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**AGES 3-7****Item 3**  
**Love****THE HAPPY SPONGES**  
**by Teresa Garcia Ramos**

**O**nce upon a time there was an ocean where some very happy sponges lived. It was not just any ocean, but an ocean of love. That was the reason for their happiness -- they were always full of love.

One day, one of the sponges approached the edge of the ocean. It decided to play with the waves and roll up to the beach. At last it reached the beach. And what did it see? A girl sat on the sand.

She did not seem to notice the beautiful ocean, nor the clear blue sky, but just looked down. She didn't seem very happy. The sponge was surprised to see such a sad face on such a sunny day. The sponge greeted her: "Hello, girl! What's up? You seem unhappy. I have always heard that boys and girls constantly smile."

The girl answered almost reluctantly, "No. Many people feel sad." She looked at the sponge carefully and said, "I am so surprised to see a such a happy sponge. I haven't seen such a happy face. Why are you so happy?"

The sponge answered, "It is very easy. Since I live in the ocean of love, sponges like me constantly absorb love. We share that love with others. And when any sponge is distracted and forgets to take love, then some accidents happen. Only then do some of the sponges get sad or angry."

The girl sat up a little straighter and asked eagerly, "What do you do then?"

"Well", answered the sponge, "then all the other sponges go to the sad or angry sponge. We fill ourselves with love, we squeeze ourselves, and then give love to the sad or angry sponge. It's easy!"

The girl said, "You are my friend, sponge. I think I would like to be like you. Do you think that it's possible for boys and girls to fill with love and be as happy as you?"

The sponge answered, "Of course!"

And the girl said, "But I am not a sponge! I am a girl. How can I do it?"

The sponge said, "It doesn't matter, you just have to believe in love. You are like a sponge because you can fill yourself up with love, and you can give that love to others."



The girl exclaimed with joy, “That’s great! I’m going to practice!” She took a big breath and practiced filling up with love in her mind. She smiled and said, “It is true! I feel happier already!”

The sponge said, “You see, it is easy. Regarding love, we are all the same.”