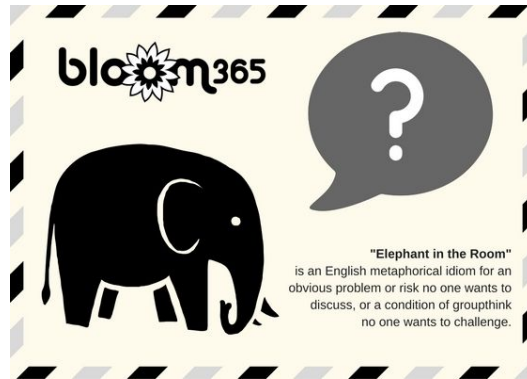


Elephant in The Room Q & A

Peoria Accelerated 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

BLOOM365 Advocate	Text or call 602-799-7017 for free, confidential support. Please allow up to 24 hours to receive an initial response.
BLOOM365 Hotline	Call 1-888-606-HOPE (4673)
BLOOM365 Drop-In Support Groups	Every Monday (Holidays excluded). Please email teens@bloom365.org or text 602-799-6096 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)
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

DOSE 1 & 2

Q: Would pressure to do something they know you're not comfortable with doing, be abuse? As in sexually?

A: If you were pressured to do something you were not comfortable with then we would define that as coercion, and that is a red flag of power and control. 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. This means an act is deemed as rape if a person is physically forced to have sex, if a person is threatened or manipulated into having sex, and if the person is unable to give consent (under the influence of drugs or alcohol). If you do not consent, it is still considered rape even if you're in a relationship. If you have any concerns about this matter please reach out to a trusted adult, school social worker, or a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above.

Q: How to help a person in an abusive relationship without causing harm?

A: 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 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.

Q: Is being controlling good or bad?

A: BLOOM365 believes that healthy relationships are stemmed in equality and freedom rather than power and control. The reasons for why people are controlling are those root causes we explored in Doses 3&4. It's important to remember though that while all of these "root causes" increase a person's risk for having unhealthy or abusive relationships, they still have a choice in whether or not they are going to try and gain power and control over another person. 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.

Q: What is love?

A: Love is one of the core characteristics of a healthy, blooming relationship that we looked at on our Loves Me flower on page 28. Love is defined as the unconditional and peaceful experience of a relationship, not just a feeling. Defining what love means to you is important first step before entering into a dating or committed relationship. To you, love may mean that the other person shows affection often. To someone else, it may mean their partner is always encouraging them to do the things that make them happy. Overall love should be all the positive characteristics that you came up with on page 34 of your workbook. We should strive to create the relationships that we want for ourselves and also help others develop healthy relationships as well.

Q: What causes someone to start an abusive relationship?

A: Abusive relationships all stem from power and control. If you recall from what we learned about in our doses, there are root causes to power and control. Some root causes of power and control include social acceptance, abusive taught behavior, oppression, patriarchy, unhealthy gender norms, insecurity and choice. Ultimately you have the choice on how you are going to treat your partner. Are you going to treat you partner with equality and freedom or power and control? For these reasons, it is difficult to say which root cause started the abuse in each and every relationship. We do know that there are multiple root causes as to why power and control can cause one to start an abusive relationship.

Q: How does an abusive relationship start?

A: First, an abusive partner does not usually begin a relationship as overtly abusive or controlling. The early warning signs of abuse are often hard to catch because they are usually masked as “caring” and not “controlling.” For instance, “I kept asking you who you were with because I want to make sure you are safe.” 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. 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. Remember, perpetrators are usually very good at putting on an ‘act’ when around other people, so other people may assume everything is fine.

Q: How to fix a currently abusive relationship without ending it?

A: If the perpetrator is willing to see their behavior as abusive, they can make the choice to change that behavior. A counselor, social worker, advocate, or other trusted adult can be there to help if the perpetrator is willing. Ultimately, it is up to the perpetrator to recognize his or her actions and to make the choice to change their behavior.

Q: How can people in a relationship abuse one another?

A: It’s important to recognize that while it sometimes might seem like both partners are abusing one another, 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. We recommend reaching out to an advocate (602-799-7017).

Q: Do you do services for domestic violence? Like in families and stuff like that?

A: While the focus and our services 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, gender-based violence, etc.). Some resources available for people who are experiencing domestic violence include the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-7233. Our advocates are also

available to talk about domestic violence issues. Please feel free to text or call a BLOOM365 advocate at 602-799-7017 for more information or resources.

Q: Is your group and number just for teen violence and teen dating violence, or can it also be for sexual abuse and stuff like depression?

A: The number listed and our support group is for teens who have been through or who are currently going through dating abuse, bullying, sexual violence, gender-based violence, and domestic violence. Our free and confidential drop-in support group is for teens where you can rebuild self-esteem in a safe place for healing, strength and peer connections. This is a place where you will be heard, accepted, understood, and all are welcomed here. 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.

Q: What if you don't want to lose that person?

A: Love is a huge barrier to leaving and moving on from abusive relationships. We want you to know that BLOOM365 is 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!

Q: If it is difficult to get out of a abusive relationship, what is some advice for dealing with it?

A: You can reach out to the trusted adults in your life, the school social worker, and/or a BLOOM365 advocate. As we learned in the program, the most dangerous time is when the victim tries to leave an abusive relationship. We encourage you to use the safety plan that we worked on in the classroom to map out a safe strategy for exiting a relationship. If you feel there is immediate danger calling 911 is the most important step to take so that no one is harmed. A BLOOM365 advocate is also available to help you create a safety plan and provide additional support and connection to resources. We also highly encourage you to get involved in our Monday night support group! Email teens@bloom365.org for more information!

Q: What is the best way to help a friend? In your opinion.

A: 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 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.

Q: Me and my boyfriend we play fight with each other, we both are very chill with each other. Like I had bad relationships in the past I had low self esteem, but he help me out with that.

A: Thank you so much for sharing! It is so awesome to hear that your partner has been there to help you get back to obtaining high self-esteem again. A healthy, blooming partnership stems from equality and freedom and having a healthy self-esteem plays a huge role in that! We encourage you to also take a look at page 28 in your workbook, which lists the core characteristics of what a healthy, blooming relationship should look like. Perhaps, reading this page and examining these characteristics with each other can help you always evaluate where you are at and then spark a conversation on how you can continue to create a healthy relationship together in the future.

Q: I want to learn more about red flags.

A: We are very glad to hear this, especially if you or a friend have experienced any of the red flags listed on page 17. We are always here to listen and provide more information! Feel free to call our hotline or contact an advocate directly by texting or calling the number above for free, confidential support!

DOSE 3 & 4

Q: Why are men paid more even if they don't do well in work?

A: As we talked about in Dose 3, gender norms are ingrained into our culture. Historically we have seen these gender norms perpetuated through a system (and the root cause you learned about) called patriarchy. Patriarchy is a system that is designed to benefit men and masculine folks so that they can hold power in society. Oftentimes, biases in race, religion, and/or sex play a role in who an employer chooses to hire even if that means that they are not reaching their max monetary potential. An employer who is biased and believes that men are better workers, may choose to hire a man over a woman, even if this means he will be paying that worker more. 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.

Q: Being sexist is a main problem we have in our society:

A: That is one of the reasons we explore unhealthy gender norms in Dose 3! As we talked about in Dose 3, gender norms are ingrained into our culture. Historically we have seen these gender norms perpetuated through a system (and the root cause you learned about) called patriarchy. Patriarchy is a system that 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'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. It's crucial that we talk about these things, otherwise nothing is ever going to change.

Q: Is it bad to seem clingy?

A: Being clingy is not one of the red flags of power and control listed on page 17. However, when clinginess becomes obsessive and controlling, then that is when you can start to see power and control seep into the relationship. In that case, clinginess would stem from the root cause of insecurity of where one perceives themselves to be vulnerable or inferior in some way. As we learned in the program, self-esteem is confidence in your self-worth resulting in self-respect and self-love. Having a healthy self-esteem allows you to have a healthy relationship that stems from equality and freedom. This involves a balance of power and respecting your partner's rights, feelings, activities and opinions.

Q: How do you identify true love?

A: Love is defined as the unconditional and peaceful experience of a relationship, not just the feeling. As we learned during the program, on page 28 you can find the core characteristics of a healthy, blooming relationship. As long as you have a relationship that stems from equality and freedom, then you are in a healthy relationship. If you would like, you can take time to flip to page 34 and review what words or actions define what love means to you.

Q: Has there been change the past few years from this foundation?

A: Since 2013, BLOOM365, has partnered schools within the Phoenix, Arizona metro area to educate students on the warning signs and root causes of teen dating violence, provide age appropriate interventions to teens experiencing abuse and violence and activate students as peer advocates and activists to create school communities that value empathy, respect, kindness, equality, consent and peace as the standard. Our work alleviates the barriers youth face with accessing prevention and intervention resources, improves the safety and well-being of youth who have experienced victimization, and provides opportunities for teens to activate as peer advocates. Outcome results from pre/post evaluations indicate that of the teens who completed our 7-Dose curriculum: 90% can recognize the red flags of an abusive relationship, 90% understand the root causes of teen dating violence, 99% learned a safe way to end an abusive relationship, 90% gained a new skill for building healthy relationships, 90% increased confidence to get help or help a friend, 80% increased self-esteem, and 40% are motivated to join CREW and help uproot abuse and cultivate kindness. You can refer to our page at <https://www.bloom365.org/impact> for more information as well.

Q: Why do people think men should have more power over women?

A: As we talked about in Dose 3, gender norms are ingrained into our culture. Historically we have seen these gender norms perpetuated through a system (and the root cause you learned about) called patriarchy. Patriarchy is a system that 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.

DOSES 5 & 6

Q: Might be a few days late, but is it a red flag if both parties chose to get “serious” fast?

A: Wanting to get serious too quickly is definitely listed as a red flag of power and control on page 17 in your workbook. As we learned in the program, if you checked off one or more red flags, it is possible that the relationship is unhealthy or abusive. If you have experienced any of these red flags that are

listed, we are here to listen and help. You can reach a BLOOM365 advocate by texting or calling the number above.

Q: Why is it sexual harassment if someone is drunk?

A: Consent always applies, especially during parties when there might be items such as drugs or alcohol. Consent is so important because no one should ever be forced to do anything that they do not want to do. Consent is a huge part of freedom and all the rights that we have as individuals. Because drugs and alcohol can affect one's ability to make informed decisions, they often cannot truly give consent. If someone can not give consent, and another person or people take advantage of that, then situations like assault can happen.

Q: Is BLOOM365 linked with other programs?

A: BLOOM365 currently partners with several other schools and community organizations in the Phoenix community. You can find more information about our partners at <https://www.bloom365.org/partners>. If you are needing resources, you can scroll up to the top of this document and view the numbers listed above or at <https://www.bloom365.org/resources>.

Q: How do people collect hate in relationships?

Please reach out to a BLOOM365 advocate at the number above to clarify what you are asking. We will be happy to answer your question once we clearly understand what you are asking!

DOSE 7

Q: How does low self-esteem start in people?

A: A lot of times our society focuses on the things we are insecure about and things we wish we could change about ourselves. One way we can stop this is by trying to encourage ourselves to take a moment everyday to remember the things we love about ourselves (our strengths, aspirations, personality/physical characteristics, etc.). Writing these things down as well and having them easily accessible can help build our confidence. You can also watch the following video on daily affirmations: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cgw8OFVHzd4>. Doing our own daily affirmation and spending time doing the things that make us happy can be helpful tools in building up our self esteem.