

Armchair Spectator

Sport comes on... sorry what were you saying?

Full Transcript: Lance Armstrong on Oprah

Posted on 23 January, 2013 6:20 pm by Denis Mahon

Here is the complete transcript of both parts of Lance Armstrong's interview with Oprah (with some live tweets thrown in here or there to satisfy any lingering OCD).

Lance Armstrong Confession Countdown: 10 mins. Paul Kimmage and David Walsh are standing by nervously pic.twitter.com/VT7VDX9L (<http://t.co/VT7VDX9L>)

– Off The Ball (@offtheball) January 18, 2013 (https://twitter.com/offtheball/status/292086982912405504?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Part One

[Introductory Video Clip – Voice over by authoritative, 40 a day, American disaster movie trailer sound-a-like]
Authoritative Voice Over Man: Live around the world... After years of denial...

Lance Armstrong: [various clips from his past] I have never doped... Is there evidence? Where is evidence of doping here?... I'm sick and tired of these allegations... I'm sorry you don't believe in miracles.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: A federal investigation that was ultimately closed...

Random reporter 1: Armstrong has consistently denied the doping claims.

Random reporter 2: His lawyer calls the report a witch-hunt.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: And finally a reasoned decision by USADA, the United States Anti Doping Agency...

Random reporter 3: A dramatic twist in the case against Lance Armstrong.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: Seven time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong...

Pat McQuaid: UCI will ban Lance Armstrong from cycling.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: Stripped of his titles, and banned for life from elite competition.

Pat McQuaid: Lance Armstrong has no place in cycling.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: Then...

Random reporter 4: Abandoned by his sponsors and his reputation destroyed...

Authoritative Voice Over Man: The final blow...

Random reporter 5: Lance Armstrong is stepping down as chairman of the Livestrong Foundation.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: For months speculation mounted: would Lance Armstrong ever address the epic fall in a formal interview. Now, the worldwide exclusive: Oprah and Lance Armstrong.
[Clip ends. Cut to hotel room in Austin with Armstrong and Oprah seated, both cross legged and looking relaxed. Armstrong, wearing a blue jacket, blue shirt, blue trousers and yellow Livestrong wristband sits upright and expectant. Oprah, in a turquoise dress, attempts to conceal a turquoise spray painted iPad full of questions in her lap (or maybe they're just blue paper...) as she begins the discussion.]

Oprah Winfrey: So here we are in Austin Texas. A few days ago you texted to the Associated Press and said, "I told her to go wherever she wants," – her being me – "and I'll answer the questions directly, honestly and candidly. That's all I can say." Those are your words?

Lance Armstrong: Those are my words.

OW: When we first met a week ago today, we agreed that there would be no holds barred, there would be no conditions on this interview and that this would be an open field.

LA: I think that's best for both of us.

OW: I agree. So here we go, open field. So let's start with the questions that people around the world have been waiting for you to answer, and for now I'd just like a yes or no, ok?

LA: Ok.

OW: This whole conversation – we have a lot of time – will be about the details. Yes or no, did you ever take banned substances to enhance your cycling performance?

Lance Armstrong: Yes.

OW: Yes or no. Was one of those banned substances EPO?

LA: Yes.

All yes so far!

— Off The Ball (@offtheball) January 18, 2013 (https://twitter.com/offtheball/status/292089755586400258?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

OW: Did you ever blood dope or use blood transfusions to enhance your cycling performance?

LA: Yes.

OW: Did you ever use any other banned substances like testosterone, cortisone or Human Growth Hormone?

LA: Yes.

OW: Yes or no, in all seven of your Tour de France victories, did you ever take banned substances or blood dope?

LA: Yes.

OW: In your opinion was it humanly possible to win the Tour de France without doping, seven times in a row?

LA: Not in my opinion.

OW: So when did you first start doping?

LA: We're done with the yes and nos?

Lance has been prepped like a Presidential candidate for a debate. Not Obama in Denver, either.

— Bruce Arthur (@bruce_arthur) January 18, 2013 (https://twitter.com/bruce_arthur/status/292090368638455809?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

OW: [nervous laugh] We're done with the yes and nos!

LA: I suppose earlier in my career there was cortisone and then the EPO generation began.

OW: Began when?

LA: For me or for...?

OW: For you?

LA: Mid 90s.

OW: [confirming] Mid 90s. For thirteen years you didn't just deny it, you brazenly and defiantly denied everything you just admitted just now. So why now admit it?

LA: That is the best question. It's the most logical question. I don't know that I have a great answer. I will start my answer by saying that this is too late. It's too late for probably most people, and that's my fault. I viewed this situation as one big lie that I repeated a lot of times, and as you said, it wasn't as if I just said no and I moved off it.

In my day, you confessed to the world about a lifetime of lying and cheating on Oprah, you wore a tie.

— Chris Wilson-Smith (@thechrisws) January 18, 2013

(https://twitter.com/thechrisws/status/292090543922622464?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

OW: You were defiant, you called other people liars.

LA: Right, I understand that. And while I've lived through this process, especially the last two years, one year, six months, two, three months... I know the truth. The truth isn't what was out there. The truth isn't what I said, and now it's gone – this story was so perfect for so long. And I mean that, as I try to take myself out of the situation and I look at it. [begins counting on fingers] You overcome the disease, you win the Tour de France seven times, you have a happy marriage, you have children, I mean, it's just this mythic perfect story, and it wasn't true.

OW: And that was not true?

LA: And that was not true. On a lot of levels.

OW: Was it hard to live up to that picture?

LA: Impossible. Certainly I'm a flawed character, as I well know, and I couldn't do that. But what we see now and what's out there –

OW: But didn't you help paint that picture?

LA: Of course, I did. [talk over each other] And a lot of people did. Listen, all the fault and all the blame here falls on me. But behind that picture and behind that story is momentum. Whether it's fans or whether it's the media, it just gets going. And I lost myself in all of that. I'm sure there would be other people that couldn't handle it, but I certainly couldn't handle it, and I was used to controlling everything in my life. I controlled every outcome in my life.

Psychological Irony Dept: Of all those he disliked, LA despised those who partially broke omerta -- who confessed halfway

— DanielCoyle (@DanielCoyle) January 18, 2013

(https://twitter.com/DanielCoyle/status/292091317981425664?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

OW: You've been doing that forever?

LA: Yeah, especially when it comes to sport. But just the last thing I'll say is that just now – the story is so bad and so toxic. And a lot of it's true...

OW: You said to me earlier you don't think it was possible to win without doping?

LA: Not in that generation – and I'm not here to talk about others in that generation. It's been well documented. I didn't invent the culture, but I didn't try to stop the culture, and that's my mistake, and that's what I have to be sorry for, and that's what something – and the sport is now paying the price because of that. So I am sorry for that. I don't think... I didn't have access to anything else that nobody else did.

He's got a list in his head of truths he can tell and truths he can't, and you can see him parsing them in real time.

— Bruce Arthur (@bruce_arthur) January 18, 2013

(https://twitter.com/bruce_arthur/status/292092153839120384?ref_src=twsrct%5Etfw)

OW: Ok let me read you this. The United States Anti Doping Agency, USADA, issued a 164-page report which I've read. The CEO Travis Tygart said that you and United States Postal Service Cycling Team pulled off, his words: "the most sophisticated, professional and successful doping programme the sport has ever seen." [sic] Was it?

LA: No, no. And I think he actually said that "all of sport has ever seen". [sic] Oprah, it wasn't. It was... It was definitely professional and it was definitely smart – if you can call it that – but it was very conservative, very risk-averse, very aware of what mattered and what didn't: one race mattered for me. But to say that that programme was bigger than the East German doping program in the '80s? In the '70s and '80s? That's not true.

OW: So you're saying that you didn't have access to certain things that other people didn't have access to?

LA: Absolutely not.

good to know the doping program kept his important races in mind. which is why he wasn't good outside the tour

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013

(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292092287167655936>)

OW: What was the culture? Can you explain the culture to us?

LA: It's hard to get into that without... And again, I don't want to accuse anybody else, I don't want to necessarily talk about anybody else. I made my decisions, they are my mistakes, and I am sitting here today to acknowledge that and to say I'm sorry for that. The culture was what it was.

OW: Was everybody doing it? That's what we've heard. Was everybody doing it?

LA: And that's not my... I didn't know everybody. I didn't live and train with everybody. I didn't race with everybody. I can't say that. There will be people that say that. There will be people that say, "OK, there are 200 guys on the tour, I can tell you five guys that didn't, and those are the five heroes", and they're right.

OW: What did you think of those guys – now you just called them heroes – but what did you think of those guys at the time when you were riding, who were riding clean? Did you think they were suckers? Did you think that they were... what?

LA: No and that's – No, I didn't... [pause] The idea that anybody was forced, or pressured, or encouraged is not true... I mean I'm out of the business of calling somebody a liar, but if you ask me "If it true or not", I'll tell you if it's true or not. That is not true.

[Video Clip]

OW: *Last Fall the US Anti Doping Agency, USADA, published details of how some of the United States Postal Service Cycling Team – and former team captain, Lance Armstrong – conducted their years' long doping scheme. Travis Tygart: I think there were parts of this scheme that were run like a mafia.*

Tyler Hamilton: Back in the day we had code words for certain things. We had secret phones. We had secret code words. It was either Poe or Edgar Allan Poe. Which was kinda – that was the code name for EPO.

OW: According to USADA, they devised a systematic doping ring in several countries, that ran nearly undetected for close to a decade. Reports say private jets flew some team members to Spain for secret blood transfusions. Payments were transferred through Swiss bank accounts, banned substances were smuggled across international borders, blood was stored in hidden refrigerators in preparation for blood doping. Armstrong's former team-mate,

Tyler Hamilton, described how riders got rid of the evidence after injecting Performance Enhancing drugs.

Tyler Hamilton: All three vials would go into a coke can, crush it, give it to a team doctor to dispose.

[End video clip]

re bio passport: source in lab work says now rider blood looking very similar. passport has hemmed them in, not extinguished doping

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013

(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292093243045343232>)

OW: How were you able to do it? I mean you talked a bit the culture. And there were all kinds of stories out that you were going to confess, you were going to talk to me but you wouldn't tell me everything – we said no-holds barred. How was it done? You said it was smart but that it wasn't the most sophisticated. What we've read, what we've heard, is it true? Motoman dropping off EPO?

LA: That was true.

OW: [confirming] That was true. Were you blood doping in the Stage 11 of the 2000 Tour? Stopping at a hotel? Tyler Hamilton says you stopped at a hotel –

LA: I'm confused on the stages but yes certainly that was the –

OW: – that in the middle of the Tour. Tyler Hamilton also said that there would be times when [she mimes injecting herself] you all were injecting EPO in a camper or in a tent and right outside the fans would be right outside and you all would be dumping the syringes in coke cans. Is that true?

LA: I didn't read Tyler's book. I don't necessarily remember that... But I'm certain not going to say, "That's a lie", or "That's not true".

OW: But my question is: I'd like you to walk me through it. Were there pill deliveries and blood in secret refrigerators? Was there...? How did it work?

LA: [laughs] Oh you'd need a long time.

OW: How did it work?

LA: I viewed it as very simple. You had things that were oxygen boosting drugs – for lack of a better word or way to describe it – that were incredibly beneficial for performance or endurance sports, whether it's cycling or running or whatever. And that's all you needed. My cocktail so to speak was only EPO, but not a lot, transfusions and testosterone. Which in a weird way I almost justified [referring to testosterone] because of my history. Obviously, the testicular cancer and losing... I thought, surely I'm running low.

OW: So you could justify the testosterone.

LA: Well I –

Bike-o path

— Glenn Stout (@GlennStout) January 18, 2013

(<https://twitter.com/GlennStout/status/292094443941662720>)

OW: Could you in some way justify the blood transfusions because it is your blood, they keep your blood, and then put your blood in?

LA: Well there's no true justification for those.

OW: Were you afraid of getting caught?

LA: No. Drug testing has changed, it's evolved. In the old days they tested at the races. They didn't come to your house, they didn't come to your training camps, they tested you at the races. That's shifted a lot, so now the emphasis of the testing – which is right – is in out of competition testing.

OW: And in 1999 there wasn't even a test for EPO.

LA: And there was no testing out of competition. They may, I mean theoretically there may have

been, but they never came. And for most of my career there wasn't that much of that. So two things changed –

OW: That much of what?

LA: There wasn't that much out of competition testing. So you're not going to get caught, you know? Because you're clean at the races. [long stare] Clear.

OW: Would you take several days before... You take it and give it enough time for it to move through your system?

LA: Yeah it's just a question of scheduling.

OW: [confirming] Scheduling.

LA: I know that sounds weird. Two things changed: the shift to out of competition testing, and the biological passport. It really worked. I'm no fan or defender of the UCI but they implemented the bio passport.

[Video clip]

again, these blood vals post comeback. reticulocyte suppression during tour is a result of injecting new blood cells <cdn-community2.livestrong.com/ver1.0/Content...> (<http://t.co/rEcg8PcN>)

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292094359774568449>)

OW: The International Cycling Union, or UCI, and the World Anti-doping Agency, or WADA, began using the biological passport he refers to in 2008. The bio passport creates a profile of each cyclist's natural blood and urine levels from samples collected several times throughout the year. Any fluctuations in riders' blood or urine level are red flagged as possible doping.

The 2012 USADA report says expert examination established that quote, "the likelihood of Armstrong's blood values from the 2009 and 2010 Tours de France occurring naturally is less than one in a million". The report went on to say this builds quote, "a compelling argument consistent with blood doping".

[End Video clip]

I like the idea of Jan Ullrich watching this in a velvet bed with a jaguar sheets.

— Jason Gay (@jasonWSJ) January 18, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/jasonWSJ/status/292097167315828736>)

LA: And it's the only thing in that whole report that upset me – I mean all of it obviously upset me – but the accusation and the alledged proof that they say I doped after my come back is not true. The last time I crossed the line – that line – was 2005. And so –

OW: So when you placed third in 2009 you did not dope?

LA: No. And again, the biological passport was in place...

OW: Ok does that include blood transfusions?

LA: Absolutely.

OW: Ok so you did not do a blood transfusion in 2009 –

LA: Absolutely not.

OW: You did no doping or blood transfusions in 2010?

LA: Absolutely. 2009 and 2010. Those were the two years I did the Tour. Absolutely not.

OW: So 2005 was the last time?

LA: Absolutely true.

[Video clip]

OW: For seven years Lance Armstrong led the US Postal Service Cycling Team and later the Discovery Channel Pro Cycling Team to the top of the podium. Armstrong was the team captain – and according to USADA – part owner of the US Postal Service Cycling Team. Reports said it was written in Armstrong's contract he had the power to both hire and fire the other riders. The USADA report stated, "the evidence is also clear that Armstrong had ultimate control over not only his own personal drug use, which was extensive, but also over the doping culture of his team".

[End of video clip]

going to keep tweeting this cause news to me. says he didn't dope post comeback. his blood profile says otherwise cdn-community2.livestrong.com/ver1.0/Content... (<http://t.co/rEcg8PcN>)

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292096618021408768>)

OW: Were you the one in charge?

LA: Well I was the top rider, I was the leader of the team. I wasn't the manager, the general manager, the director...

OW: But if someone was not doing something to your satisfaction could you get them fired?

LA: It depends what they were doing. I mean if you're asking me, somebody on the teams says, "I'm not going to dope".

OW: Yes?

LA: And I say you're fired?

OW: Yes?

LA: Absolutely not.

OW: Could you..?

LA: I mean could I? I guess I could have, but I never did. Look, I was the leader of the team and the leader of any team leads by example. There was never a direct order or a directive to say you had to do this if you want to do the Tour / if you want to be on the team. That never happened. It was a competitive time, we were all grown men and made our choices. But there were people on the team that chose not to.

OW: One of your former team-mates, Christian Vande Velde, told Usada you threatened to kick him off the team if he didn't shape up and conform to the doping programme?

LA: That's... that's not true. There was a level of expectation. We expected guys to be fit, to be strong, to perform... But I certainly didn't – I'm not the most believable guy in the world right now I understand – but I did not do that.

OW: When you say there's a level of expectation, could that level of expectation be implied to mean, "If you don't do this you're not on the team?"

LA: Em...

OW: Because you're Lance Armstrong –

LA: And this is what I said earlier –

OW: And if you say it?

LA: But even if I don't say it, if I do it and I'm the leader of the team, you're leading by example so that's a problem.

OW: Can you understand how he would feel, or someone would feel, that if you're doing it and this is how we win and I don't do it, then I might not be able to be on the team? You can understand?

LA: I can understand that.

OW: [confirming] I can understand that.

LA: But I can also understand the difference between saying that and saying, "You have to do this if

you want to do the Tour or stay on this team.” There is a big difference. But neither are good but –

OW: Are we talking semantics here? Are we talking semantics, meaning a fine line between, “You have to do it but hey look you’re on this team, you want to win”? Are we talking semantics?

LA: Well no. I don’t know, I view one of them as a verbal pressure, a directive and that didn’t exist.”

OW: But you do accept that if you are Lance Armstrong... [waves hands as if to say “Hello?!”]

LA: Yeah, I take that.

OW: Yeah. The captain, the power, force-field, the leader of the team...

LA: ...the leader of the team. The guy that my team-mates looked up to.

OW: That’s right.

LA: Yeah, I accept that. Hundred percent.

OW: Ok, and accepting it can understand that “If he didn’t do it, then maybe he would feel that he wouldn’t make the team”.

LA: Correct.

OW: Ok.

LA: But now, having said that, I just, I don’t want to split hairs here, but when guys go on to other teams – and Christian, I care a lot about Christian, he’s a good guy – but when you go on to other teams and you continue the same behaviour it’s not... I wasn’t on those teams. And –

OW: Same behaviour meaning doping?

LA: Correct.

OW: Were you a bully?

LA: Yeah, yeah I was a bully.

OW: Tell me how you were a bully.

LA: I was a bully in the sense that I tried to control the narrative and if I didn’t like what someone said – and for whatever reasons in my own head, whether I viewed that as somebody being disloyal, or a friend turning on you or whatever – I tried to control that and said “That’s a lie, they’re liars.”

OW: Is that your nature: when somebody says something that you don’t like, you go on attack? Has that been your –

LA: ...my entire life.

OW: [confirming] Your entire life.

LA: ...my entire life.

OW: So you were doing that when you were 10-years-old, and 12-years-old, and 14-years-old?

LA: It’s interesting... I grew up – as most people know – I mean, we grew up as fighters. My Mom was young when she had me. We sort of always felt like, maybe it wasn’t reality, but we felt like we had our backs against the wall the whole time. So I was always a fighter. My Mom was always a fighter, still is a fighter. Before my diagnosis I would say I was a competitor but I wasn’t a fierce competitor. And in an odd way that process turned me into a person that gonna – it was truly win at all costs. When I was diagnosed and I was being treated I said, “I will do anything I have to do to survive.” And that’s good. And I took that attitude – that ruthless and relentless and win-at-all-costs attitude – and I took it right into cycling, because quite frankly it followed it up almost immediately. And that’s bad.

What’s reassuring about Armstrong story is how many people, judging by their shock, have never dealt w/a remorseless, compulsive liar. Nice.

— Tabatha Southey (@TabathaSouthey) January 18, 2013

(<https://twitter.com/TabathaSouthey/status/292097500536532992>)

OW: But you'd already been doing drugs before that...? Doing drugs meaning taking banned substances.

LA: Correct. But I wasn't a bully before that.

OW: [confirming] You weren't a bully before that. What made you a bully?

LA: I think, just again, trying to perpetuate the story and hide the truth. This is the second time in my life where I can't control this outcome.

OW: First time was the cancer?

LA: First time was the disease which – obviously... And now. The scary thing is that winning seven Tours I knew, I knew, I was going to win.

OW: How important was winning to you, and would you do anything to win at all costs?

LA: Basically. Winning was important, winning was important. I still like to win but I view it a little differently now.

OW: You've been quoted as saying, "We had one goal, one ambition and that was to win the greatest bike race in the world, and not just to win it once, but to keep on winning it." And to keep on winning it meant you had to keep on using banned substances to do it.

LA: Yes. But – and I'm not sure that this is an acceptable answer – but that's like saying we have to have air in our tyres or we have to have water in our bottles. That was, in my view, part of the job.

OW: Are you saying that's how common it was?

LA: [laughs] Again, I don't want to... My view was that it was, and others will have to attest to that. I don't want to accuse anybody, I don't want to make any excuses for me. But that was my view and I made those decisions.

OW: Are you saying to me that you did not expect or require other top riders, your key guys, to dope in order to reach that team's goal?

LA: Absolutely not.

OW: [confirming] You did not.

LA: Absolutely not.

OW: You never offered it to them? You never suggested that they see Ferrari?

LA: Em... Ferrari... and again it's hard to talk about some of these things and not mention names. But there are people in this story – let me say this – that are good people. Ok? And we've all made mistakes. And there are people in this story that are not monsters and they're not toxic and they're not evil. I viewed Michele Ferrari as a good man and a smart man, and I still do.

an armstrong associate told me was with riders when they put \$5,000 in cash in envelopes to pay Ferrari. don't think i've ever held >\$500

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013

(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292097627384844289>)

[Video Clip]

OW: According to the US Anti-doping Agency, USADA, Lance Armstrong began working with controversial Italian sports trainer and medical consultant Dr Michele Ferrari as early as 1994. Known in cycling circles as "the master of doping", the report says Armstrong and other riders on his team paid Dr Ferrari in return for putting them on a doping regime. Armstrong reportedly paid Dr Ferrari a million dollars over the course of ten years.

Dr Ferrari still maintains his innocence and has denied doping Lance Armstrong. Last July USADA issued Ferrari a lifetime ban from cycling. In sworn testimony from a 2005 lawsuit, Armstrong denied using banned substances and gave this answer about Dr Ferrari...

[End of clip]

OW: Ok let's go to the tape.

[Oprah shows video clip to Armstrong of him replying to questions under oath in the 2005 SCA Promotions lawsuit]

the statute of limitations for his testimony under oath has passed

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292097936286961664>)

Interviewer: Did Dr Ferrari ever suggest to you that you should use, take or consider take performance enhancing drugs or substances.

LA: Never, absolutely not.

Interviewer: Is the anything about your dealings with Dr Ferrari over the decade or so that you've known and dealt with him that would suggest to you that perhaps he was using or encouraging other athletes to use performance enhancing drugs or substances?

LA: No, in fact to the contrary.

Interviewer: Tell me what you mean when you said "to the contrary".

LA: He's the – I know you're going to find this hard to believe – but he's to me, totally clean and totally ethical, believes in clean, fair sport, but produces great results with his athletes because he's so focused. But I've never – I've never had a conversation with him regarding that.

[Tape ends]

Ferrari, recall, compared EPO to orange juice. must have a killer fridge in his place — David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292098186540118018>)

OW: Would that be your same response today?

LA: Eh... no.

OW: [confirms] No. Because – **LA: My responses on most of these things are going to be different today.**

OW: Yes. Would you say... Was he the leader and the mastermind behind the team's doping programme?

LA: No. And again Oprah –

OW: That might not be the correct characterisation so how would you characterise his influence on the team?

LA: But I'm not comfortable talking about other people. Listen it's all out there.

OW: Let me ask you this: David Walsh, reporter for the *Sunday Times* newspaper in London, says that your association with Ferrari immediately dialled up suspicion on you. Looking back on that time would you say that it was reckless for you to be involved and engaged with Ferrari?

LA: From a public's perception standpoint sure, yeah. But there were plenty of other reckless things. In fact, that would be a very good way to characterise that period of my life.

OW: [confirming] As reckless. Let's talk about that. What was going on with you? You know, you and I both know that fame just magnifies whoever you really are.

LA: [confirming] Mmm hmm.

OW: So if you're a jerk you're a bigger jerk.

LA: [now suspicious] Hmm.

OW: If you're a humanitarian you're a bigger humanitarian. So what was going on with you at that time and what did fame, what did that do?

LA: I think it – and I don't know if you pulled those two words out of the air, jerk and humanitarian – I'd say I was both, and we saw both, and now we're seeing certainly more of the jerk part than the

activist, the humanitarian, the philanthropist, the leader of the Foundation. We're seeing that now. I am flawed, deeply flawed. I think we all have our flaws, but... If the magnifying glass is normally this big [forms small circle with his hands], I made it this big [brings hands apart] because of my actions and because of my words and because of my attitude and my defiance, and I'm paying the price for it – and that's ok. You know, I deserve this. I don't look around and go, "Hey Oprah, hey! I am getting so screwed here." Are there days, were there days early on when I said that? Absolutely. Those days are fewer and fewer, and farther and farther between. Listen I deserve it.

OW: What was for you the flaw or flaws that made you willing to risk it all?

LA: I think just this just ruthless desire to win, win at all costs truly. Served me well on the bike, served me well during the disease, but the level that it went to – for whatever reason – is a flaw. And then that defiance, that attitude, that arrogance, you cannot deny it. I mean you watch that clip, that's an arrogant person. I look at that I go "Look at this arrogant prick". I say that today. It's not good.

[Video Clip]

OW: In 2005 after a gruelling three week two thousand mile mountainous ride in the Tour de France, Lance Armstrong rolled through the streets of Paris in triumph. He had achieved the unimaginable: a record setting seventh consecutive win of the world's toughest race.

[End clip]

OW: This is the clip that I just cannot reconcile what you were thinking when you were saying this. Play the winning clip.

[Oprah shows Armstrong a video clip of himself delivering "winning" speech from the Tour de France podium on the Champs-Élysées]

LA: And finally the last thing I'll say to the people that don't believe in cycling, the cynics and the sceptics: I'm sorry for you, I'm sorry you can't dream big and that you don't believe in miracles, but this is one hell of a race, this is a great sporting event and you should stand around and believe. You should believe in these athletes and you should believe in these people. I'm a fan of the Tour de France for as long as I live and there are no secrets. This is a hard sporting event and hard work wins it so – vive le Tour, forever.

[End of clip]

OW: What were you trying to accomplish there?

LA: [laughs] Yeah, I've made some mistakes in my life that's for sure – that would be one – and that's not one that I would think of often but watching that, that's a mistake...

OW: Were you particularly trying to rub in the face of those people who had come out against you, who had said you were lying?

LA: No so much, I –

OW: Were you addressing them? Who were you... What were saying that for?

LA: I don't know. You it's interesting, that was the – maybe they did it long, long ago – but that was the first year that they gave the mike to the winner of the Tour. And I found out just before, and I'm all of a sudden thinking, "What the hell am I going to say?" So I didn't have any time to sort of think, "I'm going to shove it in these people's face," I mean, that just came out. Looking at that now it just sounds ridiculous. I got it.

OW: When you look at that now do you feel embarrassed, do you feel shame, do you feel humble, tell me what you feel?

LA: I'm definitely embarrassed. Listen that was the last time I won the Tour de France, that was my last day, I retired immediately after that. That's what you leave with? That's... You can leave with better than that Lance. That was lame.

OW: Tell me Lance was there happiness in winning? Was there happiness in winning when you knew

you were taking these banned substances?

LA: There was more happiness in the process, in the build, in the preparation. The winning was almost phoned in. And again I don't want this issue of performance enhancers to... again to me that was, "We're going to pump up our tyres, we're going to put water in our bottles, and oh yeah that too is going to happen." That was it.

Jesus, this is psychotic. — Ciaran Murphy (@saveciaranmurph) January 18, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/saveciaranmurph/status/29210059313525552>)

OW: Was it a big deal to you, did it feel wrong?

LA: At the time? No.

OW: It did not even feel wrong?

LA: No. Scary.

OW: Did you feel bad about it?

LA: No. Even scarier.

OW: Did you feel in any way that you were cheating?

LA: No. The scariest.

OW: You did not feel that you were cheating taking banned drugs?

LA: At the time, no. And I look up – I have this exercise where, you know, because I kept hearing...

OW: That you're a cheat.

LA: That I'm a drug cheat, I'm a cheat, I'm a cheater. And I went and just looked up the definition of cheat.

OW: Yes?

LA: And the definition of cheat is to gain an advantage on a rival or foe – you know – that they don't have. I didn't view it that way. I viewed it as a level playing field.

Emma O'Reilly diary showed Lance had lowish redbloodcell% which suggests more room to dope than the next guy. equal doping is a myth — David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 18, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292100974905012224>)

OW: But you knew that you were held to a higher standard. You're Lance Armstrong.

LA: I knew that, and of course hindsight is perfect. I know it a thousand times more now. I didn't know what I had. Look at the fallout...

OW: What do you mean by you "didn't know"? I don't think people will understand what you're saying.

LA: Well I mean I didn't understand the magnitude of that following. And we see it now because this is why it is such a –

OW: That's going to be hard for people to believe, when we met a week ago you said, "I didn't realise it was this big," to which I was like, "How could you not know."

LA: [laughing and mumbling something]

OW: How could you not know it's big? Presidents are calling, you're dating rock stars, everywhere you go...

LA: [still laughing] Hey you ask me the question, I said I didn't know, and I didn't. But the important thing is that I'm beginning to understand that, and I'm understanding it not because I see clips and we're talking about this but because I see the anger in people.

OW: Anger and disappointment.

LA: And betrayal, it's all there and these are people that supported me, that believed in me, believed me – not just believed in me but believed what I was saying – and they have every right to feel

betrayed, and it's my fault. I will spend the rest of my life – you know some people are gone forever – but I'll spend the rest of my life trying to earn back trust and apologise to people for the rest of my life.

Really hope Oprah makes the jerk off motion at some point tonight. — Leigh Ellis (@LeighEllis) January 18, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/LeighEllis/status/292101355944960000>)

OW: When you say you didn't know that it was this big, when you were in it, it feels like what?

LA: It was easy.

OW: Easy?

LA: Well it just flowed, it was just, it wasn't eh... I was in the zone – like athletes get. It wasn't exactly a perfect world, that wasn't the happiest time of my life believe it or not, I mean I could tell you with all honesty that I am happier today than I was then for a whole host of reasons.

OW: Even with all of this that's happened?

LA: I said I'm happier today. Not yesterday.

[Video clip]

OW: For years Lance Armstrong has repeatedly stated that he's been tested hundreds of times and never failed a test. In 1999 after winning the Prologue of the Tour de France samples from Armstrong's urine sample were frozen and stored. Last week Travis Tygart, the CEO of USADA, gave an interview about Armstrong's samples to 60 Minutes Sports.

[Clip of 60 minutes interview, 09/01/2013]

Travis Tygart: Six samples that were taken from Lance Armstrong were retested in '05 and they were positive.

Interviewer: In '99 when the tests were originally taken was it reported that they were negative?

Travis Tygart: There was no test for EPO. They were not tested for EPO at that time.

Interviewer: And when you tested for them in 2005 you discovered that –

Travis Tygart: All six were flaming positive.

[End clip]

OW: You said time and again in dozens of interviews that you've never failed a test. Do you have a different answer today?

LA: No I mean never – I didn't fail a test. Well there's some stuff – stuff was retroactively tested in '05

OW: Yeah [samples taken in] '99?

LA: Right, so technically yes those were retroactively, I failed those. But the hundreds and hundreds of tests that I took, I passed them, and I passed them because there was nothing in the system.

[Video clip]

OW: For their 164 page "Reasoned Decision", USADA interviewed eleven of Armstrong's former team-mates, including Tyler Hamilton and Floyd Landis. Hamilton and Landis said that Armstrong told them on separate occasions he had tested positive for EPO at the Tour de Swiss in 2001 and implied it would not come to light. In the 60 Minutes interview Tyler Hamilton gave this account:

Tyler Hamilton: Lance kind of told me in this nervous laughter that he had an EPO positive, but no worries it was going to be taken care of.

[End of clip]

OW: What about the Tour de Swiss, the Swiss Tour?

LA: Right.

OW: Yeah.

LA: Again... I'm going to tell you what's true and not true. That story isn't true. There was no positive test. There was no paying off of the lab. There was no secret meeting with the lab director.

OW: The UCI? The UCI didn't make that go away?

LA: Nope. I'm no fan of the UCI. That did not happen.

OW: [confirming] That did not happen.

LA: That absolutely did not happen.

OW: You made a donation to the UCI and unfortunately said –

LA: – these two came together –

OW: Yes, yes. You made a donation to the UCI and you said that donation was about helping their anti-doping efforts. Obviously it was not. Why did you make that donation?

LA: Because they asked me to. I mean it wasn't a... There was no deal. This is impossible for me to answer this question and have anybody believe it. It was not in exchange for any cover up – and again, I am not a fan of the UCI. I have every incentive to sit here and tell you, "Yes, that's right. They're all crooked da da da." Are there things that were a little shady? That was not one. You know they called and said they didn't have a lot of money. I was retired, I had money. They said would I consider a donation, I said "Sure".

OW: So you did not pay UCI in helping them, or in aiding them, or in assisting them in any way in overlooking some of your tests?

LA: No. And the only one there really is would be the one from the 2001 Tour of Switzerland.

OW: [confirming] Tour of Switzerland?

LA: There was the retroactive stuff later on which was, obviously at the time, a huge story.

[Video clip]

OW: Even before those 1999 samples tested positive for EPO retroactively, Armstrong had another positive test that same '99 Tour de France for cortisone steroid. Emma O'Reilly, a former masseuse for Armstrong's team, told journalist David Walsh she in the room when Armstrong and other team leaders made a plan to cover it up. O'Reilly said a team doctor back-dated a cortisone prescription claiming Armstrong needed treatment for saddle sores.

Emma O'Reilly: The problem was Lance had tested high on the cortisone. The solution was a potential prescription. "What was the prescription for?" "Why was he taking it?" "Are we all happy with that?" "Yeah we're happy with that." "Right let's go down and get him to write the prescription." It was just purely back-dated to cover up that cortisone elevation, yeah. The back-dated prescription was rigged to suit the test.

[End of clip]

Just say it, Lance. Say you did whatever it fucking took, and you didn't care who it hurt. — Bruce Arthur (@bruce_arthur) January 18, 2013 (https://twitter.com/bruce_arthur/status/292104176257867776)

OW: What about the story that Emma O'Reilly tells about the cortisone and you having the cortisone back-dated? Is that true?

LA: That is true.

OW: [confirming] Yes. What do you want to say about Emma O'Reilly?

LA: Hey she's one of these people that I have to apologise to. She's one of these people who got run over, got bullied.

OW: Isn't she one of the people – you sued her?

LA: To be honest, Oprah, we sued so many people I don't even [know]. I'm sure we did. But I have reached out to her and tried to make those amends on my own. But –

Oprah 'You're suing people and you know they're telling the truth. What is that?' That's the British and Irish libel laws — Dion Fanning (@dionfanning) January 18, 2013
[\(<https://twitter.com/dionfanning/status/292104166376079360>\)](https://twitter.com/dionfanning/status/292104166376079360)

OW: This is what doesn't make any sense: when people were saying things – David Walsh, the *Sunday Times*, Emma O'Reilly, Betsy Andreu, many others were saying things – you would then go on the attack for them. You were suing people and you know that they were telling the truth. What is that?

LA: It's a major flaw, and it's a guy who expected to get whatever he wanted and to control every outcome and it's inexcusable. When I say that there are people who will hear this and will never forgive me, I understand that. I do. I have started that process – all of this is a process for me. One of the steps of that process is to speak to those people directly and just say to them that "I'm sorry", and "I was wrong, you were right".

OW: Have you called Betsy Andreu?

I love how Emma O'Reilly "got run over" — passive. Not "I ran her over." This is why Lance is failing this interview. — Kate Fagan (@katefagan3) January 18, 2013
[\(<https://twitter.com/katefagan3/status/292104447172161536>\)](https://twitter.com/katefagan3/status/292104447172161536)

[Video clip]

OW: Betsy Andreu, the wife of Armstrong's former team-mate, Frankie Andreu, was one of the first to speak out about Armstrong's doping. While visiting him in an Indiana hospital in 1996 she says she overheard Lance Armstrong admitting to using performance enhancing drugs.

Betsey Andreu: The doctor started asking Lance questions and then boom, "Have you ever used any performance enhancing drugs?" Lance, hanging onto his I.V. rattled off "EPO, testosterone, cortisone, growth hormone and steroids."

OW: In Armstrong's 2005 deposition he testified under oath that Betsy's story was not true.

[clip of Armstrong answering questions under oath during the 2005 SCA Promotions lawsuit against him]
Interviewer: Do you deny the statements that Ms Andreu attributed to you in the Indiana State university hospital?

LA: One hundred percent, absolutely... How could it have taken place when I've never taken performance enhancing drugs? How could it have happened? ...How many times do I have to say it?

Interviewer: I'm just trying to make sure your testimony is clear.

LA: Well if it can't be any clearer than I've never taken drugs then incidents like that could never have happened.

Interviewer: Ok.

LA: How clear is that?

OW: In the aftermath Betsy Andreu says, "Lance Armstrong went on the attack against both her and her husband."

Betsey Andreu: When it affects Frankie's ability to work in the sport, that's when I said, "Enough! I'm not going to put up with it."

[End clip]

No-one's regretting staying up after that last 15 mins, right? Extraordinary. If he's trying to elicit sympathy this is going... badly. — Ciaran Murphy (@saveciaranmurph) January 18, 2013
[\(<https://twitter.com/saveciaranmurph/status/292105679731298305>\)](https://twitter.com/saveciaranmurph/status/292105679731298305)

OW: Have you called Betsy Andreu?

LA: Yeah.

OW: Did she take your call?

LA: She did.

OW: [confirming] She did. Was Betsey telling the truth about the Indiana hospital, overhearing you in 1996?

LA: I'm not going to take that on. I'm laying down on that one.

OW: Was Betsy lying?

LA: I'm just not... I'm going to put that one down. She asked me, and I asked her not to talk about the details of the call. It was a confidential, personal conversation. It was forty minutes long. I spoke to Frankie as well.

OW: Is it well with two of you? Have you made peace?

LA: [laughs] No.

OW: [breathless] Ok.

LA: Because they've been hurt too badly, and a forty minute conversation isn't enough.

OW: Yes because you repeatedly characterised her as "crazy", called her other horrible things.

LA: Well I clarified some of those... I did call her crazy.

OW: [confirming] You did.

LA: I did.

OW: If you were to go back and look at all the tapes of things that you've said over the years about Betsy

-

LA: - Oh yeah I know, I know -

OW: Ok.

LA: And I think she'd be ok with me saying this, and I'm going to take the liberty to say it, and I said, "Listen I called you crazy, I called you a bitch, I called you all these things, but I never called you fat." Because -

OW: That's one of the things she -

LA: She thought I said you were "a fat, crazy bitch". And I said, "Betsey, I never said you were fat."

OW: This is what's interesting to me: if a person is accusing you, and they say three things that are true but one of them is out of order and not true, do you then take that to mean the whole thing's not true?

LA: That's it, you're out. Yeah.

OW: Yeah. That's how you operate?

LA: Well because that's... Three to one wouldn't be accurate I would... That's a score.

OW: [laughing as if you say "you're crazy"] Ok. Ok.

LA: I know.

"i never called you fat". lance should have stuck to lying, the truth is not his friend — Ken Early (@kenearlys) January 18, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/kenearlys/status/292107476080418816>)

OW: Ok.

LA: If they said ten things and two of 'em were right and eight of 'em were false then I figured I had every right to -

OW: [prompting an answer] To go after them.

LA: [confirming] To go after them. But if one of those things is that Lance Armstrong doped to win the Tour de France they win. You can't overcome that.

OW: Well she [Betsey Andreu] said that.

LA: I know.

OW: She said that and you still went after her all these years. Yes?

LA: Yes.

*He called Betsy Andreu crazy, called Emma O'Reilly an alcoholic prostitute. But he never called anyone fat.
#lance (<https://twitter.com/search/%23lance>) — Eoin Butler (@eoinbutler) January 18, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/eoinbutler/status/292105763751612416>)*

OW: Emma O'Reilly; you actually – I've watched the tape several times – sort of under your breath but you implied the "whore" word. You used the whore word. How do you feel about that today?

LA: Em... Not good.

OW: You were just trying to put her down? Or were you trying to shut her up? What were you...?

LA: No, no I wasn't... I was just on the attack, Oprah.

OW: [confirming] You were just on the attack.

LA: Yeah that's just what it... Territory being threatened... Team being threatened... Reputation being threatened... I'm gonna attack.

[Video clip]

OW: In 2006 Lance Armstrong's former team-mate, Floyd Landis, became the third American to win the Tour de France after Greg LeMond and Lance Armstrong. Four days after his victory Landis tested positive for a performance enhancing drug. Landis was stripped of his title and banned from the sport for two years. At the time he denied using banned substances.

[clip of Landis at a 2007 press conference denying everything]

Floyd Landis: I didn't do what I'm accused of doing.

OW: Three years after that, in a headline making interview with ABC Nightline, Landis admitted to doping and alleged Armstrong, his former mentor, had done the same.

Floyd Landis: Lance Armstrong handed me some testosterone patches.

Interviewer: Did you see Lance Armstrong receiving transfusions?

Floyd Landis: Yes.

Interviewer: More than once?

Floyd Landis: Yes, multiple times.

Interviewer: Did you see Lance Armstrong using other performance enhancing drugs?

Floyd Landis: Yes I saw Lance Armstrong using drugs.

Interviewer: You're saying is that Lance Armstrong is a liar.

Floyd Landis: Yes I suppose it that's the question, yes.

[End of clip]

OW: Many people think that the real tipping point was Floyd Landis and his decision to come forward and confess?

LA: I'd agree with that.

OW: [confirming] That was the tipping point. Yeah.

LA: [nodding head] I might back it up a little and talk about the comeback. I think the comeback didn't sit well with Floyd.

OW: Your comeback?

LA: Yeah. And so... Yeah all that period began this...

OW: Do you remember where you were when you heard that Floyd, your former team-mate and protege, was going to talk?

LA: I was in a hotel room at the Tour of California when... Actually Floyd had been sending me these text messages and said, "I've recorded everything. I've put everything – I've videoed everything, I'm

going to put it on YouTube." And I kept getting these messages and finally I said, "Look man, do what you gotta do, just leave me alone." And he didn't go that route, he didn't go the YouTube route, but he went to the *Wall Street Journal* with the story.

To clarify, Floyd Landis didn't go to The @wsj (<https://twitter.com/wsj>). We dug up the emails and broke the story. Landis only talked after we went to press — Reed Albergotti (@ReedAlbergotti) January 18, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/ReedAlbergotti/status/292110435874910208>)

OW: Did you rebuff him, would you say that you rebuffed Floyd?

LA: I rebuffed him after he came out. Up until that point I actually supported him. Even when he tested positive I supported him. When he went on trial I supported him. And even afterwards I supported him.

OW: Did you rebuff him after he was stripped of his Tour win?

LA: No.

OW: You didn't just blow him off?

LA: Well we didn't give him a spot on the team which he wanted. But that's not necessarily entirely my decision –if that's a "blow off", yeah. I tried to keep him on quote unquote "my team", because of course you would because you know what other's don't.

OW: Because he knew what other's didn't know.

LA: Exactly. But to say that I shunned him or I put him out, no. I didn't do it that way. Obviously I think he did, but I also think he felt like the sport did. He felt like the sport just didn't want to take him back.

OW: So that was a tipping point. And your comeback was also a tipping point. Do you regret now coming back?

LA: I do. We wouldn't be sitting here if I didn't come back.

[Video Clip]

OW: After winning his seventh Tour de France in 2005 Lance Armstrong retired. Three years later with much fanfare he announced a comeback. That year he placed third. He raced the Tour de France one last time in 2010 and placed 23rd.

[End clip]

OW: You would have gotten away with it?

LA: It's impossible to say, much better chances, but I didn't –

OW: [confirming] You didn't.

LA: I didn't.

OW: Did you not always think that this day was coming? Not that you and I would be sitting here – but did you not think that... First of all Third Law of Motion which you put out to kind of comeback – did you not think you would be found out at some point, especially since so many people knew?

LA: Well I just assumed the stories would continue for a long time. This isn't an issue of news stories or interviews, that's not why we're sitting here. We're sitting here because there was a two-year criminal federal investigation of me.

OW: Yes.

LA: Athletes, everybody involved with this story was called in, subpoenaed, deposed, there's a man with a gun and a badge, and the consequences are serious.

[Video clip]

OW: In 2010, shortly after Floyd Landis accused Lance Armstrong of using performance enhancing drugs, the US Department of Justice launched an investigation into those allegations. Among the possible charges against Lance

Armstrong were, "fraud", "drug trafficking", and "witness tampering". Last February, after a nearly two year investigation, federal prosecutors dropped the case with no explanation.

[Clip ends]

LA: And then USADA started. Again with the same – not equal pressure – but similar pressure. And you know guys were offered deals. Fine, that's the way it works. But that's why this got out. I assumed that the stories and the accusations would continue forever.

OW: When the Department of Justice just dropped the case – and nobody knows why – I have to ask you, did you have influence in that whatsoever?

LA: No. None.

OW: None. When they dropped that case –

LA: That's very difficult to influence.

OW: [abashed] Well I have to ask. Ok. When they dropped the case did you think "now finally over, done, victory"?

LA: That's hard to define victory. I thought I was out of the woods.

OW: [confirming and prompting] You thought you were out of the woods. The wolves had left the door.

LA: And those were some serious wolves.

OW: Yes.

[Video clip]

OW: In the 2012 USADA investigation into Lance Armstrong's cycling career 26 witnesses were called, including eleven former team-mates who were questioned about their own banned substance use and Lance Armstrong's. Former cyclist and long time friend and confidant, George Hincapie, was one of them. Hincapie was the only team-mate to race in all seven of Lance Armstrong's Tour de France wins.

In July USADA charged Lance Armstrong with "possession, trafficking, and using banned substances". Armstrong filed a law-suit to block the charges. A judge dismissed the case. By August, USADA had found "overwhelming evidence" that Armstrong doped through much of his professional cycling career. This time Lance Armstrong chose not to contest their findings. In October he was stripped of all seven Tour de France titles and banned for life from elite competition.

[clip ends]

OW: What was your reaction then when you learned that USADA was going to pick up the case and pursue their own investigation of you?

LA: Great question. My reaction was the same as it was had been. [clenches fists together and assumes boxing pose] You know, coming in on my territory? I'm gonna fight back. Oprah, I'd do anything to go back to that day.

OW: Why?

LA: Because I wouldn't fight, I wouldn't sue them, I'd listen. I'd do a couple of things first. I'd say guys, granted I was – cannot deny – treated differently to other guys. That's ok, I was bigger, I won more races, etc. But I was treated differently but –

OW: Treated differently how?

LA: Treated differently in the sense that I wasn't approached at the same time as other riders, and there were lots of riders that were approached.

OW: Approached how?

LA: They approached them and asked them to come in and talk about the culture of cycling and what they did or didn't do, and of course with that they were going to be penalised. They gathered all of the subpoenas, affidavits and the evidence and then they came –

OW: 26 people including eleven of your former team-mates testified.

LA: Right. And they came to me and said, "Ok, what are you going to do?" To go back to that moment I would say, "Guys, give me three days. I'm gonna call," – and again this is in hindsight, I wish I could go do it but I can't – "Let me call some people. Let me call my family; let me call my mother; let me call my sponsors; let me call my foundation; and tell them what I'm going to do, and I'll be right there." I wish I could do that but I can't.

OW: So in the future, you can't take that back, you can't go back there, will you cooperate with USADA in order to help them clear up the sport of cycling?

LA: Look I love cycling, I really do, and I say that knowing that I sound like – people will see me as somebody did has disrespected the event, the sport, the colour yellow, the jersey, and I did.

OW: You abused your power.

LA: Yeah, and I disrespected the rules, regardless of what anybody says about the generation, that was my choice. But if we can, and I stand on no moral platform here, it's certainly not my place to say, "Hey guys let's clean up cycling." If there was an effort to... If there was a truth and reconciliation commission – again I can't call for that, I've got no cred – if they have it and I'm invited I'll be first man through the door.

OW: When you heard that George Hincapie had been called to testify and had spoken, did you feel that was the last card in this deck of cards? Did you feel that was the last straw?

LA: Well my fate was sealed. I think for those people that were my supporters who I'm assuming have left, he was the... They could have heard anybody say anything and if George didn't say it they'd say, "Well George didn't say it so I'm sticking with Lance." And I don't fault George at all, there was a lot of pressure with that. Listen George is the most credible voice in all of this. He did all seven Tours, I've known him since I was sixteen, we practically lived together, we trained together every day, and for the record we're still great friends. We still talk once a week. I don't fault George. But George knows this story better than anybody.

[End of Part One]

Some Twitter thoughts posted between Part One and Part Two:

*I'm not a cycling expert, nor one on doping in the sport. I can say with some degree of certainty, though, that Lance Armstrong is a d*ck.* — Brian Murphy (@knbrmurph) January 18, 2013
[\(<https://twitter.com/knbrmurph/status/292147204251066368>\)](https://twitter.com/knbrmurph/status/292147204251066368)

The more I think about the interview, the more conscious I become of the evasions and non-answers. His truth will come dropping slowly. — David Walsh (@DavidWalshST) January 18, 2013
[\(<https://twitter.com/DavidWalshST/status/292168108184043521>\)](https://twitter.com/DavidWalshST/status/292168108184043521)

So apparently it is ok to call someone crazy, a bitch, try to ruin them and rip their life apart – as long as you didn't call them fat!

— Paula Radcliffe (@paulajradcliffe) January 18, 2013
[\(<https://twitter.com/paulajradcliffe/status/292261073661341697>\)](https://twitter.com/paulajradcliffe/status/292261073661341697)

talked to lawyers familiar, and apparently certain LA denials last night may actually hurt witness cred in attempt cooperate to lessen ban

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292427682900230144>)

Part Two

[Introductory Video clip] Authoritative Voice Over Man: Live around the world... You heard the confessions...

OW: Yes or no, in all seven of your Tour de France victories did you ever take banned substances or blood dope?

LA: Yes.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: Now...

OW: Were you trying to pay off USADA?

LA: [silent]

Authoritative Voice Over Man: Oprah and Lance Armstrong, the Worldwide Exclusive part two.

LA: Nike called, they're out.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: The sponsors...

LA: It was a 75 million dollar day, gone.

OW: Gone.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: Livestrong...

LA: That was the most humbling moment... We need you to consider stepping down for yourself.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: His children...

OW: Luke's thirteen. You've been fighting this thing for his entire life. You heard that he was defending you. What did you say to him?

Authoritative Voice Over Man: His devoted mother...

LA: She's a wreck.

Authoritative Voice Over Man: What's next for Lance Armstrong...

OW: A lot of people say that you're doing this interview because you want to come back to the sport. What do you say to the millions of people who are wearing Livestrong bracelets? What do you say to those people who believed?

[Introductory video ends. We're back in an Austin hotel and nothing much has changed...]

OW: Every article that I've seen and everything that is written about you begins with the word "disgraced".

LA: It's terrible.

OW: Do you feel disgraced?

LA: Of course. But I also feel humbled, I feel ashamed. Yeah this is ugly stuff.

[Video clip]

OW: in October 2012 the United States Anti Doping Agency, known as USADA, stripped Lance Armstrong of his seven Tour de France wins and banned him from elite competition. Then came the fallout. For years sponsors lined up to associate their brand with cycling's golden boy: Nike, Anheuser Busch, Oakley Sunglasses , and Trek. Sponsorships that had earned him tens of millions of dollars all cut ties with Lance Armstrong.

[Clips ends]

*It's a pity George Carlin isn't around to witness Lance's downfall davehannigan.com/2013/01/george...
<http://t.co/hEYXv4iz>)*

— Dave Hannigan (@daveyhannigan) *January 19, 2013*
(<https://twitter.com/daveyhannigan/status/292442619856965632>)

OW: What was the humbling moment that brought you face-to-face with yourself?

LA: I believe it was a Wednesday. Nike called – and this isn't the most humbling moment, I'll get to that – and they said basically – Cliff's Notes here – that they were out. OK? And then the calls started coming. Trek, Giro, Anheuser-Bush... It just –

OW: On the same day, the same couple of days?

LA: Yeah, a couple of days. Everybody out. Still not the most humbling moment. Not a fun period.

OW: But how did that hit you, though?

LA: You know, in a way I just assumed we'd get to that point. The story was getting out of control, which was my worst nightmare. I had this place in my mind that they would all leave. The one person that I didn't think would leave was the Foundation.

*Again, again, Livestrong doesn't fund cancer research: outsideonline.com/outdoor-advent...
<http://t.co/7Ydt1F3d>)*

— Bruce Arthur (@bruce_arthur) *January 19, 2013*
(https://twitter.com/bruce_arthur/status/292452563738034177)

[Video Clip]

OW: When he was just 25-years-old Lance Armstrong was diagnosed with stage three testicular cancer. Doctor's said his chances of survival were less than fifty percent. Within months of his cancer diagnosis Armstrong started Livestrong to raise cancer awareness and empower cancer survivors. Less than three years after he beat the odds he went on to win the Tour de France. Livestrong became one of the most well known charities in the country. Lance Armstrong teamed up with Nike to introduce the now iconic yellow Livestrong bracelet. It was a genius stroke which caught on like wildfire around the world. Today 80 million wristbands have been sold.

Some critics challenge Livestrong for spending too much on PR and not enough on cancer research. Others say Lance Armstrong has used the organisation to deflect any criticism against him. Livestrong has raised nearly 500 million dollars for cancer awareness. Last October Lance Armstrong stepped down as chairman of Livestrong but remained on the board. In November he severed all ties to Livestrong.

[Clip ends]

LA: And that was the most humbling moment. To get that call... Two parts: one to step down as chairman and stay on the board, stay involved; but that wasn't enough – that wasn't enough for the people, for our supporters, and then a couple of weeks later the next call came, "We need you to step aside".

OW: Not just step down, to step aside?

LA: And I don't think it was – it wasn't, "We need you to step down", it was, "We need you to consider stepping down for yourself," and I had to think about that a lot. And this is... None of my kids have said, "Dad you're out," none of my friends have said, "Hey Lance you're out." The

Foundation was, is like my sixth child and to make that decision to step aside, that was big.

OW: They made it for you.

LA: I was aware of... I wouldn't at all say "force out," "told to leave"... I was aware of the pressure and yes I had interactions with Doug and some of the board members. It was the best thing for the organisation but it hurt like hell.

OW: Of everything that's happened in this entire process, in this fall from grace, has that been the hardest? **LA: That was the lowest, the lowest.**

Livestrong lobbied on the Hill to challenge @usantidoping (<https://twitter.com/usantidoping>)'s funding, ability to exist. not Lance. Livestrong

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292452656146960384>)

OW: Can Livestrong live without your story?

LA: I certainly hope so. Yeah, I hope so.

OW: Because your story transcended sports and gave hope to so many people fighting cancer. I have this email that a friend sent to me after finding out I was going to be doing this interview and said, "I've heard that he is a real jerk" – meaning you.

LA: Oh I knew who you were talking about.

OW: [still quoting from letter] "But I will always root for Lance. He gave me hope at a very dire time. My first-born son had just been diagnosed with leukaemia two weeks before his first birthday. And I'm in intensive care barely able to breathe and my brother sends me Lance's new book, It's Not About the Bike, I read it cover to cover through the night, it showed me there was hope for my son to not only live but to thrive. I had a choice to make that night on how I'd respond to my son's illness and teach him how to face the world. My prayer for Lance is that as he faces his demons he remembers it's not about the bike."

LA: Amen.

OW: [confirming] Amen. Are you facing your demons?

LA: Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah. It's a process and I think, you know, we're at the beginning of the process.

according to Landis, Ferrari was concerned he caused Lance's cancer [sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/...](http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/) (<http://t.co/2UjxIMpd>)

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292455383535067136>)

OW: Do you think that banned substances have contributed to you getting cancer.

LA: I don't think so. I'm not a doctor, I've never had a doctor tell me that or suggest that to me personally, but I don't believe so.

OW: This is the last tape I want you to look at, take a look at this.

[Oprah shows Armstrong another video clip from the 2005 SCA Promotions lawsuit against him]

LA: If you have a doping offence or you test positive it goes without saying that you're fired from all of your contracts not just the team but there's numerous contracts that I have that would all go away.

Interviewer: Sponsorship agreements for example?

LA: All of them –

Interviewer: Erm –

LA: ...and, the faith of all the cancer survivors around the world. So everything I do off of the bike would go away too – and don't think for a second I don't understand that. It's not about money for me, everything, it's also about the faith people have put in me over the years, so all of that would be erased. So I don't need it to say in a contract, "You're fired if you test positive," that's not as important as losing the support of hundreds of millions of people.
[clip ends]

OW: And here we are in that moment.

LA: Yep.

OW: It feels like self prophecy almost.

LA: Yeah, it's sick.

OW: When you look at that what do you think?

LA: Ah it's just – I don't like that. I look at that I go, "This guy's a..." I don't like that guy.

OW: I wanted to ask you, this is my question: who is that guy?

LA: That is a guy who felt invincible, was told he was invincible, truly believed he was invincible. That's who that guy was. That guy's still there. I'm not going to lie to you or to the public and say, [puts on fake crying voice] "Oh I'm in therapy, I feel better..." He's still there. Does he need to be exiting through this process? Yes. Am I committed to that process? Yes. We talked about apologies and I told you that I owe a lot of people apologies, and the obvious ones – the ones that we know by name, the Frankies, the Betseys, the Greg Lemonds, the Tyler Hamiltons, the Floyd Fandises, the Emma O'Reillys – I owe them apologies and whenever they're ready I will give them.

Watching part 2 of Armstrong interview, he admits to feeling shamed and humbled. But why is it so difficult to empathise with his situation?

— David Walsh (@DavidWalshST) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/DavidWalshST/status/292454983192948736>)

OW: Do you owe David Walsh an apology?

LA: [laughs] That's a good question.

OW: Do you owe David Walsh an apology who for thirteen years has pursued this story, who wrote for the Times, who has now written books about you and this entire process?

LA: I would apologise to David.

OW: What do you say –

LA: Yeah exactly I've had a couple of these conversations –

OW: What do you say to the woman who wrote that email and the millions of people who are wearing Livestrong bracelets, whether physically or...

LA: Sure.

OW: ...spiritually, emotionally for themselves. What do you say to those millions of people who believed?

LA: I say I understand your anger, your sense of betrayal. You supported me forever through all of this, and you believed, and I lied to you, and I'm sorry. And I will spend, I will spend – and I am committed to spend – as long as I have to, to make amends knowing full well that I won't get many back.

OW: A lot of people think you are doing this interview because you want to come back to the sport.

LA: If you're asking me, "Do I want to compete again?" the answer is "Hell yes." I'm a competitor, it's what I've done my whole life. I love to train, I love to race, I love to tow the line. If I was ever to – and I don't expect it to happen –

Oprah keeps letting things go. As McDevitt said on *Off the Ball* earlier, it's as if she has her notes and has to stick to them. Follow up.

— Miguel Delaney (@MiguelDelaney) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/MiguelDelaney/status/29245601708884737>)

OW: You want to compete again on the bicycle? You want to run races on the bike?

LA: Not the Tour de France but there's a lot of other things that I could do but I can't with this penalty, with this punishment – and again I made my bed... But if there was a window... Would I like to run the Chicago marathon when I'm 50? I would love to do that and I can't.

OW: So right now you can't run a marathon?

LA: I cannot run any marathon. I can't run the Austin 10k. I would love –

OW: Can you not run or can you just not run anything that pays you money?

LA: Anything that is sanctioned. If there are forty thousand runners there but it is sanctioned by the official governing body I cannot run it.

OW: [confirming] You cannot run it.

LA: I can't lie to you, I would love the opportunity to be able to compete but that isn't the reason that I'm doing this. Frankly, this may not be the most popular answer, but I think I deserve it. Maybe not right now but if you look at this situation, if you look at the culture and you look at the sport and you see the punishments, that's why I told you if I could go back to that time I'd say, "Ok, so you're trading my story for a six month suspension?" [nods head indicating "fair enough"] That's what people got.

OW: Which is what other people got.

LA: What everybody got. So I got a death penalty –

OW: Meaning you can never compete again –

LA: In anything. And I'm not saying that that's unfair necessarily but I'm saying it's different.

OW: Do you think you've gotten what you deserve?

LA: Erm...

OW: For a long time you were saying everybody was on the witch hunt, on the witch hunt, on the witch hunt for you. Do you think in this moment considering how big you were, what that meant, how much people believed, what your name and brand stood for...

LA: Sure.

OW: All of that...

LA: I deserve to be punished. I'm not sure that I deserve a death penalty.

OW: So was it just you being your cocky, arrogant, jerk self that did the tweet with you lying with all of the jerseys?

LA: Yeah that was another mistake.

[Video clip]

OW: Just weeks after being stripped of all seven of his Tour de France titles and banned from elite cycling for life, Lance Armstrong tweeted this photo of himself in his Austin home. He wrote, "Back in Austin and just layin' around..."

Back in Austin and just layin' around... [mob.li/_r4zAz](http://t.co/s8TjKn94) (<http://t.co/s8TjKn94>)

— Lance Armstrong (@lancearmstrong) November 10, 2012
(<https://twitter.com/lancearmstrong/status/267364416864002048>)

LA: [laughing]

Oprah: [laughing and exasperated] Why did you...? The wolves are at the door, really, the wolves are at the door, they're in your house and you tweet out that picture?

LA: It's just... [punches his palm]

OW: Yeah... What were you doing that for? What was that?

LA: That was just more defiance.

OW: [confirming] More defiance.

LA: And you know what's scary is I actually thought it was a good idea.

OW: You did?

LA: Mmm hmm, at the time.

sitting with [@danajacobson](https://twitter.com/danajacobson) (<https://twitter.com/danajacobson>) who says Oprah is missing the "whys." as in "why did you think that smug picture was a good idea?"

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292456868259971073>)

OW: So tell me, when something this gargantuan happens in your life, how has it changed the way you see yourself?

LA: You know it –

OW: Or has it, has it changed the way you see yourself?

LA: Not completely. No this is heavy and this is messy and this is not something I can sit with and then leave and go "OK, we're all good". Or I can –

OW: You mentioned therapy a minute ago, are you doing therapy?

LA: Yeah, yeah.

OW: [confirming] You are doing therapy.

LA: Over the course of my life, I've done it sporadically. I'm the type of person that needs to not do it sporadically, it needs to be consistently... You know, I've had a messy life, but it's no excuse. This is going to be a long process.

twitter, the new medium for taunting the federal agents on your tail

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292457120895471616>)

OW: So do you have remorse? Is there real remorse or is there a sense of, "I'm sorry I got caught, and I'm sorry I had to go through all of this, and I wish this hadn't happened?"

LA: Everybody that gets caught is bummed out they got caught. I am only starting and I will continue, listen when this [all] comes out, the ripple effects...

OW: Of people analysing what you said and why you said it...

LA: Yes. And people who still are sitting there today that are true believers: they're going to hear something totally different. So do I have remorse? Absolutely. Will I continue to, will it grow? Absolutely. For me this is the first step. And again, these are my actions. I am paying the price but I deserve it.

OW: When something like this happens what you hope is that it leaves an impression that causes a shift or a change within you. Has that happened with you yet?

LA: I'd be lying if I said that it had. Again I keep going to this word and this idea of "process"... I got work to do, and I can't – there's not going to be one tectonic shift here that says, "Oh ok, he's on his way now, he's good now."

OW: Were there people that cared about you who knew about this who wanted you to stop it? Stop the lying? Stop the doping?

LA: Of course.

OW: Was there anything they could have said or done?

LA: Probably not. And I'm going to name...

OW: Because I'm thinking about your ex-wife Kristin.

[Video Clip]

OW: Lance and Kristin Armstrong were divorced after five years of marriage. They have three children together: 13 year-old Luke, 11 year-old twin daughters Isabelle and Grace. Armstrong has two other daughters with his girlfriend of five years now, Anna Hansen: three year-old Max and two year-old Olivia.

[end clip]

LA: I was going to say if I could say one name it'd be Kristin. I mean she was... She's a smart lady, she's extremely spiritual, she believes in honesty and integrity and the truth. She believes that the truth will set you free. We believe differently on a lot of things. She may come at it from a religious standpoint where I may not but it doesn't matter. We have three kids together, they deserve the honest truth. They deserve a dad that is viewed as telling the truth to them, to the public. You know, Anna has always wanted that; she doesn't know that whole story back then because we weren't together.

OW: Was there anybody who knew the whole truth? Have you told anybody the whole truth?

LA: [laughs] Yeah.

Oprah: "Was there anyone who knew the truth?" Lance: "Yes." Oprah: "Let's go back to..." Wait, what??

— T.J. Quinn (@TJQuinnESPN) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/TJQuinnESPN/status/292458948546670592>)

OW: Let's go back to Kristin. She was aware of what was going on?

LA: [grunts an affirmative]

OW: Had she had conversations with you about stopping or getting out?

LA: She... And I asked Kristin... I saw her at the kids' game two days ago and said if this comes up can I talk about this and she said yes. She was not – you know – she was not that curious. Perhaps she didn't want to know. She certainly knew but didn't... [it was] on a need-to-know basis. I guess maybe I protected her a little bit from that. The thing about her and my doping and this comeback was she was the one person I asked if I could do that.

OW: If you could come back?

LA: [confirming] If I could come back. And I figured, "If I'm going to do this," – it was a big decision – "I need her blessing." And she said to me, "You can do it under one condition: that you never cross that line again."

the USADA report has a rider affidavit that says Kristin was rolling pills in tin foil

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292466392047964160>)

OW: The line of drugs?

LA: Yes. And I said, "You got a deal." And I never would have betrayed that with her. It was a serious... It was a serious ask, it was a serious commitment, she gave me her blessing... If she would have said no, "I don't like this idea", I would not have done it. But I gave her my word and I did stick to it.

OW: So you came back and you were willing to – you said to me at the beginning of our conversation here – that you didn't believe it was possible to win seven in a row without doping, so you came back: not going to dope, not going to do blood transfusions and you expected to win still?

LA: Yes, yeah. Because I thought and I still think that the sport was very clean. There really was a major shift in the mid-2000s with the bio passport.

OW: So you thought you were coming back into a clean sport?

LA: And a level playing field.

OW: [confirming] And a level playing field. How was it to you to come in third? You who loves to win, win at all cost.

LA: I didn't expect to get third, I expected to win, like I always expected. And at the end I just said, "I just got beat by two guys that are better." That's why we have the events... I know that doesn't sound like something I would say but –

OW: Right.

LA: But I did everything I could in training and I just got beat.

OW: You just were talking about Kristin: y'all have three children together, what do you tell Luke? You've been fighting this – Luke's 13 – you've been fighting this thing his entire life. What do you tell Luke? Because at 13 he's old enough to know what's going on.

LA: Oh yeah trust me [they know]. They know a lot. They hear it in the hallways.

OW: Luke and the girls?

LA: [confirming] Luke and the girls. Their schools, their classmates have been very supportive. Where you lose control with your kids is when they go out of that space, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, in the feedback columns.

Luke, I'm your father, and I'm a jerk

— nyvelocity (@nyvelocity) January 19, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/nyvelocity/status/292461026069319680>)

OW: But what did you tell him?

LA: Well first I want to tell you what happened. When this all really started, I saw my son defending me, and saying, "That's not true. What you're saying about my dad is not true." And it almost goes to this question of "why now?" You know he can't... [chokes up] Yeah... That's when I knew I had to tell him. And he'd never asked me. He'd never said, "Dad, is this true?" He trusted me, and I heard

about it in the hallways..."

OW: What did you say to him?

LA: At that time I didn't say anything, but that's the time I knew I had to say something.

OW: You heard that he was defending you?

LA: Yeah, other kids, on Instagram or [note: not sure what he says here] it gets ugly. And then I had to – you know – at that point I decided I had to say something, this is out of control and then I had to have that talk with him, which was here just over the holidays.

OW: What did you say?

LA: I said listen there's have been a lot of questions about your dad any my career and whether I doped or did not dope and I've always denied that and I've always been ruthless and defiant about that – you guys have seen that, it's probably why you trusted me on it – which makes it even sicker... And I said, "I want you to know that it is true". Then there were the girls who are 11 – they're twins as you know – and Luke, and they didn't say much. They didn't say, "But wait Dad?" They just accepted it and I told Luke, I said... [chokes up] I said "don't defend me anymore, don't".

OW: How'd he take it?

LA: He has been remarkably calm and mature about this. I said, "If anybody says anything to you," – they're going to see this [show] – "If some kid says something, do not defend me, just say 'Hey, my Dad says he is sorry.'" He said, "Ok".

OW: Did he say anything?

LA: He just said, "Look, I love you, you're my dad and this won't change that." I had expected... I don't know, I guess you always expect something. But it was –

OW: Defiance? Had you expected defiance?

LA: [suddenly, his guard down for once, his body language indicates he had not expected defiance] From him?

OW: Anger? Disappointment?

LA: Thank God he is more like Kristin than he is like me.

OW: Are you hopping with this conversation, this admission, your saying you wished you'd done things differently with USADA, that your lifetime ban will be lifted from competition? Are you hoping that?

LA: Eh selfishly yes, but realistically I don't think that's going to happen, and I have to live with that, I have to sit with that.

OW: Certainly people are discussing – there has been a lot of talk about why you're doing it and what you were going to and how you were going to say it, what was your intention or hope that would come out of it?

LA: Listen the biggest hope and intention was the well being of my children, it really was. The older kids need to not be living with this issue in their lives. It isn't fair for me to have done to them and I did it. And also for the little ones, they have no idea, they're two and three. They have, Oprah, obviously they have no idea, but they will learn it. This conversation will live forever, everything we have done today, that dumb tweet with the yellow jerseys lives forever. So I have to get that right for them as they enter the – you know the depth of their lives.

OW: Last Wednesday night, Travis Tygart CEO of USADA, told 60 Minutes Sports that someone on your team offered a donation which USADA did not accept. He said it was over \$150,000. Were you trying to pay off Usada?

LA: No, that is not true.

that's massive. he just put his on record word directly against Travis Tygart's by denying the attempted donation

— David Epstein (@SIDavidEpstein) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/SIDavidEpstein/status/292464278500409344>)

OW: That's not true?

LA: **That is not true. In the thousand page reasoned decision that they had issued, there was a lot of stuff in there, everything was in there, why wasn't that in there? Pretty big story. Oprah, it's not true.**

OW: No one representing you...

LA: **Nobody, certainly I had no knowledge of that but I asked around, "Did anybody...?" Not true.**

OW: And you are Lance Armstrong and you run your own show so if somebody was going to offer \$150,000, you would know about it?

LA: **I think the claim was \$250,000. I mean it was broad number but they narrowed it down. That's a lot of money, yeah I would know –**

OW: If that was happening?

LA: [nods head]

OW: And you're saying to me that that is not true?

LA: **That's not true.**

OW: What has been the cost, the financial cost? Have you lost everything?

LA: **I've lost, certainly lost all future income. You could look at the day, or those two days or the day and a half when people left. And I want to give you a number, you asked me the cost. I don't like thinking about it but that was a, I don't know, that was a \$75m day.**

OW: That just went out of your life.

LA: **Gone.**

OW: [confirming] Gone.

LA: **Gone, and probably never coming back.**

Lance has legal incentive to say he lost as much income/earning potential as possible. Those figures impact damages in any trial/settlement.

— Michael McCann (@McCannSportsLaw) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/McCannSportsLaw/status/292463587425931264>)

OW: Were you ever in the position where you felt like, "Wow I don't want to get out of bed"? I know you've been running and jogging... Did it hit you to the point of, "I don't know what to do?"

LA: **I've been to a dark place that was not my doing; I've been to a place where I didn't know if I was going to live a month, six months, a year, five years, ten years...It's helped me now. I mean this is not a good time but it isn't the worst part of my life. You cannot compare this to a diagnosis and an advanced diagnosis, you know, fifty-fifty odds or whatever the odds are... That sets the bar. It's close but I'm an optimist and I like to look forward. This has caused me to look back and I don't ever look – I mean my Mom and I, we're very similar in this regard, she doesn't look back. We don't talk about the past. We don't talk about what's happened. I've never asked her about my biological father. We've never sat down and had that – we just don't go there, that was yesterday, that was last year.**

OW: How is she handling all of this?

LA: **She is a wreck.**

An amazing thought: Lance thought he could go through his life and never have to tell his kids the truth.

— Bruce Arthur (@bruce_arthur) January 19, 2013
(https://twitter.com/bruce_arthur/status/292463959058030592)

OW: Yeah, because the people that love you take it as hard as you do, and harder.

LA: She's a wreck. And she's not the type of person that would call me and say "Lance, I'm a wreck", but my stepfather called and said, "Your Mom is having a really hard time," and I said, "I'm sure but she's a tough lady. She's gotten through every other tough moment in her life". Then we were facetimeing with my kids, her grandkids back and forth, and I saw my mum and I thought, "Oh... this woman's a wreck".

OW: [confirming] This has hit her hard.

LA: Yeah.

OW: [confirming] This has hit her hard.

LA: **And it took seeing her to really understand that this has taken a toll on her life. So...**

OW: And there others – I know you spoke about that – all those people. Are you in space now where you can... Because obviously that guy wasn't even aware of what you were doing and how that was affecting other people...

LA: [confirming] No idea.

OW: So in that way, that was bully, sociopathic, only obsessed with yourself –

LA: **Narcissistic.**

OW: Narcissistic behaviour, you would say that?

LA: [nodding] Got it...

OW: [confirming] Yeah. Are you now in a space as you called former friend, friends, associates, last night to apologise, are you in a space where you're not just apologising but you can begin to feel how you shattered other people's lives? Are you in that space yet?

LA: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. And we don't need the... I don't need to be back in that place where I can slip like that and take things for granted and abuse privilege. You know, to go back to my... If I had a child – if one of my kids acts... You know, we watched those tapes, if I had one of my kids act like that I'd be apoplectic.

OW: We all know that when you're famous people love to see the rise, the heroic rise, and they also love to see you stumble and fall. Will you rise again?

LA: I don't know, I don't know. I don't know what's out there. And again I go to this thing, I do not know the outcome here, and I'm getting comfortable with that. That would have driven me crazy in the past. And I'm getting there, I've got to get even more there. I don't know, I'm deeply sorry for what I did. I can say that thousands of times and it may never be enough to "get back". You're asking me if I can "come back".

OW: More importantly than your "come back", I'm not as interested in your comeback to the sports world, I more interested what's going to happen to you as a man, as a man, as a human being. Are you a better human being today because this happened. Did this help you become a better human being?

LA: Without a doubt, without a doubt. And again, this happened twice in my life, when I was diagnosed I was a better human being after that and I was a smarted human being after that. And then I lost my way.

OW: [confirming] You lost your way.

LA: And here's the second time, and it's easy to sit here and say, "I feel different, I feel smarter, I feel like a better man today", but I can't lose my way again. And only I can control that, and I'm in no position to make promises – I'm going to slip up again but that is the biggest challenge for the rest of

my life: it's to not slip up again and to not lost sight of what I got to do. I had it, and it just... Things got too big, things got too crazy. So... an epic challenge.

OW: It's an epic story. What's the moral to the story?

LA: It's... I don't have a great answer there. I can look at what I did, cheating to win bike races, lying about it, bullying people, of course you're not supposed to do those things – that's what we teach our children. That's the easy thing. There's another moral to this story, and I think for me, I just think it was about that ride and about losing myself and getting caught up in that and doing all of those things along the way that just enabled that. And then the ultimate crime is the betrayal of these people that supported me and believed in me and they got lied to.

OW: First of all thank you for trusting me to do this. You know what I hope the moral to this story is? I hope the moral of this story is what Kristin told you in 2009: the truth will set you free.

LA: Yeah, yeah. She continues to tell me that.

OW: Thank you.

LA: Thank you.

[they shake hands, interview ends]

A few post interview Twitter thoughts...

"Thank you for trusting me to do this." Actually possibly the worst line of the night.

— Miguel Delaney (@MiguelDelaney) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/MiguelDelaney/status/292466524374040578>)

Just thankful I never really bought into the whole @lancearmstrong (<https://twitter.com/lancearmstrong>) story. @vaughters (<https://twitter.com/vaughters>) @danielcoyle (<https://twitter.com/danielcoyle>) twitpic.com/bweb21 (<http://t.co/hUQ94tgE>)

— Marcus R (@marcus____) January 19, 2013 (https://twitter.com/marcus____/status/292487287856574465)

LA apologised to Betsy, so why didn't he admit hospital room? Because of 2005 affidavit by Dr Craig Nichols, swearing it did not happen.

— David Walsh (@DavidWalshST) January 19, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/DavidWalshST/status/292740224281346048>)

Every professional bike rider should be presented with a translation of today's story in Le Monde. Gentlemen (and I include Bradley Wiggins)

— Paul Kimmage (@PaulKimmage) January 21, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/PaulKimmage/status/293453853163155456>)

...this is why your sport is in a mess. You love cycling? Really? Okay, tell me what you are going to do for it?

— Paul Kimmage (@PaulKimmage) January 21, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/PaulKimmage/status/293454671689969664>)

Because unless you do something, and take a stand against Verbruggen and McQuaid, this is going to happen again.

— Paul Kimmage (@PaulKimmage) January 21, 2013
(<https://twitter.com/PaulKimmage/status/293455995659747331>)

“The UCI protected the rider when it accepted this falsified document” Armstrong’s 1999 positive test retold lemonde.fr/sport/article/... (<http://t.co/97NnFVL1>) (French)

— the Inner Ring (@inrng) January 21, 2013 (<https://twitter.com/inrng/status/293400717291565056>)

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Ed

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