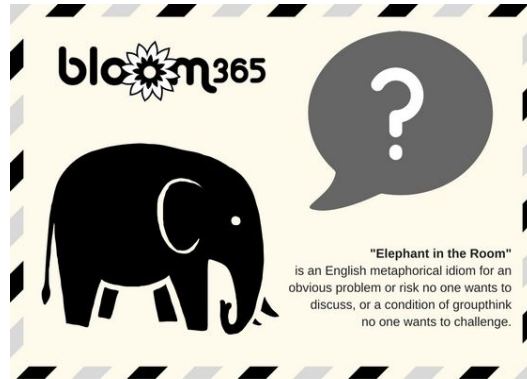


# Elephant in The Room Q & A

Deer Valley High School  
Spring 2018



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

## Resources:

*\*For additional resources, please visit [bloom365.com/resources](http://bloom365.com/resources)\**

<b>BLOOM365 Advocate</b>	Text or call 602-799-7017 for free, confidential support. Please allow up to 24 hours to receive an initial response.
<b>BLOOM365 Hotline</b>	Call 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)
<b>BLOOM365 Drop-In Support Groups</b>	Every Monday (Holidays excluded). Please email <a href="mailto:teens@bloom365.org">teens@bloom365.org</a> or text 602-799-6096 for more information.
<b>Teen Lifeline</b>	Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.
<b>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</b>	Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7
<b>National Domestic Violence Hotline</b>	1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
<b>National Sexual Assault Hotline</b>	1-800.656.HOPE (4673)
<b>National Human Trafficking Hotline</b>	1-888-373-7888
<b>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</b>	1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**Q: Student**  
**A: BLOOM365 Advocate**

**DOSE 1**

**1) Q: If someone says they want to kill themselves if you break up with them and you do want to break up with them because it's an abusive relationship, what should you do so that the person doesn't kill themselves?**

A: The act of killing someone can be seen as a final act of total control. We know the most dangerous part of a relationship is when the relationship ends. 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 as soon as possible. We highly encourage you to text/call an advocate at the number above, or reach out to another trusted adult in your life as soon as possible.

**2) Q: What makes someone become abusive?**

A: People become abusive because they believe they have the right to gain and maintain power & control over another person. Choosing to have power and control over someone else or to have equality and freedom in our relationships is a deliberate choice that we all make. People do not usually begin a relationship as overtly abusive or controlling. There is a gradual progression of power and control. It can first show up as possessive jealousy or even in comments about your choice of clothing or friends. Oftentimes if we were raised in an environment where abuse was present, the early signs/actions can be really tough to spot because they could be viewed as okay or normal (taught abusive behavior). Sometimes it takes direct education, like the 7-Dose Bloom It Up curriculum or a friend's concern to notice what's really going on. In Doses 3 and 4, we explored additional root causes of abuse (patriarchy, oppression, unhealthy gender norms, insecurity, etc.)

**3) Q: I know someone who doesn't make the best choices when it comes to dating...  
I don't want to be a tattler but I'm so worried about them.**

A: It can be very difficult to watch someone you know as a victim in unhealthy or abusive relationships, and we understand wanting to help them. There are some ways you can help if you so choose. For one, you can serve as a supportive person in their life. Let them know that you are there for them. You can also find ways to spend time alone with them doing activities you both enjoy. If you feel comfortable, you can give them the number to a BLOOM365 Advocate. Don't be discouraged if they are not ready to reach out. Remember the importance of not blaming the victim and understand there are a lot of barriers to leaving unhealthy relationships. 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. We also encourage you to reach out to an advocate yourself, as we would like to talk with you more about this situation. If you fear for the safety of your friend, it is crucial that you reach out to a trusted adult.

**4) Q: Why is it so hard to find the right girl? Similar question: Why is it so hard to find a girl that likes you or how can you date someone?**

A: Finding someone who fits what you want in a partner and who you can connect with happens at different times for every person. You can open up your workbook to page 12 for a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship. The best advice we can offer is to remember your deal-breakers and deal-makers, and to recognize that finding someone who is right for you is worth the wait to ensure you can maintain a happy, healthy relationship. Don't give up hope if it has not happened yet, blooming relationships take time to build and create.

**5) Q: If someone is being abused or is in a bad relationship, why don't they say something sooner and get the help to get out of that relationship?**

A: Leaving an unhealthy or abusive relationship is never easy. In dose 2 we talked about the barriers to leaving (fear, love, dependency, hope, etc.). Think of these barriers as hooks. It's not easy to unhook them all at once and we understand that it can be difficult to leave an abusive relationship, especially when we have hope that the abuser will change or eventually stop. 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.

**6) Q: How can you get help when no one offers?**

A: We recognize that not having the support you need is a huge barrier in overcoming difficult situations. We want you to know that we are here to support you and connect you to the resources you need. Please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by texting or calling the number above.

**7) Q: Is being guilt tripped to stay with someone considered abuse?**

A: Great question. Guilt tripping could be a form of psychological and or mental abuse. It may be used as a tactic of emotional manipulation to make you feel guilty and responsible in order to gain and maintain power and control over you. If someone is pressuring you or guilt tripping you to stay with them, this may be a red flag of power and control. You have the right to a relationship that stems from equality and freedom. If you feel unsafe, please reach out to a trusted adult. You can also reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate by texting/calling the number above for free, confidential help and support.

**8) Q: My roblox (?) GF doesn't let me play my favorite games anymore :(**

A: Something that might help in this situation is using the communication technique we learned during Dose 6 to express your feelings and to offer a solution. We recommend using "I statements" (I feel \_\_\_\_ [emotion] when \_\_\_\_ [situation] can you/we please do \_\_\_\_ [solution/resolution] instead. Perhaps the two of you can come to a compromise where both of your needs are met. In a relationship, you have the right to make decisions together and to choose the activities you want to partake in. Open up your workbook to page 12 for a list of your rights and responsibilities within a relationship!

**9) Q: In a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, how can you leave if you "love" them and really care they do "abuse" you in a certain way. Won't you be mentally and physically hurt?**

A: Leaving an unhealthy or abusive relationship is never easy. When you love someone whether it's intimate or a friendship, you integrate them into your life. You spend time with them, they help you do

things, they solve problems, and they just exist along with you. When that all disappears, you feel lost because you actually lost something. Losing someone you had a good connection with can be very painful. Especially if we have known that person for a really long time and or had history with them. With all this said, while ending a close friendship and or break up is tough it can be a great time for self evaluation and growth. A great tip for coping after a break up is to remember to be patient and give yourself time for your heart to heal. Getting over a break-up could take days, weeks or even months. In your packet, you can reference the “6 Tips for Coping After a Break-Up” to find more BLOOM365 suggested tips. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free support group! Our support group provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: spending time with the people you love, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed! If you’re still struggling with coping, please reach out to a Bloom Advocate at the number listed above.

### **DOSE 2**

**10) Q: If you’ve been sexually assaulted and you tell an adult and they ask what do you wanna do. What do you think the best thing to do is? (You go to school with the person.) Tell the police? Notify the school?**

A: First off, we want you to know that if you were sexually assaulted, it is not your fault and you are not alone. Nothing in what you say, the way you look, where you are, or who you are with gives anyone else the right to hurt you. Ultimately, the decision of what you want to do is yours to make. If you or someone you know is or has experienced sexual assault, we encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult in your life, the school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. Additionally, you can call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at the number above for free, confidential support, someone to help you talk through what happened, and/or information about local resources and support.

### **DOSE 3**

**11) Q: I disagree with the view on some of your gender and patriarchy stuff.**

A: This is exactly why this conversation of gender and patriarchy are so necessary. As we talked about in Dose 3, gender norms are ingrained into our culture. Historically we have seen these gender norms perpetuated through patriarchy. Remember that we learned it is designed to benefit men and masculine folks so that they can hold power in society. To make change around this issue we must first begin to break down the stereotypes that perpetuate the idea that men and women should not be treated as equals. In addition, due to the stigmas surrounding gender norms, young boys and men often don’t feel comfortable reaching out for support if they’re experiencing abuse because they fear they’ll be told to “tough it out” or “be a man.” Abuse DOES NOT make any person less of a man or a human being. It’s crucial that we talk about these things, otherwise nothing is ever going to change!

**12) Q: What if your in a abusive relationship? What should I do?**

A: We encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult in your life, the school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate. As we learned in the program the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the victim tries to leave an abusive relationship. It’s important to create a safety plan to map out a safe strategy for exiting a relationship, and BLOOM365 Advocates are available to help. If you are in

immediate danger, calling 911 is the most important step to take so that no one is harmed. Please see the number above if you'd like to text/call an advocate, or for additional resources!

**13) Q: You know this doesn't change anything right?**

A: 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.

**DOSE 4**

**14) Q: How can people get self confidence when you don't have any?**

A: 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.

**15) Is being sexually assaulted your fault if you have the feeling it might happen but you go the person's house anyways?**

A: Sexual assault is NEVER ever the victim or survivor's fault. If you do not consent to the sexual act, and the other person does not respect that and does it anyway... That is sexual assault and that is NOT your fault. Consent is required each and every time, and we have the right to say no and other people have the responsibility of respecting our decisions. If you have been sexually assaulted, please know that this was in no way your fault and we are here to support you. We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

**16) Q: Is it bad to laugh at murder?**

A: You are ultimately the expert of your own life. However, we do encourage you to remember what the word empathy means. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another or to put yourself into another's shoes. You probably would not want to laugh and or make jokes about this around someone who has lost a loved one to murder. It could be triggering, and ultimately make the person feel even worse about the situation that occurred. Statistics show that between 1 and 6 women and 1 and 33 men are murdered every year. So, we just encourage you to think about how it could feel to lose someone you love to murder. If you'd like to speak with us more about this, please call or text an advocate at the number above.

**17) Q: How do I come out to my best friend/friend as I'm pansexual and gender fluid?**

A: We encourage you to educate your friend 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 friend may be a process and take time. We encourage you to text or call our LGBTQ advocate at the number above or support and to discuss this situation further.

**18) Q: Maybe we should stop talking about this. This doesn't help me or anyone else get out of our abusive relationship. It's not that easy to just walk away. Yes it hurt me and the other people in these kinds of relationships but it's not that easy to just walk away.**

A: First off we want to say thank you for being so brave enough to reach out to us, and just know that everything you've experienced was never your fault. The reasons that we talk about teen dating abuse, is to prevent it before it ever starts. Our overall vision is that everyone has a healthy and safe relationship. We recognize that leaving an abusive relationship is NOT easy! We want to let you know that BLOOM365 is here to provide advocacy services to any youth who has experienced any kind of power based violence, including teen dating abuse. These services can help you discover new coping skills and learn about other resources available. We also have a free and confidential support group for teens, where all are welcomed. Our support groups offer a safe place where you can connect with other teens who have experienced or are currently experiencing abuse/violence. These groups offer an opportunity to increase your own safety and self-esteem. It's a place where you will be heard, accepted, and understood. These groups take place every Monday (Holidays excluded). Please email [teens@bloom365.org](mailto:teens@bloom365.org) or text 602-799-6096 for more information.

**DOSE 5**

**19) Q: Would one of these activities help a friend that is thinking about suicide? Like having them write down what makes them happy?**

First off, we want to say thank you for being such a great friend and reaching out to us. Please note that while there are some ways you might be able to help your friend, it's extremely important to reach out to a trusted adult if you fear for the safety of your friend or if they are sharing plans to commit suicide. If you fear that they are in immediate danger, please call 911.

It may be helpful to share with them some resources that they can reach out to for support (Teen Lifeline, BLOOM365 Advocates, etc.) We want your friend to know that there is always someone available and that they are not alone!

A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. It may be helpful to take a moment to help your friend to recognize the things they like or love about themselves (their strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). You can encourage them to write these things down and have them easily accessible to help build their 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. We encourage you to continue to make new memories with them, to let them know you are always here to support them, and to ensure they know that they have people in their life who love them.

**21) Q: What if you truly hate yourself and you can't fix it?**

A: We highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult such as the school social or a BLOOM365 Advocate for more tips on building self-esteem. Our advocates are always here to lend a free, confidential listening ear whenever you need it. Our Monday night support group might also be a great option. See above for more details.

**22) Q: What if I love him too much to walk away? What if I have no one else to run away too.**

A: We understand that love is a huge barrier to leaving and moving on from abusive relationships. We want you to know that BLOOM365 is always here to support you. You can reach out to our Lead Advocate at the number above for a listening ear and free, confidential support. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our free support group! Our support group provides teens with the opportunity to walk through the healing process alongside others. Finding ways to cope can be really helpful. For example: spending time with the people you love, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply going for a walk. Giving yourself time to process feelings and emotions is important. We all cope with things in different ways and at different speeds. Find what works for you, and always know BLOOM365 is here to support you if needed!

**23) Q: Why?! Why this presentation? Is it really necessary? I am a horrible person.**

The goal of Dose 5 is to help students learn what impacts teens' self-esteem the most. We then give you the opportunity to determine what makes you happy, what you love about yourself and begin to work through your insecurities. 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=Cgw80FVHzd4>. 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. Building good self-esteem can take a long time and is not always easy because it takes time to become confident. You can always contact BLOOM365 by texting or calling the number above for more tips on boosting self-esteem.

**DOSE 6**

**24) Q: What if they both love each other so much and they get caught up in the moment and don't consent each other but have tea. What is that?**

A: As we learned during the program, consent is required each and every single time an act of sex is initiated. 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). Consent also applies to all aspects of relationships and not just sex. 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.

**25) Q: If I was sexually assaulted and I haven't told anyone, what should I do?**

A: First off, we want you to know that if you or someone you know is or has experienced sexual assault, it was not your fault and you are not alone. We encourage you to reach out for help and support by talking to a trusted adult in your life, the school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number listed above. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our Monday night support group.

**26) Q: I just recently got out of a break up and he went to my best friend. I attempted suicide and went into the hospital. Even after that I don't have good self-esteem and confidence and I was wondering ways to boost it.**

A: First off, we want to let you know that you're not alone and we are thankful you are reaching out. 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 advocate, 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. If you are having suicidal thoughts, we highly encourage you to reach out to a trusted adult. Teen Lifeline is also a great resource for depression.

**27) Q: When it comes to cheating, over time should you forget the past (if you take a break and are willing to work on the future)?**

A: 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. 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. Again, we should not expect or force people to change to fit our "deal makers"/"deal breakers." You can text/call a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above if you'd like to discuss this further.

## **DOSE 7**

**28) Q: What makes a healthy marriage?**

A: It can be useful to look at the blooming and wilting flowers to help you to determine whether a relationship and or marriage 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.

**29) Q: Has BLOOM365 ever failed on helping someone who asked for help?**



A: 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.

**30) Q: Is there a volunteer job?**

A: Yes! BLOOM Crew is one great way to get involved in helping create change. If you are also interested in volunteering with BLOOM365 please feel free to send Marli, our Volunteer Coordinator, an email at [marli@bloom365.org](mailto:marli@bloom365.org) to learn more about volunteer opportunities!

**31) Q: What if you distract the perpetrator and the victim gets away, then the perpetrator takes you instead. What would you do?**

A: We encourage everyone to make sure that they are always safe first, especially if there is a weapon involved. If you do not feel comfortable directly intervening, we recommend using one of the other methods of upstander intervention. You can delay and check in with the victim after the incident, or you can find a trusted adult or friend to intervene with you. To discuss this situation in greater detail, please feel free to text/call an advocate at the number above.

**32) Q: What if I have a friend that is doing something dangerous that they keep denying is, and you want to help them but don't want to. Do you still make them get help?**

A: 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 on page 15, 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. If the danger is immediate, please call 9-11.