

## Stephen

During the 1970's, I attended Golden Square High School, Bendigo. Stephen was one of a group of bullies that would "pick on me." They would call me names, "spastic," and push me down the stairs, constantly knock my books out of my hands, and even throw pies at me. I hated him.

Many years later, whilst working at the Bendigo Hospital, Stephen was introduced to me as a new staff member. I went home that night in tears thinking how I would have to leave my job. How could I possibly work with him? He was employed as a porter. I was employed as telephonist. It was my job to relay messages to him, so we were in constant contact. One day, Stephen came into the room. He looked directly into my eyes and apologised to me. He apologised for all of the cruelty he had inflicted on me during our school years. I said "Why should I believe that you have changed? You were so nasty to me."

He explained that he had spent some years in the army, and that had made him grow up. His apology was one of the most genuine heartfelt I have ever encountered. We became very good friends. We lost touch once we finished working together.