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A CELEBRATION OF HARD WORK

The History of Labor Day

Americans work hard, and on the first Monday of every September we take a moment to acknowledge their efforts. Labor Day has a fascinating history, and one that you might not expect.

The roots of Labor Day stretch back to the Industrial Revolution, when jobs became plentiful, but not without a cost. As conditions worsened and work days grew longer, unions sprang up as a way to protect the rights of the common laborer. Workers in Canada didn't fare quite so well because unions were illegal. In 1872, workers marched directly to the door of Canadian Prime Minister John Macdonald, demanding the right to organize. He relented, and the march became a Canadian tradition.

As for who brought the tradition to our country, there are two competing candidates. Peter J. McGuire, a carpenter and member of the American Federation of Labor, witnessed the celebrations in Canada and proposed a similar parade to New York City's Central Labor Union in 1882. That same year, machinist Matthew Maguire proposed a national Labor Day after a public demonstration by the Central Labor Union.

Labor Day didn't become a federal holiday, though, until a few years later. In 1894, the American Railway Union went on strike against the Pullman Company in what is now known as the Pullman Strike. President Grover Cleveland called in the Army and U.S. Marshals in attempt to break the strike, and several workers in Chicago lost their lives. In an effort to quell tensions and garner union vote support, President Cleveland signed Labor Day into law just six days after the strike ended.

Our country would not be what it is today without the immense effort of laborers. As you enjoy the last long weekend before fall, take a moment to acknowledge just what a difference these hardworking people make.



Pack Your Bags!

The 3rd Annual PDAA Conference Is Right Around the Corner

I'm getting so excited for the Third Annual PDAA Conference! It seems like it wasn't so long ago that our last conference went off without a hitch, but I guess it's been almost a year now — at least, that's what the calendar tells me. Well, time flies when you have something to look forward to, and our annual get-together is certainly that. I know I've said it before, but I'm more than happy to say it again. The conference takes place on October 6 and 7 at the Renaissance Hotel in Atlanta. If you haven't booked your tickets already, now's the time. This year's event is sure to be our biggest and best ever.

Luckily, the hotel is near the Atlanta airport, so travel will be a breeze. Nearly every major airport in the country offers direct flights to ATL. I'm thankful for that, as we have assistants traveling from every corner of the country to learn a little and have a lot of fun. We'll be offering 16 hours of continuing education credits, and those credits won't go to waste. Rather than focusing on general issues, we'll be honing in on specific topics that are relevant to pediatric dental assistants. You'll get a lot of great education, and your practices will be better as a result.

One of my areas of expertise is dealing with behavioral trouble at the office. In my time, I've dealt with too many hooligans and distracted parents to count. Even with this experience, I wanted to tailor my talk to what you guys wanted to hear. Funnily enough, when I sent out a survey to members asking about pressing concerns, behavioral disturbances won by a landslide. I'm not one to deny my members, so my presentation "Behavior Guidance for All Ages: Patients and Parents" fits the bill perfectly.

Additionally, we have two more talks from experts in their respective fields. Shelly Short will be providing "5 Tips for Sustainable Pediatric Dental Practice Success,"

and Carmina Fernandez will give a talk called "Special Needs: Special Care," highlighting the techniques best suited for patients with special needs. These ladies know their stuff and are happy to discuss all the wisdom they have accumulated over the years.

That's a lot of education, but the conference won't be short on fun. Friday night is all about games, laughs, and even a few prizes. Once you start talking with other pediatric assistants, you'll quickly realize that your challenges are shared by many offices across the nation. You'll probably hear a few stories that sound like something out of your worst nightmare!

The conference might be the biggest circle on the calendar, but I do want to talk about one more thing before I go. We'll be adding a job placement feature to our new website (thepdaa.org). On this site, members can post jobs and receive applications. Even non-members will be able to view listings, so you can find the best fit whether you need a job filled or you're moving to a new area. I'm looking forward to rolling it out.

Stay tuned for that. In the meantime, I'll see you in Atlanta!

Rhea M. Haugseth, D.M.D

PUT 'POSITIVE THINKING' TO BED

Why This Way of Thought Isn't What It's Cracked Up to Be

Can the power of positive thinking change your life? Bookstores brim with self-help books written to guide readers toward positive thinking and countless websites claim to do the same. But what is positive thinking?

Essentially, it's shutting out negative thoughts. One website, tinybuddha.com, says, "Negative thoughts drain you of energy and keep you from being in the present moment. The more you give in to your negative thoughts, the stronger they become."

This sentiment is ironic considering the Buddhist philosophy of detachment (or non-attachment) suggests that one should let negative thoughts and emotions enter the mind, but not dwell on them, so they pass with the moment.

Research into the subject agrees. In the 1960s, researchers studied grief — or the lack of it. When people attempted to suppress grief, it took them longer to recover from what caused the grief in the first place.

In reality, the biggest factor at play when it comes to positive or negative thinking may be stress. Stress comes with its fair share of negative consequences. Stress can influence overall health, both mentally and physically. If you are stressed, chances are you are not in a good mood and, by extension, are thinking negative thoughts.

And this presents another problem with positive thinking. Anne Harrington, Franklin L. Ford Professor of the History of Science and director of undergraduate studies at Harvard, and author of "The Cure Within: A History of Mind-Body Medicine," says, "It's just as stressful to keep up a performance of positivity as it is to [keep up] a bad mood. It's very stressful to be inauthentically upbeat all the time."

So, what can you do? Let yourself think negative and positive thoughts. Don't dwell on the negative, and let it run its course. Then, turn your attention to your sources of stress and do what you can to minimize them.

The Unstoppable Rise of the Bullet Journal

The New Journaling System That's Taken Social Media by Storm

In the modern age, where the internet is constantly flooded with productivity apps and trends promising to fix our schedules, unlock our potential, and improve our lives, it's difficult not to wish for something simpler. We want an object we can hold in our hands that doesn't come with a bunch of unwanted features.

Enter the bullet journal: the humble, easy-to-use notebook system that's taken the world by storm.

Instead of maintaining a separate to-do list, calendar, and diary, the bullet journaling system rolls everything into a single economical notebook. Partitioned into minimalistic "modules" — the Index, the Future Log, the Monthly Log, and the Daily Log — bullet journals encourage you to write down everything on your to-do list, single-line tidbits recounting important daily events, and little notes you take throughout the day. Everything is marked by a particular bullet: dots for tasks, circles for events, and dashes for notes. At the beginning of

each month, bullet journalers examine last month's list, eliminating completed or now-irrelevant tasks and migrating long-term or continuing tasks to the current month.

Bullet journals may seem simple, and they are, but they've acquired an explosive following on social media. At the time of this writing, there are over 791,000 posts on Instagram tagged with the #bulletjournal hashtag; there are posts upon posts of users' beautiful layouts, bearing intricate calligraphy and embellished with incredible designs. As the bullet journal's creator, Ryder Carroll, told New Republic writer Josephine Wolff, "The most valuable part of the bullet journal [is] the inventiveness of its community."

But don't be daunted by users who seem to spend hours on every page of their journals. Really, it's a simple system that only takes a few minutes to learn. Check out bulletjournal.com to learn how to start your own modular notebook. But be warned: You may get obsessed.



SITUATION OF THE MONTH

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN THE OFFICE

Nearly every office has them at some point or another, and working alongside them can be quite a pain. We're talking, of course, about employees that are unwilling to pull their own weight and end up hurting a practice overall. Offices should function like a team, with every member contributing to the cause of providing the best care to their patients. So, what do you do when one team member's performance is subpar?

First and foremost, if you have an issue with a co-worker, you should bring it up in a calm manner. Getting angry with a colleague will never solve a problem, and it will probably only make it worse. Instead, try to approach the situation constructively. Ask them how you can make their life easier, while pointing out that they are overlooking certain responsibilities. You need to be delicate, so as not to upset anyone's feelings.

If this doesn't work and you see the quality of service beginning to dip, don't be afraid to take on a few extra tasks. At first, you might suffer from some "not my

job" syndrome, but your hard work will be noticed, and you'll be adding value to the practice. Added accountability leads to higher pay and a greater sense of contribution, and your doctor will appreciate it. It's important to note, though, that you shouldn't assume a co-worker's duties without first speaking with them, because that can create animosity.

If you are rebuffed by a co-worker for taking their responsibilities, it's probably time to speak to someone up the chain. You cannot stand idly by if the cleanliness, safety, and quality of your office are being compromised. You've tried to work it out with the person, and it's clear they don't want to be helped. Talking to a doctor or office manager is a hard decision, but provided you have exhausted other means, it's the right one.

Nobody wants to deal with lazy, counterproductive co-workers. How you deal with them, though, can make all the difference.

HAVE A LAUGH



With cool fall weather comes the desire for hot, comforting meals. Take advantage of fall's abundance of apples to make this savory dish.

Recipe courtesy of foodnetwork.com

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ½ Vidalia onion, chopped
- 1 Granny Smith apple, cored and sliced into ¼-inch wedges
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons dried thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups apple cider

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat oil and 1 tablespoon butter in a skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Season the chicken breasts with salt and pepper, add to pan and sear until golden, about 4 minutes each side.
3. Remove chicken from pan and set aside.
4. Add remaining butter, onion, apple, garlic, thyme and bay leaves. Sauté until apple begins to get color and onions soften, about 6 minutes. Add flour and stir for 2–3 minutes.
4. Nestle chicken back into pan, add cider, bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cover. Cook until chicken is cooked through, about 12 minutes.