

Name
Withheld

or popular

I wasn't good at sports

but I still

earned a

with my classmates,
special award.

I enjoyed reading the *New Era* in high school, but in some ways it made me feel discouraged and inadequate. It was always telling stories about talented youth, and I thought I could never be like them.

It seemed I wasn't talented in anything. I was uncoordinated and bad at sports. I was extremely shy and self-conscious, and I was made fun of in school, often because of my high standards. I did make pretty good grades—mainly because I worked hard at it.

I figured that maybe there was still something I could do, even if I couldn't be a real star like the people highlighted in the magazine. I read the scriptures about loving others and decided I would try to do that.

One day as I came out of Mutual class, I saw a girl standing at the end of the hall. She was slouched over. The thought came to me that this girl needed a friend, so I walked over and started talking to her. More accurately, I started listening to her. She talked very softly, but I showed interest in what she had to say.



We were friends from then on. She was four years younger than I was, and she was not a member of the Church; her neighbors had started bringing her to Church. A few months later, I was able to go to her baptism. She was 13 years old and the only member in her family.

I made friends with other people too. Sometimes I would think that a person wouldn't want to be friends with me, but I found that these people seemed happy to have someone who cared about them.

When it was time to graduate, our high school had an awards assembly to honor students' achievements. My name was not called, but my friend who had gotten baptized made a little award for me and had my friends sign it. I felt I had really achieved something too.

I also realized that everyone has their place and purpose in this world. I know that those talented and popular people had an influence on others. But perhaps if I had been very talented or very popular, I might have been too busy for my new friends, and those friendships have become rich treasures to me. **NE**