

A Message From Mona

I wish you Peace, Health, Joy and Prosperity in 2019. When we at Associated Billing Center, LLC think about how much we love what we do, we quickly think of our relationships with our providers who make all of this possible. Thank you for giving us the chance to do what we enjoy. We reflect on this past year appreciative of your loyalty.

An integral part of our company mission statement reads as follows: Assist our clients in improving the profitability of their practices while maintaining an absolute open line of communication with our providers. If you ever feel that we are falling short on meeting your expectations, please call me.

Many of us have faced personal challenges in 2018. I am so thankful for good health and increasingly am aware of the role gratitude plays in our daily lives. I have learned to apply the principles of the Serenity Prayer. G-d grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. It all leads back to gratitude. What a wonderful recipe for contentment; a big dish of the Serenity Prayer and a chaser of gratitude.

Finally, we would like to express our sincerest appreciation for the trust you have placed in us and, Again, send our warmest greetings for 2019.



pixabay.com

Best Regards,

Mona



pisabay.com

Celebrities Speak out on Mental Health

The National Alliance on Mental Health proudly continues to advocate for its StigmaFree campaign. With more than one in five adults in the U.S. experiencing some form of mental illness, it is imperative that NAMI continue in its efforts. Many celebrities in 2018 decided to go public with their personal challenges concerning mental health. The benefactor of such activity is the American public and how it perceives those suffering from mental health issues. Speaking Out:

▪ Lady Gaga

Gaga wrote a powerful op-ed piece on the lack of widespread resources to assist those in need. In an essay co-written with the Director of the World Health Organization, Gaga said, "Suicide is the most extreme and visible symptom of the larger mental health emergency we are so far failing to adequately address."

▪ Michelle Williams/Former Destiny's Child

"For years I have dedicated myself to increasing awareness of mental health and empowering people to recognize when it's time to seek help, support and guidance from those that love and care for your well-being. Today I proudly, happily and healthily stand here as someone who will continue to always lead by example as I tirelessly advocate for the betterment of those in need."

▪ Ariana Grande

When a fan asked on Twitter who her therapist was and if they were taking new patients she wrote back "This is funny as f--- but in all honesty therapy has saved my life so many times."

▪ Mariah Carey

Cary opened up for the first time about being diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

▪ Ryan Reynolds

He recently told the NY Times that he deals with bouts of anxiety.

▪ Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson

Earlier this year he talked about depression, as well as his mother's suicide attempt.

▪ Kevin Love/Cleveland Cavaliers

"No matter what our circumstances, we're all carrying around things that hurt us if we keep them buried inside."

Source: Gary R'nel



pixabay.com



Women Doing Double Duty

Donna Reed, June Cleaver, Marion Cunningham, Lucy Ricardo, Edith Bunker—OK, you get it—women who did not work outside of the home but were responsible for laundry, housework, making the kids lunch and cooking. Guess what. Women by a large majority still perform these chores while at the same females participating in the labor force has grown exponentially. Labor force participation among U.S. women aged 25-54 has risen to 75.2% from 73.3% three years ago.

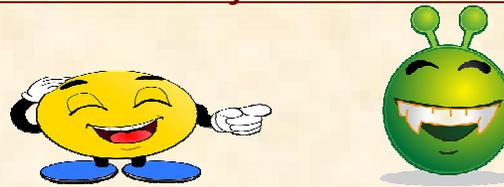
Here is where the double duty comes in. On an average day, 19% of men reported doing housework compared to 49% of women according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Women are still doing the majority of unpaid domestic work. We're not done yet. Research shows that young adult men spend more time than woman exercising, playing games and enjoying other leisure activities. Ladies, it's time to fight for gender equality when it comes to the toilet bowl brush, mop, dust rag, laundry and cooking.

The historical norm is that couples divided the labor at home depending on who made the most money. The latest stats show that women, on average, earn 78 to 82 percent of the male salary. Let's jump back a paragraph. 19% of men report doing housework today. You need not be a statistician to realize the numbers do not jive here. Simply put—men need to contribute more to completing household chores.

Now, some men naturally gravitate toward assisting in the home while others need to be coerced into wet mopping. If the male in your household simply is not inclined to do this type of work than, at minimum, he should be responsible for ensuring that each bathroom is properly stocked with toilet paper. It's the least you can ask.

Source: Gary R'nel

Laugh a Little or Maybe A Lot: It's Good Therapy



◆ After twelve years of counseling, my therapist said something that brought tears to my eyes. She said, "No Hablo Ingles."

◆ A man walks into his therapist's office and claims he suffers from CDO. The therapist looks puzzled and asks what he means. "It's like OCD but everything has to be in alphabetical order."

◆ How many therapists does it take to change a light bulb? None. The light bulb will change itself when it is ready.

◆ A Social Worker asks a colleague: "What time is it?"
The other one answers: "Sorry, don't know, I have no watch."
The first one: "Never mind! The main thing is that we talked about it."

◆ A man has a heart attack and is brought to the hospital ER. The doctor tells him that he will not live unless he has a heart transplant right away. Another doctor runs into the room and says, "You're in luck, two hearts just became available, so you will get to choose which one you want. One belongs to an attorney and the other a mental health therapist."

The man quickly responds, "The attorney's." The doctor says, "Wait! Don't you want to know a little about them before you make your decision?"
The man says, "I already know enough. We all know that therapists have good natured bleeding hearts and the attorney probably never used his. So, I'll take the attorney's."

Source: workjoke.com

◆ One therapist to another: "I'm going out of my mind. So many people are coming to see me with a multitude of problems. I don't know what to do." The other therapist responds, "Have you thought about getting counseling for your problem?"

Source: Gary R'nel
pixabay.com



Psychological & Neuropsychological Testing Codes

A Reminder: Codes for *Psych Testing & Neuropsych testing* services utilizing diagnostic tests when mental illness or brain dysfunction is suspected and clarification is essential for diagnosis and treatment were recently revised with changes scheduled to go into effect January 1, 2019. However, until December 31, 2018 the existing CPT codes for Psych Testing (96101-96103) and Neuropsych testing (96118-96120) should be utilized. Providers will need to use the billing codes for Medicare and all insurance carriers.

In addition, many psychologists who provide these types of testing could receive an estimated 6 percent increase under a proposed rule by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The APA advocated successfully to obtain higher reimbursement rates. Neuropsych testing where data is collected by a technician could also receive a 6 percent increase.

If you have any concerns or questions, please give me a call. Also, more information can be reviewed at www.apapracticecentral.org

Mona

Associated Billing Center, LLC ↔ Therapist Feedback

Unfortunately, I find myself repeatedly in a discussion with a provider telling me about the exponential increase in patients seeking addiction counseling. And, it is not just the addicted person seeking therapy but their family members as well. Many providers have informed me about Families Anonymous (FA). This wonderful organization provides surrounding family members and friends an invaluable opportunity to attend weekly meetings while furnishing the tools to help them understand the dynamics of enabling and self preservation. www.familiesanonymous.org. Everyday, more than 115 people in the U.S. die after overdosing on opioids. Drug related overdose deaths in 2017 amounted to more than 70 thousand. We must increase funding for rehab and counseling services.

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



pixabay.com

✓ The descent of the Swarovski laden ball on New Years Eve in Time Square signifies more than just the beginning of the New Year. Since 2009, the federal minimum wage has stalled at \$7.25 an hour, but that is about to change for twenty states. The list includes Arizona, California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York and Washington State. Each will eventually boost its minimum wage to at least \$12 and as much as \$15 an hour by phasing in the change. 13 Counties and cities will notice the difference immediately on January 1, reaching or exceeding \$15 an hour. Critics maintain pay increases should be based on local economies. On another note: President Trump signs an executive order freezing federal workers' pay in 2019 saying the federal government cannot afford it. The new Congress can include a pay raise for 2019 in a spending bill.



pixabay.com

✓ According to the Centers for Disease Control the U.S smoking rate has dropped-down to 14 percent in 2017. Despite the lower rate, about 35 million American adults continue to light up and 480 thousand still die every year from smoking related illness. Each day in the United States, more than 3,200 youth aged 18 or younger smoke their first cigarette. Sobering Statistic: If smoking continues at the current rate for those under 18-it is projected 5.6 million will die from smoking-related illness. In addition there is a 78 percent increase in vaping by high school students. E-cigarette aerosol is not harmless. It can contain harmful ingredients. However, the devices' aerosol generally contains fewer harmful chemicals than smoke burned from tobacco products. The CDC is beginning the process to ban menthol in cigarettes and limit sales of flavored e-cigarettes to youth. China is the world's largest overall consumer of cigarettes. In the United States someone smoking a pack a day spends on average \$70 per week or \$3640 per year. Could be a lovely vacation.



pixabay.com

✓ You want to throw your child a great Birthday Party. One problem-the cost is rapidly becoming prohibitive. One solution-charge other kids parents a fee for their child to attend the party. That is just what one mother has done. She actually sent out invitations asking that a \$25 check be returned "with your RSVP if attending." And, by the way-NO-this does not include the gift you are expected to bring to the party. Question: Would you send your child to the party if you had to enclose a \$25 check to defray costs?

Associated Billing Center, LLC Now Accepts Venmo

Beginning in 2019 Associated Billing Center, LLC will offer providers an alternative when paying their invoice. We have enrolled in Venmo after several of our clients asked if we subscribe to the service (no credit cards or debit cards). What is Venmo? PayPal acquired Venmo back in 2014. Like PayPal, Venmo is also a mobile payments service. There is no cost for users to download the app. Venmo uses encryption to protect your account and monitor activity to help identify unauthorized transactions. Learn more at: venmo.com

Please check out our website: mentalhealthbillers.com for our News & Blog updates.

Like us on 

Connect with us on 

Follow us on 

The editorial content of this newsletter is not intended to be professional advice. It should be considered informational and a venue for entertainment.

Associated Billing Center, LLC is a proud member of:



"BUILDING OUR REPUTATION ONE CLIENT AT A TIME"



www.MentalHealthBillers.com



Mona Ruback