

Stubborn as a Mule

Category: Speaking Up

written by Pris Campbell | July 4, 2020

I remember my mother referring to me from early childhood on as “stubborn as a mule.” That trait has held me in good stead when dealing with authority figures or doctors who have tried to talk me into doing something I knew wasn’t right.

The event I remember most, though, comes from my grammar school years. A girl in our class was “retarded” (the term used then), as was her mother. She came to school with her hair uncombed, clothes dirty, and wearing no underpants. Each day at recess a group of boys encouraged her to go on the hanging bars so they could run under and look up her dress.

This brought much hilarity: for the boys, but not for me. If this happened when I was around, I yelled at them and led the little girl away. One time I caught them in the act and bloodied a boy’s nose. The others ran, and she never had that problem again.

Even children know that someone has to stand up to bullies. I was glad to be that someone: then, and many more times over the years.

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