



UNG – Unnecessary Grief - There are many challenges in life that can be considered “*maintenance*” problems that are eventually bound to happen with time. This can be similar to the way when you own a car; even if you do everything you can to take care of it, at some point you will need to get maintenance (i.e. the oil changed, the brakes fixed and tires rotated). Paying the rent, taking the kids to the dentist, doing your assignments at work/school, cleaning the house; these all fall under “maintenance” types of issues. It is a waste of time to get too upset about maintenance problems because they are inevitable and to be expected

Then there is another category of problems which are the direct result of “*decisional circumstances*” that are the direct consequences of the choices we make. These problems are the ones we have the most control over and are the most avoidable. Sometimes it is also those little irritable little things we do (or fail to do) which can cause ourselves what can be referred to as “**UNG or Unnecessary Grief**”. It can be incredibly frustrating how much “UNG” a person can generate when one is not careful.

Some behaviors which can result in UNG. Discuss these as a group and add to the list if needed – Also consider how the COVID-19 pandemic can impact these challenges and effect your decisions

- Not knowing when to shut up
- Lateness
- Bringing up a subject you know will cause an argument
- Gossiping
- Not keeping promises
- Not paying bills
- Overspending
- Overeating
- Starting something, you know you cannot finish
- Neglecting self-care
- Not taking medication when you know you need it
- Hanging out with someone you know is going to cause trouble
- Getting back with the ex when you know from experience where that leads
- Agreeing to things you will not want to do or be able to do later
- Not saying no when you should
- Debating with someone you know is foolish, dishonest or has no idea what they are talking about
- Hanging out where you know trouble is
- Breaking the law when eventually you'll get caught
- Taking shortcuts now that you'll have to pay for later
- Taking on too much
- Moving too fast
- Not listening to good advice
- Trying to do something alone that you shouldn't
- Not knowing your limits
- Making decisions or speaking your mind when in a heightened emotional state
- Other?

Below are some specific examples where a person caused UNG: **Review these and then try to come up with some of your own *personal examples* from your life where at times you may cause yourself UNG**

“I’m broke again because I went out and spent too much of my paycheck the first weekend that I got it”

“My significant other is mad at me again because I stupidly brought up a topic that I knew beforehand was just going to cause a useless argument like it always does”

“I feel depressed and guilty because I didn’t take good care of myself emotionally or physically all weekend”

As a group, discuss your own personal examples like these



What can you do in order to prevent UNG? – Review the following list of ways to prevent and avoid **UNG**. Discuss these below as a group and try to choose a few of these strategies for yourself for one of your own personal examples of UNG. Explain how you will use these strategies to improve your situation in the future

- **Plan ahead and strategize before these situations arise**

- **Learn to pause and think before acting or deciding: A few seconds can make a huge difference**

- **Practice self-awareness so you can recognize when you may be making a decision based on emotion so you can wait until you are in a more calm and rational state of mind before deciding**

- **Know your triggers and avoid them or at least prepare for them if they are unavoidable**

- **Know your areas of weakness as well as “high-risk” situations for you personally**

- **Do what you can to follow a structured plan for living to limit chaos and unforeseen challenges**

- **Listen to your instincts and your conscience when you have that feeling like something is not worth the risk**

- **Consult with others whom you trust and then listen to their advice when applicable**

- **Bring others with you who are supports when you know you will be facing a challenge**

- **Remember how it felt to experience UNG last time so you can motivate yourself to stop setting yourself up with the same situations and then stop repeating the same unnecessary mistakes**

- **Seek therapy to better understand why you may be repeating some of the same choices and behaviors and causing yourself UNG and avoidable stress. (Identify self-destructive patterns)**

WHAT ARE TWO OR THREE THINGS YOU WILL CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON TO AVOID UNG?