



**Elephant in The Room Q & A  
Barry Goldwater 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 Weekly Drop-In Support Group	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 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) Is all jealousy 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.

### **2) Why do people feel the need to hurt people when they’re angry?**

It’s difficult to say why people hurt others when they are angry, but one reason might be that they are feeling a lack of control in their own lives and are looking to gain control over something. Unfortunately, this can end up being another person. When someone faces oppression, one of the root causes of abuse, they may feel like they do not have control over their lives. It’s important to note, though, that this isn’t an excuse for abusive behavior since we all have the option to choose not to hurt others.

### **3) What happens if a sibling is being mean, controlling, and threatening?**

Someone trying to take power and control over their sibling 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.

### **4) Are verbal and physical abuse the same?**

Both verbal and physical abuse are tactics a perpetrator may use to gain or maintain power and control over their partner. The two may occur simultaneously at times, but they are different. Verbal abuse typically involves yelling, screaming, rampaging, or refusing to talk. On the other hand, physical abuse can involve: Hitting, kicking, biting, shaking, pinching, pushing, pulling hair, choking, hitting with an object, threatening with a weapon, and/or threatening physical assault. Both have the same root causes, however, physical abuse includes all physical actions that hurt/violate the person; while verbal abuse consists of only abusive language.

### **5) What can I do and where can I get help for depression?**

First of all, we want you to know that you are not alone. Teen Lifeline is a great organization that specifically works with youth experiencing depression. You can reach them at 602-248-8336.

### **6) What is the difference between LOVE and BEING IN LOVE?**

There isn’t much difference between “love” and “being in love.” We do tend to talk about “being in love” only with romantic relationships while “love” is more general. For example, someone might love their best friend but be in love with their spouse.

## **Dose 2**

### **7) Is there some kind of law for dating abuse?**

Some of the actions an abuser might take against their victim are illegal, and abusers can face legal consequences for them. Additionally, a victim of dating abuse can get an Order of Protection (commonly known as a “restraining order”) which makes it so that the abuser can be arrested for coming near the victim. BLOOM365 advocates can help teens file protection orders against their abusers. You can text or call an advocate for free and confidential support or assistance at 602-799-7017.

**8) Would calling the cops be the first thing I should do if my friend is being abused?**

Sometimes it’s a good idea to call the police, but sometime’s it is not. If you see your friend being physically assaulted and are worried for their safety, call the police if you feel comfortable doing so or find someone who is (a teacher or parent, for example). You can find other ideas in the 5 Ways to Help a Friend page in your workbook or by reaching out to an BLOOM365 advocate at 1-888-606-HOPE.

**9) If the abuser has a mental disorder do they have any excuses?**

We always have the choice to either bloom or wilt. A mental illness or learning disorder might contribute to negative feelings in someone’s life that might lead them to seek power and control over someone else, but that is not an excuse for abusive behavior.

**10) I have been abused in more ways than one, it's all over now. I am safe, but I still think about it. How do I get over it? How do I get it to stop affect me?**

First of all, it’s important to remember that the abuse was not your fault and you are so strong for surviving different forms of abuse. Experiencing abuse can emotionally and physically impact on a person, and it's important that this is dealt with properly to help the survivor move forward. We encourage you to text or call an advocate (602-799-7017) who can help you take the steps to healing. Some additional resources include: The National Teen Dating Violence Hotline (24/7 support: 1-866-331-9474 or text “loveis” to 22522), email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org), local support: 1-888- 606-HOPE (4673).

**11) Why are people mean?**

There are infinite reasons why someone is mean to others, most of them stem from the root causes of power and control. Often, someone might be insecure about themselves and look to bring others down instead of building themselves up.

**12) I need help because my boyfriend is not supporting me and calls me names.**

These sound like red flags for a potentially unhealthy relationship. You can reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by phone at 1-888-666-HOPE or text at 602-799-7017. We’d be happy to talk with you more about this.

**Dose 3**

**13) Is what we talked about today discrimination or sexism?**

Sexism is an overall belief while discrimination is an action, so both! We discussed the sexism present in unhealthy gender norms in class today. Discrimination based on gender happens when someone acts on their sexist belief. For example, a coach who believes that girls can’t play football (a sexist belief) could discriminate against girls by not allowing them to try out for the team.

**14) Is it possible for the person who has power or is abusive to get in a relationship and the partner ends up with power over them? I.E. The abuser becomes the abused.**

Those who are exposed to violence as a child or throughout their lives are at an increased risk for becoming a perpetrator or victim later in life. This is the root cause of abusive taught behavior that we explored in Dose 4. To answer your question, it is possible for a previous perpetrator to later be a victim in another relationship as we know abuse has no bias.

**15) Why do all the videos show men being the perpetrator?**

Unfortunately, there is a common misconception in our society that only men are abusers. This is reflected in the lack of videos showing female perpetrators. If you would like to help us create original digital media showing more diverse types of abusive relationships, please email us at [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org)!

**16) How can an abuser change their ways?**

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 602-799-7017 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.

**17) How come the feminine have more exceptions and the masculine have more norms? Similar question: How come it is easier to come up with feminine norms than masculine?**

This may have been due to the imagination of your classmates! You could spend days listing the norms and exceptions for both masculine and feminine people.

**18) If you get cat called should you confront them or just walk away?**

Everyone reacts differently to catcallers! Whatever you feel most comfortable with and what is safest is the best option. If you're interested in different ways that women and girls react to catcallers, you can check out [ihollaback.org](http://ihollaback.org)!

**19) What exactly is the difference between feminine and masculine, for example like norm and exception?**

Our society is setup to recognize two very different genders, men and women. Men are assumed to have masculine traits and women are assumed to have feminine traits. We know that men and boys might not always want to be masculine and women and girls might not always want to be feminine so BLOOM365 talks about masculine traits and feminine traits rather than "traits men have" and "traits women have."

**Dose 4**

**20) Can men be survivors of sexual assault?**

Yes! Abuse knows no bias, and men can also be victims/survivors of sexual assault. Due to stigmas surrounding gender norms, guys 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 (602-799-7017) who can help you determine what steps you might want to take next.

**21) Where did the numbers for the soccer stats come from?**

The image shown in dose 4 representing the differences in pay for U.S. mens’ and womens’ soccer teams is from the New York Times.

**Dose 5**

**22) Why is your organization, which has been around for awhile, so committed to its goal and success even though the programs that you stand against have gotten worse?**

Our passion for creating a healthier and safer life for you guys will not stop. We understand that some things are getting worse, but we also care that you engage in healthier relationships. Nobody deserves to be abused and society needs a generation to stand up for healthy relationships.

**Dose 6**

**23) What would you do if the person you broke up with threatened to hurt you if you don’t go back out with them?**

We know the most dangerous time of a relationship is when you are trying to exit the relationship. The perpetrator feels a loss of power and control over the victim and thus causing them to react violently sometimes. If you feel as if your life is at risk immediately, Call 9-1-1. You can call BLOOM365 at 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) if you feel that your life is not at risk immediately. You may also contact a BLOOM365 Advocate at (602)799-7017 for additional help with the next steps.

**24) Is liking being controlled a bad thing?**

It is important that there is an equal balance of power in relationships. In a relationship, you have the right to:

- Equality: Make decisions together
- Freedom: Have opinions, express your feelings, and choose activities
- Individuality: Be yourself
- Safety: Feel safe and take steps to be safe

You also have the responsibility of respecting these rights of your partner and your partner’s boundaries. To answer your question, this is where consent comes into play. I encourage you and your partner to outline your own boundaries within the relationship (see page 31) and to always remember the importance of consent in all aspects of your relationship.

**25) Is it true that girls still get payed less?**

Yes. According to the Government's Accountability Office (GAO, 2011), when factors that affect pay are controlled, women still earned 86 cents for every dollar men earned in 2010.

### **Dose 7**

#### **26) Can you help me find LGBTQ youth resources?**

Yes! Sebastian is our LGBTQ Advocate and he'd be happy to connect you with resources. You can text or call him at 602-799-7017 for free, confidential support and information about available resources. Some organizations you may want to check out are: OneNTen and GLSEN. Sebastian can provide you with more information about these organizations and other resources available in your area!

#### **27) Where can I get help with depression? Do you guys help with depression? How can you end depression?**

First off, we want you to know that you are not alone. Although we do not specifically work with teens experiencing depression, we are always here to listen! We do work alongside a few organizations that specifically help youth experiencing depression, including Teen Lifeline. You can contact them at 602-248-TEEN (8336). 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.