

## **The Warm Fuzzy Story (adapted from Claude Steiner's original tale)**

Many years ago, on a little island, lived a bunch of happy people. They loved their friendly little island with its beautiful trees, water, and sand. The islanders had a special tradition of trading warm fuzzies with each other. Warm fuzzies were like little balls of pure love that made everyone feel good all over.

People would offer warm fuzzies freely, and if you needed one all you had to do was ask. Even people you didn't know would reach into their pockets and pull out a warm fuzzy, and just give it to you! Every warm fuzzy was like a big hug from a friend. And there were always plenty of warm fuzzies to go around.

Everyone felt safe and loved and they all helped each other to feel safe and loved.

But one day a grouchy, grumbly, mumbly tourist came to visit the island. He didn't understand what everyone was doing but he was sure he didn't like it. He kept cold prickles in his pockets and warm fuzzies didn't make any sense to him. So he decided that he would tell a lie to the islanders, to convince them to stop with all that warm fuzzy business.

The grouchy tourist told the islanders that their warm fuzzies were the most precious things in the world. He told them that instead of sharing them, they should be keeping them. What if the world supply of warm fuzzies ran out? What would they do then?

All of a sudden the islanders began worrying and acting selfishly, keeping their warm fuzzies to themselves. And a funny thing happened. When people stopped sharing their warm fuzzies, people stopped receiving warm fuzzies. Instead of everyone feeling warm and fuzzy inside, they started to feel cold and prickly inside. This made everyone kind of sad, everyone except for that grouchy tourist that is.

Thank goodness something nice happened next. You see, one of the islanders had left for college. She came home to visit and brought her warm fuzzies with her. When she arrived home, she started giving warm fuzzies to everyone she saw. The islanders started to realize what they were missing and that they had made a mistake. Holding onto their warm fuzzies didn't make them happier, it made them miserable. They figured out that giving their warm fuzzies away not only made their friends happy, it made them happy too.

The good news is that we can be just like those islanders! We can give warm fuzzies, like these cute little pom poms. But we can also give warm fuzzies that are sparkly, little, fluffy, imaginary balls of happy. You see, when we offer a kind word or help someone to feel better, that's the best kind of warm fuzzy there is.