLOOM 365 advocate at the number above for free, confidential support. We also invite you to attend our drop-in support group, every Monday (Holidays excluded). Please email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) for more information.

## Dose 2

**Q: My mom is in an abusive relationship and she says she loves him but its not love. She thinks he will change but it’s already been 4 years. SIMILAR QUESTION: My mother is in an abusive relationship and he will not leave. What should I do?**

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 (1-800-799-SAFE(7233)). Don’t be discouraged if they are not ready to make the call. Remember the importance of not blaming the victim and understand their 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.

**Q: How old do you need to be to intern at BLOOM?**

**A:** Most of our interns are college students, but we have opportunities for teens to get involved and volunteer as well! Teens have the opportunity to become trained as Peer Educators and/or Peer Advocates! To learn more, email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) or visit <https://www.bloom365.org/advocates>.

**Q: Should we let our boyfriend hit us if he threatens us?**

**A:** Threats of physical violence can be a red flag for a potentially unhealthy or abusive relationship. If you feel that you are in any danger, we encourage you to share this situation with a trusted adult in your life, a school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. Some additional resources can be found above. If this person attends school with you and threats are occurring on campus or 24/7 via texts or social media, it is important for you to share this situation with your school social worker or another adult on campus that you can trust.

**Q:What does the number 365 mean in the name?**

**A:**The number 365 in “BLOOM365” represents the number of days in a year. We want to Bring Love On Others More (BLOOM) and encourage others to BLOOM all 365 days of the year!

### **Dose 3**

**Q: What if power is given? Like one person in the relationship has more power but doesn't take advantage of it. The power the person has was given by the other. The relationship is happy and healthy. Is it wrong or no?**

**A:** Healthy relationships are stemmed in equality and freedom. In a healthy relationship, both individuals understand their own rights to safety, equality, individuality, and boundaries and respect these rights of their partner. You can explore your rights and responsibilities further on page 12 of your workbook. Unhealthy relationships exhibit unhealthy power and control. For example, your partner telling you what to wear or telling you who you can or can't hang out with. We would be happy to discuss your situation further if you'd like to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**Q: How do I know if I should end the relationship? What do I do, if so?**

**A:** You will need to determine for yourself whether or not you think you want to end the relationship. We encourage you to engage in healthy relationships that are stemmed in equality and freedom, but we recognize there are many barriers to leaving unhealthy or abusive relationships. If you feel that your relationship is unhealthy or even abusive and you want to end it, we encourage you to reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate or a trusted adult for assistance in creating a safety plan. Leaving an abusive relationship can be dangerous, and we want to ensure that all the proper steps are taken to ensure you are safe. A BLOOM365 advocate can also provide free, confidential support if you need someone to talk to and help connect you to additional resources if needed.

**Q: On page 24. The second picture, what does the little girl mean? Why is she holding a umbrella towards the red and black?**

**A:** This picture was created by a student at another high school as part of their creative project. Art can be interpreted in many different ways. We encourage you to interpret this image using your own creativity, as there are many possibilities for what this image signified to the original artist.

**Q: I'm homophobic. Stop saying guys have more power. It's stupid that you are such a feminist.**

**A:** Everyone is entitled to their opinion. However, BLOOM365 believes that every person deserves to have healthy and safe relationships. Our goal is not to intimidate one group. We do hope that our program helps you to recognize that both men and women can contribute to objectification and that both

objectification and hypermasculinity can play out in various ways in our everyday lives. Unhealthy gender norms and patriarchy can also negatively impact both women and men. Male victims are much less likely to reach out for help if they are experiencing abuse and oftentimes suffer in silence. While our ideas and philosophies may seem to align with feminist ideals in some circumstances, BLOOM365 does not associate itself with any one specific political ideology. We encourage both men and women to be a part of our movement to uproot rigid beliefs in unhealthy gender norms and promote healthy relationships stemmed in equality and freedom.

**Q: How do you think the males would react if a male BLOOM365 agent hosted this session?**

**A:** It really depends. Our lead advocate, Sebastian, has had great feedback during dose 3 but he has also received some push back as well. Ideally, all teens who go through our program would be open to engaging in the Dose 3 conversation and recognizing how this issues play out in our society regardless of the gender of the facilitator.

**Q: Why do we assume what people like by their gender?**

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

#### Dose 4

**Q: What if you're not interested in relationships ever?**

**A:** Even if you are not currently in a romantic relationship or do not have interest in ever pursuing one, this information is still relevant to you. You can apply just about everything we've covered to your friendships as well. Friendships can also be healthy or unhealthy! It can be helpful to really look at whether your friends are helping you to bloom or if they are bringing you down and making you wilt.

**Q: What if you're transgender (I am) and you like both masculine and feminine things?**

**A:** Oftentimes, regardless of gender identity, people like a mix of things that are stereotypically "masculine" as well as things that are stereotypically "feminine". There is nothing wrong with that! 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. For example, if someone is all of the "masculine" norms and believes that's all he could be and he dates someone who is all the "feminine" norms and she believes that's all she could be, this couple is at increased risk for a relationship stemmed in power and control.

#### Dose 5

**Q: What should we do if we think someone's in an abusive relationship they may not think they are in one and you don't want to be the one to tell them because you think they might get mad/upset.**

**A:** It is very important to 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. 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. 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 are seriously concerned for their safety, we encourage you to tell a trusted adult or BLOOM365 advocate.

**Q: I'm sometimes a blooming flower but I'm mostly wilting. I try to be positive but people keep bullying me. It makes me feel bad about myself and makes me wanna die. I even have a poem. I'm happy, I smile, I laugh. Believe me, I'm trying, but deep down I'm dying. I need someone to talk to and to help me.**

**A:** If someone is putting you down, it's important to make sure that the voice in your head is being kind since those around you are not. Remind yourself that the negative things others say about you are not true and keep yourself busy doing things you enjoy! 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. Additionally, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult (teacher, school social worker, etc.) to let them know you are being bullied and to come up with potential solutions to address this issue.

**Q: Do you love your job?**

**A:** While this work isn't always easy, none of us would be here if we didn't love what we do! All of our staff, volunteers, and interns are passionate about this work.

**Q: I just ended a very unhealthy relationship, what do I do next?**

**A:** Finding healthy ways to cope after or during an unhealthy relationship can be an important next step. For example, spending time doing things that make you happy and spending time with the positive people in your life. You might also try exploring a new hobby or join a sports team or club. You can find more tips for coping with a break up in Dose 5 of your workbook. BLOOM365 also offers free and confidential text and phone support. Feel free to text or call an advocate at the number above. We also highly encourage you to join us for our weekly drop-in support group on Monday nights. For more details, email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) or text 602-799-6096.

**Q: What should I do if I was raped?**

**A:** We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult. This may be a parent, a school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. We offer drop in support groups on Monday nights, which might be helpful in the healing process. We also offer individual advocacy. You can text/call an advocate at the number above to determine how you would like to make the report and to learn about the available resources. You can also contact the National Sexual Assault Hotline at the number listed above.

**Q: Why do people like abuse?**

**A:** 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.

**Dose 6**

**Q: You don't have to know me but I feel really weird about this school. Help.**

**A:** We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate to discuss your situation. You should never feel unsafe or uncomfortable in your school environment, and we want to ensure that this situation is addressed so that you can learn in a positive, safe environment.

**Q: Have you or any person from the “Bloom It Up” team ever been in an abusive relationship or had a friend who talked to you about currently being in one? SIMILAR QUESTION: Have you been in an abusive relationship before? How did you escape?**

**A:** At BLOOM365, we have all had different experiences and reasons why we do our jobs. Some of us are passionate about this cause due to our own experiences or the experiences of others we are close to. While this is not true for everyone on our team, we are all passionate about this cause and trained to help teens who have or are currently experiencing some form of power-based violence. If you are currently experiencing an abusive relationship that you are trying to escape, we highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or BLOOM365 advocate. A BLOOM365 advocate can help you to create a safety plan. We know that the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor tries to leave. We want to ensure that you can end and leave the relationship safely.

**Q: Where do people go when over 24?**

**A:** For people over the age of 24 who are experiencing abuse or any sexual violence, there are other resources and services available. Some services available for people over 24 include: The Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence [(602)-279-2900], National Domestic Violence Hotline [(800)-799- SAFE (7233)], and the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network [(800)-656-HOPE (4673)]. A BLOOM365 advocate can also help connect anyone over the age of 24 to specific services and resources as needed.

**Q: What if a couple is arguing but they both have power and no ones in control. Is that still an abusive relationship?**

**A:** Arguments occur in relationships and friendships, but that doesn't always mean that the relationship or friendship is abusive or unhealthy. In an unhealthy or abusive relationship, one person holds power and control over another. It's important to recognize that while it sometimes might seem like both partners are abusive in these types of relationships, 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 type of situation, we recommend reaching out to an advocate at the number above.

**Q: Why do you think that people have started drifting away from focusing?**

**A:** These conversations can sometimes be difficult and uncomfortable to have. Some people who have experienced abuse and violence in their lives may distance themselves from the conversation or try to change the subject as a method of coping with these difficult situations. Others are unaware of how serious these issues can be. These conversations, though, are so important for us to have and could potentially save lives. We try to keep the doses as interactive and fun as possible, but sometimes the topics are more serious and we have to take them as such. If you have any suggestions for interactive activities, we'd love to hear them! You can email them to [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org)

**Q: How did the Bloom program start?**

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

**Q: How do you stop a problem you started?**

This is a difficult question to answer without knowing the context of the problem or situation. It may be helpful to communicate your feelings with the person or people involved using "I statements." This can help the other person or people to understand how you are feeling and feel empathy while also offering the opportunity for you to offer a resolution or solution to the problem. If you'd like to discuss your individual situation with a BLOOM365 advocate, please feel free to call or text the number above.

**Q: How would you handle your relationship you been in for 2 years?**

There are many barriers to leaving an abusive relationship, and it certainly isn't easy to end a relationship you have been in for a long period of time. If you recognize that your relationship is unhealthy or abusive, it is up to you what you'd like to do. You absolutely deserve a healthy relationship stemmed in equality and freedom, but know that abuse is never your fault. If the relationship is unhealthy, but not abusive... You might try and work with your partner to address these issues. Using "I statements" can be helpful in taking ownership of your own feelings, allowing the other person to feel empathy, and offering a solution or resolution to the problem. In a healthy relationship, both individuals understand their own rights to safety, equality, individuality, and boundaries and respect these rights of their partner. You can explore your rights and responsibilities further on page 12 of your workbook. It may be helpful to have a conversation with your partner about these topics. If your partner is unwilling to compromise and work on fixing the relationship, you can make the choice of whether you want to continue the relationship or end it. If you recognize that your relationship is abusive, we recommend reaching out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate for assistance in leaving/ending the relationship safely. You can text/call a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above for free, confidential support.

**Q: What if we didn't have abuse, violence, Bloom? What is no one spoke up?**

If you aren't currently in a dating relationship, this program is still relevant to you! Unhealthy relationships can still occur within friendships. This program applies to dating relationships and friendships in regards to dating abuse, sexual assault, gender-based violence, and even bullying. The goal of this program is to help provide you with tools so that you can have healthier friendships and relationships both now and in the future!

**Q: I was sexually harassed. The guy pulled me in his house and asked me if I had a boyfriend. I thought he was my uncle's friend because we knew him. He didn't let me leave, he kissed and licked my neck. I wanted him to stop so he did. He locked me in a closet telling me my grandma was outside calling me. I was so scared to yell, he even put money in my pocket on my boob. When I left, I ran outside to my friend since she lives close to me.**

A: We know these things aren't easy to talk about and can be difficult to deal with. We want you to know that this was not your fault, and we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 advocate to discuss this situation. An advocate can help discuss how you'd like to make a report and to connect you to available resources. We also have drop-in support group on Monday nights that might be helpful in the healing process. Email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) for more information.

**Dose 7**

**Q: The 4 D's: How is delay to check in, doesn't delay mean to like procrastinate?**

A: Delay can mean to procrastinate. As an active bystander intervention strategy, though, delay means to wait and check-in with the victim AFTER the incident. So, you are waiting until after the situation has ended to ensure that the victim is okay and to make sure they know about available resources. In some ways, this is similar to procrastination.

**Q: Have you ever had depression or anger over an unhealthy relationship?**

A: Anger is a natural emotion, and everyone experiences anger at some point in their lives for various reasons. Sadness is a common emotion felt after a break-up or even during an unhealthy relationship. We recommend using the coping strategies provided in your workbook in dose 5. While general sadness following a break up or unhealthy relationship is to be expected, symptoms of depression could be cause for concern. If you notice the following warning signs/symptoms present for more than two weeks for most of the day everyday, this may be a result of depression: Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed, withdrawal from friends/family, changes in appetite/weight, preoccupation with death/dying, difficulty concentrating in school, feeling tired or irritable, and sleeping too little or too much. If you believe you might be depressed, we highly recommend you reach out to a trusted adult, a BLOOM365 advocate, or your school social worker for support. A BLOOM365 advocate can help connect you with resources and provide free, confidential support. You can also call Teen Lifeline at the number above. If you have experienced or are currently experienced an unhealthy relationship, we encourage you to also consider joining our weekly drop-in support group on Monday nights. Email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) or text 602-799-6016 for more information.