# 10-4 Coffee with Molly

## The Holiday Joys...

I am not going to lie. I love holidays. All of them in fact! I never lose the urge to decorate and celebrate! Christmas/winter holidays are my absolute favorite! As I write this blog, it is lightly snowing outside my windows! A perfect start to December!

Despite my love for holidays and all that involves, I have learned in my career that not everyone shares my affection or passion for them. Holidays can trigger negative emotions or memories for some, they can place unrealistic emotional or financial obligations on others, or they may seem too commercial for the rest. As a long time, supervisor and manager, I have learned to celebrate with reservation on occasions.

For me, this season is about peace, friendship, joy, love and gratitude. Finishing this year with this holiday makes me happy. I love sitting in my office or my living room and admiring my decorations. I am surrounded by symbols that make me smile. Like everyone else, I struggle with time and resources- but I refuse to allow those challenges to derail my enjoyment! The truth is that my happiness and state of mind are up to me!

In your offices, divisions, or workplace, how do you share the holiday season and use this opportunity to bring people together? To start with, I recognize that not everyone celebrates Christmas and I try to be respectful of other cultures and traditions. For me, it means more to celebrate! Second, I try to use everyday meetings and activities to celebrate. A staff meeting can include a hot chocolate bar or a silly game. Third, being respectful to your staff includes listening to them. I sincerely tried to take the time to connect one on one with my team and to hear their comments. Now, I believe we all listen- but to totally give your attention to someone and to hear what they are saying and what they are communicating to you is more intensive. Fourth- generosity never goes unnoticed. Acknowledging people with cards, small gifts or goodies is a great way to connect. You never know who needed those kind words or a moment of support. My husband and I used to host lunch for my team that included cookie decorating! We made dozens of sugar cookies and brought all the trimmings to the office- we spent lunch hour eating and decorating! It was a fun team building event! Finally, there is no acceptable or one-way best practice for holidays! It is something you can create by recognizing the culture of your school district or your organization. Even small actions can pay great dividends during the holidays!

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December for NAPT and the NAPT Foundation and your professional team are a sprint to January 1! We are working to tie up the year with grace and an eye for the future. We have so many wonderful projects and initiatives ahead! We cannot wait to share the future with you.

So today, if you are reading this blog, know that you and your work make a difference. While our industry does not get mega acknowledgements- that does not mean that what you do every day does not matter. Thank you for bringing your best to your work! Don't forget to enjoy the holidays to use this season to show appreciation, gratitude and respect for our colleagues, superiors and team members!