



Elephant in The Room Q & A

Hill AFB
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****This document can also be accessed at www.bloom365.org/faqs**

Resources:

For additional resources, please visit bloom365.org/resources

<p>BLOOM365 HelpLine</p>	<p>For free, confidential support: Text/Call: 1-888-606-HOPE (4673) Monday-Friday from 3PM-9PM (MST)</p> <p>To reach a specific advocate directly, please feel free to contact our HelpLine and tell us who you would like to speak to.</p>
<p>Teen Lifeline</p>	<p>Text or call 602-248-TEEN (8336) for free, confidential support 24/7 relating to suicide, depression, bullying, or relationships.</p>
<p>National Teen Dating Violence Hotline</p>	<p>Text "LOVEIS" to 22522 24/7</p>
<p>National Domestic Violence Hotline</p>	<p>1-800-799-SAFE (7233)</p>
<p>National Sexual Assault Hotline</p>	<p>1-800.656.HOPE (4673)</p>
<p>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</p>	<p>1-800-273-TALK (8255)</p>

***Content Warning:** For some, Elephant in the Room Cards are places where they might disclose trauma, violence, or harm. We encourage you to proceed with caution if you have experienced power-based violence or abuse of any kind. If you need support, you can reach out to the Hotlines listed above.

Q: Student

A: BLOOM365 Advocate

Q: When do you know if it's time to cut off an emotionally abusive family member?

A: This is a really good question and we are so glad that you asked. While our work here at bloom365 mainly centers around teen dating violence, our resources and curriculum can be applied to any relationship where violence occurs including families. Strong, healthy relationships of all kinds involve a balance of power in the relationship, freedom, individuality, safety, and boundaries. Ultimately you are the expert in your own life so only you can determine when it is best to end a connection with an unhealthy family member but if those building blocks of a healthy relationship are not present it might be helpful to consider if having this person in your life is something that you want. Tools such as the [blooming and wilting flowers](#) can help in the process of determining if your relationship with this family member is healthy or unhealthy - if you find that the wilting flowers overwhelmingly represent your connection with this family member, it could be a tangible sign that this relationship may not be one that is supportive to your mental and emotional health.

Navigating a familial relationship with someone who engages in toxic or abusive behavior can be a very stressful and sometimes isolating experience. It is important to center your emotional, mental and physical well being and to take some time to find healthy coping skills or strategies that work for you. Spending time with those you love and trust and sharing what you're going through with them can make you feel more supported and less alone. Other coping skills like writing in a journal, yoga, joining a new sports team or club, or simply spending time outside can also be helpful. Our advocates are also here to offer support. Please feel free to reach out to us at the information above!

Q: How do you set healthy boundaries when you've never set boundaries?

A: Understanding our own boundaries as well as the boundaries of our friends and dating partners is an important component of healthy relationships. Identifying what is important to you is a good first step in setting your personal boundaries. For example, maybe it's important to you that you have time alone to spend with your family and friends. In this case, it'd be important to communicate with your partner a boundary that aligns with this- Such as being okay with not texting/calling during the time you are enjoying with your family.

It's also important to identify your deal breakers or qualities/characteristics you do not want in a friend or dating partner. These things are also important when we set our boundaries. Your deal breakers, deal makers, and boundaries will likely change throughout your life. So, it's important to reconsider these things every so often to openly communicate them with the people in your life. Although it may feel uncomfortable at first, you should know that having boundaries is not something we should ever feel bad about. With time, you will begin to feel more comfortable setting boundaries and you will likely also recognize the incredible benefits that come with it!

Q: Red flags: criticized me, called me lazy, treated me better when others weren't around, screamed/yelled at me, pressured me to do things or go to places that I didn't want, gave ultimatums, denied screaming or yelling, blamed me for her actions/cheating/feelings

- **Related Q: Outcome: 3 years of manipulation of life I won't get back. A child I will not get to raise and barely will see blaming myself. Being apologetic for things that aren't my fault, feeling like I could never love the same way again. Spending my free time shut up in my room instead of going out or hanging out with friends or work events**

A: Those are absolutely red flags of an abusive/toxic relationship. We are so sorry to hear that you have experienced these things with a partner. Thank you for trusting us with such a deeply vulnerable experience. You have done nothing wrong to deserve that type of treatment and what you have gone through is not your fault. We hope that you are in a safer place and no longer have to interact with this person. Healing from an abusive or controlling relationship can take time and is unique to each person but it is possible. Finding community can be extremely helpful in the healing journey as traumatic experiences can make you feel isolated or alone. Finding people or activities that make you feel supported and connected can be supportive in processing what you have experienced. This could look like spending more time with close and trusted friends, joining a club or group about an interest or hobby that you enjoy, or accessing therapeutic services like those offered by [bloom365](#). Coping skills that allow you to release and process emotions such as journaling, dancing, or even listening to your favorite music are also tools that can be supportive to you. Take some time to find what works for you and know that our advocates are here to support you in this process. You can reach out to us by phone/text at 1-888-606-HOPE. We are here for you!

Q: The darkest clouds hide the brightest days. Raise yourself above your clouds and live your brightest days, when you find your way.

A: What beautiful and encouraging words - thank you for sharing these with us!