If I could put into words what's going on in my head right now, man, we would be up here for another three hours. But this is special, the guys were really mentally prepared. We want to give Detroit a lot of credit because they definitely brought out the best in us, but we just believed and guides stepped up, no matter if it was the one guy all the way down to the 15th man on the roster, we believed. Definitely, I ran to Z because when I was first drafted, Z was the first guy I seen. Z has been through a lot, been through losing seasons, year after year after year, and I promised him when I got drafted I was going to try to change it. If you guys remember when I was in New York, I said I was going to light it up like Vegas in Cleveland. Awesome, I told you, I'm going to be a GM someday. I told Daniel before the game, I said, "I believe Detroit is going to double-team me, triple me before I cross halfcourt, so get that gun and get it locked and loaded and just shoot it, don't second guess yourself, just shoot it." And that's exactly what happened, and guys stepped up. Especially Boobie stepped in, knocked big shots down. When they closed out on him hard, he drove the ball to the rim, got fouled and made free-throws. This is definitely a big step in Cleveland Cavaliers history. I mean, when we got Daniel in the second round I believe it was a blessing in disguise, I believe we got a steal. I just knew how good of a basketball player he could be, and once I seen his work ethic during practice, after practice, before practice, I mean, I get to the gym early, he's there before me, we're shooting after practice every single day and I just seen his drive and his passion. And one day we had a sit-around in the locker room when we were struggling and Daniel said, "Man, if every guy in this locker room just plays as hard as I want to play on this basketball court, we're going to be something special." And for a rookie, a guy that really is not even supposed to say something or say nothing at all, I remember that, and you remember what I'm talking about, right? I remembered what he was talking about and I stayed on him from there. I just knew he was going to be something special and tonight it was perfect. You guys know how I am about my team. There is no way we would be here in the Eastern Conference Finals or winning the Eastern Conference Finals if it was a one-man show. It's never happened in NBA history, it would never happen in the NBA where a team has one guy and he does it all. My teammates are my family. I'm with them more than I am with my own family, honestly. And every time these guys come to the gym, we believe and we made it happen. San Antonio is the premier team in our league, playing the best basketball better than any team in this league; they're veterans, they've been there before, they're special. And we've got to be even more intense, even more physically and mentally in tune to what's going on, when we enter into The Finals s on Thursday. But just the simple fact of I've always believed in us, from day one, all you guys know I've chanted championship, one, two, three championships. Every time we brought it up, funny faces at first looked at me. I didn't care, I kept it going, championship, every single day. And we've made it happen. This is special. We felt when we made our run in the fourth quarter it was starting to swing our way, something had to go right for Cleveland sports, something had to go right, and we made a real big run. This game reminds me of my freshman year in high school in the state championship, and what Boobie did tonight reminded me of our point guard, Drew Joyce hitting six consecutives threes, he hit seven threes in a row, and we won the state championship. They doubled me, we kicked it to Drew and he hit back to back to back to back threes in a row. And Boobie is unbelievable, what he's done, how he's grown, and I'm lost for words right now, I'm not even answering your question, (Chuckles.) I'm so excited, I'm not answering your question at all, but you guys know how I feel right now. Yeah, it was a turn when Rasheed got a technical, I guess. I never put a time limit on when I thought we could reach this point, but what I did -- I honestly believed we could get better every single year, and I mean, we won 30-something games my rookie year, we won 40 games my second year, missed the playoffs, and in my third year we win 50, my fourth year we win 50, and we've gotten better every single year I've been in this league, and we added the pieces that we needed to compete every single night and brought in a guy in Coach Brown that stresses defense, defense, defense, defense, defense, defense. And it's unbelievable, you can have so many struggles during the course of a season, so many people criticizing your team, "they don't have enough pieces, they're not a good outside-shooting team, Coach Brown lacks this, LeBron lacks this," but we've also believed and it's always been 15 guys in the locker room that just believed and we have a special team. If you've been up on my commercials, someone wise told me that I couldn't get through Detroit swimming in a pool, so I guess I had to do it on the court. I think it was just our time. It was our time. I think Detroit, we give all the respect in the world to that team. That team is awesome, they're great but I believe it was just our time and we're here now and we've got -- still got business to do. We're going to enjoy tonight, enjoy our day off tomorrow and get back to work on Monday and get ready for the big bad wolf of the West. Best shape I've been in in a long time. I just had some time off in the summer, and with no other responsibilities playing on any other teams, I was just able to kind of concentrate on getting strong, getting in shape. Then did my entire summer workout, like I had done in the past, I was able to get healthy and feel good coming into the season. Absolutely, yeah, of course. Defensively they were a lot better. They were physical. Z did an excellent job on the offensive glass, gave them a lot of second shots. But I thought we also did a pretty good job on the defensive end. I think it was just a better energy game for them, a better effort game for them more than anything else. No. No. We've got people that we consider shooters of the three and we're trying to get them off the three. We consider some people that we'll live with their jump shot, just like any other player on any other team. They are on my team Oh, absolutely, I'm very happy for Fin. Hopefully we can get this done. Obviously it's not won until it's won, but every year that we've won we've had some guys on the team that have been around the league, have been journeymen, have done it year after year and just unable to kind of get to this level, get this opportunity. My first year, Jerome Kersey was -- it was Tony Massenburg, a lot of different guys, Kevin Willis along the way. So every year you're really proud to have a person like that, a guy like that. Now it's Jacque and it's nice to have those guys in this situation, to be able to win a championship after being in this league for so many years and playing the game the right way for so many years, such good guys. It means a lot more to just add one and win one for them. Playoffs are always more physical, and they have been. We've played some very physical teams. The game changes in the playoffs. It takes a little while to get used to it. You get hit for a couple games and you get pushed around for a couple games, you're thinking, hey, these have got to be fouls, and then you realize I'm in the playoffs. It's not going to be officiated the same. People are going to get away with more. Once you turn the corner and come to that realization, that players are more physical and they are going to get the players to kind of decide what happens, it's a great atmosphere to play in. Veering away from what? Yeah, you have times, and it takes an entire season. It takes those 82 games to get things moving in the right direction. At the beginning of the year one of the points coach makes is we want to be better for more of those 48 minutes and do thing the right way for more of those 48 minutes than anyone else. It's progressive. At the beginning of the year we might have been doing it for a quarter or maybe for a half. Being in these playoffs we might have been doing it for three quarters and giving a quarter away, and I think we're doing it for more of those 48 minutes right now than we've done it all year long. As I say, we're kind of a step ahead of ourselves. We've got to get this one done, and of course we're focusing on that. It was an honor to even be thought of as that even coming into this season. To have won three championships and to have had the opportunity to have done that is an unbelievable thing. Coming into the league as a player, nothing is promised. You don't know what road your seasons in the NBA will bring. To have won three already, I feel blessed by that, and to have a team that has the ability to challenge for a playoff run, a playoff championship year in and year out, that's all you can ask for. He's put in a system and he's stuck with it. It's a lot of fun to play for someone that knows exactly what they want, and he's done just that. He changes a little bit every year. He tweaks some stuff every year, but the basis of what he does and the basis of what he coaches is the same. He preaches defense, of course. Over the years we've changed our offense bit by bit to use what's worked in years past. But all in all, you walk in every year and you understand what he's going to ask from you, what he's going to need from you and what players he's going to put around myself and the rest of the guys to be able to have a good team. And to have that is outstanding. That's an impossible question to ask. I don't know. They're headed in the right direction. I think Mike has them on the right track. He has them playing the right way. Of course they use a lot of our stuff. They play the way we play, and they have LeBron, they have a couple other guys who are going to be very good for a lot of years here. All I can say is they're moving in the right direction. I don't know if you can compare them to anyone. I think they're a bit of a different team. I hate to just keep saying LeBron, because LeBron is a different player than anything we've ever had, but it's a bit different but they're going in the right direction. I can't say it's night and day. I said this at the beginning of the series. This is the toughest road that we've had to a Finals. The three teams that we've played, obviously you could -- no disrespect to any of the first round, second round or third round teams, but you could have put them in any order but we could have played them in that round and had the same kind of tough series, tough opponent. Denver was unbelievable with the two scorers they had and the physicality they have; Phoenix, of course; Utah did one heck of a job and you know what they're going to bring to the table. And we made it through all three of those teams. I'd say we were prepared for just about anything. With the teams that we played, we were prepared for anyone. I've got to admit, this one is sweeter. The road that we took to get here, it was as tough as we ever had it. Guys persevered, had great performances from 1 to 12. It was great. All around it was great, probably the best one. Absolutely. That boy over there took my other trophy so I'm going to keep this one at my house. He carried the team, and I'm just happy he was on my team. It was our team defense. It was Bruce Bowen sitting down on him for 40-some odd minutes every night. It was our guys understanding that he wasn't able to do it himself. But I think it just starts with Bruce. I've got to give a lot of credit to Bruce. He did an awesome job of standing in front of that guy and making life tough for him. We understood as a group that we were going to have to do our part. They fought, they hit the offensive glass, they did everything they could, but we sustained. They made runs, we never panicked. I think it just shows a lot of the experience, the poise that we've built over the years, and I think we just outlasted them. We devise our own game game plan. We don't rely on anyone else. It's all us (laughter). You learn from everything. I think our coaches are the best in the business at watching game film, and we see these guys two times a year. Honestly we probably would have been more comfortable playing Detroit because we had played them more times before. We play Cleveland twice a year, and it's spread out and this year was so early in the year. We were different teams. We had to watch a lot of film, we had to figure out their tendencies, we had to figure out our game plan walking into this gym before we actually even had played these guys and know what they were about. Our coaching staff, give them a whole lot of credit at getting us prepared, getting us ready to play these guys. You know, it was a tough close-out. Guys like Mike Fin is what it's all about, to win a championship, to see how much he appreciates it, to see Jacque Vaughn and even Robert Horry, to see the looks on their face and the understanding of how special and how tough it is to get here, it makes it all worth it. Not that it's not worth it by itself, but those guys make it epitomize and define what it is about a journey to get here and how hard it is to get here. It made it sweeter, it really did. It would have been -- it would have been sweet either way, but it made it sweeter for them to make a run, for us to answer, for us to keep our composure and to find a way to win, no matter what. Those guys played great in that fourth quarter. They outscored us in the fourth quarter, as they did most of the series. We made plays, we found ways to get it done. I didn't play the greatest, people missed shots, they got offensive rebounds, they made plays. But we found a way to win. That's what this team is all about. No matter what happens we find ways to win. Manu is our X factor. Manu is the guy that when it all breaks down, when it all goes bad, when our offense isn't clicking the right way, he's the guy that makes plays. That's his role. That's his role, and this team is about roles. This team is about people filling their spots when they have to, and that is absolutely his role. He was great tonight in it. It was huge. It was a great time to do it. Our effort was there. They were the team who was being the aggressor on the glass, and they were the ones getting it done on the glass. And we had a stretch there where we got extra possessions. We found a way to get it done. As I was saying with the last question, we made plays and found a way to get it done when it wasn't there. That effort and that perseverance is what defines this team. We find a way to get it done when it's time to get it done. Such a broad question. Coach Pop is -- he's the one that puts us together. He's the guy that makes it run. He's the one that stays on us, no matter how well or how badly we're playing. He finds the right way to approach us. I can say no more than he defines the team. He always has, and as long as he's here, he always will. We're sticklers, I don't know. That's probably bad (laughter). We should appreciate and enjoy the win. To end the season 4-of-15 and 4-of-10 game is disappointing. In this situation it shouldn't be, but I think we're all competitors, and it defines us as competitors. We want to be the best players that we can be in the biggest situations. Honestly, I thought those other guys were great, and I thought I was sub-par. But we got it done, and that's all that matters. That's all that matters. Well, first of all, I'm happy that we came out tonight and did what we had to do at home, but it's over with. It's done. I'm happy we won, but we got to move on to the next series, which is the Finals. So I'm happy about tonight. Go home and relax with my family and tomorrow wake up and get ready to go back to work. I believe in my team, first of all. I believe that we come out every night and play our brand of basketball. We can beat up. I have been telling you guys that all year. If we run, defend and, you know, rebound, we can win a lot of games. And everybody since I have been here, has always written us off. We work every day. We put the work in the gym to become a better team. We're not -- we're not at our best yet. But, you know, I'm happy with our progress. Yes, sir. I sent out a text message when I woke up yesterday to the whole team, and I just told them that, you know, when they wake up today, think about dominating. When they come to shoot-around, think about dominate. When they get to the gym for the game, think about dominate. And we started out the day great. We had a great shoot-around. Everybody was into it. Everybody was focused. And, you know, we came out tonight with the same mentality and we got a good win. Very happy with our progress. We still got a lot of work to do. It feels good to win, but we want to win a championship. That's the ultimate goal. So tonight was a big stepping stone for us as a team from what we were able to accomplish last year. But when we wake up tomorrow, we got to get ready to go back to work. Like I have been telling you guys, if we run, defend and rebound, we can beat anybody. We are at our best when we are running and we are having fun. So, you know, that's the mentality that we have to take into the next series. I've always been known as somebody who has never been serious or always playing around. But I take the game of basketball very seriously. Every time I step on the floor, I may have a smile on my face, but my main job, my main goal is to go out there and fight for my team. And I can do that with a smile on my face. For us as a team, we understand how everybody has talked about us for the past couple of years. But we understand that, you know, we get out on the floor, if we do what we do best, we can beat anybody. It's tough to not listen to the things that people have said about us. But that only fuels us. It pushes us to become a better team and to become, I would say, you know -- we became closer. With all the stuff that goes around us, what people say, we continue to get closer. Me and Coach have gotten a lot closer. It only helps us get better. Rafer came in right away knowing he is not Jameer Nelson and he didn't try to be Jameer. He came in doing what he do best. He pushed the pace, take the shots when he's open and just facilitate to the offense. He has done a great job of that since he has been here. And he is also a great motivator. He keeps us going out there on the floor and off the floor. He's silly just like all of us. He fits in with our team very well. Just happy he's here. I think it's great. I can remember, you know, coming to the games and nobody is in the stands until we play, like, a Kobe or LeBron. And now the stands are always filled up. I think we started to bring back some magic in Orlando, and that's one of the goals that I set out to do when I first got here. I felt that we were a laughing stock around the league. Everybody played the Magic, they thought about Disney World. So I just wanted to change that. We as a team wanted to change that. Me and Jameer, we sat and we talked about this a lot, and we put on ourselves to get better every day in the gym, work on the little things to get better because we want not only the respect of the NBA but we want our fans in Orlando to believe in us. We work extremely hard every day. We might have days where, just like anybody elsewhere, we mess up, we make mistakes. It is a bad day. But we wake up the next day with the mentality of getting better. Oh, I gave him five, you know. I knew he was trying to foul me. I knew he wasn't trying to hurt me or anything. So I was just letting him know that it is all love. I knew he was just trying to foul me. It wasn't no bad blood or nothing. My effort, I would say a B. And my teammates, an A plus. There was moments where we didn't play as hard as we need to. But for the most part, we came out with the mind-set of we run, really lock in on defense and try to rebound, we were going to have a great chance of winning the game. But going into the Finals is going to be a lot tougher. We really have to work on going hard for 48 minutes. If we go hard for 48 minutes at the end of the Finals, we should have a ring. We should have a trophy. Yeah, he's always been the same guy. He wants nothing but the best out of all of us. He pushes us to the limits. Me and Stan have had our ups and downs, but for the most part, he's always, you know, always did a great job of motivating me and my teammates. He is a great motivator. Even when he is yelling and screaming, throughout all that, he finds a way to put in just an ounce of something to get us fired up. He has been doing that since I've been here. He has been one of the best coaches I've ever said. Like I said, we had our ups and downs. I told him when he first got here, he was going to have a soldier in me and I was always going to go to battle for him. I appreciate everything he's done for us. Can change from possession to possession. we knew they would do the little things. Focus, rebounding. The second-chance shots. We did a good job of holding them to about 40%. We gave them 31 second-chance points. They shot 43, almost 44%. We can take losing. That's a part of the game. But losing that way is not the way . You have the guy has the backup they have with Taj Gibson and Noah helping them out. We just go on. We had a difficult time moving the ball. If you don't get the rebounds, it's going to be a long night. They did a good job of moving the ball, rebounding We're just seizing the moment, honestly. You know we got one game to close them out. We've been in this position twice this year, and we've done a great job doing it. Different circumstances being on the road, but we look forward to the challenge. You know, it's been great. Last night was great. It was what we had expected of him. We were happy for him last night to come out and play his best game in probably the biggest game of our season. So he did a great job. I think it's great. I tweeted a long while ago about seeing him -- he was in the studio doing the game. I said he looks a lot better patrolling the sidelines. So I think he'll be great. He's a great coach. Did what for me? No. Mike Brown is a great coach. He brought us -- he gave us a success we hadn't had before in that city, and it started with his defensive concepts. He brought in a defensive mindset that we didn't have. 50-plus wins, he was coach of the year, got us to the Finals, won the Eastern Conference Finals. We was competitive year after year because of him and his coaching staff. I respect him and am grateful to have had him as a coach throughout the years that I had him. He definitely helped me become who I am today. Yes. It was great. When you look back on it, you always say you probably take things for granted, when you look back on it. I look at it, we could have been better. But I think we had a -- man, we had an unbelievable relationship. Like I said, I knew his family. I respected him as a coach. Him being a young coach when he first got to Cleveland and growing those five years. Great time. If it's true, when it's official, I think the Lakers got them a great coach. First of all, we love to play the game. If you don't have emotions about this game in this stage, I think it's a problem with you. We always do that. You look at all our wins or all our games when we fight hard to come back in a game or we just feel like it took a lot of energy out of us, we always embrace one another after the game. That's something we do as a team. People have given us a knock over that, which is crazy, but we don't stop that for nobody. It's just about embracing that moment, understanding how big that game was last night. And to use extra innings to get that win, it meant a lot. Absolutely. It's tough. I don't remember it being this tough in '07 when I got there, but it's tough. It's been a long road. We are one win away. We missed a lot of lay-ups to start the game. We missed a dunk. D-Wade had a wide-open dunk to put us up 6-0, he missed that dunk. I missed a few lay-ups. We didn't have it going offensively. But one thing we did, we defended that quarter. Gave up 19 points. I felt like I had a -- I feel like I had a good rhythm. Just tried to keep us in the game, either assisting or scoring all those points in the first quarter, and then late in the game defensively trying to take the challenge on Derrick Rose. He's a great player. I feel like I'm a pretty good solid defender. I just wanted to try to make it tough on him, and make it tough on the team. That's -- nothing from our season has been easy at all. That is not even in our vocabulary or in our pre-game speech or anything. Nothing is easy. We work for everything. We come in and prepare ourselves every day to get ready for a game. So we're just looking forward to it. That's the only way we play. When we play like that, we're a great team. We're desperate. We want to win and we want to close out on their floor. We're looking forward to the challenge. We know it's going to be tough. They have some of the best fans in the world. So we'll see. No, we've played so much basketball right now, we feel like -- we are trying to compete for a championship. Tomorrow is our next step. Is a win guaranteed tomorrow? No, none of us knows that right now. We're going to come out with the same intensity we've got since after Game 1, and we know we'll give ourselves a great chance to win. Just trying to seize the moment and understand these opportunities don't present themselves every year. Me and D-Wade talk about it all the time. If you would have told us wouldn't have an opportunity to be close to the Finals in five or six years, we would have thought you was lying to us. It's been '06, and '07 for myself. I'm just trying to seize the moment. I understanding what type of team we have. Understanding we have a good enough shot. We don't want to waste the opportunity. How bitter? I got swept. I didn't win a game. It was very bitter. Every time I got knocked out of the playoffs it was bitter. Losing the Eastern Conference Finals to Orlando. Second round to Boston last year. Second round to Boston the year before in Game 7. It was all bitter times, man. I'm a competitor. I want to win. Yeah, but if you lose, if you're a competitor, the Finals -- you're trying to -- you lose four games in the Finals and you lose a Game 7, that's kind of similar, to myself. After that Game 3, the confidence was -- we didn't have much confidence coming to Game 4. They were a better team. I said it after that series. They were the better team. San Antonio was the better team. We learned from that. When you get to Game 7 against Boston, who eventually won the title, and we had -- it was one or two possessions we could have stole that game, I was hurting too. Absolutely. I think about it all the time. I even go back and watch some of those games and see how I wasn't that good of a player, especially on both ends of the floor. You just try to use those moments. There's no way I should be on the floor on a team that I can't win a game in a series. You use that as motivation. You go in the next year and you are playing some great basketball, probably the favorite, and then you lose the Eastern Conference Finals to Orlando where a ball here, a bounce here, a bounce there, and then you win it. And then seeing Boston two years in a row, where you get to Game 7 on their floor and you have an opportunity to win, and then last year, having an opportunity, being up 2-1 in the series, and losing that series. I got a lot of motivation. There's nothing I'm trying to go out and seek. But I've been in situations where I haven't succeeded, and trying to change it. I was aware we missed four in a row in the fourth quarter. I was aware of that. We did a good job of being focused. When we get up to the free-throw line, those are the times where you don't have to play against their defense. You don't have to play against Chicago's defense when you're shooting free-throws. You have to try to maximize that opportunity. And we did it. I think his drive, man. He coaches as if he was on the court and he wanted to play. He loves -- helped us get better every single day. We never wasted an opportunity to get better. It showed. Ultimately, we didn't win a championship, which we wanted to do in Cleveland. I know he wanted it bad. I wanted it. We didn't win. We got better every single day. We brought the fans in Cleveland what they hadn't seen before. No. Do you think L.A. texts me? I mean, both of them are gratifying, honestly. Me being a defensive guy, I would rather have the defensive shot block. I have had a few in my career where I blocked a shot to end the game and we won the game or had to close out on free-throws. It's gratifying. I have had a game-winning shot at the buzzer. Both of them are fun. You think about them all the time. Your family is a big part of what you do every day. When you're out on the court, you think about it. You don't want to let them down. You don't want to let your kids down, when you go home and those are the ones smiling and saying what happened, dad? Why did you miss that dunk? Why did you miss that play? Why did you turn the ball over? You want to be great for them. Knowing Mike's situation, I think it was definitely a relief for him to play the way he played last night, thinking about his daughter at the same time. Not much of a change. It's something I did all year. It's something I've done over my career, being a point forward. It's not a big change at all. I'm in great condition, man. I'm solid. No, we've just seen our body language change. Me and D-Wade said we want to watch the last four minutes of the game and see exactly what happened. We don't honestly know what happened. We know some big plays happened, and we know we won the game. It went so fast. Our body language changed, once we got stops and finally made a few shots. I have to give a lot of credit to Chicago, Coach Thibs, D-Rose and the rest of those guys. That defense we faced this round is tremendous. Like I said, coming -- I said it coming into this series, this was going to be an offensive struggle for both teams. That's exactly what it was. We both, Chicago and us, we both pride on the defensive end. You know, once we made a few shots, we felt like we could get stops in the fourth quarter. That's what we build on. We build on getting fourth quarter stops. D-Wade made some unbelievable plays. Got an and-one on transition on D-Rose. Got a four-point play. I was able to make a few shots and we continued to get stops. It's going to help you. I've been in situations where I say why me at this point? But you have to keep working and be put in those positions time after time after time where if you fail, you have to be ready to take that challenge again and again and again. When you're a leader, D-Rose -- he earned the MVP. He's a great talent, unbelievable player. Chicago got a great -- not only a great basketball player, but a great kid, too. What he's done for this city and what he's done for this franchise in just three years is remarkable. The sky is the limit for that guy. I mean, wow, as a fan, he's going to get better and better. Hopefully we don't have to continue to see him in the postseason. Yeah, we will. It's not refine, it's just being put in those positions. I never lost confidence in my ability. I know what I'm capable of. My teammates never lost confidence in me either. That's the huge thing. When your teammates continue to look at you down the stretch and say, we need you to bring this game home for us, we need you to make plays offensively and defensively, you never lose confidence in yourself, too. This postseason has been a good run for myself as far as being able to close games. But I've done it in the past. It's just the thing when you fail in late-game situations, those are the ones that people remember. They don't even remember the ones when you do well. I just got to keep being put in those situations, like I said, and not be afraid to fail. Like I said, it seems like yesterday when we were just on the Air Force base. It's just hard work. Like D-Wade said, everyone comes into the season wanting to win. You just got to continue to push. You know you're going to have a lot of ups and downs in the NBA season. It feels like the roller coaster, like the world is caving in on you, but you have to stay together. That's what we've been doing this postseason so far. A lot of work to be done still. The hard work doesn't stop now. When you have those times when it's just us, those are the ones that help you when you get in situations like not only tonight, but in the postseason. It's no sense of relief right now. We still have work to do. Like I said, we will look at this moment tonight, have a little bit of time tomorrow to go over this moment, what we just accomplished, but we get ready for Dallas very soon. We don't take for granted this win and take for granted being the Eastern Conference champs. We're not going to take that for granted. There's a lot of teams, 15 teams in the Eastern Conference that set out to do the same thing starting the season. But we have a lot of work to do still. We look forward to the challenge once the Finals begin on Tuesday. I guess it's work, first of all. Putting the extra hours of work. Me and D-Wade always, for the most part, we stay after, get shots. Late-night get shots. Just trying to work on our craft to get better for our teammates. Not only for ourselves, but for our teammates to come through in situations like that. When you have confidence in your ability to go out there and perform, that helps. Being put in those positions help. Like I said before, when you have the confidence from your teammates to take those shots, or even when you miss, they still look at you like we want you to take those shots again. We have that confidence coming from the other 13 guys in our locker room. For myself, just stepping up. Just stepping up for this team and trying to do whatever it takes to win. And if that's making a big shot late in the game or if that's trying to get a defensive stop, I try to take the challenge. Nothing technical. Just repetition. I understand a lot of the backlash that came with me going to Miami, but I understand also that I did what was best for me, what was best for my family and what was best for me being a professional athlete. I understand what this league is all about. I wanted to team up with some guys that I understood that would never die down in the moment. The opportunity presented itself with this great organization, and D-Wade came to me and said it was possible. We made it happen. You know, I'm happy. In anyone's job, they always try to find some way they can do their job and be happy doing it. And that's where I am right now in my life, as far as on the court and off the court. I just keep on -- I'm trying to get better every day. Not only as a basketball player, but as a father, as a friend. All the above, I guess. Oh, man, I don't know. I mean, obviously that was one of my most disappointing losses in my career, to lose the Final series after being up 2-0. It took so long just to get here. I don't really know if it would have made a difference. Just this feeling to be on the best team of the world is just undescribable. Was he unbelievable tonight or what? Coming out right away in the first half and setting a tone. I think he watched me struggle there early, and he took it upon himself to really attack and look for his shot early and get going early. Man, he kept coming all night long. He was phenomenal. That one timeout he said to me, "Keep pushing. Remember '06." He said that to me in the fourth quarter. We kept plugging. It wasn't pretty for me, but I had to keep plugging and keep fighting. I don't really think that way right now. If you're in this league for 13 years of just battling and playoffs last basically ten years, 11 years, and always coming up a little short. That's why this is extra special. If I would have won one early in my career, maybe I would have never put all the work and the time in that I have over the last 13 years. So this feels amazing. I'm happy for Kidd. What a warrior he is at 38, chasing the most athletic players in this league out there and doing a great job on him, and also leading our squad. He's been in this league forever and had two chances. Just an unbelievable team. I said it all season long. We had great chemistry with the guys. We had fun in the locker room, on the buses and stuff. So this is a special group. We're world champions. It sounds unbelievable. Well, I just think we're a resilient bunch, and we saw it. This whole series we were down some. We kept battling back. Kept believing in each other. I just think this is a win of team basketball. This is a win for playing as a team on both ends of the floor, of sharing the ball, of passing the ball, and we've been doing that all season long. I'm happy. We never looked at ourselves as soft. Not for one minute. And we just kept fighting. Well, I think he's an experienced coach, and he pushed all the right buttons, and it took us a while to find a good mix. I think I mentioned that yesterday, of still keeping our defensive principles that Avery installed and also giving Kidd a little more freedom on the offensive end, letting him run the show a little bit, letting him create and letting him call some plays on the fly and push the pace up a little bit. So I think that he did a great job doing that, and during the course of the season, we had to adjust to some stuff. I thought in The Finals he did some phenomenal adjustments here to start J.J., and then decide to let Peja really sit for the series, bring Cardinal in, who has been phenomenal for us this series. Constant pro. Always stayed ready for us. It's an unbelievable team effort and the coaches and the whole organization. I give Mark a lot of credit. Cuban. He stuck with me through thick and thin. He brought all the right players always in, always trying to spend money and make this organization better and this team better. So Mark is the best. Man, this is what I obviously played for the last couple of years. I think when you come in in this league you want to establish yourself. All these All-Star Games and all those things are nice, in scoring, but when you get to a certain age, you've basically seen it all, and all you play for is for that ring. And I think that's the kind of energy we had from the beginning of the season this year, bringing Tyson in, who was unbelievable for us defensively again. Yeah, it feels amazing now to know that nobody can ever take this away from us again, and for one year we're the best team that was out there. That feels amazing. Well, I think in a lot of games we kept fighting back. All the wins we got in the fourth quarter, at some point we were down, besides today, and the way we kept plugging. Even in Game 5, we were up like 7 or 8. They made a huge run and they go up by a couple of points. And we had to battle back again and fight through it. So I don't really know where it happened, but we're just a resilient, veteran team that always kept coming. We never stopped playing, and we kept believing in each other. That was phenomenal. We talked about it in several time-outs, even when we were down, we have to keep executing, keep playing. You never know what's going to happen. And some of these wins we were able to come back. That was big. Well, you know, I think at the beginning I had some problems with the leadership role and talking. But over the last couple of years I think I've been more comfortable. Obviously my English is a lot better than it was when I first got here. So it's just being more experienced, more comfortable talking to the guys, talking to the fellows, and the experience of seeing something on the court that you want to address. And I just think it all came together for me with hard work and experience. It still feels unbelievable. It was weird. In the first half I had so many good looks. I can't even explain it. I had some threes top of the key. I had a wide-open three in the corner. I had some pull-ups. I had some one-leg fadeaways that I normally make. But like I said, the team always told me, stay with it, stay with it. You're too good of a shooter, too good of a player to keep missing. So finally there in the third I made a three, and there in the fourth I was able to make a couple of pull-ups. But like I said, this team every time somebody was down all season long, somebody else stepped in and picked them up. Mahinmi was unbelievable today, since Haywood went out a couple of days ago, and he gives us energy. All of a sudden makes some big shots today. So I think all season long if somebody was down, the team picked him up. So it was an amazing effort. I don't know. That's something I'll look back to and I can always look back to the '10-'11 season and say we're the world champs. Nobody can ever take that away from me. So that's really the best thing about this. Sticking to Dallas, that was the plan. We fell short so many times, and I committed for four more years this summer, and we didn't really know what was going to happen. We were a first-round, second-round exit a bunch of times. But consistency pays off. Like I said, Mark kept bringing in players. Losing Caron this year was an unbelievable blow. We kept playing, kept fighting through. Bringing Peja in, who was a big addition for us in earlier rounds of the playoffs. So it wouldn't have felt right to win it somewhere else. I'm happy. I obviously made the right decision. And this is also for the Mavs fans, who have been through a lot of disappointments with me over the last couple of years. And they always stuck with me and kept supporting us. And the gym was always full in Dallas during the regular season. This is for them. I mean, it's been a journey. It's been a long ride, like he said. But we're happy we've been able to put ourselves in the position, and not take we didn't take any days off. We knew it was a process once again this year. We're just going to take each ride each hump, each obstacle as it came to us. We couldn't shortcut anything this year. We're happy to be back in this position. We look forward to the challenge. What we're saying to each other, it's time. It's time. We want to give a lot of credit to the Celtics. They got a hell of a coach in Doc Rivers and great players. They pushed us as hard as any team has pushed us thus far. But everything we were saying going into the fourth, it's time. Let's play our fourth quarter defense, what we're capable of doing. I'm glad we were able to do that. No. I got to be in attack mode, no matter what's going on throughout the course of the game. I always know that he's going to figure it out. So it's not to say that I see what's going on with his game, so I have to be more aggressive; I have to stay aggressive. It's going to help our team a lot. I don't have to worry about him. Last series in the Indiana game where he didn't play well, I didn't even go to him or say anything to him. I know he's going to figure it out. It's just the player he is. For me I always have to be in attack mode and try to help our team. I envisioned it every day we worked out. I understood what his passion was. I understood what his drive was. We pushed each other every single day. That four day span, we called it hell week, that we worked out in Akron. He was a little upset about the series in Dallas, where they got eliminated by Dallas, and I was as well. So we pushed each other each and every day. I envisioned us getting to this point. Like I said, I was happy for him that he's able to get to the Finals. I'm looking forward to going against him. It's only right. It's only right. We look forward to the challenge. It's going to be a big test for us. Chris is big. Game ball automatically goes to him. Without his production tonight, we don't win. Come off the bench, 19 8. It's huge. It's something we haven't had. We haven't had that type of activity, that firepower off the bench since we got here. It's unique. It's very unique that CB is coming off the bench, but it may be something great for us. As far as the play, the three pointer in the corner, I felt like when I got the drive, that KG may sink in and try to take my drive away. So when I seen that happen, I just kicked it to him, and he just lined it up and made it. He made three of them tonight, and all of them was big. The game ball definitely goes to him. He was big time. Competitors. They're great. You can never relax. You can never relax at all on the court when you're competing against those guys. You can never feel comfortable. You always feel on edge when you go against them. This is their chemistry that they built over the years. It's like no other team that I've ever faced in the postseason. They're great. They're great. As far as the scrutinized, I don't get involved in that. For me as a competitor and as a player individually, I just try to do whatever it takes to help our team win. I do the things in the offseason to prepare myself to come into the season to be dominant, and I try to lead by example and lead by my voice every night we step on the floor. That's on and off the court. I can't worry about what people say about me, about my game, about who I am as a person. I can't get involved in that. People can have their own opinions, and rightfully so they can have their own opinions. For me I just go out and play at a high level, and do whatever it takes for us to win. And I can be happy with that. 'Spo talk already? I'm starting (laughing). This guy is starting. That's all I know. No, I don't think it's interesting. I don't think it's interesting at all. We've played some good ball. It doesn't matter who starts or who finishes the game. James Harden doesn't start, but he's always on the court at the end of the game. Jason Terry doesn't start, but last year in The Finals he was in the fourth quarter every game. CB didn't start tonight, but he was in the fourth quarter. It doesn't matter who starts, or finishes the game, it's who is being productive. That's what it all boils down to It's everything and more. You know, I dreamed about this opportunity and this moment for a long time, including last night, including today. You know, my dream has become a reality now, and it's the best feeling I ever had. Absolutely, you said it perfect. The fact that I have a family, a fiancÃ©e, two kids, supporting cast, supporting family, allows me it took me to go all the way to the top and then hit rock bottom basically to realize what I needed to do as a professional athlete and as a person. You know, I'm just happy that I was able to be put back in this position. I trusted my instincts, I trusted my habits that I built over the years, and I just got back to just being myself, and I didn't care too much about what anyone said about me. I just kind of made my own path, but did it the right way, and I'm happy I was able to do it the right way and do it for myself and not for anyone else. I mean, I heard it a lot. Last year I let it affect me. I told you guys over and over and over, I was playing to prove people wrong last year, and people would say I was selfish, and that got to me. That got to me a lot because I know that this is a team game. I know the coaches that I had when I was younger always preached about team. There's no "I" in team, and to win a championship, no matter on which level, you have to do it as a team. A lot of people were saying I was a selfish person and a selfish player, it got to me. All last year I tried to prove people wrong, prove you guys wrong, and it wasn't me. At the end of the day, I was basically fighting against myself. The best thing that happened to me last year was us losing The Finals, you know, and me playing the way I played, it was the best thing to ever happen to me in my career because basically I got back to the basics. It humbled me. I knew what it was going to have to take, and I was going to have to change as a basketball player, and I was going to have to change as a person to get what I wanted. You know, it happened just one year later. It was a journey for myself. I don't want to compare it to any other player, but it was definitely a journey. Everything that went along with me being a high school prodigy when I was 16 and on the cover of Sports Illustrated, to being drafted and having to be the face of a franchise, everything that came with it, I had to deal with and I had to learn through it. No one had went through that journey, so I had to learn on my own. All the ups and downs, everything that came along with it, I had to basically figure it out on my own. You know, I'm happy now that eight years later, nine years later since I've been drafted that I can finally say that I'm a champion, and I did it the right way. I didn't shortcut anything. You know, I put a lot of hard work and dedication in it, and hard work pays off. It's a great moment for myself. It was the hardest thing I've ever done as a basketball player, since I picked up a basketball when I was nine years old. It's the hardest thing I ever done. It's not easy at all. You just put a lot of hard work into it, and hopefully one day you hope that it pays off for you. You know, this was a testament to that. I gave it my all, and it paid off for me tonight. I think Kevin Durant is a hell of a player, one of the best players that we have in this league, hands down. I basically told him I was proud of him, everything he achieved this year. You know, he's going to use this experience, like I used it, as motivation. Hopefully I don't continue to have to run into him because he's that great. He's one of the best, on and off the court. In the summertime we worked out together. I envisioned it, but I didn't know it was going to happen, but to see a few months later that we was going to meet each other in The Finals, it was a great moment for myself and for him. But as far as your second question, I don't know. That's for you guys to write, to say if I'm the best player in the league or the No.1 player in the league. All I know is I'm a champion, and that's all that matters. I mean, right here I'm sitting here as a member of the Miami Heat. The hard work and dedication that we put in these last two years to get to this point, I mean, it was unbelievable. I wanted to become a champion someday. I didn't know exactly when it would happen, but I put in a lot of hard work. For me, I'm happy. I'm very excited. I'm very happy right now to be a champion. Nobody can take that away from me. Well, first of all, I think it's a great team. Like I said before, we're the two best teams in The Finals. They create some unbelievable matchup problems with their attack, Russ and KD and James, and they have Ibaka the shotblocker, the phenomenal presence of Perkins and the list goes on. Collison is a big time player, as well. So they're going to be a team to be reckoned with for a lot of years because they're young, and they're going to use this experience as motivation. You know, this is not the last time we'll see the Oklahoma City. I wouldn't be surprised this won't be the last time we see them in The Finals. The biggest thing I learned is that you can't control what people say about you, what people think about you. You just have to be true to yourself and true to the people that surround you and your loved ones. You know, like I said, I put a lot of hard work into this. I took one week I took, I think, one and a half, maybe two weeks off after we lost the NBA Finals, and I just got in the gym and I got back to the basics. It just shows when you're committed and you give everything to the game, the game pays off and it gives back to you. I mean, condensed schedule, 66 games, 82 games, shoot, we could have played one regular season game. Hey, man, I'm NBA champion, and it don't matter. Love you guys. I mean, obviously we're a much better team when we have everyone clicking at the same time. That's obvious. And we've had more games where everyone was clicking than not so. It just happened that this series guys were just not in the rhythm, not feeling like themselves. Hey, you save it to the last game, and it allows us to advance, then I'm okay with that. Absolutely. The first play of the game I called a play for D Wade. Even though he didn't shoot the ball, he got a good touch in the paint. Just to make him feel like he was a part of the offense, make him feel in a good rhythm. I called a couple of sets for him early in the game, just to get a feel for it. And it showed throughout the whole game that he was in the rhythm. He started to make lay ups, he started to attack, he started to make his free throws. So it was big time. This is what it's all about. I dreamed about opportunities like this as a kid to have a Game 7, no matter at home or on the road. And that game allows you to advance to The Finals. I have had multiple dreams about it. To see a dream become a reality, I'm just very blessed. Our team is blessed. And we're just happy that we are able to represent the Eastern Conference in The Finals. I guess that's what it is. That's the notion that high caliber players need to step up and play at the highest level in Game 7s. I've been blessed to do to be pretty good in Game 7s in my career. Well, I'm not going to take this win for granted. I'm definitely going to savor this win tonight. This league is so hard to win in. It's so hard to advance, that you can't take these moments for granted. So tonight I'm definitely going to savor this for my friends and my family. And deciding what we do as a team tomorrow, I'll start to get back into the books and get back into the film on a team that's very good, very disciplined, well coached. They've got a bunch of Hall of Famers. So I look forward to the challenge, but I'm not quite there yet mentally, because I'm not going to take it for granted what we were able to accomplish tonight. We came in with the mindset just stay at the task at hand. We can't worry about the reward. We can't worry about trying to advance. We just have to worry about every possession. For the first time I believe in this series probably in Game 3 as well we just focused on every possession. Try to get stops. Try not to turn the ball over. Get shots. And play Miami Heat defense. Create havoc. And I thought we did a great job of that tonight. First of all, I think our team is more experienced, first of all. My Cleveland team, we were very young, and we went up against a very experienced team, well coached team. And they took advantage of everything that we did. I think for this team, this is our third year advancing to The Finals. So we're very experienced as well. We're not young, we're not inexperienced. We understand the opportunity that we have. And I'm a much better player. I'm 20, 40, 50 times better than I was in the '07 Finals, very young, and you know. So, yeah, we're all better. Well, I mean, any little pressure I could take off D Wade I wanted to do that, especially in tonight's game. I told him we kind of talked about it this morning, about the match ups coming out. I told him I would take Paul George. I want to allow him to focus on his offense, not have to worry about stopping Paul George every possession and allow him to get out in transition, allow him to get out in transition, allow him to make a couple of cuts and get to the line. I think that was huge for him. No. Ever since I lost The Finals to Dallas, my mind frame changed that off season. I just wanted to get back to playing the game that I love and have fun and play it at a high level and just I'll take this opportunity and this unbelievable game that we have for granted. So my mindset has been the same since we lost to Dallas. I'm looking forward to it. What's more relieving? I mean, I don't know. As a team this is what we had as a goal, that's to get back to The Finals. But we didn't cut any corners throughout the process, throughout the whole season. This is an opportunity for us again to be able to win another championship. So I don't have a relief at all of anything right now because I have a lot of work to still do. But it's a great thing to be in this position. Yes, we were just aggressive. We were very aggressive. I was very aggressive. That's how you control tempo. You control tempo by getting to the free throw line. One thing it allows us to do, it allows us to set our half court defense. When we get to the free throw line, we shot 86% from the free throw line. We got there 38 times. We know that we're very good in the half court. And the games that Indiana won, they put a lot of pressure on us in transition. And tonight we only gave them five points in transition. We only gave them 12 second chance points and only 28 points in the paint. It was a by product of us getting to the free throw line and allowing us to get our defense set. I think the zone and the comfort level I'm in right now happened because Dallas beat us. Dallas beat us in The Finals two years ago or three years ago, whenever it was. I just went back to the basics. I went back home, I went back to Ohio. I worked out with my high school coach. I went back to my high school gym, and just put myself in the mindset of what made me fall in love with the game. And it's because I had a lot of fun with it. Every night I stepped on the basketball court, I wanted to have fun. I wanted to represent myself and my family and friends at the highest level. But at the end of the day, it is just a basketball game. There are so many things in life that happens that you can just put the game you can put life in perspective. Like I said the other day with the little girl that passed away, "live like Bella," that we had on our shoes. A little girl that passed away here in South Florida. Once again that just put the game of basketball, it's just a game; it put life in perspective. I'm happy I'm able to play this game at the highest level. I love to compete. I love to represent what basketball stands for. But I don't put too much added pressure on myself, because I know it's just a game. It feels great. This team is amazing. And the vision that I had when I decided to come here is all coming true. Through adversity, through everything we've been through, we've been able to persevere and to win back to back championships. It's an unbelievable feeling. I'm happy to be part of such a first class organization. Yeah, I am. . You said it. I mean, two and a half games I watched film, and my mind started to work and I said, okay, this is how they're going to play me for the whole series. I looked at all my regular season stats, all my playoff stats, and I was one of the best mid range shooters in the game. I shot a career high from the three point line. I just told myself why don't abandon what you've done all year. Don't abandon now because they're going under. Don't force the paint. If it's there, take it. If not, take the jumper. And I think the last I did a good job in Game 4. Didn't make as many shots I would like to from the outside in Game 5, but I kept on getting into the rhythm of it. Just saying everything you've worked on, the repetition, the practices, the off season training, no matter how big the stakes are, no matter what's on the line, just go with it. And I was able to do that. I hope so. I hope so. I mean, this is what it's all about. I came here to win championships and to be able to go back to back. Two championships in three years so far. It's the ultimate. I don't want to think about next year right now, what our possibilities are next year. Got to take full advantage of this one. It's an unbelievable moment for our team. I mean, I said before the series that I was a better player than I was last time I faced the Spurs. Didn't look that way the first couple of games. But I stuck with it. Through all that adversity and throughout, I guess, the rhythm that I was in at that point, I just kept going. Just trusted all the work that I put into my game. And to be able to come through for your teammates, for me, I think you know more than anybody how much I care about my teammates and hate letting my teammates down. To be able to come through for my teammates in the biggest moment on the biggest stage makes me more satisfied than anything in the world. The saying "hard work pays off" is a true testament of what happened tonight. I know I'm not the only one that works hard. Give a lot of credit, first of all I forgot to state that at the beginning to the San Antonio Spurs. First class organization. First class players. But to be able to put in the work that I've put in since I got out of the cave, like you said, after that Dallas series and for it to pay off like this, it's the ultimate. It makes you want to work even harder. I guarantee myself I'll take more than two and a half weeks off this offseason. I need it. I have a basketball camp in Las Vegas. The top 100 high school kids from July 5th to the 9th. Hopefully I don't see many of you guys. I don't mind seeing you guys, by the way. I probably will touch a basketball to mess around a little bit. But I don't know, I haven't set my goals yet for my offseason training. I will, but not right now. Please don't ask me about my offseason training right now. Just pressure. Trying to keep a body on him at all times. I think more than anything, having guys back in transition. I think we all know, if you watch the NBA over the last ten years, Tony Parker is always in the top I don't know five, ten at points in the paint. It comes from early transition buckets and also comes from halfcourt sets when guys are just not alert. So our number one key with Tony Parker was when the ball went up, made or misses, we had to get three guys back. The guy that was guarding him, the big and another guy to see bodies, because if it's one on one with Tony Parker, he's going to make you pay. He's going to make you pay. And the simple fact that we just keyed in on our details defensively, it helped us out a lot. Last year when I was sitting up here, with my first championship, I said it was the toughest thing I had ever done. This year I'll tell last year he's absolutely wrong. This was the toughest championship right here, between the two. I mean, everything that we've been throughout this postseason, especially in these Finals, to be down we were down every odd game. We were down 1 0. We tied it. We were able to take a lead, but then we were down. We were down we were scratching for our lives in Game 6 down five with 28 seconds to go. To be able to win that game and force a Game 7 is a true testament of our, I guess, perseverance. And us being able to handle adversity throughout everything. It meant a lot for us to be able to do that and force a Game 7 and being able to close out at home. Right. He was big time tonight. He didn't wait. He had I think five or six one on one iso situations, jumpers. He was in attack mode all night. He had 10 rebounds. He had 23 points. He had two blocked shots. I think one of the most important plays of the game, that he didn't even make, was his attack at the rim when he tried to dunk on Tim Duncan, and Tim Duncan got a piece of it. It just showed at that point you knew that this was the D Wade that we've all wanted to see. What can you say? He's a three time champion, gold medalist, Finals MVP. He's one of the greatest two guards, one of the greatest players the NBA has ever seen. He continues to add to his rÃ©sumÃ©. I mean, I have a few goals. My goal, one of my first goals is to continue to inspire the youth to want to play this game of basketball or to be better at whatever they do. I mean, I love kids. Hopefully tonight I was able to inspire a lot. Inspire millions to no matter what they've gone through in their lives at that point in time, they can always overcome it. That's the first thing. Second thing for me is to continue to lead my teammates. Every single day in practice, every single day in film sessions, I know the grass isn't always green and there's going to be trials and tribulations. But hopefully I can continue to be the leader for my teammates. And then lastly, I want to be, if not the greatest, one of the greatest to ever play this game. And I will continue to work for that, and continue to put on this uniform and be the best I can be every night. I need to rest my body. I do. As much as I love working out and as much as I love getting better, at this point I think the smartest thing to do is to rest my body. Give my body a break. I think that's the smartest thing. I got a wedding coming up with my beautiful fiancÃ©e. And it will be an unbelievable wedding now that we've won, instead of losing. I might have called it off if we lost . So now it's going to be one of the best weddings ever. I'm going to sign off with that. And I will see you guys when I see you guys. And please continue to motivate me. I need you guys Just to piggy back off what D Wade said, we don't take this moment for granted. We're going to celebrate tonight because it just doesn't happen every year. We've been fortunate enough to be a part of this four straight times, and you just can't take these moments for granted. It hasn't really hit us that much yet because I think we're in it. I think it will once we're done and we're able to look back at what we were able to accomplish as players, as a franchise. I think that's when it will really hit us. We definitely don't take it for granted to be in this position. I mean, I don't know. I would say it had to be at the end of the first quarter we started to get a good groove, started to get a good groove, and we were down 9 2 to start the game. From that point on, they only scored four points. It's crazy. They scored four points from that point on. We just locked in and got a good groove. I think it started with Bird coming into the game. His rebounding, his effort that he gave us when he came into the game gave us six defensive rebounds, gave us three buckets from drives from Norris and guys, and his dunk and his layup, I think that's what picked us up. And then Rashard was, obviously, the key to everything. His ability to stretch the floor, shoot the ball, and play the way he played tonight. Once those guys got it going, I think we all fed off of it. I always believe, a really good friend of mine told me that the best teacher in life is experience. When you go through so many things, you're able to learn from it. You're able to know how to go about it. Next time you face those trials and tribulations or whatever the case may come, and you're better prepared for it. So being around a group of guys like this, me being in positions that I've been in the past where I've failed, but I was never defeated. That was, for me, to be able to come back from failure and continue to come back and mentally be able to stay strong, it defines who you are as a man more than anything. Not at all. Not at all. I felt like I told the guys before the Eastern Conference or whatever, before the season even before the playoffs started, that this was going to be our path. It's different. We're going to have to win on the road. We're going to have to start on somebody else's floor in order to be able to represent the Eastern Conference in The Finals. The guys, we all responded. We all took that challenge. Obviously, we had the first two rounds on our floor, but we knew, if Indiana took care of business, we had to start on their floor, and we just had that mindset. We had that mindset, if we want to ultimately represent the Eastern Conference in The Finals, we had to win on the road, and we were able to accomplish that. Not for me? I wasn't here? No, I wasn't? I don't get a rematch? I believe, if we ever got to a point where our whole team was able to be available for Spo and for all of us, that we could compete with anybody. Never concerned about that. Obviously, going through the week and week and week and grinding months of a regular season, it was a toll on all of us. But I felt like down the stretch, if we could get healthy, we could get everyone in uniform and have our full strength, it didn't matter what seed we were. I felt like we can represent the Eastern Conference again The Finals if we had the health, and we were able to accomplish that. I don't know. I have no idea how I restrained. I don't know. I guess I just understand what the bigger picture is. It was uncalled for, for sure. That was I don't know. I'm at a loss of words with that, but it was uncalled for, and I was able to move on from it. I let him know how I felt. I felt it could have been the fact that it was Lance that hit Norris, it was a little bit you could have your own assumption of what it is. If it was C.J. Watson hitting Norris, we'd have said he went for the ball. The fact that it was Lance, we can say he went for his face. So wrong place at the wrong time or at the right time for Lance, in his case. Appreciate it. Me and D Wade grew up watching the great Chicago Bulls team and the great Michael Jordan and the rest of those guys. Any time I hear my name or our team in the same breath with legends and great teams and franchises, it's so humbling, man. It's like I really don't know. Just two kids from the inner cities, respective cities where they're from. We never thought we'd get to this point. So to be able to play the game that we love at a high level for one another, for our teammates, it's the ultimate. When you hear the comparisons, you respect it, you're humbled by it, and you just feel like while you're in the moment hopefully, while you're playing the game, that you can make an impact enough to where you move on and people will start comparing you to ones that's in the game at the present time. So it's very, very humbling. Not so well. We were down 9 2. Obviously, we didn't do our part. But we knew our fans were going to come out. It's a Friday night in Miami. We have an opportunity to close out, and our fans have been amazing thus far. We just want to try to do our part. Obviously, the first couple minutes wasn't the start that we wanted, but we were able to get back into the game, and we just fed off the energy from our fans, fed off the energy from one another, and just kept it going. He got it. Very special. It was already a special day, but to do it at home, to do it with my kids and my family and my friends here made it so much more special. Just a great experience, and a great experience for them. It is. It is. For whatever reason, it is sweeter than any other, whether it be because of the timeframe, because I'm coming towards the end of my career, because I can have these two here and really remember it and enjoy the experience, all of those things make it that much more special. It helped. What happened last year definitely helped our drive and stay focused for an extended period of time. It very easily could have hit us in different ways and we could have reacted in different ways. But we reacted the right way. We got great leadership from the top in Pop who came back absolutely fired up and ready to go, and to push us this far and this hard and to come out with the championship is amazing. It's amazing to think about having done this five times. The kind of company I'm in, the people who have had such amazing careers and having had the ability to have one, and for the stretch, and the span between them, to still be in a situation where we can win or I can win another championship is just an amazing blessing, and it's not taken lightly. I'll say a little bit of both . Very, very old when you put it like that. But as I said, that span and to be effective and to be on teams and to be starting, I feel a real part of what we had done this year, just it's an amazing feeling. Honestly? Don't listen to the media He's been unbelievable. He came in here after a lockout season, worked hard with us during that summer, and I can't say that I saw the player that I saw tonight at that point. What R.C. and Pop saw in him for him to become the player he is today, it's amazing because that summer I was like, hey, we gave up someone. It was George Hill who had been playing really solid for us. Obviously, you get attached to people and disappointed in that. He comes in here and don't know a thing about him. He works hard and continues to improve year after year. You see him play the first two games and everybody's talking to him. Everybody's saying to him: Just stick with it, just play hard, do the little things, whatever, whatever, whatever. And he shows up in the last three games and just plays out of his mind. He's not worried about just doing the little things. He wants to do it all, and he plays with a confidence that is just amazing. I'm honored to be on this team right now because he's going to be great for years to come, and I'm going to hold on as long as I can. Going from the youngest to the oldest? It happens. It happens. I'm blessed to be in the position that I can sit here and be asked that question and to be on a championship team and to even think about what that means. It's I can't explain. It's amazing to be a part of this for so long. Yeah, I have no idea. I don't know. I told someone I don't think we heard the horn in the beginning. We just we knew they'd come out with energy. We knew they'd come out and try to knock us down early, and I think we helped that. We just came out, we weren't getting shots up, we were turning the ball over. We were doing exactly what we did when we lost Game 2. But we kept our focus. We kept saying to each other that it's a long game and it's going to turn. And we get guys like Patty Mills step in and Kawhi starts stepping up, and Manu coming in with some great energy. That is the beauty of the team that we've had this year. We've had 10, 12 guys with the ability to step in and make a difference, and you see that tonight with the guys stepping in and finding a way to turn the game for us and give us a chance to win. It will be easy to remember from what we went through last year to every little step that we took this year. It was a very hard working team, a very focused and resilient team. This will be a very easy to team to remember top to bottom. We had a lot of guys that really laid it on the line, gave of themselves. We had guys that could have scored more, could have done more, could have been more this and more of that, but they gave it all up to be a part of one of the best teams in basketball, and that's what we'll remember them for. Yeah. I don't know. I'm guessing you're leading me into a question that I'm not going to answer, so I'll just go ahead and avoid that one. He said what do you think of your dad tonight Say something nice about me. My emotions, it's very emotional to be back in this city. When I made my decision to come back here, I knew what I wanted to do, but I knew it wasn't going to be easy. It's going to take a lot of hard work and a lot of dedication, and it's going to be the toughest task for me to try to get this team back to The Finals. I've had to step up my leadership. I had to be very patient, which I'm not very patient. I'm not a very patient guy, but I knew I had to work on that. To be able to sit at one point during the season and see us at 19 20 and watching my team struggle and me sitting out two weeks, they wanted Coach Blatt fired, saying we needed another point guard, will LeBron and Kyrie be able to play together? So many story lines was just happening at that point in time. For us to be sitting at this point today being able to represent the Eastern Conference in The Finals, this is special. It's very special. Obviously, from the time I decided to come back to now, it's a totally different team. When I decided to come back, we had a No.1 pick, and we drafted Andrew Wiggins. I understood that we were going to have a very, very young team, a very unexperienced team, and it's going to take a lot of patience and a lot of hard work to get to where I wanted to get this team back to. Obviously, things happened throughout the season, throughout the off season, that allowed us to acquire Kevin Love, and as the season started, to acquire J.R. Smith and Timofey Mozgov and Iman Shumpert that brought our team to a place where I felt that we could compete. But I still thought we had to be very patient, I had to be very patient, being the leader of the team, but I knew we had the pieces that we can compete. Where this ranks as far as my last four Finals appearances, I mean, it's special just because I think it's today, it's tonight, and to know how far we've come as a group, to know how unexperienced we are as a unit playing together, I think that's special in its own right. No matter what happens from here on out, to see what we've accomplished being a first year team together that's had different changes throughout the course of the season, that's faced so many obstacles throughout the season injuries here, transactions here, lineups here it's something we can be very proud of to this point. I'm a guy who believes in unfinished business, and I understood what these people were going through, the people here not only in Cleveland but in Northeast Ohio and all over the world who love and bleed wine and gold. I also knew there were a couple of guys here that were very special, in Tristan Thompson here to my left and also in Kyrie Irving at the time, that could help me get to a point where I've been before. So to be at this point tonight sitting up here talking to you guys, like I said, it's very emotional and very just something I don't know. Could I foresee this? At the beginning of the season, I couldn't. I couldn't foresee us being in The Finals at the beginning of the season because I just knew that we just had to get better and I just saw how young we were and how young minded we were at that point in time, but I knew I had to lead these guys, and if they just followed my leadership, I knew I could get them to a place where they haven't been before. It's a hard working city, and if you work hard for this city, they work hard for you. They give everything back to you. That's what J.R. Smith to my right, Tristan here to my left, and the rest of the 12 guys in the locker room, we're just trying to work hard for the city, and they give it all back to us, as you saw tonight with 20,000 plus fans. I don't know how many chapters we have in the book as far as this season, but there's at least five. Just from the start of the season to us making the transaction to acquire this guy to my right and then Shump and then Timofey, to us having injuries, to us getting to the postseason, to Kevin Love being out for the postseason, to Kyrie getting banged up and being out for playoff games we have so many different chapters to this season that's defined who we are. But one thing we haven't got caught up in is feeling sorry for ourselves. It doesn't matter. If someone is out, the next man up. If someone is not 100 percent, then as a brother, you pick that guy up. That's what it's about. That's what it's about. That's what teamwork and trying to accomplish a dream is all about, being able to sacrifice yourself and what you can do for the better of the team. That's what's got us to this point. Don't ask me another question until you ask one of these guys a question too, by the way. Don't say, hey, LeBron, I'm from channel don't ask me a question. Ask these guys. Give me a break. But you look good. You fit. My message at halftime I think we were up 17. My message to the guys at halftime was my mission was to get Joe Harris into the game. That's what I told the guys at halftime. I said, our motivation for the second half is to get Joe Harris in the game, and they answered the call. Steal offensive rebounds. That's J.R. for you. I was just looking in the right direction. For myself, I think we all here know how long it's been since a champion has been in this city. I mean, you can try and not focus on it. You can try to say, okay, well, it's not about that. But we all know it. The one thing that we can guarantee as a team, as a group, 15 guys, our coaching staff, people that travel with us on the road, whatever the case may be, that work every day, is we will give our best shot. No matter who comes out of the Western Conference, either Golden State or Houston, we're going to give it our best shot. Our coaching staff will prepare us the best way they can, and I will as a leader have our guys ready for it. Win, lose, or draw, because you can't predict the future, you don't know what's going to happen, we will give our best shot. That's all from myself. That's all I can ask of my teammates. That's all I can ask of the coaches. And I hope everyone here understands that it's not easy. It's not easy to even get to this point. It's so hard just to win an NBA game, and the fact that we've won three playoff series so far, it is very, very difficult, and if you've never been in this situation, you don't know how difficult it is. The only people who can talk about it one of my best quotes or favorite quotes of all time is Theodore Roosevelt. It's called the Man in the Arena. I suggest everyone read it. It's basically about, if you've never sweat or bled or been in an arena and having the dust go up in your face and never battled, you have no idea what it takes to be in the arena. So for me as a leader, all I can do is lead these guys, which I will do. The coaching staff will give us the greatest game plan they can to win against Houston, to win against Golden State, but as far as guarantees, I cannot guarantee anyone. I can't guarantee the championship. That's not what I'm here for. I'm here to lead. But I will guarantee that we will play our asses off. We will, from the first minute to minute 48, or if it's overtime, 53. We will do that. At the end of the day, that's all I can ask for. That's all we can give. But we will be in The Finals, I can guarantee that. It makes it so much more special to have gone through some down years and injuries and transition from a roster standpoint and to be able to sit here six years later from my rookie year and hold this trophy, this is an unbelievable experience. Love every single one of my teammates that sacrificed, put in the work, the time for us to be able to enjoy this. The coaching staff as well. So it just makes it so much more special to have gone through some lows, gradually work your way up every year, learn some things, and it all came to fruition with the championship trophy. Same thing. He's taken a solid foundation that we built over the last three years. Obviously Coach Jackson had a huge part in changing our identity, and Coach Kerr came in and was very humble about how he was going to approach his job. Because, like I said, he had a lot of talent to work with, a great coaching staff, but he had some ideas as well that he wanted to implement. Ball movement, player movement, managing all the different personalities and situations, handled them so well. Made sure everybody was accountable, like Klay said. Every decision he made, I think everybody bought into it. Whether you understood it or not, you bought into it. Because he's a champion. He's won five of these or something like that, so you've got to trust a guy that's been here before and his view for our team. To block out the noise. That's the biggest thing. Because it's obviously just you and another team, and all eyes are on you every single step you take. But it's all about winning. Stats really don't matter. I mean, guys have great series and all that and people take notice and take their place in history with those stats and all that stuff. But at the end of the day, it's all about winning and what you can do to help your team get to that point. I can speak volumes about the guy sitting next to me. You look at his stat line tonight, he had a lot of foul trouble and didn't really get going, but when he was in there, he was defending. He was playing physical, and he was doing everything he could to help us win. Little things like that make this trophy possible. And it takes every guy that steps on the floor. So that's the biggest thing I learned. Stats and numbers and story lines, they're fun to kind of watch, but you've got to kind of block that out and just worry about winning. Oh, man, he was special. Obviously he deserved that Finals MVP for the way he impacted the game on both ends and was always ready. I don't think I learned anything new about him because I know that's who he is, and he's shown that all year and throughout his career. He just needed an opportunity and stage to show the world. Playing against a great talent on the other side that was determined to try to help his team win. And Andre stepped up to that challenge every single night and a huge reason why we're celebrating right now. So can't say enough about that guy. For him to have gone through all the different things he's gone through in his career, to be able to hold a championship trophy, I know it's special. Well, I mean, we'll see. We found a recipe for success, and that's the most important thing for us. Now that we have this under our belt, I think we can actually appreciate what we were able to do this year from start to finish. It's hard in the moment to really understood what 67 wins means in the grand scheme of the history of the NBA, how hard that is. But then also to cap that off with a championship playoff run. So we'll appreciate, I think, that whole journey a lot more now, be able to reflect. I think we definitely are a great team, and a team that should go down in history as one of the best teams from top to bottom. We have a lot of things to be proud of this season. I'm just so happy, man. God is great. For us to be able to have this opportunity, and I'm going to try 1800 more ways to explain this, because this is amazing. Yes, it's an unbelievable feeling in that moment. I followed in his footsteps. I've talked about how impactful he's been in my life, just being an example on and off the court of what a true professional is and how he raised me and my brother and my sister. So to be able to have that moment was special. He's living through me and my teammates this and my whole family through this whole journey. I can't be more proud of him as a father and a role model and example for me. I hope it made him proud tonight. I know Klay is probably going to I don't know if you had that moment or not. You probably did. But your dad was a champion before. But it's special to have a guy that plays 16 years in the league, and you understand how hard it is to get to this point, and that makes it so much more special for me to have this for my family. I never got involved in that because we're not entitled to anything. We earned the right to be here and represent the Eastern Conference in The Finals. We work our tails off every single day. We commit to one another and we sacrifice to one another. We're not supposed to be here; we earned our right. We earned our right to be here today. It's an unbelievable atmosphere. These fans, they mean a lot to their team, and I think the team gave everything they could throughout this whole season. To go to a place they've never been before, to get to the Eastern Conference Finals, and to win two games on their home floor as well, in front of their fans throughout this Conference Finals, it just showed their appreciation. They were unbelievable all season long to this point, and they definitely showed that toward the end of the game, all the way throughout. There's definitely a different feeling. I didn't appreciate last year myself personally on getting to The Finals. Just so much was going on in my mind, knowing that Kev was out for the rest of the season and knowing that Ky was dealing with injuries all the way from the first round. I just didn't appreciate it. It's definitely a different feeling. Having these guys right here at full strength, having our team at full strength, and the way I feel personally, I appreciate this moment, to be able to be a part of it and to be there once again. We wouldn't be at this point today going to The Finals without those two. Throughout the first three rounds, they've been the reason why we've played at such a high level. They've accepted the challenge. They wanted to get back to this moment. Ky being out seven months, this guy [Love] doing rehab for three-and-a-half months on his shoulder, they just had so much built up -- anxiety or rage or excitement or whatever the case may be throughout the whole process, just to be back on the floor and to show why we were all put together. For us to be at this moment, I know they have a lot to say about it, so please don't ask me the next question. Ask one of those guys. It doesn't matter what's going on on the outside. It's not our problem. It's not what we're about. We've got 15 guys, we've got a coaching staff, we've got a fan base, we've got an organization and management and everybody on a day-to-day basis that we represent, and that's all that matters. We all preach the same words. We all go about our business the same way every single day. So what goes on in the outside world doesn't really matter to us. It just feels great to go out there and sacrifice and play for guys that truly just have the same goal in mind, truly care for one another both on and off the floor, and that's the results of it. We didn't have champagne, so we took waters. That’s it. I did. Like I said, I didn't appreciate last year, what we were able to accomplish in our first year. I'm just truly blessed. I mean, the man above has given me an unbelievable ability, and I just try to take full advantage of it and to -- I get to do what I love to do every single night, and that's to play the game of basketball. That's my life. It's everything, and I give everything to the game. To be in a position where I can go out and help a group of guys get to places where either they haven't been before or been but want to accomplish even more in their careers, it just means a lot. So a lot of emotions were just going through my head at that point in time, talking to Doris, and just appreciating what I've personally been able to do throughout my career so far. It means a lot. The game of basketball has given me everything, and I would never cheat the game, no matter how many games I win, no matter how many games I lose, that really doesn't matter to me because I really just give it all. That's why I can sleep well at night. I don't really get caught up in all of that. We're going to prepare ourselves. Our coaching staff will prepare us, and we're going to go out and give it our all, and we're going to live with the results. I know our city deserves it. Our fans deserve it. But that gives us no sense of entitlement. We've still got to go out and do it. We've still got to go out and prove ourselves and be as great as we can be every single night we hit the floor. We look forward to the challenge. We're still okay. We're not great yet. We've got one more round to become great, so we look forward to it. Yeah, we know what we said to them, but I don't think it's for everyone. But what those two guys have done for this franchise and this city and this fan base, nothing short of amazing. Being two All-Stars, carrying those guys through a first-round seven-game series, a second-round seven-game series and then a Conference Finals Game 6 in their home building, they were spectacular. They were great. These fans here, I know they know what they have, and they sure appreciate talent like DeMar and Kyle. So it was fun competing against them. Absolutely. Just knowing what our city has been through, northeast Ohio has been through, as far as our sports and everything for the last 50-plus years. You could look back to the Earnest Byner fumble, Elway going 99 yards, to Jose Mesa not being able to close out in the bottom of the ninth to the Cavs went to The Finals -- I was on that team -- in 2007, us getting swept, and then last year us losing 4-2. And so many more stories. And our fans, they ride or die, no matter what's been going on, no matter the Browns, the Indians, the Cavs and so on, and all other sports teams. They continue to support us. And for us to be able to end this, end this drought, our fans deserve it. They deserve it. And it was for them. Well, I mean, yeah, David, you've been harping on it a lot the last couple weeks. But for me, I'm true to the game, and I know what I bring to the table. I came back for a reason. I came back to bring a championship to our city. I knew what I was capable of doing. I knew what I learned in the last couple years that I was gone, and I knew if I had to -- when I came back, I knew I had the right ingredients and the right blueprint to help this franchise get back to a place that we've never been. That's what it was all about. Right now it's just excitement. It's not even relief. It's just excitement for us as a team, as a franchise, as a city, as a community. To be able to continue to build up our city, to continue to be an inspiration to our city, it means everything. I'm happy to be a part of it. For me, when I came up here after we lost Game 4 at home, I said, hey, listen, we've got to take one possession, one game at a time. We're going to Golden State, so we've got to fly home anyways, so why not have another game? And I believed in that. And my guys believe in me as their leader every single day. I preach to them every single day. I'm their leader, and they allow me to lead those guys every single night. I was just true to that. I believed, and nobody else believed besides the other 14 guys and our coaching staff and our fans. So it's just going out and executing and putting things together and making plays, and we were able to do that. Just zeroing in on what needs to be done to help us win. Obviously I put the effort into it, but just thinking about the game, thinking about the plays, understanding that they're going to make a run. They're a great team. Understanding that we're going to make some mistakes, but it's how we come back from it and how we move on to the next possession. Then also just living in the moment. I told my guys before the game: Listen, there is a game to be played, but there's not many guys, there's not many teams that get an opportunity to be in the NBA Finals in a Game 7. There's just not. And this is my second one, and I'm able to say that I've been victorious twice in Game 7. I just told the guys: Don't take this for granted. Don't take it for granted. Let's go out. Our coaching staff gave us a great plan; let's go execute it. A little bit of everything. I think all the emotions, everything. Obviously I know what J.R.'s been through in his career. People counting him out and saying he's this, he's that, not understanding -- you can't have that. That's not yours. That's for Daddy. Just understand what J.R.'s been through and people just saying that there's no way he can be a winner. When our GM came to us last year and said, hey, we've got a deal to get Timofey Mozgov and get Iman Shumpert, and the Knicks are going to throw in J.R., I was like, what? They're going to throw in J.R. into the deal? And I was like, okay, I've got him. I got him. And J.R. turned himself into not only a huge boost to our team, but he turned himself into a two-way player, both sides of the floor. And I think those emotions came out of J.R. at the end of those games. Those emotions came out of me, just leading 14 guys and understanding, like I said, what our city's been through over the last 50-plus years since Jim Brown. Then also people just counting me out. Throughout my 13-year career, I've done nothing but be true to the game, give everything I've got to the game, put my heart, my blood, sweat, tears into the game, and people still want to doubt what I'm capable of doing. So that was a little icing on the cake for myself to just let me know that everything I've done, it results in this. They say hard work pays off, and that's what happened tonight. Well, I mean, at the end of the day you're down 3-1, and we've got to come here. We've got to come here and win. We had to win in this building anyways. I mean, we only get three games at home. So even if we sweep the home series in a seven-game series, we've got to win here anyway. So Game 5 was a great opportunity for us to try to seize that, and we came up with a great game plan. Our coaching staff gave us a great game plan, and we were able to send the game back home down 3-2. And we know our fans. Our fans give us everything, and we were able to give it back to them. Once we get to a Game 7, I'll take my chances versus anybody, versus any team. You give me one game, you give me 48 minutes, I'll take my chances. Once we got to a Game 7, I was just confident. I knew what I was capable of doing. I knew my guys would allow me to lead them throughout the 48 minutes, and they did that. What's going through my mind is I'm ready to get back to Cleveland. I can't wait to get off that plane and hold that trophy up and see all our fans at the terminal, IX Jet Center, and I know they're going to be ready. So I can't wait to give the emotion back to them. I'm looking forward to it. That's all. That don't matter. That's yesterday's newspaper. I don't think anybody's reading yesterday's newspaper. They'll be reading tomorrow that I'm coming home. I'm coming home with what I said I was going to do. Oh, my goodness. It's going to be probably one of the biggest parties -- I'm sorry, one of? It's going to be the biggest party that Cleveland has ever seen ever. So if you guys still have a little money left over in your budget, you guys better make a trip to Cleveland and get a little piece of it. I don't know. I don't know. I can sit up here and say -- I don't know if it was "The Godfather," I don't know if it was "Couples Retreat" that I watched, I don't know if it was "Ocean's 11, 12, and 13," I don't know if it was the "Revenge of the Nerds" that I watched. I really don't know. But I was just so like, listen, you've put everything into the game. The game always gives back to people that's true to the game. I've watched it. I know the history of the game, and I was just calm. I was calm. I was focused. I was locked in. I don't know. I wish I could tell you exactly what happened, but I had to be calm in order for my 14 guys to allow me to lead them and for those guys to play the way they played. I mean, I can't do it by myself, so that was my mindset. I was confident. I was calm. You've got to stay low. Like Jay-Z said, you've got to stay low and keep firing, and that's exactly what I did. I tell you one-on-one. I tell you one-on-one Absolutely. It's the first time I've seen him since he didn't return for the second half in Game 2, I believe. Yeah, Game 2. Throughout the series we didn't get an opportunity to actually have that moment. I know I said a few things in the media about the situation he was going through, but I was happy to see him. Just give him a big hug from myself and my family. Just how tough and determined the guy is, and to be able to go through the situation he was going through on a day-to-day basis, still being focused and maintaining his focus for the team -- family is everything, and basketball comes second after family, and to see him perform the way he was performing throughout the playoffs under the circumstances was a treat to watch. A lot more words were said, but that's the gist of it. I don't know. That's a question that none of us can answer in here. They have a great team right now. IT is going to come back healthy. They have the No. 1 pick; we'll see what they do with that. But I can't answer that question and know if we're going to play them in the Eastern Conference Finals next year. I have no idea. I think the first thing for me was seeing the excitement on Kyle [Korver's] and Deron [Williams] face. You've got one guy with 12 years, first Finals appearance, and another guy 14. So that's the first thing I picked. And just to see the excitement around my teammates -- I do it for them, and they give it back to me as well. Well, I don't have a message right now because we need to live in the moment. Like I said, it's been 12 and 14 years for those two guys. So we all need to soak it up. This is a great moment, and this is not promised. We know that. But once we start to lock in on that beast of a matchup that we've got next round, then we'll be very focused and I'll let those guys know what to expect out of a Finals appearance. Well, I love the fact that RJ does that because we have a great partnership, Uninterrupted, and Road Trippin' is doing very well now. So it's a huge plug for my business and our partnership. Thank you, RJ. You're unbelievable. First of all, I wear the number because of Mike. I think I fell in love with the game because of Mike, just seeing what he was able to accomplish. When you're growing up and you're seeing Michael Jordan, it's almost like a god. So I didn't ever believe I could be Mike. I started to focus on myself on other players and other people around my neighborhood because I never thought that you could get to a point where Mike was. So I think that helped shape my game. I think the biggest thing for me sitting here today after breaking the all-time scoring record in playoff history is that I did it just being me. I don't have to score the ball to make an impact in the basketball game. That was my mindset when I started playing the game. I was like, if I'm not scoring the ball, how can I still make an impact on the game? It's carried me all the way to this point now, and it's going to carry me for the rest of my career because scoring is not No. 1 on my agenda. I'm going to be honest, I'm not in the right mind to even talk about Golden State. It's too stressful, and I'm not stressed right now. I'm very happy about our accomplishment. I have no discussion -- Golden State, they've been the best team in our league for the last three years, and then they added an MVP. That's all I can give you right now, because I'm happy and I don't want to be stressed. They cause a lot of stress, and I'll get to that point when we start to prepare for them. I don't -- have I? I'm not a golfer. This guy right here to my left [J.R. Smith] is, though, so he'll tell me what that means when we get on the bus. I think at the end of the day, for my name to come up in the discussion with the greatest basketball player of all time, it's like, wow. Like I said, I did pretty much everything that MJ did when I was a kid. I shot fadeaways before I should have. I wore a leg sleeve on my leg and folded it down so you saw the red part. I wore black and red shoes with white socks. I wore short shorts so you could see my undershorts underneath. I didn't go bald like Mike, but I'm getting there. (Laughter). But it will be post-career, though. That's the only thing I didn't do. But other than that, I did everything Mike did. I even wore a wristband on my forearm. I didn't do the hoop earring, either. That was Mike. But I did everything Mike did, man. I wanted to be Mike, so for my name to come up in any discussion with Michael Jordan or Kareem or all these guys that's paved the ways for Tristan and Kevin [on podium with James] and myself and Swish [J.R. Smith], it's a wow factor. I don't really have anything to say. That's all part of the plan. It's been part of the plan since I really started taking this game serious, to say how can I get the youth to feel like passing the ball is OK, making the extra pass is OK, drawing two defenders and no matter if you win or lose, if you make the right play, it's OK. Because like you said, scoring the ball is so heralded in our sport. I want the fundamentals of the game to be as great as they can be. And if some kid or a group of kids from the West Coast or the East Coast or the Midwest or the South and everything in between all around the world can look at me and say, well, I made the extra pass because LeBron made the extra pass, or I got a chase-down block and I didn't give up on the play because LeBron didn't give up, that would mean the world to me. So we'll see what happens. We'll see what happens. Appreciate it. I remember the first day of camp and I walk into camp, and I didn't know what to expect, I didn't know what these guys were like on the court and how they came in and worked. I didn't know anything about the team. I just wanted to come in there and just be me. And I did that from day one, and I just tried to stay with that. I had my lows in the season where I was beating myself up, where I was struggling throughout the year, but the great part about it is I'll get a tap on the head from Steph or a Draymond or -- I can remember when we were in Sacramento and we just lost to Memphis, we gave up the lead, we were up 20 -- I'm sure you guys remember -- Draymond pulled me aside, we were having dinner the next night in Sacramento, and he told me to be myself. Don't worry about anything, just be you, keep working, everything's going to come around. And I was struggling at that point. And to have teammates that encourage you, that lift you up, that's what we all need in life. And it was amazing to just see that all year, and right now just to be here with these guys, it's amazing. Yeah, it was 55 seconds left, and I went other over to half court line and I bent down, and I'm like, is this really happening? And Draymond was like, Keep playing to the end. Andre is like, Keep playing. We have like 50 seconds left. And I'm like, Bro, we're about to win the title. So I just tried to stay in the moment the whole series, and I think that worked for me. I remember plenty of times throughout my career I continued to just look in the past and look ahead and not stay in the moment. In this series I just stayed in the moment. And we did it together. Without the whole team, you got to -- what about Patrick McCaw tonight? What about Zaza Pachulia to start the game? He was amazing. What about Stephen Curry after not having a great game in Game 4, came out tonight, played like a big dog. 15 free throws, 10 assists, 34 points. Say what you want about him, but he played like a big dog all series. And so to do that as a group, call us a super team, and I go with 20 off the bench, you a call us a super team, but it's been a lot of super teams that hasn't worked, and we came together and we continued to just believe in each other and we sacrificed, and we're champions now. Like I said, just the encouragement every single day, just the belief that I could -- I can do whatever I want in life, not just basketball, everything. So I carried that all season, especially when I made the decision. And you hear so much chatter about what I should do. To have Rich, Tom, my brother, my mom, my dad, all my friends, just continue to just pour into me, just pour into me every single day, people that you don't even probably won't even meet in your life, pour it in me, John Gray, Carl Lentz, Adam Harrington, just to shout out a few names. Everybody, just from -- so many people poured into me every single day, and I just tried to continue to keep grinding and let them know that it doesn't -- it doesn't go in vain, I'm just working and I believe. And just every day, man, I'm just grinding and believing in myself that I can make this happen, and to do it feels great. The toughest challenge was to come in here and see how I can help Steph get better, see how I can help Klay get better, Draymond, Shaun Livingston, Andre Iguodala, JaVale McGee, the whole team, just see how I can help them get better, that was more important to me than anything. Proving haters wrong, like that's cool, that's cool for me to talk about it on Instagram or Twitter. But like you don't concern me, I'm coming in and working every day, seeing how I can be the best teammate I can be, the best player I can be. You can talk about whatever you want to talk about, but nobody comes in and cares about the game or loves the game as much as I do or works as hard as do I at the basketball game. You can talk about whatever happens on the outside, but inside those lines, I come to bring it every day. I work hard, I believe in myself, I believe in the game, I respect the game, I love the game, and I knew at some point in my life that it will come around for me. So I just tried to stay with those principles and keep grinding. I'm kind of lost for words right now. It meant a lot. Steph is -- I never seen nobody like him. I told him last night. I said, When you play with force, like I never seen a player like you before. And he played with force tonight. The stuff you hear about Steph as far as sacrificing and being selfless and caring about his teammates, caring about other people is real. It's not a fake. It's not a facade. He doesn't put on this mask or this suit every single day to come in here and fake in front of you guys. He really is like that. And it's amazing to see a superstar who sacrifices, who doesn't care about nothing but the group. He obviously wants to play well. He obviously wants to show who he is, because he's competitive, but it's all about the group. So when I asked him, like, Yo, you want to work out, some guys want to keep it to themselves. But he's like, No, let's get some work in. We have been doing these 30-35 sessions, is what we call it. We have been doing it all season, and we have been doing it every -- probably since the second round of the Playoffs, and definitely paid off for us tonight. I found that at the beginning of the year when we first went to Vancouver in the first pre-season game, just the camaraderie, just the togetherness of the whole organization. That's what it was about. We just kept -- I kept building on that from day one. So that's what I found when I came here, and I definitely appreciate just the type of people we have here from the top to bottom. So a championship is just a cherry on top. Well, we have grown closer and closer as the year's gone on and as the Playoffs have started, and he's -- we're always are encouraging each other. So it feels good to win one with him. And for him to play so well throughout the whole series, it's -- it feels great. A lot of people have been doubting him and been hoping that he fails and hoping that I fail, hoping that we fail as a group. And the one thing that it was a constant with us was the joy that we have for the game of basketball. I learned -- I got a lot from him from that. He enjoys playing basketball. And his energy -- I told him, his energy, we feed off of him. He's our leader. He's our vocal leader. He talks up -- like I said, 15 free throws. He missed three free throws tonight I was pissed about, but 15 free throws and in a closeout game in The Finals, he's a big dog. You better start respecting him. man averaged a triple-double. I ain't doing no slaying. Feels great. It feels great to win, but to go up against somebody I view as like a rival, personally, is an amazing feeling to beat him. But one thing I know about LeBron James, though, he'll probably be back in the gym the start of July getting ready for next season. So I probably got to beat him in the gym -- beat him to the gym. But just the mutual respect, it's -- we talk about guys being too friendly, but like it's a game and we compete on the court hard as we can, both of us, and after the game it's respect. And I did that, I respected him, and he won his first one in 2012, and he reciprocated that. So I got nothing but love and respect for him, and I can't wait to compete against him again next season. Yeah, I hear all the narratives throughout the season that I was joining, I was hopping on bandwagons, I was letting everybody else do the work. But then that was far from the truth. I came in and tried to help my team. Like I said, tried to be myself, be aggressive and sacrifice as well. There's some games I might not get shots, as many shots as I'm used to getting. Some games where Steph is going to go off and hit 13 threes or Klay might hit 60 or Draymond might get a triple-double with no points. But nobody cared, as long as we won. Andre Iguodala, who is right there, he continued to preach that every single day. It's all about the group. If your intentions are good, then that means as a team that we're moving in the right direction. So I just tried to think about that, but also add my flair to the game. And it feels amazing to win a championship with these guys. I can't wait to celebrate for the rest of the night -- well, maybe the rest of the summer. It feels so great because, like I said, it's a team sport. Man, you got to want to sacrifice. You got to want to put your teammates in front of yourself sometimes. And I just tried to do that but also be aggressive. Andre told me all the time, it is your time, go take it, it's about you. But I'm like, no, it's about us. It's about us. But I'm still going to be me. I'm talking too much at this point. I had a couple too many beers. I haven't had a beer since February. So to have a beer right now and come talk to you guys, it feels great. To be honest, I haven't even really kind of processed it. It was a great atmosphere tonight to be a part of that, be a part of another Game 7 on the road. Those are things, like I said, when you're done playing the game, you can only dream and wish that you could be a part of that once again. I haven't really processed the fact about going back to another Finals yet. I know that's where we're headed. I commend my teammates and my coaching staff and everybody that put the work in, even some of our staff that is not in the limelight, behind the scenes. This was a complete team effort. I don't know. I just know it's the present, and that's what I'm all about. I'm a guy who lives in the present. For me, I just want to try to make plays tonight to help our ballclub win, to put myself in position, put my teammates in position to be successful. We were able to do that. There was a lot said, but more importantly, it was just a mutual respect and the competition. Me and Al, we've had a lot of battles in the postseason and been on a lot of All-Star teams together. I've always had a lot of mutual respect for Al and the way he conducts himself, not only as a player but as a professional, both on and off the floor. That was the moment there. And then with Jayson, I just love everything about the kid -- the way he plays the game, his demeanor, where he comes from. I know his parents. I just know he's just built for stardom. He's built for success. And that's both on and off the floor. Two guys right there that -- Boston is very lucky to have them. It's what's been asked of me, and I have to be able to just try to figure it out. I don't know how I can compare it to other seasons because I can only think about this one in the present. It was asked of me tonight to play the whole game, and I just tried to figure out how I could get through it. Throughout timeouts, I was able to catch my breath. At halftime, I didn't come out and warm up. That was my time to recalibrate and catch my wind again. It's what's been asked of me from this ballclub. I'm the leader of this team, and I'm going to give what I've got. My teammates, they respect that. Well, it's now six. It was five, now it's six. It's now six seasons in one. I guess this is the last chapter for our team in this season. It's been a whirlwind. I mean, it's been Cedar Point. Sorry for you guys that don't know much about Cedar Point, but it's been a roller coaster. It's been good, it's been bad, it's been roses. There have been thorns in the roses. There's been everything that you can ask for. I've said this has been one of the most challenging seasons I've had. But like I told you guys, you guys are around us every day, right before the break, right before the trade deadline, I kind of reset. Didn't know if we were going to make trades or not. Didn't know what we were going to do with our team. But I just kind of reset my mindset and said, OK, this is the season and let's try to make the most of it. That's what's gotten me to this point, gotten our team to this point. His number was called, and he just answered the call. It's amazing. Listen, at the end of the day, what he does on the basketball floor is extra credit. This guy had open-heart surgery a few years ago. The game was basically taken away from him, and they said it's possible you'll never play the game of basketball again. The fact that he can put on a uniform every day and do the things that he does out on the floor -- I don't care if he makes a shot. To make big plays like he made tonight -- for him personally, it's the cherry on top because the game was taken away from him. So for him to be able to do what he did last game after Kev's injury and then obviously start tonight, it's big time. I mean, I don't know because I don't really hear it. I don't really get involved in it. I kind of know the narrative throughout the season if we lose. If we have a bad month, I already know what's going to happen on the outside world. I've been a part of it. If we win, I know the narrative. I get it. It's all a part of the storyline. But me personally, I don't really get involved in it. I'm kind of over that at this point in my career. But I think Coach Lue, he feeds off of it. Some of our teammates kind of feed off of it, on just people counting us out and counting them out personally. I think this tonight was another example of counting my guys out, saying they've been struggling, they won't play well on the road and whatever the case may be. And counting my coach out. I think they all rose to the occasion. I mean, if I did, I wouldn't tell you. I wouldn't tell you. (Laughter.) That's a good question. You tried to get me there, right? the end of the day, the game is won in between the lines, and we have an opportunity to play for a championship. That's all that matters. No matter what the storyline is going to be, no matter if we're picked to win or not, let's just go out and play ball. We're going to have a great game plan. We're going to try to get better throughout the series, and we'll see what happens. For me, I don't know, I'm kind of like the wrong guy to ask because I just like to compete. I have a love for the game. I have a passion for the game, and everything else will take care of itself. I think defensively we were just very, very sharp. Very, very sharp. We were flying around. We were moving around and that continued to just keep us into the game. Even with some of the plays that we made in the first half where we weren't knocking down shots, I always kept my confidence in my teammates and know that if we had the same opportunity in the second half they were going to knock them down. And they did just that. It's been a satisfaction in the fact that I like to be successful. But more importantly, just the work that I put into it. I mean, it's an every-single-day work ethic that I have while I'm playing this game, while I have the ability to play this game at this level. I love the competition. I think about the teams that I've played over this run and the players that I've played over this run, slightly. But more importantly, me just being healthy. I've been healthy throughout this run. I put a lot of work into my body, into my craft. Being available to my teammates and being available to my franchise, the two franchises I've been with, and throughout this run is what's been more important to me than anything. Always being available. I'll be available for at least four more games. And we'll see what happens. Does it matter? Does it? Does it? We won two championships. We just won back-to-back. I don't think anybody's even worried about that type of stuff. I'm glad that we came out and played a great game tonight. We were able to finish the series off. That's the only thing that matters to us. All of us. We all want something that's bigger than ourselves. I think we love to see each other succeed. We love to come together and figure stuff out on the basketball court. And I think tonight everybody just played their roles well. Steph came out, was aggressive for us early. Got us -- set the nice tone for us, and everybody else kind of filled in. Our defense was great. 34% from the field, I think, the whole series. The whole playoffs our defense has been great. We finished it off with a championship, so we've got a bunch of guys in the locker room that don't care about anything but just being better basketball players every day and winning. It makes the environment great. Yeah, you could see it when you play against them and through the TV. But when you get up close and personal on an everyday basis, you really, really feel that way. Grateful and excited that I get this opportunity, and it feels so good to be a part of a group like this. To win two championships is -- that's what you want as an NBA player. That's how you know we're a great team is when everybody's coming after us. Whether it's opponents, whether it's different coaches panning for us, whether it's the fans, the media that hate us, it feels good when you're the team that everybody's gunning for. It makes us better. It makes us come to work and try to play at that championship level every single day, and that's the hardest part. But, you know, I'm glad we were able to lock in, especially in the playoffs, and do what we were supposed to do to win this thing. I've just got to keep getting better. I don't think I prove -- I proved to myself I picked the right career as a kid. I think I've got a lot more to go. So I'm just trying to prove to myself that I could just stay in it for the long haul, and hopefully I continue to have some success. Just keep growing as a player. That's my only concern. Late Registration. Yeah, that's probably equivalent. But it feels good. You know, when you experience something for the first time and you do it again, those emotions aren't going to be there as they were the first time. But just knowing that the work that you put in paid off and the care that you have for something, you know, it means something. I feel like I did something that pulled back into this Earth, I pull good energy back into the Earth when I go and work hard every day on my game, and I care about the game, and I watch basketball and care for my teammates, and we care for each other. I think we're doing something good in the world. I feel really good. Former players and players now that got a lot to say about what I did, they know how I play. They know exactly what I bring. They know. They know. They understand when they get on the court with me or they check up with me. They know what it is. So I kind of try to just stand on that, but I know what I bring to the game. I know how I approach the game, how hard I work, how much I care. I think that's the stuff I try to focus on more than anything is just being a professional basketball player and doing stuff for me and the team. So I pride myself on that and everything else is just noise. Oh, it feels great to go out there and win a championship with these guys, the way we did it. Like Draymond said earlier, it's the season, it was just an up-and-down season, so many guys got hurt. We were going through so much. When Pat McCaw went down, that put a lot on us emotionally as a team, and we got through that. I feel like we had a lot of those episodes throughout the year. To finish it off with a championship, especially in a sweep, it feels so good. I'm just so happy for Nick Young, Quinn Cook, their first championships. It feels great that we can go out there and give an experience to guys that haven't been here before, just like they did to me last year. So it feels great that we can do that. Just the brotherhood that we have in that locker room, and just the family atmosphere that we take on the road, not just the players, but support staff and everybody in the organization. You know, they don't get the credit. They don't get the praise, but so many people helped us get to this point, and we appreciate them. And it feels good to kind of win it for them. No. Just the product of hard work, and care and love for the game. I treat this game with -- I just feel indebted to the game. I feel like it saved my life, it changed my life. It took me out of an environment that I didn't think I'd ever be out of. Living in Maryland my whole life. I thought I was going to live in Maryland my whole life. But to travel the world and meet different people, and go to different arenas and different cities and countries around the world, I'm just forever grateful for this opportunity. So however it came, the championship and all that stuff, it means a lot. But just to be able to change my life in picking up a basketball and change my family's life, you know, this is the cherry on top, and I'm definitely excited about it. But just to be able to leave Maryland and experience and see different parts of the world, that was -- that's why I love this game of basketball. It was able to teach me so much about life. To win a championship on top of that means a lot. One thing about our team is that a lot of guys really don't care about statements. We just want to win the basketball game. If we happened to lose tonight, we were just going to focus on going back home and trying to finish it off. We weren't thinking about a sweep coming in. We knew we had a good chance to play well this series. But we were just trying to play great basketball, especially after coming out of that Houston series where it was a tough, grind-out series. We just wanted to win, and however it came we were excited about it. But to win in a sweep feels pretty good. I want to see Jordan Bell come back a better player. I want to see Quinn Cook come back a better player. That's all I'm concerned about. And I know the veterans are going to come back and do exactly what they need to do. But to have two young guys that contributed and helped us out the whole season, I'm excited to see how they come back next year. Looking forward to just to different tricks that we use throughout the season next year. I can't wait. Thank you guys for whatever you did all season. I appreciate the love and support, and we're back-to-back champs. Yeah, just, one, getting my breath back underneath me after a hard-fought series against one of most well-coached team I've ever played against in the postseason, one of the most respected teams I've played against. Obviously, you guys know how much I love Mike Malone. He's incredible. He's the reason why that team is so damn good. So I was thinking about that. I was also thinking about some of my teammates who this is their first appearance to the Finals. Obviously, AD had a lot on my thought process. This is the reason why I wanted to be a teammate of his and why I brought him here. I wanted him to see things that he had not seen before in this league. To be able to come through for him meant a lot for me personally. Then I started thinking about the next opponent. Boston had a few moments in my head. Miami had a few moments in my head as well. How challenging that's going to be, whoever wins that series. Then I just started thinking about my journey as well. All that was just going through my mind as the confetti was on the floor, was coming down, landing on my shoulder and things of that nature. So hopefully that was a good description. For me personally, the job is not done. But it's great to hit moments throughout the course of a journey and appreciate that. This is all part of the process, but the job is not done for me personally. For us as a franchise, I'm extremely proud to be a part of this franchise getting back to where it belongs, and that's playing for championships and competing for championships and representing the Western Conference in the championships. This is what I came here for. I heard all the conversations and everything that was said about why did I decide to come to L.A -- the reason I came to L.A., it was not about basketball. All those conversations, just naysayers and things of that nature. I understood that, with the season I had last year and my injury, it just gave them more sticks and more wood to throw in the fire to continue to say the things that they would say about me. But it never stopped my journey and never stopped my mindset and never stopped my goals. I'm happy, like I said, and proud of this organization and proud of my teammates and I'm proud of the coaching staff, the front office and our ownership as well at this very moment today. I mean, every time you put on purple and gold, you think about his legacy. You think about him and about what he meant to this franchise for 20-plus years, and what he stood for both on the floor and off the floor. What he demanded out of his teammates and what he demanded out of himself. We have some similarities in that sense. Our games are different, but as far as our mindset and our drive to want to be the best and our drive to not lose -- sometimes you're going to lose games, but that drive to always want to be victorious, it stops you from sleeping. And sometimes you put certain things -- you sacrifice a lot of things. You sacrifice your family at times because you're so driven to be so great that other things fall by the wayside at times. So I understand that. I'm one of the few that can understand the mindset that he played with and the journey from high school to the NBA. It's just a thing that I carry with me, like I said, every time I decide at one point in that locker room before the game when I throw that jersey on. I don't, unfortunately. I wish I did. They happen so fast and my mind is still so locked in on the journey that it's hard for me to take in and appreciate what we just accomplished. Just how I've always been. I always say that when I'm done playing the game, hopefully I look back on it and enjoy it -- and hopefully I will. Hopefully I can, because I don't think I enjoy it enough when I'm in it because I'm so engulfed in the process until the final call. But I'm so damn proud of this team and where we are right now up until this day. I don't know, I've never looked at it that way. I've never said, OK, I want to cast myself as a superstar or whatever the case may be. I just want to travel my own journey, because it is my journey. I've appreciated everything that's happened along the way. I mean, throughout -- the ups, the downs, the ups on the court, the downs on the court, the wins and losses. But I've been able to, I guess as Frank Sinatra would say, I did it my way. At the end of the day and at the end of my career, I just hope that I inspire enough people to want to play the game the right way, and have that respect from all the opponents that I played against, all the teams that I played against and the organizations that I play for. Because at the end of the day, I mean, that's all you have, is your respect. Well, it all depends what game you were talking about. There were a couple games where I was at home. There was one or two games where I was in Cabo and a couple games where I was at a hookah lounge during the Finals last year. That's the truth. I wasn't smoking hookah, but I was there. Absolutely. I wouldn't have went. The game was on in Cabo, the game was on in my house and at the hookah lounge. I watched every single minute of the games until they stopped. I actually watched every single postseason game last year. I think I told David that; I watched every single postseason game. Part of me, I'm just a fan of the game. I love the sport. I love the competitive nature. I love the playoffs. And then, also, of saying like, oh, I wish I was in this moment, what would I have done at that moment? What play would I have made in that moment if I was out there? So yes, I didn't miss a game. I didn't miss one game. Even on vacation, I didn't miss a game. My wife didn't like it, but she'll be OK. I've always had the mindset that in a close-out game for me personally, I'm just as desperate as the team that we are trying to close out. I don't want to play another game. And if we are in a position where we can win that game, that's just my mindset. Does it always go that route? No, because I don't believe I'm undefeated. I'm not undefeated in close-out games. My mindset is that I do not -- if we have played well enough and we are in the fourth quarter and we have a chance to win, I do not want to play another game. I mean, I love the game, but I do not want to play another game. That's always been my mindset. I want to be just as desperate as my opponent, just as desperate as the other team, the player that I'm lined up against, the coaching staff that's on the other side. It's just who I am. It's just a mindset I'm able to link into at that very moment. I guess it was a very, very, very, very long time ago, when I was 27, like a long-ass time ago when I was 27 in this league. I just wanted to put myself kind of in his position. Sometimes what I would be thinking at that age and if I was with someone in the later stage of their career, I just don't want to let them down. And I'm not even talking on the floor, because there's things that sometimes they go in, they don't go in. But as far as, I don't want to say a role model, but someone that holds myself to a higher standard as far as character. I don't want to let them down. And then, it's funny because it's kind of rubbed off on me as well because he doesn't want to let me down. I don't know, you've seen the movie Step Brothers before, right? Well, there it is. Yeah, I'm Will Ferrell, for sure. I get on his nerves a lot, for sure. I go in and mess with his drums and he's not watching -- yeah, that's me. I get on his nerves a lot. I think Alex Caruso is a true definition of when opportunity meets preparation. He's been preparing for this moment for a long time and he just needed opportunity. Luke [Walton] gave him an opportunity last year, and now Coach Vogel and our coaching staff are giving him an opportunity on a bigger stage. He's just taking full advantage of that and just full stride. He's just gotten better and better every single minute he's on the floor. He's still learning. Every game is still a learning experience for him because he's so new to the NBA. He played a lot of his minutes over the course of his early stages in the G League. But first time I saw him, and seeing him in some of our practices, it wasn't the sneaky athleticism. It was the way that he defended and how cerebral he played the game. I gravitate toward players like that right away, because the game, everybody talks about the physical side and how high you can jump and how fast you can run and all those things. But the mental side is what gets you to the next level. You know, I saw that from A.C. and he continues to learn. He's just been great for us. He's been great. He's been unbelievable. I mean, we've faced, it's been a crazy obstacle course for our franchise this whole year. I'm not going to sit here and give all the details, but you guys, everyone can go back and just see from the start of the season all the way up until now what we've gone through as a team. He's been able to manage it the whole time. Bringing in guys, losing guys. He's just always been the anchor, and our coaching staff has been right behind him. I can't say anything more than that. Just happy to be on the floor to kind of be his coach on the floor and just command to my teammates the same message that he's given to me and be an extension of his mind. It's been great. One, I've taken care of my body. I've been available to my teammates. That's one. I sleep. I try to get as much sleep as I can. I think there's no better recovery than sleep. And then I've never cheated the game as well. I've put so much work into my craft, so much work into the game. I think you add on to the fact that I've played with some great teammates and some great coaching staffs, from T-Lue and his coaching staff to Erik Spoelstra and his coaching staff, and now this coaching staff with Frank Vogel. I'm blessed. I'm truly blessed. They have all allowed me to be me. They have allowed me to go out and do the things that I do on the floor. Use my mind, my play and be able to command my teammates the way I do. It's put me in position to be able to, like you said, be in the Finals nine out of 10 years. To answer your second question, everything is different. It's 2020. Nothing feels the same. Everything is different. So the ceremony is different. The one thing I can say, I wish we were in Staples Center tonight with our fans, with our Laker faithful, because they deserve this as much as we do because they went through the last so many years of not being in a postseason run, feeling like their franchise would never get back to this moment. But they continued to stay faithful. It would have been great to celebrate with them tonight. So hopefully we can continue to give them something to smile about in the next round, as well. That's what our mindset is. I think personally thinking I have something to prove fuels me. It fueled me over this last year and a half since the injury. It fueled me because no matter what I've done in my career to this point, there's still little rumblings of doubt or comparing me to the history of the game and has he done this, has he done that. So having that in my head, having that in my mind, saying to myself, why not still have something to prove, I think it fuels me. I think they are all special in their own right. They all have their obstacles, things that went on throughout the course of the year, both on and off the floor. But one is not less than the other, because when you're able to put yourself in this position to be able to win a championship, first thing you start to think about is how much work you've put in over the course of the year. How much you've sacrificed, how much you've dedicated to the game and to your craft. That's always been the most fulfilling thing for me, besides seeing my teammates as happy as they are. Being able to know that you can put the work in, literally trust the process, live about the process and then see the results. I think not only from a basketball player, but from everybody, whatever craft, whatever workspace you're in, to be able to put the work in and live along the process and build along the process and be able to see results, I think we all live for that moment. To answer your first question, with so much going on inside the bubble and everything and us going into the unknown, it was kind of hard for me personally -- once I got inside here, I said, okay, this is my mission: I want to win a championship; this is why I'm here. It was hard for me to focus on other teams and what other players were feeling. I didn't engage in that. I didn't look for it. I wanted to keep my energy in the right space. And over the last couple days, you definitely thought about it. You thought about just being here, how successful it is. I commend Adam Silver and the NBA, Michele Roberts, Chris Paul and everybody at the NBPA to make this happen and to make this work. I think we can all say from the social injustice conversations, the voter suppression, police brutality, to have this platform, have our players be able to unite like that, it's something that you will miss. You will think back on it. I think one of the biggest things, besides the social injustice, all the things I mentioned, we had zero positive tests. We had zero positives tests for as long as we were here, 90-some days, 95 days maybe for myself. I had a little calendar I was checking off. But on a serious note, no positive tests. That's a success for everybody that was involved. I can't really explain it. There's just certain things you just know. And any type of relationship, you kind of just feel, you know that vibe. You have that respect. You have that drive. Sometimes you can't explain what links you with somebody, and then it's that organic. Sometimes, you don't even try to explain it. You guys ask me about my relationship with AD, the first thing I think about is the respect, the no ego, the challenging each other. We want each other to be better than actually ourselves. I want AD to be better than me. AD want me to be better than him. Every single night, every single day. And we challenge ourselves. I think that's a part of it. It definitely reminded me of it, just the excitement, the "I can't believe this." I definitely saw myself, 27 LeBron, 27 AD. I definitely saw myself in that. And what it did for me in my career, it basically let me know that the work I put in on my craft, and the way I play the game, how I was taught to play the game when I picked up a basketball when I was eight years old, it's okay to play that way and be able to win. No matter how many people tell you, you should maybe shoot more, you should maybe do this more, you should maybe be like him more, it let me know that the way I play basketball and the way I was taught to play basketball is the right way to play it, because you do see results. And then it just continues to boost your confidence. Not saying that AD doesn't already have confidence, but it takes it to another level. To answer your first question, absolutely. I think you wouldn't be human if you didn't have ups and downs in the bubble. At times I was questioning myself, should I be here? Is this worth sacrificing my family? So many things. I've never been without my family this long. Missing the days of my daughter being in kindergarten, even though it's through Zoom. Missing my son's 16th birthday, which we all know is a big birthday if you have kids. Seeing my middle child continue to grow and be who he is. First of all, big-time shoutout to the late great Steve Jobs, because without him, without his vision, those FaceTime calls wouldn't be possible. Absolutely, I've had ups and downs throughout this journey. For some odd reason, I was able to keep the main thing the main thing. When I talked about all the stuff that I missed, they understood that, too, and that made it a lot easier for me. To answer your second question, it doesn't matter where it is if you win a championship. A bubble, Miami, Golden State -- it doesn't matter. When you get to this point, it's one of the greatest feelings in the world for a basketball player to be able to win at the highest level. Well, I can't sit here and say one is more challenging than the other or one is more difficult than the other. I can just say that I've never won with this atmosphere. None of us have. We've never been a part of this. If you've been here throughout the start -- I mean, we got here July 9th. Our ballclub got here July 9th. It's October what -- I don't even , October 11th now. So this was very challenging and difficult. It played with your mind. It played with your body. You're away from some of the things that you're so accustomed to to make you be the professional that you are. So this is right up there. I heard some rumblings from people that are not in the bubble, oh, you don't have to travel, whatever. People just doubting what goes on in here. This is right up there with one of the greatest accomplishments I've had. What gave me faith is that Rob Pelinka told me he would do whatever it takes to make sure that we would become a winning franchise once again. Obviously, championships are not promised, and I don't expect that. But he said he would do whatever it takes to make this franchise, whatever personnel changes he needs to make, any part of our organization, he would do it, because he wanted to win just as much. And for me, being able to get Jeanie back to this point, that's something that fueled me as well. This is a historic franchise and to be a part of this is something that I'll be able to talk about and my grandkids and kids will be able to talk about; their pawpaw played for the Los Angeles Lakers. It's like playing for the Yankees and winning or playing for the Cowboys and winning a Super Bowl, or the Patriots. It's like playing for the Red Sox. So to be able to win with a historical franchise is something that, no matter if your mind wavers away, you can always remember what you're doing it for. I don't want to lie to you. I did, but if Jeanie at some point would ever want to reveal what I said to her, that's up to her. It was just a special moment and I know how special it was for her. So it was just in the words of, "I'm proud to be a Laker."