

## **YELLOW BAG OF M&MS**

**By James Collins**

**I received a small handful of M&Ms in a sealed yellow bag. What is this? What is it for? What is its longevity? Who wants to use it? What is its value? All these questions rushed upon me upon receipt of the small package. Now I was thinking. How do I answer all these questions? What does it matter? Who cares? While pondering these immense conundrums I was packing my bag to leave the classroom. I was still thinking as I was walking and thinking while I was driving.**

**When I arrived home, I sat down at my computer and searched for the little yellow bag of M&Ms. The bag was gone and its contents the M&Ms were gone! What happened to them? Where do they go? Did someone steal them? If so why? What was their value and to whom?**

**I asked my question. How do people value them? The answer was it depends on how old you are. To a child, candy is a treat while at the same time to the adult it is a tool. The child wants the candy for immediate consumption and gratification, while the adult plans to use it as a bribe to modify the child's behavior. Thus, the little bag of M&Ms supplies two needs simultaneously. However, to the child the little bag of goodies is not to be shared while the parent works to get the child to share them with a sibling or a friend. To the child the treats are precious, to the adult a mere nothing.**

**As the child ages it becomes more independent and acquires more freedom. Also during this period in their lives, they gain experience. They acquire bushels of candy, which they have extorted from the neighbors during that festival known as Halloween. The children learn to extort candies from the grown-ups by using a low-level extortion threat of 'trick or treat'. They promise not to burn down the neighbor's house if bribed with candy. The grown-ups, from their point of view, do not want damage to their property and reluctantly supply candy to the miscreants who show up wearing masks and other paraphernalia used to make their identification difficult. These are the traits of street muggers and stickup men. Some of the children will follow these avocations.**

**Once they grow to working age, the M&Ms become a snack, which may be added to their lunch or used when they are working overtime in the late hours of the night to keep their energy level up. They view the little packages of M&Ms as old friends. They cannot remember a time in their life when they did not have access to them. Their office may contain bowls of multicolored M&Ms open as offerings to their colleagues again a form of bribery. People will do anything to become popular.**

**Now as you age, a little more, you acquire your own children and now you move to the other side of the seesaw. You now offer bribes to them to manipulate their behavior and thus a new generation starts on the M&M track. Slowly but surely the M&Ms have moved from being a desired treat to being a required supply for everyday use.**

**Maturity has its own stages but is just a few steps closer to the end of the bus ride. The elderly enter a different stage of dealing with M&Ms. Because of dental problems and dentures M&Ms that are pure chocolate are savored. Those, which contained hidden peanuts, are like a minefield. Bite down on one on the wrong side and pain occurs rather than pleasure. That is why grandparents often offer M&Ms with peanuts to the children. The grandparents cannot use them because they do not trust them.**

**This finally brings us to the end of our journey –death. We leave this world with all of its temptations, pleasures, pain, sorrow and joy but the M&Ms appear to go on forever. Who stole my M&Ms? It could be anyone. Where are they? No one knows. They could be anywhere. They could be just lost waiting for someone to find them. M&Ms as you know never die. They just sit there and dare you to try to outlive them.**

**THE END**