



**ARE YOU A STREET PUPPET ?**





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by  
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## Are you a **STREET PUPPET**?

STREET PUPPETS are people who feel that the only way they can ever be accepted by anyone is to just go along with “the crowd” when “the crowd” wants them to do something wrong.

-To a **STREET PUPPET**, it really doesn't matter how dangerous this act may be, or how painful it may be to their family or how embarrassing it will be to themselves, **being accepted** is all that matters.

-To a **STREET PUPPET**, you don't “make waves” by saying “no” to something, even though **you know** it's wrong.

-To a **STREET PUPPET** there exists no courage within to **stand alone** when a situation comes up that might really “mess up” the person for years to come.

-To a **STREET PUPPET**, you just..... **go along** with everyone. Being accepted to a STREET PUPPET is that easy. Just.....go **along** with the crowd. Never mind what may happen as a result of your actions, just..... **go along**.

In other words, you become a ‘puppet’ to those you hang out with because you feel it's the only way they'll accept you.

Well, truth is **being accepted** is easy and you don't have to “just.....go **along**” to have people “hang out” with you.

Anthony sure didn't understand this.

Anthony's Story is **true** and it's a good example of how easy it is for some people to get trapped into becoming a STREET PUPPET without even knowing it.

Anthony was a slender 16-year old boy who never thought he'd find himself in the kind of trouble he was in. After all, he had never even been sent to the principal's office much less to juvenile jail. As he stood looking out the narrow window from his cramped jail cell, Anthony kept asking himself the same questions over and over again:

*“What am I doing here? How did I get into this mess? How could I let this happen? Stupid!”*

Anthony's problems started when his family moved from North Carolina to a small town in Minnesota. His father had a new job that required him to travel quite a bit.

Once again Anthony found himself in a new his high school. Being new, he wanted very much to be accepted.

One day, a small group of boys came up to Anthony and asked him if he wanted to go to a beer party that evening. Never before in his life had Anthony gone out drinking.

He didn't like the taste of the stuff and never saw a need to do something he didn't like just to hang out with friends.

But being in a new school Anthony put aside those things and decided to go.

At the party, Anthony drank just one can of beer. Even that was tough for him to take. It took him most of the party just to do that.

Anthony seemed to fit in pretty good so his friends ask him to another party a few weeks later.

He went to that party and drank. Then weeks later, to another party and drank. And to still another party after that.

It got to the point where Anthony wasn't drinking just one can of beer anymore.

He was drinking a six-pack, some vodka" and some rum.

Anthony liked hanging out with his new friends even though they did things that were totally against what he believed in.

Hanging out with these people gave Anthony a sense of importance, of acceptance—like he was

SOMEBODY to SOMEBODY.

This also gave Anthony a feeling of security: something he had never had before in his life. There were people around and if it took drinking to make this happen, so be it.

In time, Anthony actually believed that the people he was hanging out with were the kind of friends who would be there for him if he ever really needed them.

Truth is, they were more “drinking buddies” than actual friends.

Anthony couldn't see this at the time, but it wouldn't take long for him to discover it.

There was something else Anthony was about to discover.

You see, the boy who'd never been drinking before, who had always tried to do the right things in life, who had put aside his values just to be accepted, was now developing a drinking problem.

Anthony was at a point where he would drink just about anything his friends would put in front of him.

When you're having fun and people are hanging out with you, you don't think of those things.

Little did Anthony realize that when friendship is built upon **sand** instead of **rock**, it doesn't take long before the rain washes it away.

And the rain in Anthony's life was about to come down and come down hard.

It all started on a Saturday evening, 2 days before his birthday.

Anthony went to one of his parties thinking nothing of it. Just another party to him.

When he walked into the house, he saw his “friends” sitting in a circle on the living room floor. Not giving any thought to it, Anthony sat with them.

Shortly after he sat down, someone pulled out a marijuana cigarette, lit it up, took a drag and then passed it on to the next person. This person also took a drag...and so on.

The marijuana was eventually passed to Anthony.

Everyone waited for him to take a drag. He stared at the joint for a moment, then raised his head and slowly moved his eyes around the circle. As he was doing this, his mind began to race.

*“Man, I don’t want this garbage,” he thought.  
“Drinking is starting to mess me up enough. Like  
I really need something else to make it worse?  
Forget about it!”*

He then passed the joint to the next person without taking a drag.

*“What’s the matter?”* one boy said in a sarcastic tone, *“Too strong for you? Want a candy joint instead?”*

Everyone in the circle laughed.

*“Give me a break, kid!”* another said.  
*“I didn’t think you were such a whimp!”*

Suddenly an uneasy feeling crept into Anthony’s body. As he looked around, the faces he once knew were no longer familiar, but rather dark shadows of people he had never met before.

This made Anthony feel really uncomfortable—so much so that he wanted to leave.

But as Anthony tried to stand up, something peculiar happened. He couldn’t seem to get off the floor; it was like he was glued to the carpet.

The heavy hand of possibly being rejected literally held Anthony in place. He was afraid that if he left that party, people would make fun of him, and no one would ever want to hang out with him any more.

So he stayed. The marijuana kept going around and Anthony kept passing it on. The more he did, the more uneasy he felt.

Suddenly there was a knock at the door.

*“Open up,”* a voice on the other side said. *“It’s the police. We got a call from your neighbors that something might be wrong. Open the door.”*

As everyone scrambled to get away, the police opened the front and smelled the marijuana. They then quickly came in and arrested everyone in sight for possession of a controlled substance.

As Anthony was being handcuffed, he turned to his friends for support.

*“What’s up? Someone tell them I didn’t do nothing. Come on! Tell them I didn’t do nothing!”*

Anthony expected his friends to speak up for him. He actually expected someone to cover his back. But no one said anything. Some just looked away while others smirked.

*“Come on!”* Anthony said in an anxious voice.  
*“Quit messing around! You know I didn’t do anything. Tell them! Tell them!”*

Once again, silence. The only thing that could be heard was the clicking of handcuffs.

Anthony slowly hung his head. A look of anger and frustration showed on his face as he was led out the front door.

*“Punks,”* he whispered to himself.  
*“I was hanging around a bunch of punks.”*

~

After serving time at the Hyland Detention Center, Anthony was sent to an alcohol treatment facility to get help for his drinking problem.

But Anthony’s Story doesn’t end there.

About a year later, his family moved again—this time to a town in southern Minnesota.

Anthony was new to this high school and wanted to be accepted. However, after all he’s been through, he was now a lot wiser. And it didn’t take long for him to put this wisdom into action.

One day, a boy from the “in crowd” came up to Anthony’s locker and invited him to a beer party.

Anthony paused.

He raised his head, looked the boy squarely in the eye and said in a slow, soft but yet firm voice,

*“A beer party? I don’t want to go to your beer party...”*

Another pause.

*“...And if you’re smart, kid”* he said as he put some books in and closed his locker door,

*“you don’t want to go either.”*



# FINAL THOUGHT

# The Ultimate Friendship Test

Did you ever wonder why the people you hang out with hang out with you?

I mean, do they hang out with you because they like you as a person,

or

do they hang out with you for some other reason?

Want to find out?

Take

THE ULTIMATE FRIENDSHIP TEST

and see for yourself.

*Here's how it works...*

Hang out with your friends as usual.

Mess around,  
have a good time,  
enjoy your friendship with them as  
you normally would.

After all, they're your good friends.

Or are they?

If any of your friends want you to do something that could really mess you over in some way—serious things like

drinking,  
stealing,  
drugs,  
skipping school,  
or whatever—

do the right thing instead.

Don't walk away from their friendship, just simply do the right thing.

Give some reason why you don't want to do it and tell them you'll call them later.

After two weeks of doing this, look around.

Who's left?

Who's still hanging out with you?

Who still calls and stays in touch with you?

Whoever they may be, they are people who hang out with you because they have more respect for you as a person than for anything else.

Keep them, because they're not bad friends to have around.

No matter how you look at this test, whether you think it's dumb, old fashioned, or wouldn't think of taking it because you're afraid of what you might find out, the bottom line never changes when it comes to friendship.

That is,

RESPECT  
and  
true friendship  
are  
INSEPARABLE.

The  
ULTIMATE FRIENDSHIP TEST  
is a great test for dating, too.

Especially if the topic of sex ever comes up.