|  |
| --- |
| It was definitely a physical game tonight. You know, fouls were called at times and weren't called at times. You know, this is what it's about. You know, you can't look to get fouls and you've got to try to be as aggressive as possible. No, I go for the winning play. If two guys come at you and your teammate is open, then give it up. Simple as that. No, you've just got to take what's there. It's not about taking a high volume of shots, it's about trying to win the basketball game. You've got to take what's there. We had an opportunity to me with me taking three shots in the fourth quarter. We game is not solely on taking a lot of shots. I'm going to continue to say that. That's the only answer I can give you. We had an opportunity to win. We definitely played pretty well. Both teams are going to make adjustments, you just do that in the playoffs. But as a whole we played pretty well. You can't ask for nothing more than what we did tonight. We always want to win the ballgame, but we always say if we play as hard as we did tonight for 48 minutes, like we did, we're not satisfied but we can look back and say, okay, we're okay with this loss tonight. Not sure. It's just something that we've got to work on and get better at. At times we look to take too many jump shots to start the third quarter instead of attacking. Definitely with a team like Detroit that's very efficient on the offensive end, we've got to know how to pick your poison at times, and if there's a jump shot that's open, take your shot. They played great. I mean, their defensive mindset is very good. But for me, I just -- you just take what's there. You know, if you get a good look at it, you go for it. If not you kick it to a teammate. Simple as that. |
| Just wanted to try to get the best shots possible to try to either give us the lead, get fouled, go to the line and try to send us home with a win. I believe there was some contact, but there's been a lot of contact throughout this series. We're a no-excuse team, you know, and we can't look at the last play as why we lost. We've just got to get better. But I do feel there was some contact. I think so. That was definitely a good look. I thought Sasha had the opportunity to shoot the ball, and I guess he seen Chauncey closing out and he couldn't get the shot up. It was a tough play for Sasha, tough play for us but we had to try to at least get the ball up at the rim. We can't have a turnover. I played pretty good. I can play a lot better. At the end of the day we didn't win. You know, we gave ourselves a chance to win the game, when it came down to the final possessions and we can't make the right plays and we didn't get the stop that we needed to win the ballgame. That was just me wanting to win the basketball game. I never felt frustrated. I just wanted to execute as best we can on the offensive and on the defensive end trying to get stops. No frustrations at all, though, in my teammates. I can't be frustrated out there me trying to be a leader. I just want to win the ballgame. That's over and done with. Me and the ref had a good conversation, and I've moved on as a player. I'm not sure. They've definitely got a good plan coming out in the third quarter. That's something as a team we've got to figure it out, but they do a great job in the third quarter of coming out and putting the pressure on you. We haven't been a good third quarter team all year. I don't know why. That's something we'll have to figure out very soon or we're going home. I seen Coach's reaction after the play. You seen me and the referee talk about what happened during the course of that play. I've just got to move on. I can't do nothing more than just try to be aggressive when I play. I made contact. I mean, things happen like that, I guess. Well, I thought so. You're not allowed to use your hands on the perimeter once a guy starts penetrating towards the basket. There was a lot of physical contact throughout the course of the game, so I don't want to look back at just that one play, but it could have made a difference. Absolutely not. I wanted to be aggressive, and I was able to do that and I was able to create some contact. Well, no, I found that he was right on one side of my move, so I was able to spin, and once I went up to my shot, I felt some more contact. But I guess -- you call this playoff basketball, I do the best I can do and hopefully we get some respect at some point. No, I still made some passes throughout the course of the ballgame. I made one that was called for a turnover that wasn't a turnover on Sasha. We had an open look and he was able to pass the ball before it landed. But I try to take what's there. You don't want to try to force anything because they're a very good defensive team. We fell short again. I don't know, I can't put a finger on it right now. If we could, we'd be able to fix it. We can't put our finger on it right now, but it has to get better and soon, or we're not going to be in the best position possible in this series. We have to try our best, try to fix it and come out in the third quarter with a little bit more focus, try to attack their pressure because they come out with a lot of aggressiveness on the defensive end and just try to get better. We have to do it now. We can't wait until Game 4. We have to do it now. We have to get better at it. We're starting off with too many jump shots. We're having a lead, we feel like we can continue to shoot jump shots and then they get on the other end and they get fouls or they get dunks or they get lay-ups. They do a better job of trying to go inside, trying to get some contact, trying to get early in the penalty in the third quarter. I have to do a better job of that, also, and my team has to do a better job of reacting to what's going on in the third. Yeah, I have to, or we're not going to win this series, simple as that. I'm the leader of this team and I have to do more on the defensive end and offensive end. For us to win ballgames, we have to make better decisions down the stretch and eliminate some of the mistakes that I make throughout the course of the ballgame. It is some room for improvement with us, and we have time. Have to win four out of five. It's not impossible, but we have to do it now. I don't know, you just have to wing it. You just have to see during the course of the ballgame what's there for you as an individual, what's there for your team, what's the best fit, and we have to go with it. At a point if we have something that's very comfortable to us, we have to stick with it. Everyone just has to continue to play hard, which we've done the first two games but we haven't played hard enough to win. He's playing great. I think we didn't know how well of a shot blocker he was until this series, and he's definitely playing great, using his length. He's definitely done a good job on the offensive end, too. He's definitely one of the best power forwards in this league. His numbers don't speak for it, but everyone knows how well of a player he is. Because I'm still in the playoffs, I guess. You wouldn't talk about it if I was at home, you know? You have to have something to talk about. I make the decisions and I live with them. You know, my teammates respect the decisions that I make and I've always come through for them, if it's either late or early in the game. It doesn't bother me at all. Definitely. You shut all that up by trying to win ballgames. You win and they have nothing to talk about. No, I wanted to -- when I decided to attack I wanted -- the best thing I wanted to do was, hey, if I get the ball to the rim, just give us another opportunity to get a look at it, and we did. Larry got a great look and Andy got a great tip at it. So I started to attack, I seen him start to shift and I backed up a little bit more and I started to attack again and created some contact and created some more contact and we was able to get another look at it. You live with it. I think it's all about paying dues right now, you know, earning respect. You look at it, you can say, hey, these guys have been in the Conference Finals five years in a row. This is our first time in a long time. Right now it seems like it's about paying our dues and earning respect to everybody. I'm not sure. It's a challenge, but it's nothing we haven't been part of before. We was down 2-0 to these guys last year, even though last year is not this year, but we've been in this situation. It's always good to be in certain situations. We've been up 2-0, we've been down 2-0, so we have to see how we react. Our fans are great and hopefully they'll do a great job of supporting us on Sunday. I think it is. You know, you just don't care about where your man is, they can just kind of react to letting the pass go and kind of react to it. They have a great defensive strategy. Those guys are doing a great job of just trying to make me do some things that's out of my comfort zone. It says that I'm just not a one-man show. That's what it says to me. I have a great team, and out of 30 teams we're still here. You know, no one ever looks at that, they just look at, hey, we had an easy run, we played a team in Washington that was depleted and we played a team in New Jersey that had no inside presence, but it's never the Cavs won these ballgames. It's never that. Whenever anybody else wins, they did a great job of executing, they did a great job of winning ballgames down the stretch. But when we win it's like the other team was depleted or they didn't do a great job of making things happen. It's just we have to earn respect. I don't know how we do that, but I guess you do it by winning, and we've done nothing but win in this postseason. We don't want to make excuses. We've been a no-excuse team all year. Everyone knows how we felt throughout the course of that game, but we got an opportunity to really calm down and prepare ourselves for Game 3. It was definitely a situation where maybe things could have got out of hand on that podium with me up there last night and with Coach, also. You guys could see it in our guys that we maybe wanted to say something, but it's not about that. You have to just learn from what happened and maybe try to execute a little bit better the next time. |
| Be a little bit more aggressive attacking the rim in the third quarter, not put so many jumpers, not allowing their defensive intensity to speed us up on the offense. It's about the same honestly. We had a very physical run against New Jersey, a little bit more than we expected, but we kind of took it for what it was. About the same. Definitely, definitely. We've been here before. That's the best thing that can happen to us right now is we've been in this position before, so we know how to react to it. Being down 0-2, never being in that position before we wouldn't know what to do, so we've been here before so we should know what to do and how to catch them. We've definitely talked about the course of the playoffs before the playoffs started, good luck to each other, and since he's been home and rehabbing, basketball highlights, injuries going, and he was able to get successful surgery on his shoulder and stuff like that, and he's just telling me play as hard as possible and lead my team to victory. He's definitely given me some pointers. Well, basically just trying to be more aggressive against Detroit's defense. They're definitely a team where you definitely hold the ball, so just try to score more in early offense and not allow them to set up. Shoot the ball every time, I guess. He doesn't give good advice all the time. He's very active, and definitely he helps the guys that's guarding on the ball. He's a great outside defender. He's very long so you try to attack him, he's very capable of moving his feet and sliding and getting some good shots blocked. He's definitely a big part of the defensive scheme. Our crowd knows how important they are going to be tomorrow. They should come in with a lot of energy, and we look forward to seeing our fans tomorrow night. You're always a little more comfortable at home. We should have no excuses coming out tomorrow with a lot of energy, attacking early and attacking late. Well, we did a great job of coming down the early offense and getting to our offense a lot quicker, attacking a lot quicker before their defense set. They're very good when you allow them to set up. So we did a great job of coming down early on offense, moving the ball, getting it from one side to the other, drive and kick, and it worked for us. It's all or nothing at this point. You either make a series and be 2-1 or you make the impossible and be down 3-0. It's common sense. For me it was the biggest game of my career, and I was happy that my teammates were able to help me get through it, and we won a big game. Any time you get on offensive rebound, it allows the defense not to set. So I just wanted to try to be aggressive and I was able to get to the hole and seen the open lane and was able to make something happen. It was definitely an opportunity for me to just -- just wanting to be aggressive and try to see the whole floor. If a double-team came, try to get the ball up, and if not, try to be as patient as I could, try to get the shot clock, try to get some time off of it. I didn't want to force it to the basket. I was able to take just a very comfortable mid-range jump shot and it was a big play for us. No, all I'm excited about was I was able to get a team victory. This guy sitting next to me is growing up before our eyes, and he played some big minutes for us tonight. Defensively he was very in tune and we responded. I grow a little every night. I need my teammates out on the court to make me grow. You see a guy like Daniel, as young as he is and as young as I am, we're out there working as hard as we can to try to win ballgames. It's a great opportunity and great to see he made the most of it. We ain't done yet. We've still got to hold down home court and try to make it a three-game series. Being in the same situation honestly in the first two games, you don't want to let one slip away again. I could see if we could just get over the hump finally, we could win this ballgame. We finally got the stop that we needed. We finally made the offensive execution play that we needed. I wanted to make sure that the guys were very in tune and know that hey, we need one more stop here, we need the offensive execution, and win the ballgame, and the guys responded. Well, it definitely helps us perimeter guys when you have inside presence, and Z shot the ball extremely well. He defended extremely well and it just spreads the defense out when you have a guy that's seven-foot tall that can shoot outside jumpers and get to the lane. As perimeter guys we need that production out of our bigs, and he showed up tonight and it was great to see. Just not holding the ball as much and allowing our defense to set. Like I said before, they're very, very good when you allow them to set up. I was very aggressive early in trying to attack before their five guys were able to set up on the defensive end. I was a little bit more aggressive on the post, not allowing their guys to bump me out to the perimeter. Once I started getting some easy buckets, that opened up my outside shot. Very productive. Well, we knew it was going to be electrifying tonight, first time since '92. Like I said before, I was a WWF fan at that time, so I don't know what Cleveland sports was doing at that time. The crowd was exciting. We need them to be the same way on Tuesday because they really helped us. It gets us a little bit more energy when they're out there cheering. I mean, they deserve it. We haven't had a Cleveland sports team or Ohio sports team win in a long time, so they really deserve it. I've won a lot of playoff games in my two years in the playoffs. I mean, I just try to be the best player I can be out there for my teammates. You learn from mistakes, you learn from wins and you learn from losses, but this game doesn't put something on me where it's saying, hey, I've finally done it. I've won playoff games before, I've won playoff series. This is a big game and we won it and we need to move on. It's the first time in my career I've ever showed up to the gym three hours before a game. I usually take my nap before the game, and I woke up earlier today, so I had nothing else to do. I didn't want to sit around. I didn't want to continue to answer my phone about tickets (laughter), so I came to the gym and I turned my phone off and I was here, and the guys were still setting up the camera on the baskets. The mindset that I had today coming to this ballgame was we have to win, simple as that. We have to win. And me being the leader of this team, I have to be that guy that sparks this team, I have to be that guy that does it on both ends of the floor, but at the same time, my teammates, when they see that, they have to respond, also, with me, and I guess we did it. I don't know. |
| Just mentally try to prepare ourselves to be focused today and try to hold down home court, make it a three-game series. We've got to try to do our best to try to win the game. We know they're going to come out strong, and we've got to try to match the intensity. No, it's not doing the impossible when you go down 3-1. It's definitely going to be a challenge, but we don't even want to think about that. We want to try the tie the series up 2-2 and make it a three-game series. It was about execution. We've been able to get stops in the fourth quarter. That hasn't been our problem. What's been our problem is we haven't been able to execute offensively, we've turned the ball over, not even getting looks at the basket. But we had a lot of great looks, we moved the basketball from one side to another, made a defensive shift, and we connected on it. For me I watch film all the time, so I got an opportunity to watch it twice already. It was definitely a great performance by our team. We definitely took the challenge and we answered the call. We did a great job of keying up our crowd's intensity, and we showed why we're one of the best teams in the NBA. That wasn't much of me trying to score more, it was trying to be more aggressive, and if that had to do with me getting to the basket and scoring or making the winning play for our team, to try to make a good shot at the basket. One thing we want to do in the second half was just try to execute, especially down the stretch, not turn the ball over, at least try to get a shot at the basket. We knocked them down. It's very important. Like I said before, their defense is very good when you allow them to set up in the half court, and we try to want to get up the court as fast as possible, try to get some early offense opportunities, where we can get to the basket without their defense being set. It's also important for me to catch a rhythm and it's important for our team at the same time, and we took advantage of it. We definitely defend. You know, we take pride in the Eastern Conference about defending, and that's not saying that Utah and San Antonio don't, because they're very great defensive teams, but we rely more on our defense in the Eastern Conference, and we know it's important. Well, it's all about execution down the stretch. We know the fourth quarter is definitely going to be some hard fouls, there's going to be a lot of things going on in the fourth quarter because we know the game is going to be tight. We have to do a good job of executing offensively and defensively and try and take what's there. Definitely. I definitely felt comfortable yesterday by just trying to attack the defense early. I got a few early post catches, didn't convert them like you said, but it felt pretty good to get down there, and it definitely helped the team. Well, last night we did. Today is definitely -- everyone is ready to eat some barbecue, I guess, and forget about last night, but we'll get ready for tomorrow night. What we did was almost everyone touched the basketball. It wasn't just give the ball to me and let me make a play and see if I can get it to somebody else. I caught the ball in the post one time and we did a great job on the backside of flood and Daniel Gibson got a wide open three. The next time we ran our offense I was able to come off a pick-and-roll and hit Z, and then Z hit Drew for an open jump shot. So it's important for us to continue to move their defense because it allows us to get better shots on the backside. I'm not quite sure. Those lanes were definitely there. I just wanted to try to attack as much as possible, and some of the small lanes that I was able to find, I wanted to be able to take advantage of. I definitely took advantage of them and my teammates did a great job of spacing the floor to allow me to get into the lane and do the type of things I was able to do last night. I don't know (laughter). I don't know. Well, as always, you need to be able to adjust -- they're definitely going to try to keep me out of the lane in the fourth quarter and the whole game, but that's been the emphasis the whole series is to try to keep me out of the lane and try to make my teammates beat them. I think my teammates are focused, they know they're going to have to do a big part of contributing, and that's going to allow us to win. He's important to our team. Hopefully Larry is healthy enough to play tomorrow, but we don't know at this point, and if he's not, one thing that -- we've played without him. We don't like to, but we have done it, so it's something that's not new to us. "Boog" has started a lot of games this year, so he knows the role. He knows how big he is, and he knows how to play in front of a big crowd on a big stage. He's mentally prepared to play, whatever role is given to him. It's not about what he did last night or what he's done in the past. He's mentally prepared to go out there and be a big player on our team. We need him out there on the court just because of the way he can shoot the ball, the way he defends, and he's going to be big for us. I have a lot. I believe every time he catches the basketball on the perimeter, he can make a basketball play, and I'm not just saying that he can cast up a three. I believe he can do a lot of things off the dribble, he can shoot the basketball extremely well. On the other end, he plays with a lot of heart defensively, and he showcased that last night. No, it's not all about history here. It's about us trying to hold down our home court, and it's just like us, we've been a very good team after losing ballgames, too. I think they're going to make a lot of adjustments, we're going to make a lot of adjustments, and we'll be ready to play tomorrow. You know, it's a different type of random offense. Last night we got to a lot of random offense but we were able to be comfortable with it. What he doesn't like is when we come down and we take early jump shots, maybe one passing shot or just come down and not get into our sets and not getting our spacing. Last night we had a lot of random offense but it was successful because we had a lot of spacing, we had a lot of ball movement, we had a lot of player movement and it worked in our favor. Oh, definitely. You've got to try to attack this team early, as much as possible, and I think it works in our favor at times. Well, it definitely hurts us. If Larry is not able to play tomorrow it definitely hurts us because he's experienced and how well we've been with him at the point guard and how well he defends and how well he's able to shoot the ball. It definitely will hurt us, but at the same time, the best thing about it is we've played without him. Like I said, we don't like to, but we've played without him so guys are going to have to step up. It's something we can't control. His intensity. I think offensively and defensively he's very in tune, and his ability to knock down open shots. That's definitely a gift for me. It makes sure the defense stays on us, especially with him out on the court, that he can make an open shot and he can get to the lane, also. And then on the other end he's not a liability. That's important for us. Well, we didn't start out too good last night in the third quarter, but we definitely ended it the right way. We didn't get too down on ourselves. I don't know, we have to put our finger on it soon, getting better in the third quarter. No, I just think his before-and-after practice workout, that he definitely stays before (and after). I'm there before practice and he's always there, and after practice I'm shooting and he's always shooting. When I'm off the court, he's still shooting. He has a lot to prove, being a second-round draft pick and people saying he shouldn't have come out of college, he was too young. He has a lot to prove. We were definitely a much better team going into Detroit last year. We won the game just because we have more playoff experience. Last year was based on us making the playoffs; this year is based on us getting to the championships, and we have to approach it with the same mentality that we had. Honestly for the first four games we only have two games to show for it. Have to clean up that third quarter. Good in the fourth, but that third quarter is going to catch up to us sooner or later, and I don't know what we're going to do about it. We'll have to put our finger on it some way, some how, but we got stops down the stretch and executed on the offensive end and made big shots and that's what it's about. He definitely gave us a lift throughout the whole game of attacking and getting to the rim. You know, a lot of guys don't understand that Daniel is much better than shooting an outside shot, which I told you guys after Game 3. He got to the line 12 times, made technical free-throws, and it's different when everybody else is up there. It's about talent, I should be a GM someday, I guess. Make both and the game is over. You know, I don't want to make the first one, I wanted to make both and there is no way they can win the game with four seconds, and we're smart enough to know if we go up four, don't foul anyone and don't contest, we win the game. I've definitely stepped up with my free-throw percentage and it was something I had to get over with. The same thing I did to Gilbert last year. I invented that -- no, no, Scottie Pippen invented that to Karl Malone. But he tried to mess with me and I have to stay focused. I missed a lot of shots I usually make in the third quarter, I missed two lay-ups, I missed a wide-open baseline shot, but in the fourth quarter the game is on the line and I live for the fourth quarter. I love the fourth quarter and I told my teammates, get me to the fourth and it's close, and I'll try my best to win the game and I was able to do that. I think besides Drew grabbing eight rebounds and 18 points, what he did on Rasheed was big; he was able to front him and the way he played defense on Rasheed allowed us on the backside not to double Rasheed, and allowed us to stay home, and he did a heck of a job. And to be able to guard Rasheed and score and get the rebound, it was a big inspiration to our team today. I was very surprised, because I know Larry's history of injuries and -- but when I seen him in the training room with his uniform on, I asked him was he going to give it a go and he said "yeah," and that showed me this is more about the team more than anything, and he did what he could. I mean, he came out there -- just being him out on the court and gutting it through. What he's going through right now was an inspiration for us because we know he could have easily sat out tonight. But him being on the court and saying, "who cares about my injury. It's about this team." And it don't get no bigger than that. |
| Just the simple fact of us coming here in Game 1 and 2 and playing so well and falling short, and throughout this whole game we played the same way. The same way we played in Games 1 and 2, and we couldn't leave out of here without getting at least one win, just as well as we've played in this building, and that was just my mindset. I don't believe there was a lot of one-on-one coverage; there was a lot of double-teaming, a lot of triple-teaming, and I just tried to get the ball up. They have to respect my shooters out on the court, with Daniel Gibson and Donyell Marshall and Sasha and Damon Jones and Z, you have to respect my shooters, you can't just leave them open. So I was able to attack once I got the ball back, and make a lot of tough shots. I give all the credit to my teammates. This is definitely not an individual performance on my part, but without those other 14 guys, we would be down 3-2 instead of up 3-2. Why do I have to be surprised? I made a lot of good moves and I was able to finish. It wasn't just like they opened up the lane and let me through there. I made a lot of good moves, my teammates did a good job of spacing the floor and I just wanted to try to finish. They're definitely a great defensive team, but at times I wanted to attack as much as possible and that's it. Just for the simple fact that we won the ballgame means more than anything besides my performance. If I did everything I did tonight and we lost, it means nothing. So the win is the most important thing for us, and we are one more win from getting to our goal. Terrible. Yeah, I feel terrible right now. I'm everything, I'm banged up, I'm winded, I'm fatigued. I've got all day tomorrow. It's going to be tough to get some rest when you got a crazy two-year-old running around the house. So hopefully I can take him to one of his grandma's house. The simple fact that I was able to will my team to victory and definitely pleasing to me. This is definitely a big win, one of the biggest wins in Cavaliers' franchise history, for me and my teammates, it's definitely the biggest win. But we have a goal, we can't dwell on this tonight when we have another game on Saturday. We have got to do our best to try to win that ballgame and get where we wanted to be all year. The Pistons do a great job of making runs and you kind of never know when it's going to happen, but when it happens it's quick. So I just wanted to try to be aggressive and not allow them to make too much of a run, and give ourselves an opportunity to win down at the end of regulation. And it took two overtimes to do it, but as a team we definitely -- this is a gutted-out victory. Team passion, hard work, this is a group of guys that's never going to give up, and team basketball. When you look at San Antonio and you look at Detroit, that's what you want to be at a certain point in your career. They've done it year after year after year after year after year after year. So I respect the Pistons more than any team in the league just because I'm in the Eastern Conference, and I play against them as much as I do. So this is definitely a group of guys that have a lot of fight in them, and we have to take the challenge on Saturday. |
| 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. |
| Well, for us it really is. To everybody else it might not be the next game or next playoff series, but to us it is. That's how we've approached every game in this postseason, from round 1 all the way from the Eastern Conference Finals and now to The Finals. That's the way we approach it. We don't try to make it more than what it is. It's a basketball game and we have to approach it like that, with our same mindset we've been doing throughout this postseason. Well, for me growing up it really wasn't bad for me because I wasn't really on professional sports at all. I didn't know what was going on with professional sports. I was just trying to play AU basketball and play little league football and things like that. So it really wasn't a big deal for me. But as I grew up and started to learn more about it and then being the No. 1 pick to Cleveland and knowing the history about Cleveland sports, it really meant a lot to finally bring home a championship to the city of Cleveland. You just seen how the fans reacted after. Just to have fun. I mean, this is fun times for us, and there should be no reason to add any more pressure onto it. This is fun times for us, and we've earned it. We've played just as many games as everybody else in this postseason, so we've definitely earned the right to be here. And at the same time, we have to be mentally focused and approach it like it's business. It's always been business for us throughout this postseason, and him being the only one as a player, besides Coach Brown, and Danny Ferry being part of the Finals, he knows what it's about, so we listened to his word and we approached him in practice yesterday and we're going to try to do the same today. I think defensively they're one of the best teams in the NBA. You know, they work well together on the defensive end. You know if you beat one guy, another guy steps up. They've been pretty good throughout the years on the defensive end. But it's no added pressure for me. There's no added pressure for our team to go out there and try to pressure. We just know we've got to go out there and play as hard as we can and give ourselves an opportunity to win. We've definitely been able to do that. My favorite Finals moment is probably the last shot Michael had in Utah to end the series, thinking that was going to be his last shot ever in the NBA uniform and to retire on top like he did, hitting a game-winner on the road, was definitely my No. 1 favorite moment of watching the NBA Finals. That was pretty nice, too (laughter). Me? Cleveland? Yeah, that's why we're here (smiling). We're going to try to do our best to bring it there, absolutely. No, absolutely not (laughter). I feel like -- I just feel like a veteran. I don't say I don't feel 22, I'm not hurting or anything like that, my body is not down or anything like that. I just feel like when you look at a guy like Daniel Gibson playing on the backcourt with you, or you look at Sasha and Andy, you know these guys look like younger guys to you, but when you really look at it, Sasha and Andy are really older than me, but I'm kind of the leader and I'm kind of the role model for those guys. As a basketball player, I don't look -- I don't feel 22 until I really get off the court, and then I'm back and doing my usual video games and running around the house and stuff with my son, things like that. That's when I feel 22 again. I don't know. That's not my room to say. You know, when you look at guys who become greats, it's because of their athletic ability and their ability to do the things that they did as an individual, and I don't get involved in individual things like why do they base your game on and things like that. That satisfies me more than anything about winning a championship, just to get the satisfaction for my teammates. I think you become one of the greats by doing a lot of things as an individual. They don't base that on your team's perspective and things like that. That is definitely fun. It is fun to really know that you can get stops on the defensive end, and I've been on both sides of the fence where I couldn't get stops or as a team we couldn't get stops, and it made it harder on the offensive end. When you have a coach that tells you, hey, you guys go out there and get stops, you play defense for me and I'll let you do what you want on the offensive end, then it makes you play a lot harder. It's a pride thing for us, and it's a pride thing for me to say I don't want my man to score. You know, I kind of played both sides of the fence. I played offense and defense in the Detroit series and I took pride in doing it because I don't want to be the one guy on the court that's not playing defense and I've got four other guys working their ass off on the defensive end. It's not about that. You've got to play both sides of the fence. It just brings so much excitement when you know you can go out there and get a stop and get a run out on the other end. I'm very quick. I've always got compliments on that from coaches I've played for saying I'm a quick learner. I'm able to adjust fast to what's going on throughout the course of a game or throughout the course of life, honestly. I've been pretty good with it thus far. Well, it is, but it was a different situation for us also being in the Eastern Conference Finals, never being part of that as an individual. I learned from game to game to game how to adjust. How do you adjust for the road crowd, how do you adjust for the home crowd. I mean, I don't know, how can I explain it to you until I get into the fire, and then I'll be able to adjust on the fly and I'll be able to answer a lot better probably after Game 1, let you know how I was able to adjust throughout the course of the ballgame. I feel great. I'm ready. No, we haven't been on the everyone-picks-the-Cleveland-Cavaliers side yet (smiling), so there's nothing new for us. We just go out there and we play great basketball. You earn respect and you get respect by playing great basketball, and we've done that throughout the last two years. We haven't looked in the paper yet and seen the Cavaliers is picked to win the series or picked to win the game, so it's nothing new. You definitely give a lot of credit to the Spurs. They definitely played well tonight defensively, offensively. Some of it was me missing a lot of the shots that I usually make and some of it was the defense that they put on me and on our team in general. It's like a half and half thing. We're going to have to make adjustments. You're coming to Game 1 you don't know what to expect. We don't know what they're going to run against us offensively. We've got to make adjustments in Game 2. A lot of credit to the, they played extremely well defensively. It's a series. Things happen. They're up 1-0 and we'll make adjustments and be ready for Sunday. It was definitely crowded. They did a great job of shrinking the floor. If I went by one guy, another guy stepped up, something I'm going to have to make an adjustment for for Game 2. I'll definitely be ready to counter some of the things they did defensively. I didn't play extremely well, definitely. Not just shooting the ball, but the six turnovers was uncharacteristic of me in the postseason, tried to force a lot of passes in there that looked open at times but really wasn't. I have to play better, and for us to win, me being the leader of this team, I have to play better in order for us to have a chance to win down the stretch, and my teammates know I'm going to bring my better effort in Game 2. I feel good. A lot of shots I took is shots that I make. They felt pretty good, they just didn't fall for me. Things like that happen. You have one off night, but the thing like this is it's not like the NCAA tournament where you have one game and you're out. We've got to regroup and be ready for Game 2. Same answer I keep giving. We don't know. We haven't put our finger on the third quarter yet. We did a better job last year in Game 5 and Game 6 of playing great basketball in the third quarter, but once again it caught up with us again. We don't know what it is but we did a great job of figuring it out. We're going to do it pretty soon. We definitely want to get a win on this floor before we go back home. No, it doesn't. I know I'm going to see a lot of double teams, at times triple teams. It's something I've seen before and it's something I've been able to adjust to from game to game and in different series of this postseason. It's not like I've never seen a double-team or triple-team before, I just have to play better, and I definitely have a better effort on Sunday. I think defensively he's very good. He's one of the best defensive players in this league, and the guys behind him help him a lot. It gives him an opportunity to get up into me and force me into the bigs, and the bigs are very good, Elson and Duncan, of course. He has a lot behind him. He doesn't have to do it by himself. I'm able to go right and left, so there's nothing that I can't do out on the ball court. I'll just have to make an adjustment and come into Game 2 with a better mindset and try to get a win. That's definitely a fair assessment and I have to do a better job of trying to recognize that, trying to attack north and south instead of east and west. They tried to make me dribble out towards the side line. The bigs did a great job coming off pick-and-rolls, of showing hard and allowing Bruce to get underneath the big, try and attack me coming right underneath the big. I think our coaching staff is very aware of what was going on, what happened in Game 1. I think our players are very aware of what happened in Game 1, and we'll make an adjustment. It's not like we haven't been in this situation before. |
| I watched it twice, same answer as yesterday. I don't want to dwell on it. I don't want to put too much inside my thinking process on what I'm going to do to attack their defense. It's just mentally and just trying to read the defense as much as possible and just try to be better the next game. I've done a great job of preparing myself from one game to another, and I definitely feel like it's going to be a bounce-back game for me tomorrow night. that's a great question. I did have my girlfriend TiVo(r) the Sopranos definitely so when I get home I'll be able to watch it. But I think I'll be more focused on Tony Parker, even though I am a fan of Tony Soprano. Me and my guys have definitely sat down and think about it. My friends think that either the Feds are going to come and get him or he's going to make friends with the Feds and maybe snitch on a lot of people, or he's going to be whacked, which I don't think is going to happen. I hope that he's just able to get away and not worry about nothing (laughter). I'm serious, I'm a big Sopranos fan, and this is the first time I finally got a question which is not the same question I've been hearing all year. I appreciate that. That was awesome because I told you I'm pretty tired of answering the same questions, so I appreciate it. I hope not. No, absolutely not. Congratulations. I didn't know that. Congratulations to him and his family. That's awesome. I'm expecting any day. Well, I'm not (laughter). That would be kind of weird, but Savannah is expecting any day. I think it's a great time for his family, and it's not going to take away from nothing that he does on the basketball court. No, we're just going to -- she's going to just play it by ear. Whatever happens, happens. We're very excited about it, and we can't wait. Just like I said in the last series, I think they're very good when you allow them to set up in the half court defensively, and that's the same with Detroit. Just try to get up and down the court a little bit quicker and try to get some earlier looks on the shot clock where they're not set as much. Try and make the easy pass, don't go for the hard pass. They're very good at shrinking the floor and closing out some of my shooters. We have to do a better job of dribble penetrating, getting to the lane and then kicking out instead of just making the hard pass from one side of the court to the other side. Offensively and defensively we're a lot better. We did play pretty good defense, but offensively were weren't sharp at all. I wasn't sharp offensively, and that trickles down to the rest of our team. If I'm not sharp then it's going to be very tough for us to win ball games. Mentally we had a great practice yesterday and we're looking forward to having another one today. Are you a shooting coach? I'm looking for one (laughter). I've been told that before. It's just sometimes it's natural for me to fade. You know, I think a lot of my shots go in when I fade, a lot of them go in when I jump straight up, so it's something I'm definitely going to work on and get better with. But trajectory and all that stuff, I don't know. I don't know (smiling). I just think -- It's not easy at all. That's why I'm not sitting out there, I guess. He's definitely a team-oriented guy, and he communicates well with his teammates, and that's off the court. You know, it's definitely family first with him and basketball second, and any time you get an opportunity to sit down with a guy like that -- you know, we have a guy like that on our team, Eric Snow, who really cares about everything else besides basketball because basketball is going to take care of itself. You really respect a guy like that who really respects your family and things that you do off the court, community service, things like that and things besides basketball. I think that means a lot to a person like me, and I really respect Bruce and Eric being open like that. Well, you definitely look at it and see how you can attack it a little bit better. But it's not going to make me that much more passive. I've definitely faced double-teams and triple-teams throughout this postseason, so I have to do a better job of trying to attack the double-team early and see if I can swing it to the other side to a teammate that can make a play, also. We got into too many late shot clocks in Game 1, which is not good for us. We don't work well when we get into the shot clock down at 3 and 2 on the clock, and it makes us make bad plays. We just have to do a better job of trying to attack the double-team and being a little bit more aggressive getting to the lane. The last movie I saw was -- what was it? I don't remember. Spiderman III was the last movie I seen. It was a little bit too romantic, but it was very good. It was very long, but it was a little bit too romantic for me, I guess. I liked the black Spiderman. He was very funny. He couldn't dance at all, but he was very funny. We're definitely still confident. It doesn't matter if you lose by 1 or lose by 30 with us. A loss is a loss, and we've been down 2-0 before in this situation, so we have to find a way to bring the intensity that we did in the fourth quarter tonight and carry it on to Game 3. I don't know, I think the fourth quarter we just realize that it's a pride thing then, and we don't want to get blown out. We're here for a reason, and it becomes a pride thing in the fourth quarter when you're down so many points. I think it's just an upgrade from series to series, you know, from the first round to the second round, Conference Finals, and then to The Finals it's an upgrade. It doesn't matter who it is, the intensity level automatically picks up. The team is better. It doesn't matter if it's Detroit or the Spurs. Every round gets a little harder. I think the intensity is a big difference. Like I said, I don't -- you give the Spurs a lot of credit, but everyone knows that each round picks up, and the team picks up. You get better after you win one series. You get better when you win the Conference Finals and get to The Finals. You get better as a team, and the intensity definitely picks up. It's not a good thing for me. I can't remember the last time I didn't play 40-plus minutes. I got two quick fouls and it definitely didn't work in our team's favor. I wanted to be out there to try to help my team win, and being in early foul trouble definitely hurt us. We can play better. We can play harder. It shows, the difference the first three quarters or the first half compared to the second half. At one point we were shooting 57 percent from the field, and that hasn't been us. We have to find a way to pick up our intensity and carry on what happened in the fourth quarter into the rest of the game. I don't know (laughing) you know, he's very good, probably the second best point guard we've played in this postseason. Jason Kidd is one, I think Tony Parker is two. No matter what you do he's going to find a way to get into the paint. He can finish over big guys, finish over small guys. They have a great one in Tony Parker for sure. No, that's kind of a cop-out. We don't want to go zone. We're a man team, we have to man up and try to keep him out of the paint. We have to make our best effort. We made him take a lot of jump shots tonight, which he made. He made a three. I think when he's shooting the ball as well as he did tonight there's no way you can stop him. He definitely did a great job defensive, came up with a lot of blocked shots, rebounded the ball extremely well on the offensive and defensive rebound. He's been here before, and it's nothing new to him. It doesn't matter if he's out there for five minutes or for 25 minutes, he's definitely going to give his best effort, and he was definitely a spark off the bench. It's definitely going to be a great experience I think for all Cleveland fans, for northeast Ohio, for the whole state of Ohio. It's going to be something that hasn't been experienced in a long, long time for our city, for our fans. It's going to be electrifying. If you're not there, I expect you to try to get there. No I just think he understands how to play the game of basketball, and he knows that he's going to get some great looks, but he knows if the guys run him off the three-point line, he knows how to finish in the lane. He's getting better every game, every series, and it's great to see him grow and watch him continue to grow. I think he's definitely one of the best players on our team. |
| On the three-pointer? We had to go for a three, we were down three points. You know, it went in and it came out. No, incidental contact. Incidental contact. It didn't affect my shot. I had a good look at it and I missed. Oh, absolutely. I had been aggressive in the fourth quarter. I was definitely going to get it back from Andy, but Andy made a good move. He just over-shot it. I definitely wanted to try to get a good look at it or give my teammate a better look at it, but it was just miscommunication. Well, tonight was definitely a couple. I didn't think that went my way. I had an offensive foul, but I didn't think that was a foul. Their defense was definitely good, and they're definitely making me work for everything I do. Well, everybody has to still believe. You know, it is the first of four games, but we dug ourselves a big hole, and we have to come out aggressive and just continue to play hard. We gave ourselves a chance to win tonight and that's all we can ask for. Absolutely. We can't live on history, but at the same time we have dug ourselves a big hole, and we know that. We have to come out and try to win four straight games. This is all about them. They played very good defense. They played elbows and boxes and if I'm coming off someone that's there and I have to swing the ball to a teammate or I come off a pick-and-roll and they're there again. It's all about me not trying to force anything and to try to go for it when I can. I did a good job of not forcing it tonight, got into the lane and missed a couple bunnies that rimmed in and rimmed out. Definitely I found some creases tonight. It was definitely good for them because Manu struggled, Tony struggled, and Tim Duncan didn't shoot the ball well from the field, so Bruce definitely kept them in the game in the first half hitting three big threes, and defensively he's very good. So he definitely helped them. I'm not surprised on how tough it is. I kind of envisioned it being tough. I think the Eastern Conference Finals was tough, and I knew it was going to pick up another level. I think our team senses that, also. You know, the experience factor, we don't like to make any excuse, but it definitely played a part in this Finals against a world power team in the Spurs. Definitely. I think Coach Pop and their defensive staff has put in a great defensive plan against me. Any little crease I find they're still having guys coming over me, and if I do finish they make me finish over bodies. I really expect that and I love the challenge. It's fun going out there and seeing different defenses and trying a pick here and a pick there. You've got to give all the props to the Spurs and all the props to Coach Pop and his staff. They've done so far a wonderful job. |
| You know, definitely they're doing a great job. You know, I was definitely trying to read to see what they're doing at a particular time of the game. You know, you see one guy, you might see two and now you can see another one. So it's definitely a collective defensive attacks that they're putting on me and putting on our team. You know, I've got to read the defense first. I've always done that. I'd go on two dribbles and they'd go on the double-team. We had some great looks, we just didn't knock them down. All the shots we took from the outside was good looks. We've just got to step in and make them. Just got to continue to take them, feel confident about it and go up there and take that shot. You know, I know I can make them, I think my teammates know they can make outside shots, we've just got to continue to take them. Definitely I thought there was some contact, but we don't want to try to make that as an excuse of why we lost the game or if it could change the game. We had opportunities where we could have made shots before that and not put ourselves in a position to be down three with five seconds to play. I think we all know there was some contact, but that's neither here nor there, so we don't get involved in that. I play my game. My game is what I've been doing. I see a double-team, I get a ball up. If I don't see a double-team I try to attack and get into the lane. If I've got an outside shot, I'll take it. I can't change my game, what got us here. Everything I've been doing is the reason why we're here, and our team, everything we've been doing, is the reason we're here. We don't want to try to change anything but we know our backs are up against the wall and we have to try to win Game 4. Well, you have to. We have no choice but to win or the season is over and there's a new champion. We have to come out with the mindset to take one game at a time and just continue to try to win four in a row. Hopefully we can do that. I think individually he's great. I think what also helps him is the guys that's behind him. You know, it's not one guy in this league that can play defense on an individual by himself. I think as a team they're very good, which allows him to pressure, which allows him to do a lot of things that some other defenders can't do because they don't have that back line behind him. When you have a seven-footer in Tim Duncan and Oberto and Robert Horry, and you have Manu that closes in when they try to drive, it allows his one-on-one defense to be a lot more pressure, that much more physical because he knows he has that help behind him. Individually he's great, but those guys behind him also helps him. Well, I think Detroit, they tried to drop a lot of pick-and-rolls and tried to weak me left on the top. I wasn't as aggressive around the perimeter, which allowed me to get into the lane a little bit. I think San Antonio is not allowing me to come off screens without seeing another body, simple as that. I'm seeing one or two, and if I'm getting around two I'm seeing another third guy. They definitely have picked up in intensity, and we have to be able to exploit that. If they're going to put two guys on me, we have to be able to do something on the backside, and if I get a ball, I have to be even more aggressive on trying to get it back when we're swinging from one side to another. Well, definitely. We've had opportunities where I've kicked it out of the post and nobody has had an opportunity to swing, swing or we took that first look. Maybe we needed to swing it from one side to another to get something on the backside and therefore rotate. I think that would help. Well, it's just kind of a mental thing trying to get ready and get prepared for the game. You know those shots are not going to be there during the course of a game because you have defenders guarding you, of course, but I think just getting a warm-up, just getting a workout before the game mentally prepares you for the game definitely. We gave ourselves a chance to win last night, and I've always said, and I said all year and all throughout the postseason, you give yourself a chance to win you can't feel down about it. Defensively we were very active last night. Offensively we got some great looks, we just weren't falling. I was able to get into the lane a couple times and missed a couple bunnies. We don't want to get swept, of course. We're not even thinking about that. We're thinking about winning a game and continuing to try to win and win a championship. It's awesome. I think they have a dynasty already at work, and I think Coach Popovich and that staff and being able to get the No. 1 pick in Duncan has really helped their franchise and the pieces here and the pieces there to make that team a championship team. They don't have the greatest athletes in the world, they don't have the greatest shooters in the world, but they have probably the greatest team in the world, and that's what this sport is all about. It's not about an individual. It's not like tennis, it's not like golf. You have to have one unit. You have to have everybody on the same page at the same time to win basketball games. With him being a part of that franchise, why shy away from it? When you want to be the best, you want to try to mirror image the best, and they're definitely the best team in our league at this point in time. You want to try to do as close or exactly to what they do. And it's going to be tough because they've been together for so long, but at the same time, you want to try to just take a little bit of something from there and try to input it into your system, definitely. No, if they would have heard him we would have called a time-out. The time-out looking back at it when we got the ball, didn't seem like he was calling a time-out. I think he was trying to communicate more to the refs than to us, you know, and it's -- it's no one's fault but we didn't know. Look at that, we call a time-out there, then we don't have the two to try to tie the game up at the end, so it kind of worked in our favor. We took some confidence from Game 2 to Game 3. We played with that last night. We had a lot of energy, defensively we played extremely well. We didn't allow them to get whatever shot they wanted like in San Antonio. At the end we gave ourselves a chance to win. We still feel confident. It's all about the first team getting No. 4. They're definitely closer than we are, but at the same time, the series is not over until somebody hits four. It definitely could have been better. It could have been better in order for us to win. You know, if I don't play well, our team is not going to have a good chance to win. You know, I've got a lot of things to work on to get better for next year. There's no one thing that I want to focus on intensively, it's just everything. I need to definitely get better, and once I get better, our team will automatically get better, and I know that. I have to do everything that I've done well and try to improve in order for us to be a better team next year. I'm not sure. You know, you're definitely disappointed. I'm not disappointed in our effort the last two games, not at all. I think we played well. We definitely just faced a better team in this series, simple as that. I really think the team we have now is good enough to win a championship, and I really stressed that from the beginning. It just shows we went up against a better team, simple as that. We went up against a better team in this series, and everybody has to be better coming into next season. I have to be ten times better. Our team has to be ten times better. As individuals, if we all put in the work this summer and come to training camp next year, our level automatically rises. I'm just excited about what happened with our team this year. You know, we gave it all. We did what we said, made it to the championship, try to win the championship. We won the Eastern Conference Championship. We wanted to win the big thing, but when we look back on it, hopefully we can be satisfied, or not satisfied, but happy with what we have done. I didn't. I didn't want to turn around at all and look at it, but I've seen other teams win the title before, me watching on TV, so I know what they were doing. But I didn't turn around and look at it (smiling). I didn't want to look at it. I don't think so. I felt great throughout the whole season. Everyone at this point is -- everyone is injured at this point, everyone is a little fatigued. It's not an excuse. I definitely felt good coming into this series, and I think the defensive intensity and some of the things they did kept me off guard and kept the team off guard. The turnovers are uncharacteristic of what happened. It was a lot of unforced things, me losing the ball or me making bad passes. It's all things I can control, and I wasn't able to do that. We have to be better. Me, as an individual, I have to be much better on and off the court, and that will carry our team to higher levels. I think it starts with me first and then it will trickle down to everybody else. I'm not sure. We haven't really talked about it. You know, we went up against a better team. We know the Spurs is definitely the better team in this series. They played like it. They never got rattled when we made runs. They never sped up. They played their own tempo, and they kept us off balance. I think we learned that as good as we thought we was, there was still a team out there that was better than us. I was just basically congratulating him on a wonderful season, on his championship. He's definitely a great player and he has a great supporting cast around him. I think it's great. If I couldn't do it, why not Tim Duncan? He's definitely a very good player, and he definitely brings out the best in his teammates. I think I kind of want to do the same thing and try to do the same thing with my teammates, so we're kind of the same player, me in the perimeter, him in the post. So why you ask me what he said? |
| This is -- we had a good chance to win Game 1, but it was great plays made by both teams down the stretch. Two good teams continuing to execute down the stretch. It definitely hurt, but we got to adjust. Like we said before, a series is not won or lost in one game. It is a good start for them. We just have to make adjustments and get ready for Game 2. I'm not injured. Just caught a few cramps. That comes from maybe a little bit of dehydration. So I got to make sure I keep my fluids up for the next few days. I'm not hurt. Not an ankle, not a knee. I'm fine now. Just sometimes if you ever -- if you ever played sports before and you catch a cramp, your body will tell you when you are ready to move. If you try to move before your body tells you to move, it is going to hurt. I just got to stay a little more hydrated throughout these next few days. Mo knocked it right on the head. Some of the same shots they had missing in the first half they made in the second half. With Dwight's numbers, Dwight played great, of course. But we felt like Rashard was that X-factor tonight. He made some big shots for them at the start of the fourth. Every big shot they needed, they were down one, up one, he made shots, man. He had a heck of a game to help them win tonight. Well, my statistics don't mean anything when it ends in a loss. If I can do something else to help our team win, I'm going to do that. What I did is try to give us an opportunity to win. I tried to put us in the right position to win. That's all I can do as an individual. But you try to -- you got to find a way to will games away sometimes when they get away or continue with the same energy you had throughout the whole game. Tonight my individual performance means nothing, you know, because we didn't win the game. Him being 6'10", he can see over a lot of defense. He can still see over some of the guards or see over me sometimes when we are blitzing his pick-and-roll. He had to really -- he had a really all-around solid game. He adjusts in the second half, found some things that helped them win the game. We will prepare just like we do after a win. You make an adjustment. You try to play a little bit harder on the defensive end. For a team shooting 55 percent on our court in a game is unacceptable for all of us. We know that. That's not how we play basketball and that's not how we are going to win. We should have lost giving a team 55 percent from the field. So we are going to make adjustments tomorrow. We are going to watch some film. We are not going to add no more pressure on us than we need to be. Just go out there and play. I mean, offensively we were stagnant at times, maybe because I felt the hot hand. I got back to the one-on-one play that I had in the past. But I felt I had it going individually. But we only had five turnovers as a team. It is not like we were not playing basketball the right way. We missed some really good shots, some easy shots, we made shots. We shot 48 percent from the field offensively, so for the most part that's a pretty good game when you have 19 assists and only 5 turnovers. He missed two wide-open ones right before that, too. Yeah. I thought the last one was going to go in (smiling). All the easy ones. I think Sasha can be really good for us. Mentally if he is in tune with the game plan, he can give us some big minutes. His athleticism, his length, being 6'6", 6'7", he can help us. But the last play, Mo wanted the last shot, you know. He told me to tip it to him, he was going to take the last shot. We went with it. Almost went in. I think it is always good. Nobody said it was going to be easy. It's one game, and if we just look at it and just one game and we just move on to the next game, then we'll be fine. If we think the world is coming down on our heads, then, you know, we are going to get beat pretty bad in Game 2. So like I said before, we always have been a one game or, you know, one team. That's our attitude. So win, lose or draw, you move on to the next. It may have. Because I caught some cramps, too, before in Game 1 of the Atlanta series with the layoff that we had. You can never simulate practice or scrimmaging during practice because you can't add 20,000 fans, you can't add the lights, you can't add that type of atmosphere. With all the sweating that goes on during the course of the game, the mental and physical pounding that you take throughout the course of a game, it is easy for you to catch cramps. So it has something to do with it. That's called reverse psychology. Just trying to get his guys basically saying you guys need to play a little harder and don't worry about his name, just -- you guys are in the NBA for a reason. I got to just continue with what I got to do to help us win ball games. You guys hear Stan all the time in time-outs, you know how he is. He's funny (smiling). Rashard hit a big shot. Couldn't believe he took the shot, but that's him. If you look at any other series, if you look at statistics and you guard the stat sheets and know percentages and things like that and guy's tendencies, Orlando, they like to go for the win on the road. Hedo took a 3 in the Philly series with a tie game. And Rashard, you just need a little bit of air space to knock down a 3. The play was drawn up to me to make a play, to go quickly, to give us a chance to get an offensive rebound, and I was able to drive. And my man failed, so it kind of got me off balance. So I drove and seen Mo, I saw one guy guard Mo and Delonte. Just like any other play, any other time, I see that happen, I made the skip to Mo. I know Mo wanted to shoot it bad, but his basketball instinct say if a man comes to you, swing, swing. Delonte, same spot to put us up one, had a good look at it, just didn't fall. Yep, yep. You're done. What was the question? Game 2? It is. It is. It is a big game. We are looking forward to the challenge. Last night's game, we watched it. It was a great game. Great performance by both teams, the Final Four teams. You don't want to go down 0-2. We are going to try to even it tomorrow. It doesn't. Every game we play, we go out and try to win every game. We are looking forward to it tomorrow. I think we did a pretty good job of it last night. We watched the game. For the most part, when a guy has it going like that -- I mean, we was up two points. And if Rashard missed that 3, we aren't having that type of conversation. It is tough. You know, it is tough sometimes because you got the flow of the game and has it going like that, you have rhythm. But at the same time, you keep missing it. You have to try to balance it sometimes. It is going to be a long series, we believe. We got to approach every game like it is the last. We are just going to go out and play. Mo is that type of guy. Last night he didn't feel like he did enough. I really think he did. He is hard on himself and that's good. He played a great game. He didn't shoot the ball particularly well from the field, but his overall game was good. Got to stay hydrated. It is long, mentally and physically draining. I was doing the jumps and all those types of things. Hopefully after last night -- with nine days of layoffs, you can not simulate 40,000-plus fans. My body just didn't adjust well last night but I'm okay. No, a lot of water. I don't drink Gatorade. Like I said, we come out shooting like that, it is going to be tough to win. We know those guys are going to shoot a high percentage in the paint. A lot of the other guys played great. I think (inaudible) did a great job. We made a few mistakes getting the rebounds that needed to be put back. We didn't have one block last night. That was -- I mean, that shows how well offensively we played. He is a great player. Not many guys that can stop him in the low post. He had it going. |
| Wow. I mean, the reaction from the fans and the teammates, the loudest it has ever been in this building was the first time I made the playoffs in my third year and we faced Washington and we ran out on the court on that game, the towels was out and it was unbelievable. I had lost my wind as soon as I ran out on the court. Tonight surpassed that by ten times. I mean, it was unbelievable. I mean, you couldn't -- I mean, you couldn't hear anything but just a roar of those 20,000-plus fans. And they deserve it. They deserve it. The first option was for me to fake up and go for the lob. Two things happened. We had a 16 of Rashard Lewis on Mo, so it was going to be a difficult pass. When I went to go for the lob, Hedo had never been on it. I told Mo, whatever -- whatever it was going to take for me I was going to come get the ball, no matter what happened. If the first, third, second, if all options run, I'm going to come get the ball and I'm going to knock down the shot. It is the biggest shot I have made in my career. Orlando is not in our head at all. We respect that team a lot. This is a very good team we are playing. These are the four best teams in the game right now, you know, and they are battling. We are battling. We are going up big and they are making runs. It is going to happen. They are not in our head at all. We don't look at it as that. It is just two really good teams just going at it and having a pretty good series so far. I just took my time. I just took my time. For me, a second is a long time for me. You know, for others it is very short. I mean, those are -- as a kid, you practice those type of moments, as a kid. As a basketball player, you are sitting in your backyard, you are in the gym and you are five, four, three, two, one (buzzer sound). Those are the moments that as kids -- you don't have to be in the NBA to know what I'm talking about. Everybody know those type of moments. And to hit a shot like that at the buzzer at home, wow. Well, that guy is not in the League anymore. The other 23 is now on the good side now. That other 23 is gone, so we don't have to worry about that no more. (Smiling). No. For one, I think they seen that set before. We ran it one time earlier in the season in Indiana right before the All-Star break, and I was able to get a foul on Danny Granger. Rashard Lewis played it perfect. He stood tall, got in Mo's way and dropped it. If you watch the replay, Rashard Lewis even got a contest on the shot when I got up, but just a little bit too late. I mean, they played it perfect. It is just a good shot. It is a good shot. (Smiling). The same way we guard Rashard, when Rashard hit that 3, we guarded it perfect. Good players or great players just make good shots, man. I wouldn't say put one ahead of the other. That was a great performance also from us as a team, from me as an individual. Tonight was another good performance by me as an individual and us as a team. That's a shot that you will see for a long time, you know? You watch classic games and you see Jordan hit game winners and you go all the way back, Jerry West hitting game winners, and Mattie Johnson going across the lane and hitting the jump hook against Boston. You see all these type of shots, man, always be played even when the game has left you as an individual. Hopefully I can stick my foot in that category with Magic and Jerry West and Jordan and all these other guys that made spectacular plays on the biggest stage in the world. It's something I will probably do after I'm done playing the game of basketball, man. I don't take time to look at what I do as an individual while I'm still playing this team game. When I'm done and retired and I'm gone away from the game, I'm by myself, my family, my kids, I can look back on what I did as an individual. As long as I have 14 teammates, I will never look upon what I do as an individual. That's not how I approach the game. I never seen this side of Mo before either. I've seen him before, I know him. Swagger. You lose all your cool points. You know what to do. Honest answer, when I caught it square, it felt great. It was in the air, it even looked like it was going in. There was a great chance it wasn't going in. Hedo hit a tough shot over Sasha to take the lead. It was -- I just didn't know. I mean, it was like, you know -- I didn't pray as much as Mo did. It felt great. It felt great. If it came out -- it is possible I could have missed that, too. But it felt great. I practice those type of things, man. You guys see me every day. You guys see me after the practice. I'm catching, shooting things that may not happen in a game, but, you know, it happened tonight. No, you didn't. (Smiling). No. As a kid, you wouldn't leave the gym until you made it, though. As a kid, you would do the five, four, three, two, one. And if you missed 20 in a row, you wasn't allowed to leave the gym until you finally made that shot. I was always Jordan when I made that shot, because in my era growing up Mike was always the one who made those five-to-one game winners, the light goes off and the crowd goes crazy. I wanted to be Mike when I did those things. I got that out of my bag of Michael Jordan tricks, I guess. Very good team. You want to try to protect your home court the best way you can. In a seven-game series, you say you have home-court advantage, but in the Eastern Conference Finals and Western Conference Finals, is there really a home-court advantage? These four great teams out here competing at the highest level, we are the four best teams in the League for a reason at this point. To go on the road, one second from being down 0-2, going to Orlando and from zero seconds the shot goes in to being 1-1 going on the road, it is a good feeling for us. We can carry this momentum. One thing about us, we are not going to carry Game 2 to Game 3. It is over and done with. It is a great game. We are a next-game team. We have to figure out a way to play better basketball in the second half. The first thing we need to do is realize that we are not going to blow this team out. When we get leads and they make a run, we just can't get down on ourselves. We have to continue to play. The best thing Orlando has, they have matchup -- they have matchup problems. They create matchup problems with Rashard being at the four, they create matchup players. Very good player, very talented. We have to understand that every possession matters. We cannot take a possession off, and if we have a scheme, we cannot break down because every time you break down against a really good team, they make you play. Just like we would do if a team breaks down against us, we are ready to hit the road. It has been a while. We look forward to it. |
| No. You just try to do anything and everything possible to try to help your team win. At this point everybody is fatigued. There is no -- there is no room for excuses at this point in the season. I mean, everybody is fatigued at this point in the season. There is no way you can hide away from it because of the intensity of the playoffs, the magnitude of the games, the possessions of the games, and the two teams trying to compete to move on to the next level. Fatigue is within everybody who approaches the game. I think -- we just got to man up a little bit and take responsibility of who you are guarding. We have done it all year, and guarding the guys in front of us and then rely on help second. That's a very, very good team. A lot of credit to the Orlando Magic because it is a very good team. Take nothing away from them. Well, we've had a few games this season where if no one is making shots then we don't look that good of a team. We've had -- we are a very good shooting team, but we've not found a way to find our stroke. I hope -- and I think we will. Guys are going to be confident about every shot that they take. And if they don't, they think about making the next one. At this point, we are. They create a lot of matchup problems. The way Rashard spaces the floor, our bigs are not used to it. I think our bigs will do a good job of continuing to watch film and find a way to stay out on the perimeter with Rashard. They do -- they got some very big players that can shoot the ball. Also, they can drive, too, if you close out on them a lot. They have done a good job of exploiting that. We run out their shooters, they go around us. If we don't, they stop and shoot the 3. They have done a good job, and their coach has prepared them the right way. He is a very active player. But, I mean, coming into this game I was shooting 60 percent from the field. So, you know, I missed a few shots tonight I'm capable of making. He is a very active defender, but I don't believe anybody is an individual that can guard me. Every time we got it close, there is a whistle blown. I think the refs did a great job tonight. There was a few of them we thought was a little ticky-tack, but, hey, it happens throughout the course of a game. I mean, you look at it and they shoot 51 free throws, and Hedo went 1-11 from the field and but he goes to the line 12 times and makes 11 of them. That's very difficult to guard. When a good shooting team like they are go to the free throw, Dwight goes to the free throw a lot, we can live with that. But we can't allow Hedo to go to the line 12 times and Pietrus come off the bench and go to the line seven times. It is not helping our cause. We are missing some very easy shots, shots that we've always made and continue to make throughout the playoffs and throughout the regular season. I don't think it is the matchup problems on the offensive end. We're very confident. I know I am as an individual. I make sure our team is. We will get ready for Game 4 and play the same intensity basketball that we played tonight. Hopefully a few shots can go in and a few of theirs can go out. So it is a very good team. Like I said, give them a lot of credit. I think it was. It was a little extra. The foul was called and he continued to swing his elbows. I mean -- I mean, you see Mo's face. It wasn't a pretty sight. It is not called for in this game. Is that it? Thanks. No. It is over and done with now, you know? Mo's -- his eye is definitely sore, and it is hurting pretty bad. But we are going to move on from that. It happened last night. It's not why we lost the game, so it is not something we are going to harp on. No. For what? We are just trying to get wins. Well, I think we just got to ramp up a little bit. It is a very good team, we know that. Defensively we just got to try to take responsibility and take pride in guarding the guys on us, first, and rely on help, second. That's the defensive team we have always been. They got a really -- they got some really good players personnel-wise. We got to buckle down a little bit more. I don't know. Like I said, they are a very good team. You know, we can't worry about, you know, teams winning 10-14. We got to worry about Game 4. If we harp on that, then it will not get us anywhere. I think he will be fine. I'm fine. I'm excited about Game 4. As long as I stay upbeat, we got a chance, of course. So I'm confident and I'm sure the rest of the guys are confident. Mo just has got to do all he has done all year. That's to continue play hard and continue to make shots and take a lot of pressure off me, take a lot of pressure off the rest of the guys. He has done a great job of doing that, and he hasn't shot the ball exceptionally well like he's capable of doing in this series. But he's due. You know, Game 4 would be the perfect time for him to come and take some pressure off me and the rest of the guys on the team. He should. We should be confident about winning this series. There is no reason why we shouldn't be here. A guarantee or you say you want to win the series, same thing. I don't believe in pressure, man. We got to come out and play hard. It is a very good team. We know that. We got to do it on both ends. And if we do that, we'll give ourselves a good chance. Definitely our bench is -- I can't put a lot of pressure on our bench because they haven't really got a great opportunity to go out there and perform, so it is hard to say our bench isn't producing. I think when they get an opportunity to come in, they play pretty well. Our bench is key because I think on the other end, their bench is definitely coming in and giving them a big boost and we need it. Our bench has have been strong for us all year. When they come in, they need to do a good job, which they have done when they got the opportunity. For me, I don't -- crowd is not intimidating to me at all. It really doesn't matter to me. Of course, adversity happens. That's how you overcome and become great. You are going to face adversity throughout life, in basketball and off the court. So this is an adverse time for us, but it is not the end of the world. We're looking forward to Game 4. I'm not down. We're down 2-1. It is not like the series is over at all. Sometimes you face a situation in a series that you may not want to be in before a series even started but it happened. It is not like the series is over. We are looking forward to Game 4. It will be really fun. |
| I think the guys really knew that they had to play well for us to have a chance in this game tonight. Those guys definitely made shots the whole first half, and it was good to see that. Mo definitely put a lot of pressure on himself and he played well. And I think our bench came in in the first half and gave us a great lift. We just got to continue to play hard, man. We've had -- we've lost two games off inbound plays. And being up two in Game 1, being up one, you know, tonight, and we've lost two games off inbound plays. So we got to be more in tune in our inbound plays. You got to communicate during that situation and not give up open shots or good looks down the stretch like that. Of course I want the shot, man. I always feel like I can make any shot that I take. As it traveled, it didn't look good. It felt good leaving my hand but didn't look good in the air. Those are the breaks we have gotten this series, man. It just didn't go. Well, it was a different situation because we had no time-outs. So we weren't able to get it at half court because we had to use our last time-out before I hit the 3 before that play. So it didn't go -- you know, I didn't go back to Game 2 and review it in my mind. I was just hoping that I could make one more. Well, we just allowed Dwight to get a lot of paint catches. And I think in that instance, if he got dunks, we got to try to wrap him up and try to foul him and make two free throws. I think Dwight has done a great job of making his free throws. But, you know, statistically he might miss one. And we know he ain't going to miss no dunks or no lay-ups. We got to foul him in those situations, especially in a close game like that. We got to close out games right away. We are giving ourselves a chance, and we are breaking down in areas that we haven't broke down all year. It is a great three-point shooting team. We got to give up something. I mean, Dwight is playing well, and he's a beast down the middle. So you try to shrink the floor. We open it up to their shooters, and then Dwight continues to get dunks and lay-ups. But we are executing on the other end. We need one stop. We haven't got one stop to win a ball game yet. I feel good, man. This is the best I felt during the post-season in my NBA career. So fatigue hasn't played a factor. I continue to try to help our team, put our team in a position to win ball games. The ball is in my hand a lot, and I may have a few turnovers. That happens. But I have to figure out how to not have eight. Eight is unacceptable for me. That's way over what I've done throughout the whole playoffs or throughout this series. I won't turn the ball over as much. Some of them is just misqueue, some of them is just trying to make the right play. But fatigue has nothing to do with it. Well, you deal with it, move on to the next game. We had our chances tonight. And we didn't execute. You move on to the next game. You try to get the game on Thursday back home and come back down here and try to get Game 6. We are looking forward to the challenge. I know I am. I'm up for the challenge, and I think my play, my leadership has spoke for that. So I will be ready, and I think our guys will be ready also. We had another play called. But I was doubled at the time-out. Courtney Lee played under and Pietrus played right behind. So by any means, I went to go get the ball. That's the shot I can definitely make from that range. Just didn't go. If I was Rashard Lewis, we would have won. I would have took the 3. But me being who I am, I took the two and got fouled and went up there and made two free throws. |
| We covered the three-point line really well today. They killed us from the three-point line last game making, 17 3s, and the whole just great shooting team is 32 percent from the three-point line was to our benefit. We had a conscious effort of getting out to their shooters. If they were going to make some, they were going to make it over a contested hand. It worked to our benefit. That's what we make our mark at, man. We got to find a way to get stops down the stretch. We haven't done that throughout this series until tonight. In Game 1 we gave up a 3 to Rashard Lewis when we was up two. In Game 4 we give up another 3 to Rashard Lewis. That's when we made our mark at it all season, man, by just clamping down in crucial situations throughout the course of a season and throughout the course of a game, especially in the fourth quarter. We finally did that tonight. Just take what the defense give me. When my guys make shots, it makes it a lot easier on myself because they're -- now it allows me to go one-on-one with a defender. They can't help as much. And when they did help, they knocked down three-point shots and Andy got a one-handed layup. That's what I need from my guys. I don't add no more pressure on my teammates, but they know we're a very strong team when they knock down shots. Just close out. We was down one to start the fourth and I knew coach was just going to -- it was win or go home at this point, so I knew I was going to play the whole fourth. Just wanted to -- my guys, they had made shots through the first three quarters, so I knew it was going to be an opportunity for me to probably press the gas a little bit on the offensive end. And they continued to make shots in the fourth. I always feel like myself individually I can always get going any part of the game. That's key. Something that as a unit players and coaches we came up with, trying to figure out a way we can try to exploit their defense with all our shooters out there. And having a live dribble either at the top of the key or free-throw line is key for myself and for our team because now it adds a threat of me jabbing, jabbing, taking a shot or getting to the paint and either taking a shot for myself or creating for my teammates. So any time you are as dangerous as I am or the best guys in this League and you have a live dribble, it makes you that much more dangerous because they don't know what you are going to do. That was huge. I mean, that defense is very good when you allow the ball to just stay on one side and you just dribble and dribble and now you are getting down to five seconds on the shot clock and now you got to try to race and get up a good shot. By Mo and Delonte and also Daniel coming and pushing the ball up the court and getting us into our sets early, it allows us now to be comfortable with now attacking it with ten on the shot clock instead of five. Getting the ball moving against this team is key. Hedo is an all-star in my mind. You look at their team, you can say they have four all-stars with injured Jameer and Rashard and Dwight. Hedo is -- him and Rashard, they are clutch players they have. Just try to take the challenge. At this point it's -- you got to just take the challenge, man. Especially when you are on your last leg, you just got to take the challenge, and I did that. That's what I do. I attack no matter who is in the paint. No matter what's going on, I just try to attack. Even though I know he is a defensive player of the year, you just got to try to attack a guy like that, man. He is very good with space. If you allow a guy like that to get space, then he is able to jump and create and block shots. That's how he gets a lot of his weak side blocks and coming across and blocking shots. If you don't give him much space, you hit him, make contact with him, it is tough for a guy like that to get off the court. I don't know. I think Dwight was just in here, like, five minutes ago. So I don't know. (Smiling). I'm good. I think we started out the first two games with a sense urgency. They just made a run and we weren't able to slow it down. They just caught us off guard. At this time, either you win or you chill at the house, you are playing with the kids a lot. You sit back and watch the finals. Something I envisioned. I signed up to play for a long time in the series and this season. There is always a sense urgency when you are on the brink of elimination. Thanks. Yeah, man. I slept really well. Difficult to sleep at 5:00 in the morning, you know what I'm saying? Wake up late in the afternoon but feel good. Both teams. Both teams need to win. We need to win to keep on going, and they need to win to close out. Pressure -- I have never been a big believer in pressure. I don't really believe in it. So I'm the wrong man to ask about pressure. It's a challenge. We all know how big and strong he is. I try to bring that same intensity when I go to the hole and just try to meet at the ends, I guess. It's tough. It's tough sometimes. You get beat up sometimes going in the air, but you got to continue to be aggressive, continue to try to get him in foul trouble. Just try to attack. They are a very good team. My game is all towards attacking and what the defense gives me. You know, Dwight is their anchor on defense. If you attack the anchor, then it is tough for that defense to standstill. We got to continue to be aggressive. I mean, any time you get the Defensive Player of the Year off the court, it's a lot. Imagine if KG fouled out last year in the playoffs, it is a totally different ball game so that's key. I think what we did in Game 4. We pretty much lost that game on an out-of-bounds play giving it to Rashard. We know we can play well. I mean, a team is dangerous when they know they are on their last limb and especially with us. I think we are very dangerous at this point. I mean, it is going to be a crazy atmosphere. We look forward to the challenge. Paul probably -- Paul and Kobe are the best guys that we have in our game, and Dirk, at that elbow right there, sending it to the free-throw line. So I stole a little bit from those guys. No, I haven't. But against this team, I think you have to change up sometimes and that's the point on the floor where most teams can't dole from because I can see both sides of the court. If I'm on one side, they make them load from one side. Me being in the middle of the court with shooters on both sides, it is tough for a team to defend that. It is probably going to be something we go to late in the game. Yeah, especially when teams went zone. Coach K would put me at the free-throw line. I would be that guy I caught it at the elbow, I can either attack or I can see both sides of the floor having Carmelo and Kobe on both wings. So I did that a lot. It helped, of course. I mean, any time you can do some things in the game, you know, in a previous situation, you get comfortable with it. And I was very comfortable being at that position last night, just catching the ball with a live dribble at the free-throw line with shooters on both sides. A lot. When Coach broke up the teams -- we were in the starting lineup, of course. When Coach broke up the teams, we all went at it, all 12 guys. You got 12 of the best players in the world. We helped each other get better every day. He's challenging. He's great. Dwight is going to be the most dominant player in our league for a long time to come. Dwight is going to be great, man. He's young. I'm young. We are just going to continue to grow. Mo's pace is always high. When he's making shots, he's confident. He believes he can make any shot on the court. He came off an opening. He is going to be aggressive, and he's going to take shots. He's going to live if he misses them. He is going to live if he makes them. He wasn't worried about the consequences of missed shots. He just came out and believed he would make every one. It's been five games. It has been every possession for five straight games. Exactly. So I was built for it, man. I don't -- I don't die down. I didn't die down at no point in the game last night. Wasn't tired. Felt great. It is just -- when you haven't seen something like that for a long time in this league, it is easy to say there is too much pressure on a guy. I live for the moment. I'm okay with it. There is fatigue on both teams. It is almost June. There should be fatigue. We can only -- the body can only take so much. But both teams are just trying to get through and just trying to stay mentally focused. At this point, fatigue is a factor, but mentally you have to be more in shape than you have to be physically. Oh, yeah. The rest that I've gotten during the season with the way we was playing the basketball throughout the season has definitely helped me. I only averaged 36 minutes a the game throughout the regular season. I knew in the playoffs it could bump up, and I was ready for it. Throughout this series I averaged 40-plus minutes and felt like the same 36 minutes I played during the regular season. |
| N/A |
| Same thing. Treat every game like it's its own. That's why this is a series. You see the mistakes we made in Game 1, the things that we can control, and you come out with a better mindset and try to get Game 2. We're not worried about it. It's the series. That's it. We learn from our mistakes and come up with a better game plan. We can't give a team like that 31 second-chance points. We had so many turnovers. We can't allow a team like that Next question. We can lose by 100. This is the playoffs. This is only one game. It's just one game. You have to sit in and see how bad you played for a couple of days. Just resting our bodies a little bit. We can use a couple of days off, to make a couple of adjustments. They're up 1-0. It's our job to come back in Game 2. We come out and play. that game got away from us. . We have to go out and do the small things. We can't get get outrebounded by them. We've been outrebounded four straight games. It's not been draining. I planned on playing long this season. I knew everything I was going to cover this season as far as on the court and off the court. It hasn't been bad at all. She's very important. Not only to the world, but to this city. We'll take a back seat to Oprah. We don't have a problem with that. I've guarded five positions. Whatever it takes to win. I have no problem with that. |
| You have to adjust somewhat. Of course. I can't say we don't have to. Because you have different guys out there that does different things. You just kind of play it by game. Play it by series. And the lineup that coach puts out there, you float with it. We've had enough minutes with every lineup as far as who has been the starting point guard and who has been the starting center, we can be comfortable with it when it happens. Absolutely. We have to do a better job of rebounding. Fourth straight time we've gotten outrebounded by the Bulls in the regular season. That's where they're very dominant. We did a great job of holding them on forced attempts. 38% from the floor. They got up to 42, 43%. We allowed them 13 to 21. Me and D-Wade is athletic enough. We're aware enough to see where the ball is coming off the rim, or first coming off, to go get it. At this point Absolutely. That's one thing we can learn from, the regular season, the postseason. To learn from our mistakes from the previous game and then move on. We've done that. We're looking forward to the challenge. We're excited about tomorrow's opportunity to be here and try to steal home court. That's just energy. You can't practice hustle plays and getting on the floor and getting loose balls and things like that. Nobody practices those. Joakim doesn't practice diving on the floor on loose balls or outworking. You don't practice those. It's in you. You have to be determined to go get it. Is it a pride thing? It's competitive. This is the biggest stage. If you don't have it by this point, you're in the wrong business. I've been down before. Absolutely. I know it means a lot more to him personally playing a meaningful series in his hometown. At the end of the day, even though the fans boo him, we all know they still love him. You have to respect a kid coming from the inner city from Chicago that's done the things that he's done as a professional on and off the court. We all know how they really feel. But they have to root for their team. Whoever is wearing that jersey, that's who they're going to root for. Whoever is not, they're going to boo. We understand. |
| Those guys are trying to seize the moment just as much as we are. They have a game plan and we have a game plan. Whichever team executes at a high level close to 48 minutes is going to win. We talked about that too on the plane. We were watching the film. This is the first time the lineup we envisioned at some point in the season finally had happened with us, Mike Miller, UD and CB out on the court at the same time. It worked. We haven't been able to ease into anything this year, right? I didn't bail our team out. We're all in it together. I made a few plays down the stretch. If we didn't continue to get stops defensively and give ourselves an opportunity to get in that position, we wouldn't be 1-1 now. It isn't a bailout. This is a 48-minute game. I made a few shots, but the screen that Mike Bibby set for me to get open on the three, you know, the movement that we had, for me to be able to get open in those plays. It's not a bailout. It's about teamwork. Heat years, 50. Like 29 on his birthday. There's no time for exhaling. We're in the Conference Finals. We understand this team is a very hard-working team. They're going to try to steal home court back. We've done some great things on our home court in this postseason, and we're looking to do that. Our fans deserve it. We're going to go out here and give it 110% the same way we played in Chicago Game 2 and see what happens with the final result. Just try to keep a body in front of them. Try to make him stay out on the perimeter. He's so quick and so fast, he's going to break your defense down. When he does, our bigs did a great job of being there for us and having a high hand. When he hit the floor, had to go to the free-throw line to shoot two free-throws or making him take some contested lay-ups. We did a good job. He missed a few shots. You have to just try to stay in front of him as much as possible. It's easier said than done. But we have the personnel and the lineup changes that we just throw different bodies at him and continue to try to keep him off balance. We knew that our third quarters haven't been the greatest in the postseason. We knew in order to even the series, we had to come out with a sense of urgency in the third quarter, and we did that. We got up by as much as 11 in the third quarter that gave us enough lead that when it was tied and we couldn't make a shot in the fourth, a couple of balls go here, a couple of balls go there, we were able to have enough of a lead in the third quarter where we could manage. That's what it's all about. We got out and we changed our halftime, our warmup thing. Usually guys we play so many minutes, we use it as downtime. We got out and got a good warmup and came out with a sense of urgency in the third quarter. It's improved over the years. When you first -- of course, my rookie year you don't -- after game 30, you are about ready to quit. You hit that rookie wall. I played 27 games in the season in high school. It took me a couple of years to get into NBA-game shape. My first two years I didn't make the postseason, so after a few years in the postseason, I started to do more to try to enhance my wind. I've been able to be in some pretty good shape where I can play 40 to 45 minutes in a postseason game and be okay when the next game comes. At this point, it's the postseason. Whatever it takes. If I'm able to be out there and I'm not hurting the team by being out there playing 40 minutes or 45 minutes, I'll be out there for my team. I did a lot of swimming this past off season, just try to take a lot of the grind off your legs when you're in the pool. I do pilates and yoga to stay in front of the curve. I feel like it's helping me. Does it work for everybody? I don't know. I'm not a guru on how to be in the best condition. Let me sit here and tell you that. But it works for me. It's tough to say about a curve. Like I said, pilates classes, yoga classes, I did a little swimming, auditoriums back home. It was back home. I can't tell you exactly where it's at. It's a secret place. We hold a secret society over there. We don't tell too many people. Yes, the same with the swimming. I mean, I didn't want to miss those ones earlier in the season. Of course not. You want to come through for your teammates anytime you're in those situations. When you're put in those situations time after time after time, you're going to miss some. Ultimately, if you have confidence in yourself, if your teammates continue to have confidence in you, you're going to come through for them. And you're going to come through for yourself. Those shots result in a win, of course it's gratifying. I can't say it's not. I just have to keep it going. We have a true professional team. Look at Dampier, the situation. He started a lot of games for us. E. House has played some big games for us, made big shots for us. And those guys are not particularly playing right now. But their spirit, they come in every day at practice and help us get better and play like it's a game situation. When you have true professionals, it's not about the I, it's about the we. And they understand that. We respect that to the fullest, being in that situation. Man, if you had to play back-to-back in the postseason, no way I could play 45 minutes a game. It would never happen. With the time that you get off, it definitely helps the body to recover. But also at the same time, it's whatever it takes, honestly, in the postseason. I feel like personally if I'm not out there hurting the team, I'm out there playing big minutes, I feel I should be on the floor. If I'm out there and dogging and not playing at a high level defensively and I'm not helping the team and I'm playing these big minutes, I should come out and sit on the bench. Me just being in good shape and me continuing to -- when I'm on the court, just trying to help the team as best -- the best way possible and go from there. Yeah. We do a good job of mixing it. You don't want to stay off your legs too much. You don't want to become sluggish. We got out a little bit yesterday. Had lunch. Got into the city a little bit. At night you just try to get off your legs as much as possible. It's a fine line, because you don't want to get out of rhythm. We come in here and get work in during the day, and then we try to relax during the night. I don't know. We're just worried about Game 3, which is tomorrow night. We come out with the same intensity that we did in Game 2, we give ourselves a good chance to win. It happens all day. It happens all the time. You dream about it, hosting that trophy up, the title, seeing the confetti rain. You have to have that vision. If you don't have that vision, I don't know exactly what you're being a part of this postseason for. I have that vision all the time. Even when I'm awake or I'm sleeping. No, that's his. I'm good. If it takes home court, that's what it's about. They talk about they haven't lost two games in a row. So we're going to protect home court, and try to come out with a win. We'll see what happens. Something has to give. I don't know. It's unexplainable. Do you have any tattoos? You ask me how my tattoo feels, you can't explain that either. You have to be under the needle. Under the boards, it's a grind out there. You have to be physically and mentally strong to want to be out there and come up with the rebound. There are times you're down there battling, and you still don't get the rebound. You have to be physical for one, and you have to be mentally strong as well. |
| I was seeing two defenders all night. Two or three defenders. I came into the game knowing that they were going to try to load up on myself and D-Wade. So I just changed my game plan tonight, be more of a facilitator. If I needed to get it going offensively, I could. The great thing about it CB had it going. When we have someone going on our team, we continue to give the ball to him and continue to feed off their energy offensively. And he brought it home for us tonight. I think defensively what we've done all year has worked. We have a system, and we make adjustments at times. But we stick to our guns. We know defensively when we're active and guys are on the string and if one guy gets beat, another guy is there to help him, we're very good. So Derrick Rose is a great player. He's going to find creases. He's going to get his shots. That's what great players do. We try to make it tough for him. Try to make it tough for not only him but his teammates, also, make them take tough contested shots. It's a long series still. Through three games we found a way to just play our defense and not dictate our defense on what they do. We just play our game. They were great tonight. Bibby knocking down two huge threes for us in the third. And I think 'Rio (Chalmers) coming in and having his hand. He also got a strip, a big steal for us. He was solid. Derrick Rose is a great player. Our point guards just try to stay in front of him as much as possible, trying to contain him. They're doing a great job so far. Our point guards are very key to our team. When they play big and make shots and also defend like they are doing, we're a pretty good team. I mean, I think they're looking at it how we looked at it after Game 1, saying if we can walk out of here with a split, then we feel comfortable going home. That's what they're thinking. Coming into our home building, we have to continue to give our fans what they want. That's wins. We come in with the same mindset as we had Game 2 and Game 3. Defending, executing offensively, we give ourselves a good chance. It's a very good rebounding team. We've done a great job of just trying to lower those offensive rebounds and second-chance points each game from Game 1 to Game 2 to tonight. And if we do that, we give ourselves a good chance. We're looking forward to it. We're playing desperate too. Both teams have been playing hard. We're just as desperate as they is to win another game at home. I mean, two or three games, I would say. We just bring it to them with a game plan. Guys are finally understanding how important every possession is. This being the semifinals. We were playing great defense in the Boston series at times and the Philly series at times. But I think these games consistently, this is the best we've played. We have to keep it going. No, I do push hard all my 44 minutes. I don't go out there and dog any of my time on the floor. But I think it's the luxury of having guys that can make plays besides myself. D-Wade can make plays, CB can make plays. Udonis made plays for us last night -- I mean late in the fourth. We have guys that can go get it. That's the luxury of our team. I'm happy to have it. I don't know. Just trying to play hard and win basketball games. That's a question for D-Rose I guess. I like to play any style. Any time you are compared to a great -- to a hall-of-famer, to a multi-ring championship player like Magic coverage it's humbling, honestly. I can play any style. I try to take what the defense gives me and go with the flow of the game. That's what we pride ourselves on. Especially the fourth quarter. We feel like if we go into the lead in the fourth quarter it's going to be tough to beat us because we pride ourselves on defense in the fourth. And we consistently could get stops and get stops and get stops, we have enough guys that can make shots on the other end of the court. We're able to break the game open. That's what we've been able to do the last two games, game 2 and Game 3. We got stops and got stops and got stops, and then we just consistently worked the offense and made a few shots and was able to bust open the game. Emotions get played. I'm not saying with Joakim -- I'm speaking about that was right. I don't think it was right what he said. But emotions does get said throughout the course of the game when you get emotional. We know there's going to be microphones. We know there's going to be cameras around. You have to be cautious about what you say. You try to control your emotions as much as possible, even though it's a very intense game. But we know. It comes with the territory. You get the great press, you get the bad press when you do something wrong. As role models to kids and as role models to people who watch us every day, we understand that. We have to own up to it. He's a good player. Let's not take away from the fact the guy is a max player. He got max money. He has done some great things in the postseason. If you look at his postseason numbers, he's played extremely well. We knew he wanted to get out there for his team. Eight rebounds and things like that. He played a great game last night. Offensive rebounds, made big shots for his team. We knew that, we talked about it coming into Game 3, he was going to be more aggressive. Derrick Rose was going to be more aggressive. We have to make sure we key in on them and shut down the other guys too. Their team is a little bit different than ours. They have two max players. I was the only max player on my team. They got some great complementary players as well. You know, I can relate. I can definitely relate, being -- having the coach of the year and getting the MVP and then going to get out and go against people who have multiple guys that can go against you and break you down. I can relate to what he's going through right now. They have a great team. I'm not about to sit here and say this team is down and out. That's a great team. We are looking forward to the challenge. We know they're going to bring it in Game 4. Yeah, man. I'm hurting a little bit right now, but I'll be all right for Game 4. It's the camera -- you guys -- the media and camera guys are too close on the floor, and there ain't no room for comfort. Makes us a very tough team to beat when he's aggressive like that. Inside and outside. We always say he's the key to our team. He's a relieve guy for us. Anytime things are going slower, me and D-Wade aren't getting anything in the perimeter, not getting anything in the paint, we can always go back to him and know we're going to get a good shot. Number three guy, as far as the shooting percentage in the series, behind D-Wade and -- who was it? Yeah, Gasol. Those other guys. CB is . He's doing a great job. Just capitalizing on the attention we get. He's making them pay. No, nobody messes with CB. You leave a guy like that alone. You have to worry about the quiet guys always. First you missed the block on that play. D-Wade coming weak side and getting that block. It's whatever it takes at that point. Joakim got a hand on it. I wanted to try to fight him as much as possible. I was able to strip the ball away from him. Dove on the ball. The ball was headed out of bounds. Once I tipped it and I saw it rolling and I saw UD, I already knew we had the ball. Nobody is going to take the ball from him. That was just a great all-around team possession for us. It came at a big moment in the game in overtime. First of all, the two dunks were great. There's no point guard in our league I think -- besides, you have Russell Westbrook, he makes plays like that. But D-Rose on the break, he goes to a jump-stop and finish it with an and-one and then he breaks down our defense, split pick-and-roll and he gets in there against probably our best shot-blocker in Joel Anthony, and dunks the ball for an and-one. He's a special player. Those plays are spectacular. That's why he is who he is. What was the second question? With a player like that, you just try to keep him out of the paint as best as you can. He was attacking our defense a lot, getting to the free-throw line. The last shot all you could do is contest. There's not too many guys that are going to block his shot on the jumpshot. But I just tried to make it hard on him, get the contest. I made him take a tough one. As far as guarding him throughout the game, I take pride defensively. It doesn't matter who it is, if it's Derrick Rose or starting off on Luol, it's whatever it takes for myself and for our team. If that means me playing extensive minutes guarding D-Rose, then I'll do it. I don't have a problem with that. I play both sides of the floor. I love defense much more than I do offensively. I just take pride on that side of the floor. We were able to get enough stops. It's great when you have guys behind you that also love to play defense, also. So you know you got help if you get beat. I got beat on the baseline, D-Wade got the spectacular block. So you take pride on that side of the floor and it pays off for you. Defense is our staple. We know in order for us to win basketball games we have to get stops and we have to play at a high level. That's all we're about. We know offensively -- at times we have rough stretches where we don't score, but we give ourselves a great chance to win every game because we defend. And that's what it's about. I mean, we're looking at a Game 5 as a must-win. We're going to every game saying it's a must-win for us. We take it upon that challenge, going back into the madhouse. We know it's going to be extremely loud. They're going to feed off their fans. We're going to try to play as desperate as we've played the last three games. It's been since '06 for D-Wade, '07 for myself since we've been to The Finals and it's one game away. We're not taking anything for granted. We're just continuing to play our game and take one game at a time. It starts with Game 5. We have a family bond. Drake has always been supportive of myself, and everything that he do I'm a supporter of his. So it goes beyond what you guys see at the game. We talk on a regular -- everything, about family and everything. What we have is a real family. It's not just because we are successful what we do. We really care about one another on a day-to-day basis. Anytime you get a friend that can come and support you in what you do, I really respect that. He has a busy schedule. I respect that. Anytime I get some free time, I try to come and support him as well. Absolutely. Tonight he just played free. Everything that he gave us tonight was what we always expected out of him. He didn't think about it tonight. Every time he caught the ball -- what we've been telling him all year, "when you catch the ball, just shoot it." He's probably the only guy on our team that can shoot any shot he wants to. Even me, D-Wade and CB, Coach gets on us sometimes if we take ill-advised shots and things like that. Mike Miller is a guy who can shoot any shot he wants. Tonight he did that. He caught the ball, he shot threes, made a pull-up, and then what he's always been doing when he gets minutes, he rebounds the ball extremely well. He had nine rebounds for us and they were all key. Like I said before, that lineup we talked about this summer, myself and D-Wade and CB, Udonis and Mike is something we always envisioned, and it's coming together at the right time. That's a great last question. |
| 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. |
| First of all, I'm honored to be here again. Now with this franchise, it's an honor. As a player we worked hard. I worked hard individually to get to this point. I had a lot of visions of being at this moment and the now it's hit me. Being on the floor and seeing the championship logos, The Finals logos, I'm very excited. I got an opportunity to see the trophy yesterday and take pictures with it. Hopefully we can bring it home. Yes. They make you do everything with it. Besides take it home. I mean, it's great satisfaction to be here. But we have a lot of work to do still. It's been a great ride so far throughout this postseason. We played some great teams starting with Philadelphia, then going with Boston and then Chicago. Three great teams. And being able to be in this moment, we've all had a vision where we all worked hard, from the start of training camp on the Air Force base. And to be here is very humbling, it's very satisfying at this point. We want more. I don't know. That's something for you guys to break down and look at the numbers and the everything. I'm hungry for one. That was my goal coming into this league. It's been my goal. I've seen the vision over the last few years. I haven't had an opportunity to get there. I played in The Finals before; didn't win it. I got to the Eastern Conference Finals before against Orlando; lost. Had some years where we were the best team in the league in Cleveland and we didn't get back to that point. I have had this vision and now I'm back here and I'm looking to change the outcome. I feel different because I'm older, more experienced. I'm a better player at this point. You know, going into the Finals with the Spurs, I said it at the end of that Finals, I said they were a better team than us. It would have been a lot harder to digest it if we had came into a Finals with a team that we felt like wasn't better than us, didn't execute better than us, wasn't a veteran club and would have beat us. I thought the Spurs were a better team than us and took advantage of all our weaknesses. They've been to that position before. Right now I feel more comfortable because I feel like we have a veteran ballclub and we have three guys that have had rings, Eddie House and D-Wade and Udonis. We have guys that have been in the postseason year after year after year. When you have that experience, when you have guys that can make plays and take over games, you like your chances. We don't know. We don't really get into it too much. You know, we've got a lot of flack this year over mostly because of myself. And we've tried to use that as motivation every day we get on the basketball court. But just play the game of basketball. That's all we can do is play the game of basketball at a high level. Play Miami Heat basketball. That's defending at a high level with speed and athleticism. And then sharing the ball and being the team offensively. As far as this villain thing and things like that, we don't -- it is what it is. People are going to say whatever they want about us. We just got to continue to go out there and just play our game. You hear it all the time. Always say, to go down as one of the greats, you have to put a ring on your resume. I mean, as an individual, you have those dreams and you have those goals. You want to be a champion. Do you care as much as what people say about your career as far as your body of work? I don't know. I think you look at Dirk's numbers, they speak for itself over his 13-year career. You look at my numbers so far in my eight-year career, you know, it kind of speaks for itself as well. As individuals, myself and Dirk, we both are competitors, and we both know the ultimate feeling is to win, is to win a championship. Not for whatever everybody else think, but for the people we have around us. That's our teammates, our organization, our families to be able to have that moment and have that feeling. Well, I mean, it all depends what type of guy you are. For me personally it's driven me. It's gotten me better. I go back and look at some of those games, I look at myself and say, you are a much better player than you were then. That comes from playing games, playing postseason games, losing, winning. But I took from that Finals that I just need to become better, not only as a basketball player, but as a leader on and off the court. Just use it as fuel. Is it going to happen the next year? It can happen to you individually where you become a better player. But does it always get you back to the Finals? It doesn't. There's a lot of guys that have been in The Finals, and lost and never got back. You look at Allen Iverson who got to the Finals and took the 76ers to The Finals. He was great every year, every year after that, but he was never able to get back. I'm humbled. I'm blessed that I'm able to get back to this point and to be able to redeem myself for that time when I was in The Finals against the Spurs. I'm looking forward to guarding anybody. I don't care about guarding anybody. I mean, that's what I do. I'm a defensive guy. I'm not sitting up here and saying I can stop Dirk. I don't think no one can single handedly stop Dirk. He's a shot maker. One of the best shot makers we've ever had in this league. Whoever Coach puts me on or whoever I need to take the challenge on, it doesn't matter to me. As far as what? I don't know. Dirk is a great player. There are a lot of great players that have played in this league. Dirk is one heck of a player. The things that he's able to do out on the floor, the shot-making ability, everyone said, you forced me to a bad shot. Really it's not a comfort shot for him. It looks like a bad shot if you don't know basketball or you don't know his game. One-legged fadeaways off the glass and pull-up jumpers off the dribble, pump fake, pump fake, fadeaway, things like that. He's a great player. Ultimately for me it was about being in the position to compete year after year after year. And not only being able to do that, but being able to do it with one of my best friends, one of the best players we have in this league today in Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh. I know what this league is all about, about having multiple guys on the court that can dominate a game. With teaming up with these guys I feel like we can compete for a lot of years to come. We've proven a lot of people wrong so far. We have a lot of work to do still. Ultimately that's what it's about. Me being happy and also being able to compete at the highest level. That's what there league is about. This league is about. No, I mean whatever. Whatever it takes for our team. You know, if I need to be on Terry or anyone on their team, I try to take the challenge. Our defense is pretty good. It's never me just guarding someone individually. But I do take the challenge on any individual matchup that I'm against. And tonight happened to be Terry mostly in the second half. We needed to lock in. We came out in the third quarter not paying attention to detail. Gave them an open three. DeShawn Stevenson hit an open three. Dirk hit an open shot at the top of the key. We just weren't paying attention to detail about how we were going to defend this team coming into the game. Once we slowed down and got back into what we know, what our strong point is, and that's getting stops, we were able to get out, D-Wade was able to get an and-one. Make another shot and we made a run. Defense. I think in order for us to win basketball games, we have to defend and we have to get stops, and our offense will speak for itself when we continue to get stops. I think for me going into the fourth quarter, I know it's winning time. That's when the game is won. So I got to try to dominate my individual matchup defensively, and then try to execute as best as possible. Try to get good looks, not turn the ball over. And we did a good job of doing that tonight. We got stops and we executed on the offensive end. D-Wade said that to me. Congratulated me after the game on my first Finals victory. I mean, it feels good because it's the first game. And we played well as a team. We got a lot of work to do. We'll come in with the same mindset on Thursday, and looking forward to this challenge once again that's in front of us. It's one in the books. We're excited about this game. Tomorrow we prepare for Game 2, and obviously there's ways we can get better. They play a lot of zone, and the zone is to pack the paint, keep our drivers out of the paint, myself and D-Wade. And dare us to shoot threes. I think our bench came in and did a great job, Rio (Chalmers), Mike Miller did a great job against that zone, knocking shots down. We needed that boost off the bench. We know how strong their bench is, and our bench matched them tonight. And they played extremely well. When they were in the zone, they knocked down shots. Rio gave us a big boost. Mike Miller gave us a big boost, and everyone contributed. Pretty much. Yeah, dare me to shoot, that's pretty much gone. I think people will still live with keeping myself and keeping D-Wade on the perimeter, but it's just my confidence. I put a lot of hard work into it, and understanding that you got to be a two-way player in this league. You have to be able to shoot the ball, you have to be able to drive and do other things to not only get yourself involved, but get your teammates involved. Tonight once again I shot the ball extremely well from the outside, but more importantly, it helped our team get a win. That's what it's all about. I think it was left unsaid. They understand I've been in some big games. I've been in the Finals. Didn't win a ballgame in '07, but I've been in big games before. So basically it's the same conversation we had before every game. Let's get ready to go out and continue to improve as a team, as individuals, and help lead this team to a victory. He's right-handed. He'll be all right. Dirk is right-handed. He shoots the ball extremely well. That left hand is just a guide hand for all shooters. We all know that. It won't affect him. He's still going to be great. He's still Dirk. I mean, just to answer about D-Wade, when D-Wade is dribbling the ball, dribbling it and he gets in his rhythm, and pulls up for a three, once that went down, I knew he was feeling really good. We're rhythm players. When we get in a good rhythm, we get in a good groove, we feel like every shot we take is going to go in. Those are two cases of it. We always said that. We always said we would figure it out. We always believed in our abilities. We always believed as a team. Everything we went through, the pitfalls and the downs was going to turn and make its course. We just stuck with it and understood it. We have guys that have closed games before. We just had to figure out how to do it together. We've done it by ourselves. CB has closed games in the past. D-Wade has closed games in the past. I've closed games in the past. What we had to figure out is how do we do it together to maximize our team potential. Those pitfalls early in the season has helped us get to where we are now in the postseason. It's not like we have big deficits at halftime. I seen the stats last night, down two points to Chicago, three points here, two points to Boston, one point to Boston. It's not like it's a huge deficit that we're trying to come back from 12 or 14 points down. Usually it's just good basketball at this point in time. We happened to be down. We've played I think -- if I'm doing my math right, we've played 16 games. So we have had ten other games we wasn't trailing. We just got to continue to play our game and not worry about if we're trailing or not. We don't want to trail. We don't want to trail at all throughout the whole game, if it's possible. But we just got to maintain our focus. Like I said, it comes from failure throughout the season. Having games where we felt like we could or should have won games late in games and we just didn't execute. I said last night I was used to closing out games in the last seven years. CB was used to closing out games and D-Wade was used to closing out games. One thing was figuring out how to do it together. We were used to doing it individually early on in the season. Me making a play or CB making a play or D-Wade making a play going back to our last few years. Once we figured out how we were going to do it together for the better of the team, we started to close games out, figure things out, figure out certain sets that would work for us in late-game situations and go from there. That's what it's about. We understand that Game 1 is over. We played well, but there were some things we could have done better. We now move our focus to Game 2 and approach that game like it's our last as well. We continue to come into our home court and try to protect home court. We understand Dallas if comes in here and does a great job of stealing one of our games, then they feel -- they forget about Game 1 as well. So we have to come in with the same mindset. Huh? What do you mean "cool"? He cool. There you go. It was great. I had an unbelievable meeting with not only Pat but Micky and Nick Arison and Coach Spo and Zo came. It was a great meeting. Basically gave me the blueprint about how this organization is ran, both on the court and off the court. The great thing I got out of that is about how important family is. I'm a big believer in that. Always have been throughout my life. I appreciate that, and also the product they can put on the floor as well. With D-Wade and also at the time they were talking about they could get CB as well and another free agent. I thought it was the right move. No, not at that point. I definitely seen something at that point when we were all talking about the players in this organization, I definitely have something to look forward to. I think it was just a big shot, period. It was a close game at that point in The Garden. To be able to make that shot and tie the game up, it was a huge shot. It definitely was a shot that we needed at the time, and I was able to knock it down. And I just kind of just took that momentum from that game, and moved on to Game 5. Now I'm here, made a big shot in Game 2 in Chicago and a few key shots in Game 5 also in Chicago from behind the arc. And then last night I was able to make a few, also. It's not my game, though. I'm not a three-point shooter. I'm an attack guy. If a defense is going to allow me to sit and measure up a three-pointer, I'm going to take it. I have that much confidence in my shooting ability. I'm an attack-first guy. That's what I'm best at. I don't care how many threes I make, I understand that my game is in the paint. Yes. It was a bunch of them. I don't know. I guess reading the situation. Taking what the defense gives me. They played a lot of zone. So in the zone it is to keep your perimeter attackers out on the perimeter. I was able to make a couple just swing, swing situations where the defender ran at D-Wade or ran at Mike Bibby and I was sitting in the corner by myself and I was able to hit a couple. I made a couple off the dribble. One at the end of the third and one right before the end of the third. I think like a minute on the clock I was able to pull up for a three. Just try to take what the defense gives me, and not force anything against this defense. They play so many styles, from man to zone to matchup and things like that. You have to kind of be patient and go with it. Just play our defense. This is the most challenging offense we've played in this postseason, because of the firepower that they have offensively. They have multiple guys that can shoot, multiple guys that can put the ball on the floor and create for others. They have guys in the paint that also can create in Shawn Marion and Tyson Chandler, who gets into the paint, and makes some things happen around the rim. It's a challenge for all of us. We come out with a game plan, Coach Spo and the coaching staff gives us a game plan and we go from there. Kind of just use our instincts, our athleticism and our communication defensively to try to read and react. Just seizing the moment. Understanding this is a great opportunity for not only myself but for our team to seize the moment and try to take full advantage of it. Am I going to make every shot or close every game out from now on? I hope so. I don't know. But I do put myself in the position, I do have the confidence that if I have the ball in my hands or if I get the ball in my hands that I can make a play, not only for myself but for my teammates to help us win that game. We're a really good team down the stretch now. It has a lot to do with our team as far as trust, it has a lot to do with myself and D-Wade and just the position Coach has put us in in late games to have us have an ability to come down the stretch and make shots for our team. I guess it's a confidence of closing games out, but it's also the trust you have for your teammates. When they look at you and see you need to close a game out. No matter if you fail, they look for you again to do it again. |
| It was no celebration at all. I was excited about the fact that he hit a big shot, and we went up 15. The same thing we've done over the course of the season. There was no celebration at all. We knew we had seven minutes to go still to close out the game. As far as celebration, that word has been used with us all year. But we knew how much time was left in the game still. I think offensively we just weren't in a good rhythm. But it's not even -- offensively we've been out of rhythm before. At the end of the day, we hang our hats on our defense. I think they were 1-for-10 the first four or five minutes in the first part of the fourth quarter. It was 88-73; end up scoring 22 points in the last seven minutes. They only scored 24 in the whole fourth. We're up 15. If they go on a 12-0 run for the rest of the game, if we don't score another basket, we still win by three. Defensively we just have to be more in tune and not allow a great team, a great offensive team to get as many great looks as they did down the stretch. Jason Kidd had an open three. Jason Terry had a leak-out lay-up. He also had a corner jumper. Dirk 90/90 he hit a wide-open three. That's not our defense at all. We have to do a better job and be more in tune. It's a different mindset, of course. It's a ballgame now. With the series tied 1-1, we're looking forward to the challenge. It's going to be a difficult challenge for us but we're looking forward to it. We're a confident bunch. We play great on the road. It's going to be a hostile environment. Their fans and team are going to bring everything they have. We have to come out with it all. Play as close to 48 minutes as possible on both ends. Absolutely. We're a team that's confident. Every time we have had a pitfall, we've figured out how to bounce back. Right now we have another one. As a veteran ballclub and a team that's been through a lot, we understand how important this next one is with Game 3 being in Dallas and we look forward to the challenge. It's not going to affect us for Game 3. It hurts right now because it's right now. We're competitors. We want to win the game. We feel like we have a 15-point lead in the fourth quarter, that our defense will prevail. That's how much confidence we have in our defense. It hurts now, but we'll be fine. I don't feel like our confidence will be down going into Game 3. We'll be back to square one and figure out how to win the game. No, I don't think it's an issue. We were asked about it after Game 1, I said it would be a non-issue. He's a great scorer. He understands he can use both hands. He got the left-hand lay-up to tie the game up at 90, and then the game-winner going left once again. So as you can tell, it has no effect on his left hand at all, if any. They did. They did a great job of playing two on the ball. They used Tyson Chandler to come off pick-and-rolls, Tyson Chandler or Dirk. They blitzed me and D-Wade's pick-and-roll. Something different. Something we can go to the film to figure out how to exploit that or do a better job of executing later in the game. They didn't do that till the fourth quarter. They picked up the aggression and it got us out of the flow of the offense where we were taking shots at the end of the shot clock. I know I took a few fadeaway threes at the end of the shot clock because we couldn't get into our offense. It's something we'll work on and be better on in Game 3. That's part of the game. We're an emotional team. When we make plays, we can congratulate one another. I don't see why this whole thing has been blown out of proportion. I just look at it in the case of I think -- I've seen Dallas go on plenty of runs before. You know, if JT hits a three and they make a big run, if he runs down the court doing the whole wings expanded, do we count that as a celebration as well? I just think everything gets blown out of proportion when the Miami Heat does things. It's been our motto, it's been our make-up all year. In the playoffs it's a win or a loss. However it comes by, it's a win or a loss. We've moved on from Game 2, seen the mistakes we've made. Seen some of the great things we've done as well. It's a win or loss. The series is tied 1-1. We never get too high or too low in the series. We haven't gotten too high or low in the regular season as well. We move on to the next challenge and go from there. It's very important. We understand that. We are coming out with that mindset, like we had in Game 1 or Game 2. The same mindset. It starts defensively. We have to be in tune as close to 48 minutes as possible, especially versus this team who shoots the ball extremely well, who plays extremely well, especially at home. But it's a sense of urgency. That's the only way we have approached games. We've never went to a game saying this isn't a must-win for us or it's not a sense of urgency. That's the only way we know how to play, when we feel like we're desperate. It's the only way we approach games. Right. I think it was a few minor breakdowns we don't have. And once those minor breakdowns happened, it allowed them to get into a rhythm. Even though we played great defense in some of the later possessions, they were in a comfort zone at that point. We gave up two wide-open threes without contest to J-Kidd and to Dirk. A wide open lay-up to JT off a missed shot, a missed three, and he got a wide open lay-up. We did a lot of things uncharacteristic. It happened. I don't know why we couldn't score on offense. At the end of the day there's been times we haven't been able to score for quarters on offense, but we've been able to get the stops. That's the make-up of our team. We understand no matter what happens offensively we have to be in tune. We lost our edge. I don't think offensively -- after rewatching the film, we got into a lot of great sets. Besides two or three possessions out of our last 14 possessions, it was pretty good. We had a few shots, I missed a lay-up at the rim. Mario Chalmers missed a wide-open lay-up. We ran some offense where Chris Bosh got in the post. He mishandled it out of bounds. UD got an offensive rebound with a minute left and mishandled it, saved it and they got a lay-up to tie the game. So we had some really good possessions. They just didn't go down. At the end of the day, that's not where we lost the game. Like I said before, our team -- there has been times we haven't been able to score offensively, but it hasn't stopped us from keeping that same concentration or even more of a concerted effort to play defensively in the game. A little bit of both. I know I'm excited for the game tomorrow. It hurt. We had time to let it hurt us as much as it could yesterday after the game. But today is a new day. And we're back and focused. We're a confident bunch. Me personally, I'm looking forward to the challenge. It's going to be fun. I think Shawn Marion has done a great job. Especially offensively. He's picked up his game offensively. Hanging around the rim, getting some lay-ups, getting some tip-backs, playing around the rim. His activity throughout the first two games has been pretty good. I take it upon myself to not only lock in at the beginning, but whoever is on him to lock in a little bit more. Because he's been very effective. I don't feel like it's one guy in this league that can stop me one-on-one. There's always a defense that's looking at me when I have the ball. He's the guy that's guarding me, but there's no one-on-one guy that can guard me. Obviously, we look at it as we have enough guys not only can guard Jason Terry, guard Dirk. It's a team thing. It's not LeBron versus Shawn Marion, LeBron versus Dirk Nowitzki or LeBron versus JT or DeShawn Stevenson versus Dwyane Wade. It's not about that. It's about the team. Even though you have a one-on-one matchup on the court, there's a team defense that's put behind it. So if I get caught on him, it's not like I'm playing him one-on-one. We have a team defense and guys help each other. That's how you become successful in this league by being able to have a back line behind you. When you guard someone as great as Dirk or as great as JT is, you have to have a back line. It's never one-on-one. It's not a one-on-one thing. We get caught up on the one-on-one matchups a lot. There's always a defense that's behind it. I think personally I do have to be more aggressive in the paint. Six free-throws in two games -- I do that in my sleep in one game. So that's not me. So I'm going to make a concerted effort to be more aggressive to try to get to the rim, create some more opportunities for myself and my teammates. I understand that. But I think we just had a few -- they extended their defense late in the game. They did some things defensively that they hadn't done throughout the first two games all the way. They started to blitz me, D-Wade's pick-and-rolls, a lot of our sets kept us on the perimeter. We didn't get into our sets early enough to give us more time. So we had to take contested long-range threes. I think I took two. D-Wade actually took one. So I think the best thing about our team and the best thing about me and D-Wade individually, we get an opportunity to watch the film and know when that happens again, we know how to attack it. And to not settle as much or to get the defense moving a little bit more where we can create not only better shots for ourselves but for our team, and we're not forcing things at the end of the shot clock. |
| It's all about trusting your teammates. D-Wade, we ran a two-three pick-and-roll. They put two on the ball. D-Wade hit me first. I had Tyson Chandler closing on me. I saw CB wide open. I don't care if he missed 15 in a row, he was wide open and that's his sweet spot. He was able to knock it down. It's the trust we have in each other's ability, no matter what the point of the game is at. It's not even that. We play our defense. This is the toughest offense we've played all year as far as how many guys they put on the floor that can make plays. Not only for themselves, but for others. Unbelievable shooting team. And they make you stay in tune. You can never relax or they make you pay. Our defense always tries to extend offenses further than where they usually start. That's just our defense. It has nothing to do about them not being a paint presence or anything like that. It's just our defense. That's how we played all postseason all year. I think you're concentrating on one side of the floor. All you're looking at is the stat sheet. Honestly, I'm a two-way player. Since D-Wade had it going offensively, so we allow him to handle the ball, bring it on offensively. You should watch the film again and see what I did defensively. You'll ask me a better question tomorrow. Like D-Wade said, we had all the confidence in the world in our defensive scheme. UD wanted that matchup in Game 2. So we knew when he got this matchup, he was going to make Dirk take a tough shot. He made that shot before. He will make it again. At least we just make him work for it. Make him take a turn-around jumper. UD stayed in front of him and it rimmed out. It was a huge stop for our team. It's just we're teammates. At this point there's no room to hold anything back. There's nine or eight days left in the season. I think our friendship allows us to don't care about that moment. It's living in the moment. That situation he had every right to say what he had to say to me. As a competitor, you love when guys challenge you. He challenged me in the locker room at halftime. He challenged me on the court. As a competitor, like I said, I respect that. Something that -- I don't know if my kids are asleep right now. No, my kids stay up late. It didn't look well. All game you could see it watering. You could see him messing with it. Just trying to keep a tissue during time-outs to keep it padded. But he fought through it. And then you definitely respect that. CB is really hard on himself. He's his own critic. He knows when he's not playing well. As teammates we try to keep him upbeat, let him understand how important he is to this team. He's grown. Not only just this series but throughout the whole postseason. This is the furthest he's ever played in a postseason. So he's excited, and he's done some great things for our team. He's going to continue to do great things for our team. We always say he's the most important player to our team. No, I did win. We won. (Laughter). That's all that it's about. You know me, anybody that knows me throughout the years, all I care about is the W. No matter if I'm scoring. I'm not just a scoring guy. I've got a lot of points in my career. I have had some teammates who have given me great confidence and ability to go out there and score a lot of points. But I've done other things. I don't have to score points to be effective. Not only did Chris Bosh make the game-winning shot, but D-Wade had a hockey assist. I got the assist to CB and Udonis Haslem set the screen on Dirk to get him a wide-open shot. That's what it's about. This is a team game. Even though I know I get a lot of the headlines, bad headlines, D-Wade gets a lot of the great headlines, CB gets a few headlines, this is a team game. We understand as a team we have to play together to win. It's not just about me. I don't think it can't be too many. I think there are slight adjustments both teams make from game to game. Like I said, Game 4 of The Finals, which you've been working on all season since training camp is what you have. There's not too many things you can change. You can make slight tweaks offensively, defensively that can make you be a little bit more on point when you see a situation happens. But right now it's about the team that's going to play hard, going to use their instincts and just play on a string. You have to trust one another as teammates both ends. Not only us, but Dallas as well. I think when our communication just -- we didn't care about -- it's all about winning. Once we started communicating that -- I think it started early in the season when we just were struggling. We were trying to be too unselfish. I've always said that trying to change our game, I thought that was going to be for the better of the team. At the end of the day, we had always just say whoever has it going, we kind of just go to. D-Wade had it going last night. I have had it going at points in this postseason where they've come to me, come to me and I've been able to close for our team. It doesn't matter. At the end of the day, it's the win. If it's D-Wade making a crucial basket or me making a crucial basket or last night, CB making the game-winning shot, that's all that's about. No, I just want to win. Individual, I think my individual stats will take care of itself. Like you said, in a series I've averaged 38 points a game and we've lost in the Eastern Conference Finals against Orlando. This is a team game. My resume will speak for itself after I'm done with this game of basketball. What me and my teammates are trying to accomplish now is the only thing I'm worried about. When I'm done, I'll let you guys figure where I should be placed. They're very similar, because they force you to help -- they have so many dynamic players on the court at one time. You look at Boston, Ray Allen, Paul Pierce, Kevin Garnett and Rondo, these four guys can all break you down at one time. So everyone is live. You can't relax off anyone of them because they'll all make you pay. That's the same with this Dallas Mavericks team. When you are coming down the stretch and you have Jason Kidd and Jason Terry, with Dirk also and Shawn Marion and Tyson Chandler who also can create things off the glass, you never have a chance to relax, ever. So mentally you have to be in tune, because if you do, like we've done a few times in this series, they make you pay. I think the difference is he had a super duper green light. Like he told you before, he had no conscience in '06. He knew that he really had to go out and score 30 every night to give his team a chance to win at times. He's a smarter player now. That just comes with age. It comes with experience. It comes with games that you play throughout the course of your years. I mean, he's the same great player I faced my first seven years in the league. A guy that can break you down off the dribble, create at the rim, can make shots from the outside. At the same time, a two-way player who also plays defense at the same high intensity. I just think he's a little older, but not old at all. Just a little older. Not at all. I've never been afraid of constructive criticism. From my coaches, from my high school teammates. I had four best friends in my high school team. Those guys would get on me all the time if I ever did anything wrong. Something I've been going through my whole life. When you have good friends and you have friends they are not afraid to tell you when you're wrong. That's on the court or off the court when you're doing stuff that shouldn't be done. So it wasn't hard to adjust to. I understand that if he's yelling at me or trying to tell me to do something better, it's for the better of the team, to help me get better individually, vice versa. It didn't take no time to get used to. I know I'm not bigger than this team or I know everything. I still got a lot of improvement to do. The only difference for me in '07 and now, it takes a lot more preparation. Being young, I wasn't ready for the preparation for the NBA Finals at that point. Being my first time. I wasn't prepared mentally. Coming into this season, I prepared from day one. Being around two guys who had already won rings, three guys including Eddie House and Udonis and D-Wade, I knew how to prepare throughout the course of the season to get to this point. So it is great when you are around guys who have been in this moment and who actually got to the mountaintop, to lean on at times. We have a luxury. We have a luxury here. We got guys that have been in this moment before and not afraid to be in it again. |
| Definitely didn't play great offensively. I got to do a better job of being more assertive offensively, not staying out of rhythm offensively the whole game. But I think one thing I try to concentrate is, if I get two guys on me, try to make my teammates better, hit those guys for open looks. They made some great looks, but at the same time I have to keep myself in rhythm while I'm doing that as well. You know, with these games, every other day, there's not much gym time you can have. You want to try to stay off your feet as much as possible. If I feel like I need to come to the gym and get some extra shots up, I will. Absolutely just to get my shot back going and my confidence with my shot going. If I feel I need to do that after practice, tomorrow night I will do that. I'm confident with my ability. It's about going out there and knocking them down. When you have the opportunity, you have to knock them down. Your teammates give you the confidence. They give me the confidence all year, all postseason. So I have to go out there and make them count. I don't think anything is commanding in this series. These are two games teams trying to figure out a way to make plays down the stretch. We've seen in this series seven or eight-point lead is nothing. You just got to continue to execute offensively, continue to grind defensively. And put yourself in the best possible chance to win late. I think they haven't changed their coverages on me. Me just being more assertive, that's what it's about. I got the ball in the post a few times, and I seen double-teams. I tried to kick it out to guys and they've made shots for us. At the same time I can't let that stop my aggression when they bring two on the ball. I still got to make plays for my team, but also make plays for myself to keep me in the rhythm of the game. I think the fact that it happened in a loss is the anger part about it. That's all that matters to me. If I had had eight points and we won the game, I could be satisfied. I don't really care about that. The fact I could have did more offensively to help our team, that's the anger part about it, and myself. I'll come back in Game 5 and do things that needs to be done to help our team win. We've always been a good bounce-back team. Anytime we have a loss or we feel like we could have did better in one game, we've always been able to bounce back. Individuals have been able to bounce back, including myself, D-Wade and CB and the guys. We understand it's a golden opportunity. Game 5 we come here and we play as well as we did tonight, we execute a little better down the stretch, we give ourselves a good chance to win Game 5 and go home and be able to close out. Jason Terry is a great player. When he plays well, Dallas plays well. He's the reason why these guys are in The Finals and that's the reason why he's been one of the top guys and Sixth Man Award every year, because he plays well for this team. It's a good show tonight by both teams. They made one or two more plays down the stretch than we did. We look forward to Game 5, and try to come out here with a win. I don't think -- what do you mean? We have matchups. We have schemes. It's not one guy that's hurting us. I think Tyson Chandler had an unbelievable game last night. Offensive rebounds, he had nine offensive rebounds. Dirk made shots. He can make shots against anyone. He can make shots against me. He can make shots against anyone in this league. Just try to make it hard on him. We did that. You can always use -- if you can get a minute or two minutes there, it helps anyone. It would help me as well. I feel like I'm in condition where I can still be effective. I just have to figure a way I can be effective on both ends of the floor. Last night, you know, eight points is definitely inexcusable for myself. I hold myself up to a higher standard than that. I had to do a better job of putting myself in situations where I can benefit myself and my team, no matter how many minutes I'm out on the floor. You're at a point where you just not in a good rhythm. You start aiming shots, you start thinking about plays too much. You start thinking about the game too much and instead of going out and reading and react and playing the game. It happens to all of us where you get to a point where you feel so out of rhythm, you try to impact the game some other way than offensively. I try to rebound the ball, try to defend. If I wasn't -- had it going offensively, just trying to get guys to defend, to play two on the ball where I can give it up to someone so someone else can make the play. When you're out of rhythm, it's tough to get back into the flow in that particular game. I guess the best thing about it is you try to watch that film, see the things you can do better the next game and then go after it. You just have to pick your spots. At times -- I watched the film again last night when I got back to the room. I watched the film today with the whole unit, and there were times I definitely could have attacked. When you're out of rhythm, I guess it feels like you have nothing going offensively. You just try to focus your play somewhere else. At the same time I have to make sure I keep myself active, some way, somehow. Getting offensive rebound, the put-back, cutting when someone else has the ball. Figure out a way to still be effective even if I'm not bringing the ball up or initiating the offense. I think it's that time. I think it's that time that I try to get myself going individually. But at the same time still play my game. And when I say be more aggressive, that doesn't mean be more aggressive and have to shoot the ball. It just means being more aggressive and looking for opportunities to get a look. And if I bring two defenders and give the ball up. That's something I've done my whole career. Still be aggressive but at the same time get guys involved and have to do that. I like when I smile and the flashes go off and -- it's pretty cool. (Laughter). Like I said, I'm not -- DeShawn, he's been talking for a long time, since out Washington-Cleveland days. I don't let that get to us. Those guys are playing well. We're playing well. It's a three-game series. Talk is cheap. You have to play the game of basketball. Let the scores and the plays define the game. We don't get caught up in that too much. Just mental. It's just a mental -- your mind state going into the game tomorrow night. You watch film, you watch too much. You don't want to drag on what happened last night. You get into the books, you get into your studies, and then you move on. It's a new day. Tomorrow is a new game. And just like when we moved on from Game 2 to Game 3, we will move on from Game 4 to Game 5 and try to come out with a better outcome. No. Not really. Just being back on the court. Just rushing the opportunity to be back -- having another opportunity. If it was the Super Bowl, I would be kicking myself in the foot. We have one game. That's it. The great thing about this, it's a series. No matter if you can have a bad game, you can always make an imprint on the next game. Game 5 is a huge game. I haven't read anything that was written. I didn't play well, especially offensively. I know that. I've got to do a better job of helping this team win basketball games, especially late, no matter what it is. If that's getting an offensive rebound, like I said, making a couple of baskets, being more aggressive to give my guys opportunities to get open looks. I have to do that. That's what my job is. That's what I'm here for. You can. Because you know you have other guys. You have other options. You feel like you don't have to take over games. You don't have to take as many shots. Sometimes you can get out of rhythm doing it. I think we've all seen that at this point -- at some point this year. Kind of waiting and waiting and waiting, and then it gets to a point you're just out of rhythm. We've all been through that. But we figured it out through games, through practices, how we can all be effective at the same time. And we need to put it together now. I have. Both series, the Boston series and the Chicago series, there was a couple of games I didn't play well. You come back and you just do better the next game. I understand that I have the ability to go out there, my teammates give me all the confidence in the world to go out there and try to help them win a basketball game. You definitely relish the next moment. I'm looking forward to it. It's a challenge. But at the same time like I said, you have to figure out a way to still be active in the offense. That's cutting behind the defense and making yourself closer to the ball. You have to do that. D-Wade does a great job sometimes of cutting baseline getting dunks, getting lay-ups. I try to flash behind the defense at times when I don't have the ball necessarily and get some looks for myself or for my teammates. You can't ever feel like you're not in the offense even though you're on the weak side. You always have to be like the ball is coming to me, the ball is coming to me even when it's all the way on the other side. You have to stay in tune with whatever is going on if that instance. Absolutely. I criticized myself. I was hard on myself all last night. Anytime I feel like I could have played better and the team loses, that's what it's all about. If I have a bad game and we win, I'm hard on myself, but at the end of the day we win the basketball game. That's ultimately what it's all about. When we lose and I don't play well, and I feel like I could have did one or two more things to help our team win or get over the hump, you're definitely hard on yourself. That's just me. That's just the make-up of who I am. I have no idea. There's always opportunities you feel like you can get more in the paint. I had a few times -- I can always get more, be more aggressive. I said that last night after the game. I have to be more aggressive, even if that takes for me getting out in the open court sometimes, getting the rebound, getting out in the open court where I'm at my best or playing in the post. I'm playing a lot in the post, too. So I'm in the paint there. They're bringing double-teams, I'm able to get it out to a lot of our shooters. I don't know the exact number. I don't know at what instance I felt like I was out of rhythm. I think what bothered me the most is that it resulted in me being out of rhythm. It resulted in us having a loss. That's what it's all about for me. At no point should I ever feel like I'm out of rhythm, because my teammates key on me and they look at me to come through for them. There's times when you're out of rhythm, it's hard to get back into it. But you have to figure out a way to still be an impactful player on both ends of the floor. Like I said, if that's getting a defensive stop, if that's creating a charge defensively, or getting an offensive rebound to get us another possession, you have to figure out those ways to do it to help your team win. I didn't do that last night. Those are the things that I pride myself on that hurt me the most. I'll just be hard on myself and figure out a way to do it better the next game. |
| No, I don't think so. I don't believe so. I know I'm not. We as a team, we played good enough to win again. Put ourself in position to win down the stretch. Everyone, guys made plays. They just made a few more than we did. That's what it came down to. I don't think it was a case of offense again tonight. There was enough offensive play. We shot 52%, they shot 56%. We scored 103 points, they scored 112. The offense wasn't a problem. He made big shots. He made some great three-point shots tonight. A hand contested in his face. Some of them was open. He's just aggressive. We always said when he plays well, they're very tough to beat. That's what he's done the last two games. Well, it starts defensively. We've had a few breakdowns late in games in this series that we didn't have in the first three series. So it's something we know we can do. We just got to push through it. At this point we have no choice, honestly. We got two games left, and we worked hard all year to get home-court advantage. So we have to take advantage of it. Just try to work our same offense. I was able to get into the lane a couple of times, hit out for threes, hit out for guys that got some lay-ups, and also I was able to get to the rim a couple of times, put a little pressure on the defense. But it's nothing that you really can change. It's our habits we've been working through all season. With him being out, we just try to do the same thing as if he was in, but knowing that one of our scorers is down. But guys had to come in and try to make plays and pick up the slack while he was out. Absolutely. The only thing that applies to me is a win. A win or a loss. I could have made a couple more plays for my team. But at the end of the day, all it's about is a win or a loss. Triple-double means absolutely nothing in a loss. So we will be better in Game 6 on Sunday. Like I said, it's never a one-on-one matchup. I said that when he was struggling in the first couple of games, the games that we won. I said it's never a one-on-one matchup. JT is the reason why, like I said, in the top vote-getters of Sixth Man of the Year every year. He does a great job of staying active, staying in rhythm and they get him the ball in the fourth quarter. So I take pride in it. Like I said, I'm not going to always stop him or hold him under his average. I would hope so. He gets enough looks, he gets enough cracks at it, he's going to make a few in. We have to make sure we stay locked in and not allow him to get open ones like he had tonight. Honestly, we just worked our game. I was able to get the ball in the post a few times in the first half. It worked. Some of them didn't work. Second half with D-Wade being out to start the second half, I took it upon to be a little more of a ball-handler, get guys into our offense. But we just try to take what the defense gives us. We have nothing to say about our offense tonight. We shot 53% from the floor. These guys shot 57. Shot almost 70% from the three-point line. Offensively had nothing to do with why we lost this game. We just couldn't get enough stops down the stretch. I didn't think about it. D-Wade gave it to me, I had enough room and I shot it. Shots I made before. I just didn't make it that time. The last 48 hours have been thinking about Game 5. Some of the opportunities we had to win. Some of the opportunities I had to make plays, and either made them or didn't. At one point we look at it we're up three with three and a half minutes to go. We had an opportunity. We played well enough to win that game, even though with them making 13 threes, unbelievable shooting for them. We still had an opportunity to win. I thought about that and also kind of shifted my focus to how can I be better and how can our team be better in Game 6. We worked all year to get home court, and even though we're in an elimination game, we feel like we still have a great opportunity with this series coming back to Miami, two games on our home floor. I don't think it's too much. I feel like I'm in world-class condition. Like I said, anytime you get a little rest here, a little rest there, it definitely helps. I wouldn't say it's too much. I don't think so. I don't feel like I'm hurting my team for the time I'm out there. I don't feel like it's too much. It's frustrating, of course. When you look at the three games we lost, we all had the opportunity to win. Game 2 being up 15. In Game 4, we had an opportunity. And in Game 5 we had an opportunity. It is frustrating when you look back at the film and you watch and you see some of the mistakes that you had, not only individually but as a team. But it's something you can't -- you have to try to move on. But also learn from those games where you had an opportunity to win and seeing the games where you won, where you took advantage of them. So I think it's a new game, Game 6 being tomorrow night, and we're looking forward to it coming back to our home floor. At this point I don't think technique has anything to do with it. Shots go in, shots don't go in. I don't stop to think about my technique or anything like that. One thing about me, you just be aggressive. And when you have the shot, you take them. Some of the same shots I've taken in the other series, they went in. They're not going in for me right now, that won't deter me from taking that opportunity once I get them again. I think the game of basketball can be pressure. It doesn't matter if it's The Finals or the Conference Finals or first round. Playoff basketball is all about pressure, how you can handle it. There's a sense of urgency because we're on an elimination game coming into Game 6. But it's something if I sit here and say we haven't seen everything to help us out to get to this position this year, I would be lying to myself and lying to our team. This is a position -- I mean, we wouldn't want to be in this position being down 3-2. But at the same time we're going to relish the opportunity being back on our floor. I mean, honestly, J.J., he shot the ball extremely well. The guy hit four threes, three of them was at the end of the shot clock with him not even holding his follow-through. A guy like that once he gets into the lane and he gets a few lay-ups, get into the flow, his outside shot becomes better, just like a lot of us. Myself and D-Wade, if you allow us to get two or three lay-ups, we feel like we're in a good rhythm. So we have to do a better job of trying to keep him out the paint. If you keep him out of the paint early, that's better for us. He doesn't shoot the ball as well as he would if he gets a few lay-ups here, a few lay-ups there, a couple of free-throws. He's a key. We always say he's a key. J.J. being a key and J.T. being a key to their success. I've seen myself being less aggressive at times. A few reasons is most of the time I feel like D-Wade has it going. In situations where in the past in the last series there was times I had it going, in the Chicago series or in the Boston series, and our team just rolled me offensively. Guys just try to pick it up, some way, somehow. D-Wade has been playing extremely well in the fourth quarter. CB has played well. And just haven't found my niche in the fourth quarter thus far. You look at it, tomorrow is another opportunity for me to make an imprint on this series in the fourth quarter and help our team win. It's nothing that I've seen over The Finals that I didn't know coming into this series. I understood this is a huge series. It's a huge stage. I want to play well, of course. I want to help this team win a championship. That's all it's about. The things that you can't control, the ball going in for you, or you playing extremely well every single game. The game doesn't happen like that. If I wanted to be that way, I would love for it to be. I have to do what's best for our team to help put our team in a position to win ballgames. That's the only thing I can control. The losses do. That's all it's about for me, winning and losing. Of course, I get on myself, I'm hard on myself about wanting to play well, because I feel like that's what I need to do for my teammates. But to answer questions about what's written about me or anything like that, I don't really feed into it. It's going to be written no matter what, no matter if I play well or not. I had a triple-double last game. I had a bad game in a lot of people's eyes. I understand that. That's just the situation I'm in. That's the bowl I'm in right now. I can only satisfy my teammates. That's the way I look at it. I'm not feeding into that. If you guys want to feed into everything that not only myself or D-Wade or the Miami Heat do, I think that's a non-issue. There's bigger issues in this series than that. I don't think so. I think we have figured it out in the sense of what makes our team successful. Just like in the last series, I feel like D-Wade was out of rhythm, I just tried to pick it up offensively. And it's kind of vice versa right now. I haven't been in a good rhythm offensively. He's tried to pick it up. Guys have tried to pick it up in my absence offensively. That doesn't mean that we're back to square one. We've worked to playing too many games to go back to square one. If I make a few plays here, make a few plays there, then the whole course changes from me being 8-for-19 last game to being 10-for-19. You just got to be able to stick through it, watch film and figure out ways that you can help this team win offensively, because that's what it's about also. |
| I mean, sometimes you got it, sometimes you don't. And that was this case in this series. I was able to do things in the last two series to help us win ballgames. Wasn't able to do that in this series. Once you get to the playoffs, every game is pressure. You want to win. You have to win. And I mean, we've seen some of that in the Chicago series, we seen some of that in the Boston series. Even though we lost Game 4, we lost Game 4 in Philly, there's pressure in that series as well. So it doesn't matter which round it is. Once you get to the postseason, every possession counts. Live in the paint. They did a great job of every time I drove, they brought another extra defender in front of me. They did a great job defensively. Very underrated defensive team. Took me out of a lot of things that I'm capable of doing or used to doing. It took us out of a lot of things we're capable of doing, that's getting points to the paint and getting to the free-throw line. So they did a good job. Much respect to them. It hurts of course. I'm not going to hang my head low. I know how much work as a team we put into it. I know how much work individually that I've put into it, when you guys are not around. That's something people don't see. I think you can never hang your head low when you know how much work, how much dedication you put into the game of basketball when the lights are off and the cameras are not on. No, that doesn't bother me. I understand this is a huge stage, and you want to perform well for nobody else besides your teammates. That's ultimately what it's about for me. If I can play well for my teammates, help my teammates win basketball games, then I'm always satisfied with that. It hurts me, and I get on myself when I'm not able to play well and help my teammates win. Absolutely not. Because at the end of the day, all the people that was rooting on me to fail, at the end of the day they have to wake up tomorrow and have the same life that they had before they woke up today. They have the same personal problems they had today. I'm going to continue to live the way I want to live and continue to do the things that I want to do with me and my family and be happy with that. They can get a few days or a few months or whatever the case may be on being happy about not only myself, but the Miami Heat not accomplishing their goal, but they have to get back to the real world at some point. I don't think so. I pretty much don't listen to what everybody has to say about me or my game or what I've done with my career. I don't get involved in that. This is year after year after year for me. Me as an individual, people write or say what they want to say about me. It doesn't weigh on me at all. Like I said, the only thing that weighs on me is when I don't perform well for my teammates and the guys that I play for every day. That's the only thing that weighs on me. Because I take pride in going out there and doing the things that need to be done to help my teammates win. That's it. Honestly, it was about fourth-quarter defense and trying to get buckets. We got into a good groove to start the fourth. I think J.J. Barea's three at the end of the shot clock was a huge shot. Put them up seven. That was a huge shot. I think it was 81-77 at that time. He hit a shot, the three at the end of the shot clock. We played defense 23 straight -- great defense for 23 straight seconds and he hit a shot like that. So it took a little bit out of us. You don't want to dig a hole like that against anyone. Especially on your home floor going into the fourth. Any time you feel like you get to the top of the mountain and you fall off, there's definitely a personal failure. It was a failure in '07 when we lost to the Spurs when I was in Cleveland, it's a failure now for myself losing to the Mavericks. Absolutely. I can only prepare myself each year. In the summertime I'll put a lot of hard work into my individual game, try to bring my individual game to a team, and I work hard every day as an individual to go out there and perform at a high level for my teammates and for myself. I got close. Won two more games than I did in '07, and hopefully next time I get here I'll win two more games than I did in '11. I've been in this league eight years. There's no distractions that can stop me from trying to chase an NBA championship. Not you guys, not anything that goes on that's not focused on my team and my teammates and what we're out there -- what we're out set to do. Like I said before, I work hard to try to put myself in position to play at a high level. When you go out on the court, does the ball always go in? Absolutely not. But the one thing I know, I never hold my head low in saying, I didn't do it the right way or I wish I would have did this. It's not about that. I put a lot of hard work into this season individually. We all did. So we have nothing to hang our heads low. Just use this as an extra motivation to help myself become a better player for next year. |
| I don't know. We just feel more comfortable out on the court, no matter who is out on the floor with us. We try to complement one another. When one guy is flowing. We try to feed off of each other's energy and always try to stay in attack mode to help our team. We get to the free throw line as individuals or try to spread out our three point shooters and allow them to make plays as well. It's definitely a high comfort level right now. We just want to keep it going. That's a veteran ballclub. They're mentally tough. One of the most mentally tough teams that we have in this league. So we don't even put in the factor of them being fatigued. We don't let that be in our head. We try to work our games, work our habits, the coaching staff gives us a great game plan, try to execute that, and hopefully it continues to result in wins for us. I mean, just they are a championship caliber team. No matter what injuries goes on, I look at them as a top opponent, as a top contender, and as a competitive group. Anytime I look out there and I see Paul and I see Ray and KG and Rondo, no matter who they have in their supporting cast, I feel it's a championship caliber team. I approach every game with a high intensity both mentally and physically. It's going to be tough on all of us. We have to be in tune with Rondo. He's probably the number one unpredictable guy we have in our league as far as how he forces his action. A lot of his points come in transition where you kind of you want to lull to him, but also he spreads off the threes. He's that good. He's that good that he forces a lot of our triggers. He forces us to pay a lot of attention to him, and then he's able to get him a shot or get someone else a shot. We try to make it tough on him, like we do any other guard or any other player in this league. We try to make it tough for him and wear him throughout the game. But he's a great talent. Defensively, no matter what year or group they have out there, they're great. So you try to get the ball moving from one side to another. When it comes back to you, I try to attack. I was able to attack early in the game. Also in a lot of my post ups I was able to get to a lot of my shots I was comfortable with making. So just always try to be on attack, no matter what point of the game it is. And I was able to get a couple to fall for me tonight. It doesn't what our complementary guys do never show up in the boxscore, especially our centers. They go out there, they defend at a high level. They get us open offensively, setting great screens and transition and also in the half court set. We find them, they try to go up there and finish. Everything we get offensively from our centers is always a bonus. It puts no pressure on them offensively. We just want them to play hard, rebound and defend. We know the opposing team is going to sag off our centers, try to clog up the paint. It's been like that the last two years. But they understand their role, and that's what makes them so good. That doesn't change anything for us. We expect to hit the deck every single game, me and D Wade. It's how we feel like teams approach us. They feel like they need to put us on the floor, hard foul us. It doesn't change our approach. We still have to be in the attack mode no matter what happens, because that's when we're at our best as a team. We feel like we didn't play our best basketball tonight. We had some great looks offensively, but we had a lot of breakdowns defensively. So we didn't play our best game. And we want to just try to continue to get better throughout the series. We come in tomorrow, we're going to watch a lot of film, break down the film, see the ways we can get better offensively and defensively. It's a good sign. It's a good thing for us, but we understand we didn't have our best game tonight. So we will prepare and we will be better on Wednesday. First of all, it let's us know we're active. We're playing the rim and playing the ball. Definitely a defensive stop is just as effective as a big dunk. They are both momentum changing plays. Especially when a guy feels like he has a good lane to the rim and someone comes over and gets a block. That definitely helps us offensively, because once you get the block in, most of our blocks aren't hit out of bounds, so it allows us to get out in fast break and get out on the floor. So it helps us a lot. You like Chris Bosh's name. I'm starting to believe that. You mention him every single day. You don't go one day without saying Chris Bosh's name. We have to rebound, and I have the ability to rebound, so I'm just trying to do whatever it takes to help our team win. I mean, we enjoy it. We're always looking to run out on transition. We're just trying to make a transition. Off the rebound, or right off the turnover, we're trying to make the pass, the easy bucket for us. It's a good heads up play. He was one of the greatest receivers. I'll tell you that. Man, how do I prepare for something I already think is going to happen every game . That's possible. We had some great looks. Didn't go down for us. D Wade was able to get into the lane and make some great plays. We start to see it, and we're ready for it. I don't know. First of all, that's a question you should ask him. What adjustments do you think he'll make. I always expect for a great player to be great. He's one of the best players we have in this league. I always expect him to be great each and every night. I feel humbled now, first of all. I remember when I first came to the league and five straight or something like that. I was like, wow, that's unbelievable. I hope I get an opportunity to play in the Conference Finals. This is my fourth. I'm humbled and blessed to be able to be on some great teams, great teammates, great coaches. For sure. For sure. More relaxed, and more I think of my teammates as well. Just more focused. I mean, I've been around here before. So I've got to be more relaxed. No, honestly, I mean, when I first played against him I wasn't into the defensive side of the game like I am now. But he's a great player. You have to try to make him do things that he may not want to do. But he's still going to make shots, because that's how good he is. He makes plays. He can shoot the ball, he can handle the ball, he can post up. I try to make it tough on him. He's a great player in the league. Say that again? That's all. We all know how K.G. is. He means no harm. Be able to put together a good game. We won Game 1 and . Doesn't tell me anything. I expect it to be every game I play in. Me personally. It doesn't surprise me. It's not like I have to gear up for it. I'm already geared up for it. First of all, just to be playing this time of the year is exciting. There are a lot of teams that's not playing right now. We're blessed that we're able to be a part of this. You know the history. You know the Boston franchise is great. It's always fun to go against them as well. It's a great time for us. Get to the free throw line. Like I said, I expect physical play. I expect to be quote, unquote, thrown on the deck. Whatever the case may be. I have to go to the free throw line and go up there and make them. I made a few adjustments. We had a few miscues, a few communication breakdowns in the second quarter when we gave up 35 points. and we gave up eight offensive rebounds as well. As players we can get better to help out. It's another game. Playoff game. We have to protect home court. Playoff game is not one or two games. It's going to be a long series. I don't personally D. Rose. I've never had a conversation with D. Rose. It sucks that it happened. I wish him a fast recovery and hope he gets back . I don't know what he's going through. I've never had that type of injury. So I can't imagine what he's going through. I hope he comes back 100%. 110% because I am a fan of his. I love the way he plays the game of basketball. I love what he brings to his game. Get healthy. |
| First of all, Rondo was absolutely amazing. The performance he put on tonight will go down in the record books. He played the whole game. He made all the plays and tried to will his team to a victory. He showed tonight why he's an all pro and one of the superstars in this league. He's a unique player. He's an unbelievable player. He gave everything that he had tonight. As far as after the game, it was a battle. We never felt like we won the game or lost the game until there were zeros on the clock and we looked up there and there was 115 to 111. We were able to win this game with so many ups and downs throughout the whole game. But it was exciting to be a part of it and to win. Absolutely. Always feel like he's going to make a play, no matter what's going on in his game at that moment. I always feel the next play he's going to make a play to help us push forward. And he was definitely doing that late in the game. He made some unbelievable shots. Made some drives, kicked to UD for a big time shot as well. He made some big plays for us. We ran a play, D Wade was able to hit me on a pass to the rim, and I missed the lay up. I felt I had a good look at it, but I was kind of off balance. I was racing trying to get the offensive rebound to give us the last possession. I had a great look at it at the end of regulation, it just didn't go down. And then started the overtime, I missed two free throws. Like you said, I tried to help us win. Whatever it took, whether it was offensive rebounds, trying to get a defensive stop or whatever the case may be, trying to be out there to help my teammates win. I was happy to be able to make a few plays. I mean, there's parts of the games where you have iso ball, but it's not what we want to do. We don't want high doses of that. We want to continue to work our habits, continue to do what we've been doing over the course of the season. If the pick and roll blows up, we have to get the ball from one side to another, and not try to force anything. Now the clock is at a disadvantage for us. They showed us something different tonight defensively, which we knew they would. We knew they would make a change. That's why this series is going to be great, because both coaches are going to make adjustments throughout the series. We get an opportunity to watch the film tomorrow, and we'll go from there. Absolutely. That's what I told Rio in the game after in the locker room. He kept us afloat by his play. When D Wade didn't have it going, Rio made big shots. Especially in the second quarter, in the third quarter as well he kept us afloat. He stepped up, made some big shots and gave us a lift. He gave us a third punch that we needed in this game. So he played a great game. You guys are tired too, huh. I appreciate it. |
| I mean, KG is a difficult match up for a lot of guys, period. He started off really well. I think he had 12 points in the first quarter and got them off to a good start. That's part of the reason why they had 58 points in the paint. He opened up a lot for not only himself but for his teammates as well. And he's definitely a threat down there, and he made some huge shots. I had a game this year when I didn't have an assist. Do you remember that? They do. You don't know what game it was? I think we played great ball since he's been out, Game 1 of last round. We've played some great ball. Guys have stepped up in his absence. Guys are going to have to continue to step up in his absence. We don't know when Chris will be back. We're not going into next game hoping that he's going to be there, or whatever the case may be. We have to prepare like he's not playing. We will prepare for Game 4 like he's not playing. It started way before that. We can't dig that big of a hole on ourselves. We were down 24 points. When you start fighting uphill, we made a run, but any little mistake defensively or offensive rebound we give up or we miss a shot, we feel like we could have made it, or anything and they come down and get a bucket, it hurts, because you're trying to fight back the whole time. So we made a good run, but they was up too much and we got in too much in the hole. I think we still was in attack mode. Just the free throw attempts just doesn't show for it. I hit a few jumpers as well, but I got into the lane. D Wade definitely got into the lane, got some attack points. We had 46 points in the paint, which is a really good clip. We only made five threes, so it does show we had to make some shots in the paint as well. It just doesn't show for us. But we're attack guys. We'll continue to attack and try to, you know, force the issue. That's what we do, and that's why we're in this position now. No, we're going to keep attacking. That's what it's about. We're attack players. We don't shoot many jumpers. We never got to this point by shooting a lot of jumpers. But we're an attack team. It starts with us. And it trickles down to everybody else. KG is a difficult cover. First of all, he's a more prolific scorer than of Chandler and of Hibbert. And when he gets to shoot, his wing span is he shoots higher than anybody we have in this league. So we have to do a better job of trying to help each other out and not expose ourselves as much with our coverages. Well, we're going to have to go to it. It's just how our lineup is being played right now, especially with CB being out. I'm going to be guarding him either in the case of lining up against him to start the possession or a switch. I'm confident in it. Just try to make it a little bit more tough on him and not give him so many relief lay ups with us being so aggressive on Ray in the post. Absolutely. I know that D Wade, once he gets a few easy buckets, he starts to shoot his jumper, he starts to get to the free throw line and he's very aggressive from that point on. I had it going early on in Game 3, but I'm going to need his dominant play as well. So I will make a conscious effort to try to get him going early. No, nothing changed in our approach. For me, I made a lot more jumpers than I've made in the first two days. But I still got into the paint. I still put some pressure on the defenses, and D Wade did the same way. It just didn't result in the stat sheet saying we shot free throws. No, they played great ball. We came in with a game plan. They executed it more than we did. And it showed in all the big points, as far as free throws, the points in the paint, things like that. So they played good ball. Well, we're going to meet after this. 'Spo is going to give us a game plan for Game 4. And if there's something as players that we see, we're going to give our opinion, and then we go and get ready. We don't honestly, we don't see it too much. We don't read into it. I know I don't personally. I don't get involved in it. It's one game. They protected the home court for Game 3. We get another opportunity. That's the best thing about it. We get another opportunity to play tomorrow, and we're going to try to win a game, go back home and try to finish it up. We have to get back, first of all, in transition. Also low to Rondo and then KG. They do a good job of getting points in the paint with Rondo's attacks and KG posting and in transition. And also Paul, he gets into the paint as well. So you have to be a little bit more aggressive defensively, but also a little bit smarter too. These fans, they support their team. Of course we all know the history of this team, the history of the league. So they give great support to their team, and their team fires up after it. And they love it. It's always great to be a part of it. Like I said, I've been on both sides. Been able to win. I've lost more in this building than I've won. But it's always exciting. As a team we have to figure out ways to exploit the double team. He's going he's always going to try to either come off the pick and roll, and when he posts up, he's going to bring two defenders. So as his teammates, we have to make ourselves available and we have to make plays for ourself. And also when the double team is not there, early and often try to get the ball to him early so he can attack without a double team. Hungrier? No, I don't need to be hungrier at this point. It's the Conference Finals. I'm fine and looking forward to it |
| N/a |
| Some of them we wish we could have come up with. Some of them we haven't been able to come up with. The ball bounces in crazy ways at times. Sometimes you get them, sometimes you can't. We feel like we gave ourselves a chance. I mean, you don't need much motivation right now. It is what it is. You win and you bring it back here, or you go home. It's that simple. I don't need no extra motivation at this point. I've been motivated since the playoffs started. I mean, for me, I just got to keep playing my game. If I can get a couple more points here, a couple more rebounds there, a couple more assists, maybe we win more games. I don't know, man. I put a lot of pressure on myself to try to come through for our team. Last night I felt like I could have made a couple more plays, and I didn't. But at the end of the day, if you play hard, you go out there and lay it on the line, the numbers will take care of itself. And you can be happy with it. I'm not. I won't. I'm going to go into the game just knowing that I got to try to make plays to help our team win and not put too much pressure on myself. I understand what I do for our team. They are going I'll be satisfied because they know how hard I play. I'll be fine. I feel confident. I feel confident we can go up and get one. Then we're focusing on Game 6. That's what it's all about. It's definitely different. Last night we was down. We didn't want to lose that game. We played hard. Gave ourselves a chance to win. But you have to have a new mindset when you come in here today. You have to focus on Game 6. I know we have to go in with a mindset that we're going to win and bring it home for Game 7. We feel confident now. It does. It means a lot to me. How much work I've put into this year. No one said it was going to be easy. I'm looking forward to the challenge, me personally. I'm looking forward to it more than probably anyone on the team. So I'm going to lead these guys in the right direction, and hopefully it results in us winning. I put a lot on myself, like I do any game. I do a lot for the team. I hold myself to a high standard. So I want to play well. I want to play well for sure. I'm not going to put too much pressure saying these are the numbers I'm going to get. I'm going to go out and play my game. At the end of the day we'll see what happens. No, it is fitting. I know how much pain this team has given me over the years. I think I guess it's only right that we will be going up there in an elimination game. In order for us to keep our season going, we have to win in their building. . What do you mean? Let it not get in my head? It's a new day. It's a new game. But it's obviously a great team, and if we go in with a game plan and we go in and play hard, all we can ask for is to give ourselves a chance to win late in the game. We can be satisfied with that. Game 3 it wasn't close. They pretty much got whatever they wanted. Game 4 we gave ourselves a chance to win. We didn't make enough plays. It was a great game. And last night we also had I mean there were some tough bounces. I know a few plays went right off the top of my head. D Wade got the block off Bass. It was a 50 50 ball in the air. Rondo punched it to Pietrus for a three. That was a big play. And then another play was Ray Allen went down the lane, kind of kicked it off his foot, picked it up and hit Pietrus again for another three. Sometimes the ball bounces in different ways. Momentum plays happen. But like I said, last night we gave ourselves a chance to win. That's all you got to do. I mean, he's our coach. I don't need to defend him. I'm here. We got a lot of respect for Spo. We have all the confidence he's going to give us a game plan to help us win. Me personally, I don't even hear what goes on out there. I only hear it until you guys tell me about it. So it's always new to me. I know he's heard it before. That's not new to him either. I mean, they definitely come up. Of course. It's human for them to come up. You got to approach tomorrow's game like it's its own. And we look forward to the challenge. I know I do. We can use his we're going to have to have him out there on the court. I think he played great in his minutes he had last night. 14 minutes, 9 7, that's really good production. The fact that we're a whole finally for a game that means a lot to us all, it should help us. |
| You just said it, it was a must win game for us to continue our season. I'm happy we were able to put together a complete game for the first time this series. We were close in Game 1. We played really good in Game 1. Since then we hadn't played a complete game that we're capable of doing. So that's what I'm more excited about than anything, that we finally put a 48 minute game together. And it allowed us to win this game, a game that we had to have. I don't know. I don't know. I haven't really I haven't watched the film or anything like that. I just tried to make plays for our team throughout the whole game, as long as I was on the court I wanted to make plays, both offensively and defensively, to give ourselves a chance to win. I think I did that tonight. In an environment like this you want to have a big game. I wanted to be there for my teammates, no matter what was going on throughout the course of the game. So like I said, I'm happy I was able to make some plays both offensively and defensively to help us win this game. This was a gut check for us. And it's good to see we were able to bounce back after that loss, after that Game 5 loss at home. You just try to keep the pedal going, keep the pedal down and just continue to be aggressive. I felt like I was aggressive from the opening tip, and the guys continued to find me. I tried to keep it going. I felt like that a few times in this postseason. And it's a great feeling to be in when you feel like everything you put up is going in. But you just can't you can never let go. You can never let it die down or anything like that. You know you have to continue to put pressure on their defense, and I was able to do that. I don't know. I take every game as its own. I will continue to be aggressive. I will try to continue to play at a high level like I done the whole postseason. If it results in these numbers or whatever the case may be, I'm going to go out there and play my game and play as hard as I can. I don't really care what the stats say. I won't regret Game 7. Win, lose or draw, I'm going to go in with the mindset like I've had this whole season. And we'll see what happens. I wasn't paying too much attention to those guys. I was focused on what we had to do as a team, as an individual, to help us win this ballgame. I was in such a zone I really didn't I wasn't trying to pay too close attention to their expressions or what they were going through over there. I was just doing what I had to do to help our team win this game. I have no idea. I don't know. I didn't use any motivation. I just went to my habits. I went to what I built over the course of the season, over the course of the years, and just went out and played. I wasn't going to feel sorry for myself or anything tonight. I just go out and play as hard as I can, as I said, and try to make plays for our team. And at the end of the day, whatever happens happens. I can be satisfied with that. I didn't need no extra motivation tonight. It's the postseason. I know how big these games are. Every game is big. So that's my motivation itself. But I didn't need any extra motivation in this game. I just went to my habits, what I built ever since I started playing this game. I don't really get too far in sports talk radio or anything like that too much. Over the postseason I've been doing a lot of reading and been watching movies and things like that. I don't really hear the outside noise of what's said about me or what's said about our team. As a team, we never get too high, we never get too low. So we kind of just try to stay focused on what's at hand. And over the course of these 48 hours we've just been worried about Game 6, how can we prepare to win Game 6. And our coaching staff gave us a great game plan, and as players we tried to go out and execute that. For me this game is all about team. I was coached that way as a kid, and it was instilled in me ever since I picked up a basketball. As an individual you can't do it by yourself. No matter what my numbers was tonight, nowhere near we would have won this game if the other 14 guys weren't in tune and wasn't focused about us trying to win this game. So two guys come to me or three guys come to me, I'm very good at math, that means someone is open. I believe in my teammates, and they're going to knock that shot down. So that's how I play the game, and I will continue to play the game like that, because it's gotten me to this point. No, it doesn't mean that. I'm basically saying this whole team is about getting back to the way I play the game of basketball. I said that to all you guys, seen the interview I did with Rachel before the season. You guys have all seen it. In a great place right now as far as the game of basketball on the court and off the court. So I'm looking forward to Game 7. See you all in Miami. |
| 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 |
| No, it wasn't my choice, it was a suggestion that Spoel brought up, and I thought it was good early on for us. It gave us an opportunity to switch a lot of pick and rolls when Perk went down and did a screen for KD and I was able to switch off for him. Whatever the case may be, we had a good game plan to start the game, and the third quarter hurt us. I don't think so. You know, we know we have to have more production for sure. We're going to have to have more guys in there to give me and D Wade a rest. And Shane, Shane played a lot of minutes. But Spoel will figure that out. We'll be more conscious about it, just trying to get a minute or two here or there so we can finish strong, but I don't think it was much of a problem tonight. I think offensively we just moved the ball. We moved the ball, and Shane was the recipient of those of us moving the ball, especially in the first half. He knocked down a lot of shots, you know, and he helped us a lot to spread the floor. He's a big part of our unit, and when he knocks down shots, we're a very, very good team. He was just the recipient of us moving the ball and getting the ball from one side to another, and he was able to get some shots down. think they made shots and we missed shots. The couple offensive rebounds they got, they didn't make many mistakes in the fourth quarter. I don't think we made many mistakes in the fourth quarter, it's just they made more plays, especially offensively. They made more shots. Russell made some big time shots, KD made some big time shots, and Nick Collison got a few offensive rebounds that allowed him to extra possessions when we did a stop. So I think that's what it's about. You take them with confidence, take more shots with confidence, and at the end of the day you live with it. All your shots are not going to go in, of course not, but you try to put pressure on the defense, and then when you shoot the ball, you shoot it with confidence. Not give up 56 points in the paint Well, first of all, those two guys are all stars for a reason. You can't stop them, you just try to limit them. And Russ made some big plays late, but I think we can live with him shooting 10 for 24 from the field. I think KD got a couple looks that we don't like. He had two transition threes that we gave up where he had nobody on him, and he had a couple jumpers that we didn't like, either, with nobody on him. We need to make adjustments with that. We will make adjustments. Like D Wade said, this was the feel out game. We come out with a lot of energy, try to steal Game 1, and now we get an opportunity to go to the chalkboard, go to the film and have a better game plan in Game 2 since we've already seen them to see to see what they're capable of doing. He's always aggressive. Any time he's on the floor, tonight 46 minutes, he's always aggressive. It doesn't matter what court it is. It's not been too difficult. It's just been challenging. When you go out there with different lineups from game to game, it's challenging for sure. But we've been able to figure it out. We've been able to figure it out on the fly and find ways to make it successful either for that game or that series in general. Yeah, I think so. Just because of the depth of teams and both teams have so many guys that can do so many things defensively, that can guard multiple positions defensively. You know, it allows both coaches to be flexible. You can see that throughout the course of the series. No, that's not right. There's no stories behind it. You know, it's a look, it's a fashion thing. But he absolutely didn't start it. I don't know who started it, honestly. I think know I've wearing mine for about two years now. But I don't know who started it. None of us started it. It could have started back in the '70s or '80s. I'm serious. I mean, fashion comes and goes, decades No, we didn't. It just happened like that. Absolutely, I tell him a lot. A lot of times I try to let him figure it out on his own, but sometimes I go to him and tell him I need one of those games from him, I need one of those performances from him because he still has it. He knows he still has it, too, but every player needs a little kick every now and then, no matter how time tested they are. Yeah, I try to continue to let him know how important he is to this team, which he should know, but he also needs to be D Wade and not worry about deferring as much. I'm not surprised because it's nowhere near close to last year. This year it's happened maybe a handful of times, I can probably count on my hands as many times it happened as much basketball as we play. Last year it happened a lot. It happened every week or every other week where we was trying to figure out ways we can help our team or we can figure out ways we can help one another. But it wasn't happened much this year, so it's not surprising when it comes up. It's just reassurance. I think I have a lot of fun with the game. You know, I'm back to having this year in particular, I have a lot of fun or I've had a lot of fun with the game. I got back to what drove me to the game and what made me fall in love with the game. It's been a great ride this whole year, and just doing the things that need to be done to help our ballclub win and for me to have fun on and off the floor. I feel good. I mean, it's whatever, honestly. I mean, I will do whatever it takes for our team to win. If I need to start on him, I will. I kind of coach gave us an idea for Game 1, and we went with it. We still had an opportunity to win Game 1, we just didn't make enough plays. Oh, I don't know. Like I said, I don't say something to him before every game. I don't know even if I will for Game 2. We'll see. I don't have nothing planned as of right now what I may say to him to prepare him. I mean, he's a winner, he's a veteran, he knows how to prepare, so forth, for a Finals game, this being his third. We'll see. I mean, when you're at ease, honestly, the game becomes very easy for you. For me it's just once I was comfortable with everything that was going on off the court, I was able just to let my preparation and all the years that I've put into playing the game of basketball just take care of itself. I know how much work I've put into the game, and I don't dis appreciate the game in no way, I don't take it for granted me being in the position I'm in. I kind of let it take care of itself, and it rewards me. Well, it's a fine line, honestly, especially now being in The Finals. There's always times where you would like to get a minute here, a minute there, two minutes there, and I've got to be more out with my coaching staff, as well, when I feel like I may need a minute here or a minute there and then I can go back into the game. But there's also times where I may feel tired, but I'm playing well, we're playing well, so I don't want to mess up the rhythm, and this is a rhythm game. It's a fine line with getting rest and just playing through it because I don't feel like I hurt my teammates when I am out there. But it's just all about a communication thing, getting two minutes rest here, three minutes there. It may can help. Well, I mean, any time the timeouts or the TV timeouts, the breaks, halftime, you get rest, you're able to recoup and reenergize. I mean, it helps. Well, this is one game. We will make adjustments. This is going to be a long series. I'm not worried about the end of the series right now. It is. It is necessary for any scorer. I mean, you look at last night, I mean, Kevin Durant had 10 points in transition, Russell Westbrook had 10 points in transition. Scorers, when you get those easy transition buckets, the jump shot starts to feel more better, the pull up jumpers that are contested feel more better, and for D Wade and for myself, we feel the same way. When you guys see us get out on the break and we got alley oop dunks and lay ups and things like that, we start to make a lot of plays. I always try to make a conscious effort especially with D Wade to try to get him some easy ones, you know, get him a dunk in transition or get him a lay up or in half court where he's not facing the double team, what he's going to be facing for most of the game. So it helps. Well, I mean, every game is its own. Sometimes we're good, we're great when we're playing our two man game, and other times it has our offense stagnant and it's not allowing us to get the ball from one side to the other. I think we're very good offensively and in the half court when we're attacking, no matter what we're doing, either we're playing two man game or we're moving the ball from one side to the other and we're attacking the rim and getting to the free throw line. So that's when we're at our best. |
| It was very important. Any time you get a lead in this series, it's important, no matter if it's a double digit lead or one point lead, because both teams are playing great basketball. Any time you can get a quick start and get a lead, it helps. He's been a huge lift. He's been a huge lift for us. He's shooting the ball extremely well from the outside. He's making plays both offensively and defensively. We're going to need it. We're going to need it. The series is going to be so tight that we're going to need guys to step up, and Shane has been there in the first two games. We've just got to continue to do what our staples are, try to get back in transition, level them off, make them take contested shots. They're very good when you miss a shot or you turn the ball over at getting out and getting early buckets. We've got to continue to be conscious about our turnovers, and then when we miss a shot we've got to have three guys back just to try to level them off and not allow them to get those transition buckets. It meant everything. We had played too well in the first 36 minutes to try to let this one slip away from us. We knew we were going to keep coming. We knew they were going to keep fighting. They've been doing it the whole postseason against all the teams they've played against, especially on their home floor. We just wanted to make one more or two more plays than they made and come out with a victory, and we was able to do that. For me it's all about aggression. You know, I just try to get into the paint, make things happen, create for myself, create for others and put some pressure on their defense. For me that's what my game is all built around. Well, I mean, for me, I want to guard the best and the biggest point of the game. KD is an unbelievable talent. I think we all know that, we all see that. He can make every shot on the floor. Just try to keep a body on him, take contested shots. He got away from me a couple times, got a couple threes that I am not too happy about. So I'll watch the film and try to figure that out. On the last play they were down two and I figured they were going to go to him. He got a small step on me, I just wanted to try to keep a body on him, make him take a tough shot, and he's made tough shots all year, all series, and just that one he missed it. I mean, when you get to the championship, teams got to win on each other's floor. The two three two doesn't mean much, I guess. I don't know, you've got to these are the two best teams. They're confident no matter what building they're in. We're happy now that it's a 1 1 series and we're going back to Miami and will take control of the home court. It doesn't mean that the series has changed. Both teams can win on each other's floor, and both teams are confident. I mean, as a competitor, of course you would have been angry. Like I said, I just tried to keep a body on him and make him take a tough one. Shane has been huge. Going against him in my career, I understood how smart he was, I understood how competitive he was, especially on the defensive end. I was very excited when we was able to sign him in the off season. He's a big part of why we're here today and competing for a championship. He's meant a lot for our team, he's meant a lot to me, being able to guard guys as well as the top scorers. He did it against Carmelo Anthony, from Carmelo Anthony to David West to Paul Pierce and Brandon Bass all the way down to Ibaka and Kevin Durant. He can guard multiple positions and allows our team to have so many options defensively. He plays a big part in that. I mean, I'm a confident guy. On a big stage like this in a big game like this, every point counts, every point matters. So you go to the free throw line, no matter how hostile the environment, and try to knock them down. You live with your routine, things you practice all year, and you live with the results. Like I said, I'm happy that I was able to go up there and make a few plays, go up there and make my free throws. We needed it. We needed every point tonight. That's just we want to make enough plays to win basketball games, not to answer any questions about what people have to say about us. I mean, it's a huge game for us. We understood that we wanted to split. We had an opportunity in Game 1, but it kind of slipped away from us in the fourth quarter, they took control of the game. And Game 2, we wanted to come out and get the win. We didn't want to go home being down 0 2 even having three games on our home floor. It was good to see the sense of urgency to start the game, and then late in the game make enough plays to even the series. You know, for me I always want to be aggressive, and I don't think there was just one guy that can guard me. You know, I'm always looking at the next line of defense and seeing the rotation coming. Sometimes it doesn't work in my favor. I got into the hole one time, Ibaka got me from behind, got a block. But I don't think it's just one guy. You can't just put one guy on me and allow him to be on an island and defend me one on one. It's about being aggressive and taking what the defense gives me. When I shoot double digit free throws, that means I know personally I'm being aggressive when I'm getting to the rim. At the end of the day, it's helping our team. |
| I don't remember that play. What happened? I'm serious, which one? Oh, yeah, yeah, on the break. Just trying to attack. We got a great block. I think we got a block, and Rio got the ball, and I started to call for it then and there, but I told him to go middle, so I just filled the lane and Rio hit me and I was able to finish. I seen KD going for the charge, so I kind of went away from him a little bit and was able to get the block. I don't know, just trying to make plays. I told you guys, last year I didn't make enough game changing plays, and that's what I kind of pride myself on. I didn't do that last year in The Finals. I'm just trying to make game changing plays, and whatever it takes for our team to win, just trying to step up in key moments and be there for my teammates. Well, how I was feeling down 10, we weren't playing our game. They made us stagnant and they came out in the third quarter and attacked us, and we didn't attack back. We did that the last minutes of the third quarter and we was able to cut the lead, I think even taking the lead with D Wade's free throw. We didn't play good to start the third, and we can't do that. We can't do that against an explosive team like that. But it just shows our character, how we was able to come back from that and make plays and regain the lead. Well, that's our mindset, period. That's just how we play. We always feel like we want to grind out games. No matter how well we may be shooting the ball from the outside, no matter how many lay ups or dunks or fast break points we get, we always feel it's going to be a grind out game especially since we're playing against a great opponent. So it was that. It's not. We don't have that mindset. Our mindset right now is coming into tomorrow we try to get better. We have to get better in Game 4 because everyone makes an adjustments, everyone comes out the next game and does a better job. In the fourth quarter we had an opportunity to extend the lead, and we turned the ball over. We turned the ball over nine times in the fourth, I believe, and that's not winning basketball. We know they're not broken. For us, we just want to improve. We want to improve each and every game, and we look forward to the challenge of Game 4. Well, we've got to make big plays. You know, we understand our supporting cast is going to be there for us no matter what's going on throughout the game. But if the game gets tight, one of the three of us, or all three of us, have to make plays to bring home the win. You know, it was great to see us able to close this game out tonight. We had a comfortable lead, but they made a run. They made a quick run, cut the lead to one, and then I was able to hit Chris for a lay up. He got fouled, made two free throws, was able to get a stop, and that's what it's about. It's about us just trying to step up when our teammates need us the most. Well, we felt like they were going to come out aggressive, so I wanted to counter their aggression with aggression. Put pressure on the rim offensively or get offensive rebounds, I was able to get five offensive rebounds to give us extra possessions and get some second chance points. Looking at the stat sheet, we had 46 points in the paint, 11 second chance points. So that's good. And also we had 35 free throws. That's a really good number for us. When we're getting to the free throw line, even when we don't shoot the ball well, that's a plus for us. Just always trying to be in aggressive mode and do whatever it takes to help our team come out with a win. I mean, size doesn't matter. It's about just will and determination. It doesn't matter if someone is taller than you or bigger than you or weighs more than you. You just try to put yourself in a position to get rebounds or make plays to help your team. That's what it comes down to. We don't care about teams being taller than us or I guess, quote unquote, bigger than us. Every last one of our guys plays bigger than what their height is, bigger than what their weight is. As a team we don't feel like it's a disadvantage whoever we're going against. Is that a question for me or for them? It doesn't change me. I mean, I don't know. I mean, if he's on the court or he's off the court, we have to still be aggressive. We have to continue to do our play, play our game. I think he got it going in the third. He made some big shots in the third quarter, gave them the lead. His fourth foul on D Wade, we kind of got the momentum from there. But he's a great player. He's going to make shots. But for us, we have to be aggressive no matter if he's on the floor or not. I wish it was that easy. You know, that's a great team we're going against, and defensively they have some very active players, so they kind of bring the double team sometimes when I'm in the post or if I'm in the perimeter they kind of put two on the ball. I just try to take what the defense gives me, try to get into the paint. If I can't do it with the ball, just try to be active on the weak side or cutting or getting offensive rebounds or getting put backs that way, just try to do a little bit of everything where I'm not just isolating on the post or on the elbow. You know, it's a good mixture of what I have right now, and my teammates do a good job of finding me when I don't have the ball. Well, it's absolutely true. We talk about it all the time. We understand that it's been a great teacher for us, just the experience. We don't take things for granted. We understand that we accept each challenge as its own, and we know Game 4 is going to be a different game. No matter what happened in Game 1, Game 2, Game 3, Game 4 is its own, and we will approach it like that. We understand that there's going to be a team that's going to come in and try to get the home court advantage back once again, try to win on our floor. But if we do what we need to do defensively, we make them make tough shots, we rebound, and we don't turn the ball over, we give ourselves a good chance to win Game 4. Looking forward to it |
| It's a big time team win. We needed everyone's effort, and everyone came up and made a play. You know, from the starters to Rio's spectacular game, to Norris, as well. We was down in that first quarter, Norris came in and gave us a spark, hit a couple threes, got into the lane, got a lay up and made some plays to kind of help us get into a rhythm. You know, it's a big time team win, and we needed every point, we needed every rebound and everything that everyone had to get it. I'm feeling a lot better. I'm feeling good. We'll see how I feel tomorrow, too. I mean, of course it's there to think about, but I'm not taking our preparation for Game 5 for granted. We're going to prepare the same way we've been preparing all series, and if we play Miami Heat basketball, we give ourselves a good chance to win. Yeah, yeah, I have. What did it feel like? I mean, I don't know. I mean, you have to play sports and get a cramp before to understand the feeling. It's basically like your body just shuts down, your legs shut down on you, there's nothing really you can do about it. I mean, the ball was swung to me, and the shot clock was going down. I just wanted to step up and try to make a play. You know, and I was able to drain that three and give us a lift. I was just trying to make a play. If I was out on the floor, I wanted to try to make a play with the limited mobility I had at that time, and I was happy I was able to come through. Well, for us we're a complete team. A lot of people don't understand that about our team, and they always just focus on myself or D Wade and CB. But everyone's effort, all the hard work everyone puts into it makes us a complete team. We need that performance from everyone. You know, we understand it, myself and D Wade and CB get a lot of the press, but without all the sacrifices and all the commitments from the other guys, we wouldn't be in this position. It was very frustrating because I'm a competitor, and I want to be out there to help my team. But like I said, it's a team game, and that's why we have those other guys out there that's going to make plays, even if I'm not available or someone else is not available. That's what it's been for us all season and all Playoffs. When someone goes down for any reason, guys step up. I did want to come out. Like I said, I sat on the bench, got rehydrated as much as I could while we had a long time out, and sat through a few plays and I was able to go back into the game. Like I said, I'm happy I was able to make a play, make a big shot in a big game, and my teammates were able to close it from there. This is the second time we've seen a performance like that from a great point guard. The first one was Rajon Rondo when he had that spectacular game against us. I think that was Game 2, if I'm not mistaken, of last series. I mean, so many great point guards in this league today, Rondo and Westbrook and Derrick Rose and Chris Paul, these guys can do wonderful things, and Westbrook gave it his all, shot the ball extremely well, and he came out from the gate. I think they hit their first three or four shots. He was in attack mode, and you get a couple lay ups, his jumper started falling. He gave them an opportunity to win this game. And at the same time it just shows that we can still win those games. If someone has a spectacular game against us, we're still able to find a way to win. But he had a hell of a game. He had a big time game. You know, tomorrow we're going to prepare for Game 5. We've got to prepare like we've prepared all series and all season. You know, Coach Spo and the coaching staff has given us a great game plan. There's some things they can change, that we can correct. Like I said, if we come out with the mindset that we've come out with during the Playoffs, we're going to give ourselves a good chance to win. That's all we can ask for. I think Sefolosha is a very active defender. He's wiry, he's strong down in the post at times, but he has quick hands, he has long arms, so you can't play with the ball around him. But I enjoy the match up. I enjoy whoever they put on me, and I just try to thrive and make plays for our team. No, I didn't fight him. I caught the cramps the one time, and tried to get some liquids in me, get rehydrated and went back in, and it happened again at that point. I knew I probably wasn't going to be able to finish the game. I didn't fight them. I didn't fight anything at that point. I just put the faith in my teammates, which I understand. I've got a lot of faith in them, and I love them for the way they played tonight. Between now and Game 5, just try to rehydrate. I lost a lot tonight, but I will be ready. I'll be ready for Game 5, and hopefully I can stay hydrated where it doesn't happen again. Well, I knew I wasn't injured. I just knew I had cramps. I've had it before. Your muscles basically just lock up on you, so I tried to walk, but they wasn't letting me move. So our trainer, Jay, and Juwan came out and assisted me to the bench. I wanted to walk to the bench, but my legs wouldn't allow me. But I've been there before. I've had cramps before, like I said, and it's not a pleasant feeling. But I'm happy that we've got a great training staff, a great organization, and they helped me get back on my feet. I was able to walk up here and talk to you guys. |
| 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. |
| Well, our play didn't change at all. We went into the timeout, we had two different calls, and me and Spo looked at each other, and he asked me which one I felt comfortable doing. I had enough time where I could get to the basket and make a play. I don't know if I was surprised or not. I really wasn't worried if Hibbert was in the game at all or if he was in. I was worried about trying to get a bucket for our team. I knew I had enough time to get to the rim. Two plus seconds is plenty of time. I only need one dribble to get to the rim. And the set that we ran, the space that I had, you know, CB first having the first trigger, going to the rim for a lob, and Ray slipping to the corner, a thread and then I was able to be the option at that point and get to the rim. Shane definitely gave me a great pass. All I had to do was just, you know I peeked over my left shoulder. I seen Paul George was a little out of place. So I just took off. I knew I had enough time to do either I could either get to the rim or I could get one dribble in and get up a jumper or a shot. So I seen him leaning a little bit. Just a quick second. I just took off. Yeah, for me it's just flow of the game. I take what the defense gives me. I was able to turn the corner a few times and either get a look up at the shot or at the rim or find my bigs cutting and finishing some plays. The contribution that we got from Bird tonight was unbelievable. Without his effort we don't win this game. Just his energy and his effort once again. For me it's just the flow of the game. I don't really predetermine what I'm going to do. I just read and react. The best thing about it, the coaching staff and my teammates put me in position to be successful, and I try to take advantage of it. We wish we could take two wins, but we only get one. That's what it's all about. No matter if you win by one or if you win by 30 or whatever the case may be. You just want to win. We have to be better Friday if we want to win again. We'll come here to prepare tomorrow and see the ways that we can do that. Well, I mean, like I said, my teammates put me in a position. Coach Spo drove a good play to put me in position to be successful. It's my job to go out there and make it happen. I mean, I made a lay up. It's not like I made something half court. I made a lay up. I've been doing that since I was eight years old. I understand the circumstances a little bit. It happened to have been in the Eastern Conference Finals. When you practice something over and over and over, and you just it's just second nature to you. I also know, hey, we protect home court. This is Game 1. That's what it's about. It's very important. When we go against guys that are taller than us, a little bit bigger than us, our front court and our back court have to help out with the rebounding. I got to go out and if I have to average ten rebounds in this series or whatever the case may be, I have to be out there for my bigs. My bigs are fighting with Hibbert and fighting with David West all game long. When some of those long rebounds come off, myself and D Wade and Norris have to be able to clean the glass to help our bigs out. So just trying to contribute the best way I can when I'm out on the floor. I mean, I don't know. We don't any of us know that? D Wade was not there either, because he fouled out. I mean, you can't say what would have been different. Ten guys out on the floor, and I was able to get the lane against George Hill in the first one, and I was able to get the lane on Paul George in the second one. You know, I was on attack when Hibbert was in the game, I was on attack when Hibbert wasn't in the game. That's not for us to worry about. Once I got the ball I was the only option. I was the only option at that point. Especially with only being 2 plus seconds. As unselfish as a player I am, I cannot no way try to make a pass at that point. Like I said, I'm blessed to be in that position. My teammates put me in a great position each and every night. My coaching staff. And I just try to come through for them. We covered it the best way we could. George, going through my mind now, Paul George entered the ball to David West and he got the hand off. So UD and D Wade switched. D Wade ended up on David West and I was on George Hill. Me and D Wade switched. He got a DHL pass from David West, and he launched one. He launched one from a couple of feet behind the three point line. I was able to get a little strip on it, but he hit a big shot. Tough shot. So we still had an opportunity to win the game with 0.7. We just weren't able to get a good look at the end of regulation. I mean, after it happened, I landed on the elbow, and it would have happened when I decided not to wear my elbow sleeve. I shot the two free throws. My fingers were still tingling a little bit. But it kind of wore off. There's concern for our starting point guard. Any time one of our players go down, especially in the postseason, where every game and every possession counts and we need everyone out there, there's a little concern. But I think our training staff is amazing. Rio is a tough guy. So we'll see what happens. Hopefully he's available by Friday. He should be. We don't know. If not Norris will step up, and I know Mike Miller is looking for the opportunity to probably be back on the floor. You know, call in the righty. |
| First one, Ray came to set a pick and roll in the first one, and David West basically just put his hands up and he was able to get his hands on the ball. A little careless on my part obviously. And then the second go round, I was able to get in the lane, I spun and I seen Ray once again wide open and I was careless once again. I had the lane for Ray. I maybe should have jump passed it over the top. I tried to throw it through the lane, and they was able to get the hand on it again. Can't happen in that situation. Especially being down two in a big game. Very disappointing, of course, for me. That's the first thing I always look at on the stat sheet is my turnovers. I had two key ones at a big point of the game. I am very disappointed in my judgment and my plays down the stretch. But I'll make up for them. I get ready for Game 3, like I did in Game 1 and Game 2. I didn't have any emotions after making the game winner in Game 1. We won one game and tonight we lost one. So emotionally I'm still at the same level I've been at. We had an opportunity, but they played well enough to win Game 2. We're just two guys trying to do what it takes to help our team win. He's really good. He's going to be a great one. His maturity and his game has definitely risen in just one year because of the opportunity Frank Vogel has given him. His teammates have a lot of confidence in him, and he has confidence in himself. I love competition. I try to step up to the challenge and try to be there for my team as well. I think the outside shot isn't there for the guys who have been hitting all year for a couple of reasons; the rhythm. We have to figure out a way to get our shooters into the game more instead of trying to get them the ball and make them make a tough one late in the game for Ray or from Rio or from Shane. We have to figure out how to get them some shots early in the game, where they feel like they're part of the offense. That has to come from me, come from D Wade, come from CB. We're the three guys that have the ball in our hands a lot. Try to get our shooters in the game early. We know they've been there for us all year. We're going to continue to have confidence in them. We know it'll help us out a lot. I think having them a part of the flow offensively, they'll feel like they're part of the offense, they'll be there late for us. I mean, I know the answer to that. I'm not going to say it right now while I'm competing against the guy. He may try to use that during our match up right now. I know the answer to that. I'll answer it after the series. Just our experiences over the years. We've had home court and we lost a game at home. But like I said, every game, every series is different. We will figure out ways what we could have did better. Tonight we had some opportunities. We had some really, really good opportunities tonight. One that sticks out in my head a couple of plays, I think we were up four, got a stop, CB got a good look at a three. We missed it. Then Lance Stephenson I think hit a three. If CB makes that, it may be a different ballgame. Also getting another stop and Rio having a clean look from the corner. But I mean, there are experiences over the year, we just stay even keeled. We don't get too high, we don't get too low in the series. We know we're going to go into a hostile environment against a very good team, and we look forward to the challenge. I'm nowhere near close. I made two mistakes tonight. That hurt our team. And that hurt more than anything. Let my teammates down. They expect me to make plays down the stretch, and I had the ballwith the opportunity to make a couple of plays and I came up short. That burns. But the best thing about it is this isn't college. It's not one loss and you're done. I have another opportunity to get better in Game 3, and if I'm put in that position again, to be able to learn from it. My turnovers hurt more than anything. I think the careless turnovers. My mind seen the right play in my head; two guys on the ball, Ray Allen is open. But if I could take it back, I would maybe throw the bounce pass on the first one, because David West had high hands. And on the second one I would still make the same play, but I would probably jump pass over the defense instead of going through the lane, the passing lane. When I took the spin on Paul George, I seen Ray wide open. So I tried to throw the ball through the lane, through the passing lane instead of doing the jump pass. And I would have been able to complete it. Me turning the ball over, no matter what point of the game, but especially like tonight, with us down to a one possession game, those hurt more than anything, more than missing a free throw, more than missing a shot, more than anything. It is disappointing. But at the end of the day, we had a chance to win. We still had a chance to win. I thought Hibbert was big tonight. Every time we kind of made a run, he was able to make some big shots. Especially in the fourth quarter. He had his jump hook going, he had his rolls going. I thought George Hill was the X factor tonight. 18 points, hit some big shots, some big free throws. Just kept them above water. We can't allow 50% on our floor. But at the end of the day, it was 40 points in the paint. It was 9 8 second chance points, 8 6 fast break points. We had 14 turnovers; they had 13. It was a pretty much even game. And they just made one more play, or two more plays than we made down the stretch. Again? No. No. The first play, like I said, I was careless with it. I threw it back to Ray. He was open. I was still on the perimeter. Hibbert was not even around. The second play I drove and I spun away from Hibbert, and seen Ray and turned the ball over. So, no, he wasn't a distraction for me at all. |
| I think it was a little bit of everything. I made a conscious effort to sit down in the post tonight, try to put pressure on the defense. Spo and the coaching staff wanted me to be down there tonight, and my teammates allowed me to do that. It was a little bit of everything. We wish we can not come off losses, but it happens. It happens in the playoffs. That's what playoff basketball is all about. But we're a team who just bounces back from diversity. We love the fact that you know they took the home court away from us, and now let's see what we are made of. I think we know what we're made of as well. This is a great group of guys that always loved, I think, the pressure moments of being, I guess, 1 1, a team taking our home court away. And we have to go on the road to win. Well, I mean, I seen I had a one on one match up. They didn't come down in the post all game, so I just tried to take advantage of it. My teammates gave me space. I just tried to sit in the post, not get the ball in the wing as much tonight. Tried to anchor myself down on the block and go to work. I was able to do that. He's always the key. He's the heartbeat of our team, first of all. He's the captain, one of the captains of our team. There's no one in our roster that plays that goes out there and we don't have the utmost confidence in their ability. For him to come through tonight and do what he was able to do offensively from the start, Rio stepping it up in the third, also Shane and Ray contributing, Bird giving his usual. We needed everyone's effort tonight, and it allowed us to get a big win on the road. Well, we have to get stops, first of all. The 34 30 first quarter was something both teams are not accustomed to doing, being defensive minded teams. But we had to get stops, we had to rebound and then we had to execute. We went from a 34 point quarter to a 36 point quarter. It just showed the ball movement that we had. And also not turning the ball over; we had five turnovers for the whole game, and that's big time. Especially on the road. We're a team who doesn't turn the ball over a lot, but when you have under 10, you're going to give yourself an unbelievable chance to win. To have five turnovers on the road in a tough building was big time for our team tonight. We just wanted to keep putting the pressure on them. We scored 70 points in the first half, and we knew they were going to make a run. That's a really good team. We knew they were going to make a run. They did. They cut the lead to seven in the third. Right after that I think Rio got an and one to put us back up 10. We wanted to try to continue to put the pressure on them, continue to execute offensively, not turn the ball over, get stops defensively. And we could see their body language start to change a little bit. That's when we just keep going. Just keep going and not play the score, not play the lead. Just play the game. Understand every possession matters, every possession counts. At the end of the game we see what happens. We were able to continue to do that and come out with a well needed win. I do everything with my left. I just shoot the ball with my right. I'm weird. His knee is fine. We don't need to talk about the knee. In the lineup, he good. |
| You would like to be out there on the floor, especially me. Be there for my teammates especially in the closing minutes when we have a chance to win. Wasn't able to do that. That's obvious. They did a good job of taking away our first option. Sometimes our second option. I believe though we had some really good looks and some of them just didn't go down. You give a lot of credit to their D. As a team they D'ed in on me, especially in the low post. But for me, I've seen every defense, I've seen every individual. I was able to get it going a little bit in the second half. I played mostly with foul trouble. I thought we got some great looks. I thought CB had a great look by their bench, a three pointer. I thought D Wade was going to get a good look on my offensive foul. You know, you give some credit to them for sure, for holding us to only three points. But some of the shots that we had just didn't go down. We can't afford to get beat on the glass by 20. Can't happen. It allows them to get second chance points. Then they shot the ball from the field 50%. As a collective group, we can't allow that. But we don't need confidence to go into any game. We're a confident bunch. We're excited to get the opportunity to go back to our home and play Game 5. I thought, I mean, offensively he played extremely well. He attacked us. He got some offensive rebounds. He got one offensive rebound for a tip back. I think he played well. He played really well. But if you are sitting here and talking about an individual one on one match up between me and Lance Stephenson, I'm not going to harp on that. I didn't believe it was an offensive foul. I was going to set a screen, and I felt like I was stationary. And D Wade rejected the pick and roll. Lance actually ran into me. I believe I was straight up and down on Paul George's drive, on the and one. Hibbert, they reversed a call with Hibbert, called a foul for me on that one. And at the end of the third they called a push off on David West in the end of the third. It was a couple of calls that I didn't feel like were fouls, personal fouls on me. That's how the game goes sometimes. He's playing well. He has his jump hook going. I think we just got to try to clean up some of those offensive rebounds that he's getting, because he's going to make some shots in the low post. We're playing some great defense, getting them down to late seconds. One that sticks out in my mind tonight is the long heave three by Paul George that went off the backboard, and he got the offensive rebound. That was a big time play. I think I fouled him on that to give him a three point play. And then there's a couple of other ones. He's so big and being around the rim, he's able to get a lot of offensive rebounds. If we can cut that in half, it would help us out a lot. Yeah. We wanted to be greedy and get two. We were able to come here and regain home court. We feel good about that. It's a three game series with two on our home floor, if needed. We look forward to Game 5. D Wade told me about it today. Obviously I'm not on social media right now during the playoffs. D Wade came to me with the story today, and it was a no brainer for me. It's sad. It puts everything in perspective. At the end of the day, this game is just basketball. Two great teams, we're competing. But it's just basketball. You have a little girl or any kid that loses her life over an illness, it's very sad. It's very sad. It puts everything in perspective. I understand that this game is so magnified, and this is the talk of a lot of people throughout the day. But what happened to Bella puts everything in perspective. |
| Juwan's voice in our locker room on the floor is as big as anyone. As big as Spo, as big as mine, UD, D Wade. That's why we brought him back because he's an instrumental part of our team. He got us on at halftime, letting us know how we weren't connected as a team, we weren't playing as a team. We were wasting an opportunity. At the beginning of the third, I just tried to reiterate that in my own words, and get on the guys and just let them know we can't just win with talent. We are playing a great team. Luckily we were only down four at halftime, at the half. We had to play with a little more sense of urgency, well, a lot more sense of urgency in the second half, if we wanted to win that game. Yeah, I kind of just went back to my Cleveland days at that point and just said, hey, let's try to make more plays and be more of a scoring threat as well, and just try to figure out a way that I can I don't know, just see if the guys would just follow me, and just lead them the best way I could. I was just in attack mode in the third quarter, look for my shot. And luckily I was able to make some. Well, I mean D Wade is not a liar, so... If he said it, it happened. I have a big voice in our locker room. I have a big voice on this team. I sensed what was going on with our team, you know, in the first half. And before we took the floor in the third quarter, I just gave them a little piece of my mind and a piece of my voice, and we was able to respond. Yeah. As a competitor you love challenges, and Lance is one of those guys who likes to talk some. And I'm for it, too. I really don't start it, but if it gets started, then I love to do it. It's cool. I think it's great. It shows a competitive spirit between two individuals, between two teams to go out there and just try to figure out ways to help their team win. But I'm all for it if it's there. We just had no sense of urgency. We were just waiting for the game to change instead of going to get it. Instead of going to make plays and make things happen and make changes, we were waiting for things to happen. We made a great run to actually tie it at 40 40, but they went on on a 4 0 run to end the half. There was a few plays in the first half that were just like, didn't make any sense to us. Didn't make any sense to me and to some of the guys, like a couple of plays we know we're capable of making that we just wasn't making. And it had nothing to do with X's and O's. It was about a sense of urgency. I think we all sensed that, we all felt that. I am glad we were able to turn it around. Yeah, I have. I talked to him before the game today. I talked to him after shoot around this morning. Letting him know where he can be aggressive, where he can make plays not only for himself but for our teammates in certain situations. Most of his possessions are coming off 1 3 pick and roll with me and him. I just tell him just to use me. My man is sometimes kind of in between of trying to help on the point guard and not help as much off of me. So that gives Rio a lot of creases. Rio has done a great job of using me as a screen or to get in the paint, either make plays for himself or for teammates. I just seen how we were playing in the first half. Like I said, we were in wait mode in the first half instead of going and getting it. Just waiting for things to happen. I took it upon myself to stop waiting and just go. Just try to figure out a way to go and get it. I don't know, I just stepped outside the box a little bit and UD was amazing. I mean with his ability to shoot the ball as well and finish around the rim. As one of the leaders on the team, I just tried to do whatever it takes to try help those guys to try to follow me and lead them to the right place. No, I don't think so. I think UD is, like I said, he's our heartbeat. Any time there's a confrontation, if he's on the floor, he goes to protect. We're not going to let anybody talk down on our point guard. He's one of the smallest guys on our team. UD was there to protect him. I was just trying to take advantage of what I seen after that point. I don't think the confrontation had anything to do with it. I think the emotions of being in a Game 5 with the series tied 2 2 on our home floor and being able to make plays had everything. That's where the emotion came from. I'm blessed I was able to make a few plays. That's what I came here for. That's what I came here for, is to be able to compete for a championship each and every year. We are one step away from doing it once again. But it's not a promise. It's not promised at all. I made a tough decision, obviously. I think we all know the story. I'm not going to harp on that. I envisioned something that was bigger as far as a team. Sacrificed a lot for me individually, what I had going on in the summer of 2010 because I wanted to do something special with a team. And we got an opportunity as a team once again for the third year straight to make a trip to the NBA Finals. But we have to try to go out on the road in a hostile environment and take it. |
| Explain it? You seen it. It was total domination by the Pacers in the third. They made a lot of shots. We didn't get too many stops. And we missed some very, very easy shots. D Wade had a chippy in transition. Rio had a chippy in transition. We bobbled a turnover on a three on one break. CB had a couple of good looks. They pushed it up. It just needed one quarter. One quarter to separate the two teams. 23 21 first. 17 18 second, 23 22 fourth. And you know, 29 15 in that third. That was the separation. No. No. I believe in my teammates. They are struggling right now, obviously. So they got another opportunity on Monday, and I look forward to the challenge. I know they do as well. I mean, obviously it's a little bit of both. They're two great players. When they don't shoot well or play well, it's more them. It's not taking no discredit away from Indiana's defense; they were amazing tonight. They forced us to have more turnovers than assists. And we only shot 36% from the floor. But I think Dwyane and Chris have seen every defense ever been applied to them in their ten year career, and they've been able to figure it out. This one just took a little longer. had to run down the court to stop from being kicked out. I thought it was a pretty bad call. I don't complain about calls too much. I thought me and Hibbert met at the mountaintop. I didn't throw an elbow. Basically I went straight up. And I knew he was going to go high hands, like he had been doing. So I went to a double clutch to try to let him go down. Then I was able to go over the top. I don't have no idea why that was called an offensive foul. So, you know, just stopped me from being ejected. I think at that moment I just got away from the ref that called it. I said absolutely nothing. I ran down the court to get me away from the scene of the crime, I guess. I may have to look over the film. I am able to replay a lot of plays in my head. I know for him I know he missed a couple of chippies that he wished he could get back. He had a lay up or two lay ups in the third, pretty good ones, pretty good looks, some looks he hadn't had all series. He went around Hibbert I think and he missed one at the rim, it rimmed out. He had another one that rimmed out for him as well. I know he wish he could get those back. Those are rhythm plays for anyone. When you're struggling, the best thing to get is a lay up or a dunk. He missed a couple of them. So I can go over the film. I will watch the film tonight and I will watch it tomorrow and see ways that we can try to help him get on track. That will be great for our team. I mean, we can state the obvious; they're both struggling. Chris is struggling with his shot, and him hurting his ankle didn't help him a lot as well. I think he will find it. He will find it. It's my job as a leader to keep him motivated, to let him know how important he is to our movement, to our chances of returning to The Finals. The best thing about this opportunity is right here we worked all season long to get home court advantage. If we ever had an opportunity or we put ourselves in position where we weren't taking care of business on the road, we always have one more to fall back on at home. This is the position we're in and those guys as professionals, as champions, we'll figure it out. And me as the leader, I'll have to help them figure it out. It's going to be tough. I probably won't be able to relax just because of the excitement of having the Game 7 in our building, the opportunity to go to the NBA Finals. I probably will not be able to relax until the game starts. It's an opportunity for us. And like I said, that's why we had the best record in the league for. If we didn't take care of business on the road at some point in the playoffs, we can always fall back on this. We'd hate to be in this position, but it's an opportunity and we look forward to it on Monday, I believe. Do the opposite of what you just said. It's not promised. Each and every year there are 30 teams that would love to be a part of this. To have one game to advance to the NBA Finals. And there's two teams that's in this position. And it's something that you can't substitute this feeling. You can't substitute the atmosphere that we're going to be in on Monday night for both teams. We should all cherish this moment. At the end of the day, go out and play, have fun. It's just a game of basketball. That's all it is. It's just a game of basketball at the end of the day |
| 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 was tough. You're going to make me go back to that play? Tony did everything wrong and did everything right in the same possession. He stumbled two or three times, he fell over, and when he fell over, I was like, okay, I'm going to have to tie this ball up. He got up and went under my arm. I got a great contest, and he even double pumped it and barely got it off. That was the longest 24 seconds that I've been a part of. It is what it is. It's a seven game series. You know, we got to see ways we can get better for Game 2. We can only focus on the next game. That's what it's about. Well, yeah. They did a good job of putting two guys on the ball. When I got the ball, they kind of shrunk the floor and set a guy at the elbow and dared me to pass the ball. I know my guys will be there to knock those shots down the next game. We had some really good looks, especially in the third quarter. Rio had some very good looks. It just didn't go down. They did a good job tonight. We had our chances to win. We go into the fourth quarter with a three point lead. So we had our chances. We had five turnovers in the fourth. We gave them some offensive rebounds in the fourth as well. And Tim Duncan had one putback; Kawhi Leonard had another one. We can't allow that. Yeah, against this team you can't make many mistakes. You look at statistics, you know, we put in ourselves in position to win. They shot 31%. We outrebounded them by 9. We had more assists. But we turned the ball over five times in the fourth. I was looking at the stat sheet. It says they had 21 second chance points. I don't really understand how is that possible with only six offensive rebounds. I'm very good at math, and the only way you can get a second chance point is if you get off a rebound. Am I correct? Even if you hit a three, six offensive rebounds, that's still 18 points. I don't understand how that works. But we had chances. That's kind of weird. I don't understand this. Am I right or am I wrong? Am I right? Okay. It's crazy. The Spurs are the Spurs. They're going to put you in positions where you feel uncomfortable offensively and defensively. And every time you make a mistake, they're going to capitalize on it. I told him I needed one. At that point I had played the whole third. I had been accustomed to being able to start the fourth. But the third quarter was so I was in the paint, defensive rebounding, I was closing out Kawhi Leonard on shooters. It took all in the tank from me in the third quarter. So I needed a little breather. The fourth quarter was the difference. I can see it on a few of our guys' faces. Felt a little fatigued, still a little banged up from that seven game series. They looked like they were rested in the fourth quarter. They took advantage of that. We had some mental mistakes, and we played some really good basketball. But in the closing quarter we had some mental mistakes. And it's only a couple of teams you can't have mistakes against, especially in the fourth. And San Antonio is definitely the number one team. It's the first team to four. They came in and beat us on our own floor in Game 1. I know they're going to be hungry to try to get two. So we have to be able to combat that and come back with a Game 2 plan that's better than Game 1 and even the series. I mean, I missed some shots. I missed some really good looks. As far as being efficient, I'm not worried about that. I also had 18 rebounds and 10 assists as well. So you know, I'm not too much worried about what I do as far as scoring. I think one thing about our team we've gotten better as the series went on. We hate to lose before we start to get a little edge, but that's what happens. We'll see if we can continue to repeat what we've been doing in the series, being down, and come back on Sunday with a like I say, with a better game plan, you know, and try to even the series. |
| Just wanted to, I guess, make an impact some way. Offensively it was a struggle for me; couldn't make a shot, missed lay ups. Some things I'm accustomed to making. So I just wanted to make some plays and try to help our team. And I was able to protect the rim on that one. Basically I told myself, you'll end up on Sports Center where you're going to get dunked on or you're going to get a block. Luckily I was on the good side of the Top Ten and the Not So Top Ten. I already know what we have here. Like I said, I don't really read into it of what people want more of me or whatever the case may be. I will continue to find my shooters, if they're open. And I will continue to try to put pressure on the defense. If I draw two, I'll find my shooters. I have confidence they're going to knock them down. They did that tonight. Ray, Mike Miller, Rio made big plays after big plays for us. Yeah. Absolutely. I was, I guess, the last line of defense. I just pride myself on that side of the floor, honestly. It didn't matter to me. I was going to try to protect the rim the best way I could. Like I said, I was fortunate enough that I was able to make a big play for us. We were able to go down the other end and I think Ray hit a three after that, I believe. Just being on both sides of the floor, being able to make an impact is what it's all about. Rio, he has to play big for us in multiple facets. I think that especially defensively he's guarding arguably the best point guard in the league. But I think he also has to make Tony work on the defensive end. He can't be passive. He has to attack the paint. He has to shoot his shots when he has them. We started to get a little flow, and I started to see him start to play really well, especially coming off pick and rolls. We ran a lot of pick and rolls between the two of us, and I told him to keep attacking and let's try to push this lead up and go for the kill. And we were able to do that. I don't know. Whatever conclusion you want. It's a 1 1 series. That's the only conclusion I know. We look forward to Game 3. What I do know is sharing the ball is contagious, and it allows everyone to feel involved in the offense. For me personally, I know I attract a lot of attention. This team has been set up the right way where when I do attract attention, we have guys that can make plays. Tonight was another case of that. They packed the paint on me. I seen two bodies, unless I was in transition when I missed a couple of bunnies. But when I felt like my shooters just need a little bit of room. Mike showed that, Ray showed that and Rio showed that tonight. Now offensively if I'm not in the rhythm, you need to make a couple of plays to make an impact. That's what you're on the floor for. You need to do it on both sides of the floor, however you can do it. I think what helped me was the late third quarter pocket pass from Rio, I was able to get a lay up. Then I came out in the fourth, I was able to make an elbow jumper. And then I made some plays defensively to try to help. I made some defensive rebounds. I was able to get the block on Tiago, and then my shooters finished some shots I was able to get them in transition. You know, that's just part of my game. When I'm not scoring or I'm not as efficient offensively where I feel like I'm missing some shots, I just figure out ways that I can still help the team, even if it's not scoring as much. Well, honestly for me, when I was struggling offensively, my teammates continue to keep it in range. And we even had a lead at one point. Especially late in the second quarter when we made that run and I was struggling a little bit. So I think Rio more than anybody kept us aggressive, him getting into the paint, him getting those and ones and making a couple of threes. It allowed me to sit back and wait for my time. We want him on the floor. As teammates, we want him on the floor. We know what he brings. He's a 6'7", 6'8" two guard/small forward that can shoot the ball from anywhere and can rebound at a high clip. With the lineup we had in the late third to the fourth, me, Rio, Ray, Bird and Mike it spreads the floor. It spreads the floor for our attackers. When Mike gets the ball our shooters got the fluorescent light on our team. They're not even allowed to pass. When Ray and Mike get the ball, they have to shoot it. No matter how close the defenders are, they have to shoot it. When you have that leeway and that confidence, you just have to let it go. I mean, it's key. The Big Three I guess on both sides. You know, you can kind of rely on them at all times. But I think the supporting cast is really why both teams are here. They've been making an impact all year long, and they feel like their supporting cast is better. We feel like our supporting cast is better. It's who goes out and do it each and every night to help seal wins. I really don't it doesn't matter. Two best teams in the NBA at this point. Both teams have won and can win on each other's floor. So it's not a biggie. No. I got a floor burn in Game 1. Instead of the band aid, I wrapped it so the band aid won't fall off. I am okay. Don't worry about me |
| Some of it both. They're doing a great job of putting bodies in front of me and not allowing me to have some of the creases I have had throughout the playoffs. Some of it is me being out of rhythm. It's a little bit of both. No, I figure it out. I'll be better. I'll be much better tomorrow night. Better than last night. I played like . Yeah. Absolutely. I take full responsibility for our team's performance last night. Me as a leader, I can't afford to perform like I did last night and expect us to win on the road. It's that simple. So I'm putting all the pressure on my chest, on my shoulders to come through for our team. That's the way it is. I have to do whatever it takes. I mean, 7 for 21 isn't going to cut it. Zero free throws. I had 11 rebounds, I had 5 assists, but 7 for 21 and zero free throws ain't going to cut it. So I will be better tomorrow. We've been at our best when I guess our backs are up against the wall. And we're at it again. We'll see how we respond tomorrow. We have to have a collective group to win, especially against this team. And everyone has to perform at a high level. No, I'm not discounting anyone. We wouldn't be at this point without my teammates. I have all the confidence in the world in my teammates. But I am the star, I am the leader. And they look at me to do things on the court, to make plays, and if I'm not doing it, I'm not doing my job. Absolutely. We'll see what happens. Something has to give tomorrow night. They have a championship pedigree. They have four. We have two. So something has to give. We'll see what happens. We've been able to bounce back throughout adverse times throughout the season throughout the years that we've been together, these three years. We'll see. You can't have both of them. If you can go 7 for 21, but you get to the free throw line ten plus times, you're being aggressive. You have to be able to shoot the ball high clip from the field if you're not going to the free throw line. You can't have both. It's impossible for me to go 7 for 21, shoot 33% from the field and not have free throws. You have to figure out ways offensively that you can make an impact. At times it has. Last night a few of them did. A few of them didn't. But I know, I've shot the ball my rhythm, I've been in good rhythm all year. I've worked on it enough. Mentally it's not a problem. Mentally I'm not out of it, saying that my shot is gone. I know what I can do. It's just about going up there and knocking them down. I will do that. 19 offensive rebounds, 20 points in transition for the Spurs. I don't know. It's just something we've grown over the years, being able to bounce back in adverse situations. And no matter the circumstances, this is going to be probably one of the toughest, because this is like you said, we're going against a team championship DNA and championship pedigree on the floor and a must win. We're going to be ready for it. We're going to accept the challenge and see what happens. I don't believe I was settling. I think I took the shots that was there. I had some really good looks that didn't go down. But I just didn't get to the free throw line. I can't allow that to happen. I have to try to put more pressure on the defense. Not saying the whistle is going to be blown, putting pressure on their defensive interior and for myself to kick it out for my guys to have to do that. That's what I was brought here to do. And it can't be anything less than that. I'm just confident in my ability. And my teammates are going to put me in positions to succeed. And the coaching staff will put us in positions to succeed. I'm a positive guy. I love the game. I have fun with the game. As dark as it was last night, can't get no darker than that, especially for me. So I guarantee I'll be better tomorrow for sure. I don't know. I don't know what they don't understand. I guess they're not on the floor. But for me, I don't really get involved in what people say that I should do. I just do what I need to do to help our team win. I can't worry about what guys are saying or writing. I don't really get involved in it. Is in my head? Right now? Well, I'm better today than I was last night, obviously. I mean, if you see my comments and you see my interview, it'll let you know it was weighing heavily on me, right after getting blown out in a Finals game. So it was weighing heavily on me. With my performance, I didn't particularly care for myself at that point in time. So obviously it was in my head. I think that's one way. Another way is for us to get we have to get stops, too. And defensive rebounding, where I'm getting the ball off the backboard and trying to create some early offense instead of playing against their half court defense. But, yeah, I may use that adjustment. Thanks, David. Appreciate it. My man. He's doing something they haven't done this year. They're 29th in offensive rebounding this year. And Kawhi has found a way to I think he's made an adjustment to get offensive rebounds. So it's part of my job, too. It's part of my job, too. I'm matched up with him a lot. I get caught sometimes trying to help out our bigs and rebounding. He's coming in flying in when I'm helping out with our bigs, he's coming in and getting rebounds. I think in Game 2 he had eight offensive rebounds in Game 2. He had a couple last night as well. That's part of my job, too. I'm okay with that. Specifically what do you mean? Well, I mean, I think first of all, I think David said it well, getting the ball on the move. Get some early offense. Not playing against their set defense as much. They're doing a good job of when I come off pick and rolls, they have a guy shrink the floor at the elbow and getting a big in front of my body and a guy guarding to pursue the ball as well. They are putting me in a position where they can crowd me a lot. If I can get the ball in transition where I'm facing my defender or maybe just one other defender, I can break their defense down. But I will watch film today. I'm going to break down the film. We already watched a lot of film. I'm going to break it down some more, and do a better job of attacking their defense tomorrow |
| I mean, it was on our shoulders, obviously. We had to figure out to will a game for us, to play at the highest level. When all three of us are clicking at the same time, we're a very tough team to beat. Well, he's a competitor, and every time he's down, he responds. For him to go out there and play the way he played tonight, it was amazing. 32, 6 boards, 4 assists, 6 steals. The 6 steals let me know he's very active both offensively and defensively. He went back in his bag today. He was Flash tonight. We needed every bit of it. Yeah, he's hurting. Of course he's hurting. He's been playing with a bum knee all year. He's hurting, but he's not making no excuses about it. A performance like tonight will make you feel better. We had a game plan, and we played well. We played well offensively and defensively, and we needed it. We needed everybody, contributions tonight from the starters to the bench. We stuck with the game plan, even as they were making their run in the second quarter and some of the runs they made in the third. Well, I needed a break a few minutes, for sure. I gave it everything I had. I was just playing as hard as I could until the tank was empty. And that's how it's going to have to be for the rest of this series. I was just trying to keep my foot on the gas, me personally, and just play till, like I said, until the tank was empty. That's why we have guys that can come in, when guys get tired, just keep the momentum going. I just came into the game confident. Before I even made a shot I came into the game confident. I knew what my mindset was going to be. I didn't worry about last game. Last game was history. And I just worried in the present. I'm blessed and happy I was able to make a contribution to our win tonight. That's exactly right. You said it perfectly. We can't wait until our back is against the wall every time to respond. We have to build some momentum. And we can use tonight as momentum, but we still have work to do. We still got to get better. There was some stretches tonight where we didn't play well. And if we understand and if we own it, we come in with a mindset on Sunday that we are desperate once again, and our back is against the wall. So it's going to be a challenge for us, and we have to be ready for that. I'm blessed to have, I guess, a next day. I never went to college, so I never had to worry about if you lose the first one, then it's like I don't have another opportunity. And it's not saying I'm taking the game for granted, I just know there's a tomorrow. And I can't worry about what happened yesterday. And that's what I've been able to do. As bad as I played in Game 3, I put all the pressure on me to say I can't afford to play like that and hope for us to win. Not at this level. So I was able to forget about it. It hurt. I watched the film. It hurt watching it. I didn't like the way I was playing. But I just came in with a whole new clean slate tonight, and like I said, I was blessed to be able to make a few plays to help us win. He's a big time player. Against big time players you just try to make it tough on them. That's what we've been trying to do. We've been trying to get high hands on his pick and rolls. He's a great passer. When he raises for his threes, we try to get contests. When he drives the lane, we try to get a body in front of him and contest him at the rim. Sometimes you're lucky, and sometimes you're in the right position. So it's been a little bit of both. The 25 shots let me know that he was aggressive, every shot that he took. He wasn't passive. He came off, they went under, he shot his jumper. In transition he attacked the rim. He continued to attack throughout the game. And no matter how great you are, no matter what your rÃ©sumÃ© is, to have a game like this, it let's you know that you're still one bad you know the next two words. I can't say, my kids may be watching. That dude was amazing. Like I said, he was '06 Flash tonight. And we needed every bit of him. Thanks, guys. |
| Absolutely. That's the position we're in. The most important game is Game 6. We can't worry about a Game 7. We have to worry about Game 6 and going back home, being confident about our game, being confident about getting a win, which we are. So it is what it is. We have a Game 6 on our home floor. He said it. He said it. We're going to see if we're a better team than we were our first year together. I always kind of focus on the present. And for us the next challenge is Tuesday night. We will get better tomorrow. We're going to watch film, see ways we can clean up our starts, especially our first quarter. We're not playing well in the first quarter. We have to figure that out. But our next challenge, biggest challenge will be Tuesday night. We have an opportunity on our home floor with our home fans to keep the series going, and we look forward to it. Well, I mean, for me I think opportunity is everything. Pop gave him an opportunity. He's trying to seize the moment, and he's doing great for his team so far. If I knew the answer we would have won two games in a row. I don't know. Just haven't been able to do it. I think that's where it starts for us, honestly. Getting into the paint. I think between the two of us, we probably missed 12 lay ups tonight. Transition lay ups that we usually convert. I missed a lob. I missed two lay ups. Transition on the same possession. I know D Wade had a few lay ups that we're accustomed to making. Those are points in the paint that we weren't able to convert which we are not worried about. Those are shots we make. And maybe it would be a different turnout at that point. Ray is a big part of our team. So when he's on the floor, he's a threat. We try to find him. I think just to piggyback on what he said, it don't matter if you are up, you need one more win or one more win you're out. You can't sleep. Especially at this point. It's a great opportunity for both teams. For them to close this out for them to win it, and for us to force a Game 7. So we look forward to the challenge. We've been here before. And like you said, we've been on both sides of the fences. See what happens, and we got an opportunity to do something special. And we look forward to it. |
| We just played with a lot of energy. We defended at a higher level and allowed us to get back into the game. I don't even remember the play much. I was just focused on the job, the task at hand, and just trying to be aggressive, just trying to figure out ways I could help the team get back into the game. And you know, I guess the headband was the least of my worries at that point. It was by far the best game I've ever been a part of. The ups and downs, the roller coaster, the emotions, good and bad throughout the whole game. To be a part of something like this is something you would never be able to recreate once you're done playing the game. And I'm blessed to be a part of something like this. And I'm happy about the way we dug down and was able to get a win. It didn't look like we could muster up at some point in the game. Yeah, I noticed it. It kind of did the same to all of us. There's a few guys in the locker room that talked about it. We seen the championship board already out there, the yellow tape. And you know, that's why you play the game, to the final buzzer. And that's what we did tonight. We gave it everything that we had and more. And to come out with a win like that, it makes it even more greater, when you're able to, I guess, just will everything that you have as individuals for a team and have a game like this. If it's not me taking the shot, I have no problem with Ray take that shot, man. He's got ice water in his veins. Ray can like I said, Ray can be 0 for 99 in a game and if he get an open look late in the game, it's going down. That's just the confidence he have in himself. It's the preparation that he prepares for every game. It's the confidence that we have in him. We seen it before. We seen it before. We're happy to have him on our side. And this is the reason why we wanted him in games like this. I mean, fatigue is a part of the game. You've got two teams that's fighting for an NBA championship. Not only are they going all the way taking the tank all the way down to E, they're also using their reserve tank. But I don't think fatigue played a part in the game. I think both teams had a will to win. We just made one more play at the end of the day. I did a lot. I called him, texted him. I just knew what he could bring to our team. Just like you said, I've been on the other end of seeing him get them feet down, putting them stupid two fingers after he make the shot. Not so stupid anymore now that he's my teammate; I love it. He's big time. He's big time. We love we're so happy to have him, man. He creates so much for our team. And to have someone as dangerous as that on our roster, man, it means so much. Well, I mean, it wasn't too much of a broken play. We ran a great set. I came over, got a great look. CB made some unbelievable plays tonight. He got the offensive rebound. Hit Ray, and once Ray got them feet down, I seen it in the air and I was like "It's going in. It got a chance. It's going in." And he drained it. Just gave us another life. I think luck plays a part, of course. But at the end of the day, we're out there busting our tails to make to put ourself in a position to have a little luck. But at the end of the day we have a Game 7 on our floor to win the NBA championship. So I really don't care how the hell we done played so far. . We could have played the worst six games of our lives, but we got a Game 7 on our floor. So Thursday is for all the marbles. I was struggling shooting the ball. We were struggling. And they took a commanding 12 point lead to start the fourth. After we came out before we entered the ball, I basically just told myself, give it all I got. If we go down losing, I'm going to go down with no bullets. I'm going all out. I can be satisfied with the results. That's exactly what I did. I just tried to play both sides of the floor on a high intense level until I had no more left in the tank. Looked at Spo a few times. Told him I need a timeout, so I can get a rest. And just go back on the floor and try to make plays happen. Just try to do whatever it takes for our team to win, man. And that's what it's about. I just think the emotions. The emotions, the ups and downs, us being up, us being down. I think more than anything just our mental toughness. Our mental toughness to make it almost look like the game was out of our hands, and to come through victorious. And to be a part of something like this, like I said, once you're done playing this game, you would never be able to recreate a feeling like I had, we had, the fans had, you guys had, people at home. Never be able to recreate that. I'm just blessed I could be a part of such an unbelievable moment. I thought we did a better job in quarter one today of coming out with a sense of urgency. I think Tim Duncan, he was amazing in the first quarter. They made some tough shots. But we still had a two point lead. It was the second quarter that really killed us. We got outscored by eight in that quarter. And in the third quarter we got outscored by four. If we come out at the end of the day, it's the last game of the season. It's the last game of the season. You have to muster up all the energy that you might have. It's not about X's and O's at this point. They know what we're running. We know what they're running. We know their personnel. They know our personnel. It's about getting stops defensively, staying in it mentally, not turning the ball over, and making a few shots. The best team will be crowned Thursday night |
| 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 |
| I don't think we played a solid game all the way through. We had a lot of mistakes, and they took advantage of it. Obviously, a three point shot is a big thing for our team, and tonight they weren't there. No one had it going. We had some really good looks. They didn't fall, and we just got to do a better job executing in the next game. A little bit of everywhere. I mean, they got some threes early on. Our pick and roll coverage had a lot of breakdowns, including myself; I broke down a few times defensively, and we allowed them to get into the paint. I mean, they shot 37 free throws to our 15, which is definitely something that we can't duplicate going into Game 2. But we had some breakdowns throughout the game, and that's what resulted in us losing this game. As a veteran ball club, we will watch the film and break it down and be better prepared in Game 2. It will be a little bit of both. Just because you watch it on film doesn't mean it's going to be exactly how you want to play in it. You've got to be able to read and adjust on the fly. But I think going into Game 2 we'll be more mentally prepared for their actions and have a game plan of how we're going to cover their pick and rolls. They did a great job with their pick and rolls, with Roy setting it or David setting it and exploited us. The game's still so fresh. It's too hard just to say, well, we need to do this better in Game 2. We need to evaluate our mistakes and things we did well in Game 1 first before I can say what we need to bring to Game 2. Tomorrow will be a game I mean, will be a day when we watch film and start to prepare for Tuesday. We wasn't surprised because Spo told us what the lineup was going to be. So we weren't surprised. It's got to be a collective group, not just one guys or two guys. We all have to get down there and help everybody out. They outrebounded us by nine. So we've got to do a better job of that. We will see. We'll make adjustments, and we'll be a better team in Game 2. We just gave them too many points in the first quarter. We let George Hill get into a real good groove to start the game. And from that point on, I mean, they hit 30 on us, and we just broke down defensively, had a couple of breakdowns, couple of miscommunication errors. Like I said, which we will clean up. They took care of business Game 1, and we'll figure it out going into Game 2. |
| I mean, I just play the game. However the game presents itself, I just try to take advantage of it. I needed to do something in the fourth. I did a great job in the third quarter of attacking and getting my guys some open looks. I hit Cole for two threes, hit C.B. for a three, but I needed to make a few buckets as well to help us in the fourth quarter, and I was able to come through for us. Just tried to keep a body on him. Very good player. Our bigs took a challenge on him all night. Just try to run him off the shot. When he drove, just tried to keep a chest in front of him. Made him take contested shots over the top. Offensively, we just tried to attack him as well. Put him in some pick and rolls. He got a couple of early quick fouls. So that maybe got him out of rhythm, too. But our bigs did a great job on him. We got back to play Miami Heat basketball. We flew around, covered for one another. Even when we made mistakes, we still covered for one another. We allowed them in Game 1 to dictate what our defense did, and that's not us. They had us on our heels the whole game, and that's not how we play basketball. Every time we lose, we always that's the first thing that we can see. Defensively today, we came out with an aggressive mindset. Even if we made mistakes, guys had to cover for one another, and I think we did that for 48 minutes. Yeah, absolutely. Norris is I mean, he's all about defense. He's all about team. Whatever it takes to win. I believe that he'll be a good matchup on Stephenson, even though Stephenson is a bigger guy. He's going to get some shots over him. He's going to make some plays, but I think Norris can lock in on him. And it allowed D Wade to shift to Paul George and allowed me to shift to George Hill. So that versatility that we have on our wings at that point, it helps a lot. But for me as a leader, I just try to give confidence to guys, and I was confident enough for Norris to take on that challenge. Lance had it going, and at the same time, Norris got it going on the other end offensively too, making two threes in a clutch situation. I think the three days are going to allow us to prepare for Game 3. Even though we won, we're going to break down the film as if we lost and see ways we can get better even with some of the mistakes that we made. I think the best thing about tonight, even though we made mistakes, we were flying around, and we were playing the type of basketball that we wanted to play. When we do that, we give ourself a great chance to win, and we can live with the results. So with these three days, we're not comfortable, and we're not satisfied at all. We came here. We got Game 2, but Game 3 is a new game, and we're going to start preparing for that tomorrow and get ready for it on Saturday. We have no idea we're doing that until we hear it after the game, which is our plan. We believe it doesn't matter whoever has the ball in each other's hand, we're going to make the right play not only for ourselves but for our team. Tonight was one of those nights once again, where we were making plays, finding guys, and finding each other, finding a good rhythm with the ball in our hands. We don't know we're doing those things, but we just try to make plays and do whatever it takes to help our team win. It was a huge momentum play. We did a great job on that possession. Hibbert got the ball, and our big did a great job of pressuring him, and he took a couple dribbles and then stopped, and everybody just locked in on their individual man. D Wade kept the Paul from Paul George getting it. Norris kept it from Lance. C.B. kept it from David West, and I was trying to do the same thing to George Hill. When George Hill got the ball, I just tried to lock in on him. I was able to get a steal. Usually, D Wade don't even chase me down. He knows if it's a one on one matchup with me, most of the time I'm going to score. I was glad that he did. I missed the layup, and he was able to tip dunk it. Huge momentum play in the fourth quarter when we needed it the most. |
| I'm fine. Probably just got a little dehydrated tonight. It's been four days since we played. Just playing as hard as we could tonight. I try to prevent that from happening, but it happened. D Wade came in and closed the quarter out. I wasn't going to leave until I saw what he was going to do. He drained and put us up ten, and I was all right. He definitely did that by putting the right personnel on the floor. Obviously, we started the game with mental turnovers, mental breakdowns, mostly coming from us offensively. He pushed the right buttons, bringing in Norris, giving Rashard a nod, Bird came in with his energy every night he plays. Those guys off the bench, man, they did it for us tonight. They got the game ball for sure. Well, for us, we have to play our type of basketball. We have to be disruptive. We have to speed up the team that we're going against, and we have to fly around defensively. When we lay back, we're just everything that we've built, it just doesn't work. We just lay back and allow teams to come down and set up their offense or whatever the case may be, even offensively, when we're just passing the ball around and being very passive. We're an attack team. When we get into our game, so many things happen for us, and we're even able to cover up for some of the mistakes we make both offensively and defensively. Ray creates so much for our team, just his ability just to move without the ball, to shoot the ball. He shifts the defense by himself, and it's a great I mean, it's great that we have that. No matter who's on him, him coming off pin downs, he's one of the few on our team that can do that, that can create two on the ball, and he's always in constant motion. He's got it going, man, and we just want to continue to find him. I was able to find him for the majority of the shots that he had tonight in the fourth quarter, and when you got a hot hand, you just keep going to it. We have a lot of confidence versus our opponent, but we don't want to keep digging holes. We hate the way we played to start the game. We can't play that type of basketball. We've got to come out and play like we're down 15 to start the game because they can't bite us in the butt if we don't prepare that way. But we're a confidence group. We don't panic. We just work the game. Obviously, the start of the game, it wasn't the type of basketball that we're accustomed to playing. We turned the ball over way too much, and myself and a couple other guys had a few turnovers. But we just got into our game. We kept going, getting into our game. We started putting pressure on them defensively, offensively, and we were able to get back into the game at the end of the second quarter. Norris, he's great. He's great for our team. He's a change of pace from we have our starting point guard in Rio, and when we go to Norris, he changes the tempo. That's when you need with guys off the bench, you need energy guys. We have a few of them, but Norris, he's great. He's been in this is his third year. He's still young, but he's been in all the pressure situations, obviously, so he's able to come in and be confident. As the leaders of the team, we try to give him confidence. Defensively, though, it's his mark. He makes his mark defensively. He makes us all step up our game defensively as well, and then offensively, whatever he gives us is always extra credit for us. He attacks the rim, gets himself looks, gets our great guys looks, and it's great to have him. Not surprised. They've done it for two years. Two years straight, he's guarded Ray when we went small. So not surprised at all. |
| Chris Bosh. We got off to that fast start because Chris Bosh came out and got it going early. No, I don't need any motivation. I'm motivated enough to try to get back The Finals. That's motivating enough, and being one of the leaders of this team, I have to do my job. I have to do my part to help us win. That's what it's all about. I got a smirk out of it. We did only have five turnovers, seven steals, and 20 points off their turnovers. That has nothing to do with the free throw line. The fact that it makes it a lot easier for Spo when you have true professionals, guys that can sit out for one month, two months, two weeks, and get the nod, and they're ready to go right then and there. That makes it a lot easier on our coaching staff to have the locker room and the group of guys we have. That's why Spo and Riles and those guys went out and got this team. It wasn't just about the game of basketball. It's about what they bring to the locker room as well. To insert U.D. back into the starting lineup and then take him out and insert Rashard. Or when D Wade went down and Toney Douglas came in or J.J. came in in the Charlotte series. It's whatever. G.O.'s number could still get called. B's number could still get called. Those guys are ready. That's the type of locker room we have. It makes it a lot easier for Coach when you have that type of luxury. I took care of it. Don't worry about it. I got you It's going to take a better game than we had tonight. It's that simple. You have to get better every game. Their back is against the wall, but we have to go in with that mindset that our back is against the wall, too. We don't want to come back with a Game 6. We love our fans, obviously. We love being in Miami, but we want to try to close it out. But we're going to have to work for it. It's not going to be easy, not against this team. It's the No.1 team in the Eastern Conference, and they're there for a reason. So we look forward to the challenge. The first play of the game was ran for him, and he opened it up with a jumper. Second play, D Wade drove the ball, kicked it to him in the corner, and he hit a three. From that point on, he just got it going. He had 10 points in the first quarter. Should have had 12; he missed two free throws. I haven't seen that from him in a while, but he just got it going. We rode him that whole first quarter, and it gave us the 27 19 lead. For us, we just want to play great basketball. We don't really get involved in whatever that we can't control. What we can control is how we approach the game from an offensive and defensive standpoint, and that's with aggression. That's how we approach the game. At the end of the game, whatever the end results is, we can be satisfied with that if we brought our game. Everything else doesn't matter. When you get between the lines of the court, 94 feet, and you got to get in between, and you got to play it. That's all we try to worry about. We can't worry about nothing else. It was to get Chris going. We needed it from him. C.B. had been struggling offensively the last few games, and we needed that. We needed it from him. So Spo called it, and I was able to D Wade was able to make the pass. I was able to slice over the top to release pressure from him, make Hibbert back up into the lane, and that got him his first shot. That was the game plan for us. We've been talking about it the last couple of days, how are we going to get C.B. going? It worked out for us tonight. All time, yeah. |
| I picked up some early fouls. It's definitely something I'm not accustomed to, but my teammates kept it going and put us in a position to win. That's all we can ask for. We needed it. We needed every bit of it. Wish it would have resulted in a win when he started to make shots, it was big time. He gave us huge minutes. His timely shots, defensive activity. He's been great ever since he's been inserted into the lineup for sure. Just called it out. I was able to get into the paint, drew two, and saw C.B. in the corner in his sweet spot. Thought we got a pretty good look. You live with the result. I don't really I mean, I'm just here to play basketball, man. All the extracurricular activities, I don't really get into. I mean, I'm just trying to win. We need one more game to get The Finals. That's my only concern. We put ourselves in a position to win tonight, and as competitors, as professionals, that's what we are. At the end of the day, we put ourself in a position to win. All the extra, whatever Lance wants to deal with, I don't really care about that. Absolutely not. It's a clean slate for myself. It sucks for me because I'm not able to make plays to help our team win. I made a couple in the fourth, but 24 minutes is not enough for me to make an imprint on the game like I know I'm accustomed to doing or I know I can do. So you just continue to help the guys from the bench, let them know what you can see when you're in foul trouble, and ways we can try to exploit them. But I'm much better on the floor than I am off of it for sure. I mean, it is what it is. We go back home. We learn from our mistakes tonight, and tomorrow we get ready for Friday. I said that? You think or I said that? Yeah, I don't think I said that. Yeah, okay. Don't worry about it. Obviously, we don't want to come back. We come here to win. We'll focus on Game 6 now. Like I said before, we focus on the things that we can control and not the things we can't control. We learn from our mistakes. 17 turnovers on the road for 21 points is definitely not winning basketball in no way, shape, or form. Like D Wade said, this game is imperfect. You cover for those mistakes. At the end of the day we put ourselves in position to win, and we look forward to the game on Friday. It's Eastern Conference Finals, it should be urgency no matter what. You can't control shots going in. It's a make or miss league. I think turnovers for sure. You can control that. You're going to have some. We're an attack team. We're going to have attack turnovers. Some of the careless turnovers, some of the swing passes, some of the entry passes where we were careless with them and we allowed them to get into the open floor, those are some of the things we can clear. No. We don't get involved in things that we can't control. That's not how we play ball. Only thing we can control is how we approach the game in Game 6. Lance is Lance. He's going to do what he needs to do to help his team win. As to the leaders of our team, we're going to do what it takes to help our team win. The game is reffed by the refs. They ref how they see it. We play it, and you live with the results. I mean, it's easy to say that after the fact. It's like playing cards, that's why they got backs on them. You don't know what's going to happen. For me, my teammates trust me that I'm going to make the right play to help us win. I trust myself that I'm going to make the right play to help us win. And win, lose, or draw, you live with that. I don't it doesn't matter from somebody else's perspective. We got a great look. C.B. makes that shot, then we go, we get a stop, and we're headed to The Finals. So it's a make or miss league. You don't think about things you could do in the past. You just correct them in the future. Probably my wife. I blew in my wife's ear before. That was definitely a defensive tactic. That's the second time it's happened to me, right? |
| 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. |
| I'm feeling better than I did when I came off the floor. So, doing better. I was going to try to give it a go and Spo said no. It sucks at this point in time in the season. You know, after I made that layup we was down two and, you know, as well as they played we still had a chance. You know, after I came out of the game, they kinda took off. And it was frustrating sitting out and not be able to help our team. Yeah, it's both. I mean, it's frustration and anger, but at the same time it's something that you try to prevent, you try to control. I mean, I got all the fluids I need to get, I do my normal routine I've done and it was inevitable for me tonight, throughout the conditions, you know, out there on the floor. I lost all the fluids that I was putting in in the last couple of days out there on the floor. It sucks not being out there for your team, especially at this point in the season. The best option for me to do was not to move. I tried and any little step or nudge, it would get worse. It would lock up worse and my muscles spasmed 10 out of 10. Best thing for me to do was just not to move, and, you know, it was frustrating. Well, no, it was the whole left leg, damn near the whole left side. I was losing a lot throughout the game. It was extremely hot in the building, you know, both teams, fans, everybody could feel it. I was the one that had to take the shot. Drank a lot at halftime, even changed my uniform, just tried to get the sweat up off of you. Our training staff tried to do the best they could by giving us ice bags and cold towels on timeouts, keep us dry. It was an unusual circumstance, I never played in a building like that, it's been a while, like high school game or CYO and everybody is sitting on top and you feel good being in a building like that. But, you know, at the end of the day, it's no discredit for what they did. They played extremely well. They moved the ball extremely well. I think they had 30 assists. You know, even from the turnovers both teams were committing, uncharacteristic of both teams, they played extremely well. I need it, I need it, I need it. We're going to start tonight, continue to get the fluids in me and get me ready for Sunday. Thankful for the fact that I can get on it tonight, and put myself in a position where I can be out there for my team for the long haul. And sitting on the sideline, you know, if I'm not in foul trouble, is not good for us and not good for me. Look forward to Game 2 and go from there. |
| It was rewarding in that it was a huge play to help us win. I just seen it develop the whole time, and I wanted to try to put some pressure towards the rim, and I caught Tim Duncan peeking at me a little bit. And I was able to find C.B. in the corner in one of his favorite spots on the floor and he knocked it down. That's not our concern. All we worry about is what we can control and that's just how we play the game, how we approach the game both physically and mentally. And we live with the results. Just play the game, try to play the game the right way. However the flow of the game is going, I just try to impose my will in some kind of way, either scoring or rebounding or assisting or defending. Put myself and my teammates in a position to succeed, and I was happy in the fact that I was able to make some plays to help us get the victory tonight. Didn't affect me at all. I've been going with the longer tights throughout the playoffs; decided to go with the shorter ones today. I don't know, I was watching Game 2 of our Finals appearance versus OKC in 2012, and I didn't have long tights on in that game, so that's why I didn't wear them tonight. Just a little crazy on my part. For me once I get into a good groove, I feel like everything is going to go in. Obviously it didn't. I made a couple of shots in a row, and then missed the elbow jumpshot over Tim, and they made a run after that. But for me I just try to make plays out there on the floor, and like I continue to say, put myself and my teammates in a position to succeed and live with the results after that. I just continued to attack. I had a slow start, but all my misses was in the paint. My first miss was a shot over Tim and Tiago; I missed it. I missed a spinning layup in the lane. I missed a banker over Tony Parker. I just got off to a slow start. Then I drove the lane and got my foot tangled up a little bit and threw up a wild shot I started 1 for 5. I was confident in where I was getting on the floor and I had to stick with it. For me, at that point in the game, yeah, I was tired. I got two offensive rebounds. Was able to go back up with them. Put some pressure on their defense. So Spo was very, very consistent and great with his adjustments today as far as the personnel, in and out guys, in and out. And when I asked to come out, he took me out and I was able to go back in. You know, I didn't really try to think about it too much. One thing I did do differently this morning, I took an 8 a.m. yoga class at our resort that we stayed at outside. Me, and three other people and also a little kid but he didn't want no parts of it. So that's probably the only thing that I did differently today. Nah, it started to rain a little bit this morning, actually. About 8:35 it started to rain. Well, I mean, mentally I didn't want to even think about it too much. What happened on Thursday was Thursday. My whole focus was how was it going to help this team even the series up and just try to make some plays. It wasn't an adjustment. In the first half, you know, I got into the paint, made some shots, got some rebounds, put pressure on their defense. In the second half they backed up off me and I shot it. It was that easy for me in the sense of don't overthink it. They give me space, I shoot it. They get up on me, I try to drive and make plays for me and my teammates. They're going to make adjustments going into Game 3, and I have to do it as well. But I don't want to cloud my mind too much with what they're doing defensively. I want their defense to react to what I'm doing. I've heard it all. I've heard it all. I just stay with my plan. Our training staff and our medical team, we do a great job of just doing what we usually do. We didn't want to complicate things. I think the two and a half bags after a game of IV helped me out a lot. Like I said, I didn't try to think about it too much tonight. I thought it was a tough call to start it off, with Rio getting the flagrant one. I thought it was an inadvertent elbow. I didn't think it was intentional. So Tony missed two and Tim went up and missed two as well. Just wanted to capitalize off their mistakes and just try to put some pressure on their defense. We got some great looks, we made 'em tonight. And the biggest thing for us, we got stops as well when we needed it. That helped us win this game. I've got a great supporting cast around me that allows me to vent at times. Try not to hold it in. I also understand at this point in my life what's important and what's not important and what's important is my teammates, what's important is my two kids at home, my wife, my family and my friends. That's what I can control and that's what's important to me. Obviously the game of basketball has brought me so much, and I love to play this game at a high level. And without this game, I wouldn't be who I am today. But I also know what's important. Everything else kind of just fall by the wayside. You have to. It's very difficult at times, very challenging, but for me, I'm here and I know who I'm playing for and what I'm playing for and what I stand for, not only as a basketball player but as man and as a role model. I know what I stand for. To be able to put an NBA uniform on every single night with my name on the back, knowing where I come from, let's me know that I've done something special. I just try to give back to the game as much as I can while I'm here. Rashard has been huge for us ever since he's been inserted into our starting lineup, from the Indiana series. He's been in this position before. He's been to the Finals with Orlando Magic. He's been in huge playoff games, and his experience and ability to knock down shots helps us out a lot. It spreads the floor for us, and every time he catches the ball, we tell him just to shoot it. Don't think about nothing else besides shooting the ball, and we live with his results. I think that's a key going into any game. When a team lives in the paint, it puts so much pressure on your defense and it allows paint points obviously. But when guys get into the paint it shrinks the defense, and they get to kick out for their threes, which they did a couple times tonight. Danny Green had one, Tony hit one, Patty Mills had a couple. We got to do a better job of shrinking the floor and not allowing them to get in the paint. They will, they will get into the paint some, but as much as we can limit the penetration, it will help us out a lot. Offensively we want to share the ball and not turn the ball over. We're a team that shoots the ball extremely high from the field, very efficient offensively. We get ourselves in trouble when we turn the ball over. It doesn't allow us to set our defense. We're a really good half court defense, we're a solid pick and roll defense. And when we're solid offensively, we don't turn the ball over, we're going to get an opportunity to make something happen. Not at all. If you're on the floor at that point in time, you can make a play. You can make a shot, a steal, a rebound. You can do whatever it takes to help us win. For me, when the ball is in my hands, I'm going to make the right play. To have that trust from my teammates, they know when I got the ball, I'm going to make the right play. Doesn't mean it's going to go in. Doesn't mean it's going to result in a win, but they believe in my ability to do that. You know, C.B. had just missed one, got a great look, but if I draw two and his man leave him again, I went right back to him and he knocked it down. I got a lot of confidence in my teammates and they got a lot of confidence in me and we live with the results no matter what happens. |
| Oh, they jumped on us, and they were the aggressor tonight, and they had us on our heels from the beginning. This is something that at this point in the season shouldn't happen, but they were more aggressive an us and they got off to that 41 25 lead at the end of the first. Well, I mean, of course. I mean, it's The Finals, so everything is magnified. You want to win at this point in the season but for us, we will get better from tonight. We hate the performance that we put on, but it's 2 1. It's not 4 1. It's 2 1, and we have to make some adjustments tomorrow. We're going to come in and learn from our mistakes, as we always do after a loss, and get ready and prepared from the beginning. You know, this is the last team in the NBA that you can dig yourself a hole against. You just can't do it, and we learned from that tonight. I think it was a little bit of everything. It was a cumulative of everything. Some possessions we played extremely well and they hit shots. Some possessions we weren't quite there and they hit shots as well. One thing about this team, if you make a mistake, they're going to make you pay, and they made us pay more often than not tonight from some of the mistakes that we made defensively. I was in a pretty good rhythm tonight as well. I just turned the ball over way too much. I had two at halftime, I had five in the second half, and some of them were trying to make some plays to my teammates, and some of them were just overdribbling at times. So I've got to do a better job with that for sure. It's not surprising that I have a Finals record for something I don't want to have, you know, so there we go. It's a new storyline for LeBron. I don't think we had a lack of urgency. Just they were very aggressive and we didn't match that. They came in with a desperation that we just didn't match. Just because it's our fourth Finals doesn't mean anything. That doesn't guarantee you a win. It doesn't guarantee you that you'll be more urgent or less urgent than the next team. You just have to prepare for each and every game. We've got to have a better performance in Game 4, for sure. We definitely can't get behind this team like we did tonight. Well, we want them to run the offense and we want them to defend. When they get open looks, we want them to take them with confidence. When they have an opportunity, we want them to be aggressive. Obviously, with Tony and Patty, those guys are very high motors, so we want them to match that effort. One thing you can't control in the game of basketball if a shot goes in or not, but you can control how you defend. You can control how much energy you bring to the game, how much effort you bring to the game. If our two point guards do that, we can be okay with that. I know our two point guards, they're very passionate. They've got a lot of pride. And I know they're looking forward to learning from what they did tonight, and trying to be much better in Game 4. Well, they spread you out. They have multiple guys that can make plays. It's kind of like us. They share the ball extremely well, and those guys are always in the right spot. I mean, if they ran the set and closed their eyes, they know exactly where the guys going to be at. It's a system they've been in. They do a great job of feeling one another out. And every guy that's on the floor can make a play. You know, it's very challenging mentally and physically for a defense. So you always have to be in tune. |
| No, first time I left I went to go get retaped, retape my ankle. It's been kind of bothering me for the last couple days, but I felt okay. Second time I went back, I just had to use the restroom. Well, I mean, man, we put ourselves in a position where it is about making history. But all we can do is worry about Game 5. We've got to worry about Sunday first. Try to go up there in a hostile environment, where we were able to steal one in Game 2, and try to get another one and go on from there. Obviously, I do know the numbers. It's never been done before, but we're still a confident bunch, even though our heads are lowered down right now. Of course, being down 3 1, and losing two straight games at home, that's just human nature. But we've still got to go out and play on Sunday. That didn't mean nothing, you know. If it's not helping us get into the game, it didn't mean nothing. I tried to will us back into the game, but they continued to execute. I continued to make shots. I had a huge third quarter, but it meant nothing. I mean, they smashed us. Two straight home games, got off to awful starts. They came in and were much better than us in these two games. It's just that simple. I mean, coming into the series we knew that that's what it was going to be about. They're a high oil machine and they move the ball extremely well. They put you in so many difficult positions. If you're not right on time, right on target, they're going to make you pay for it. Well, I mean, the series is not over. We've got guys with too much pride to even start thinking about that. At the end of the day, our focus will be, how do we get better than we did in Game 3 and Game 4 here at home? We're going with that bunker mentality in Game 5. Like D Wade said, we'll get away from it tomorrow physically. Mentally it will still be lingering around. Saturday you start to get back into the flow of things, and then Sunday you go out and play and see what happens. That sounds like a set up question. Not really? Man, they move the ball extremely well. They put you in positions that no other team in this league does, and it's tough because you have to cover the ball first, but also those guys on the weak side can do multiple things. They can shoot the ball from outside, they can also penetrate. So our defense is geared towards running guys off the three point line, but at the same time those guys are getting full steam ahead and getting to the rim, too. The challenge is as well, with them, implementing Diaw into the lineup has given them another point guard on the floor. So Manu, Tony, and Diaw and Patty Mills on the floor at once, they've got four point guards basically on the floor at once. So all of them are live and they all can make plays. So it's a challenge for us all. No, because I didn't even remember that until you just told me. Obviously, I'm a guy who always just kind of lives in the moment, man. One thing you can't do is control what happened in the past. You can only focus on the present and hopefully you can do better in the future from your present time. For me, I'm here at this point. I'm here with the 3 1 deficit, and me as one of the leaders of the team, I have to figure out a way to get us to a 3 2 deficit. And you worry about that, and everything else that's happened before you, you can't control it at this point. Well, I mean, they're a difficult challenge. Like I said, I stated it before because they have so many guys that can do multiple things. Any little mistake you make, they make you pay for it. So we have to go back to the drawing board once again, figure out ways we can slow down on the mistakes that we had and get better from it on Sunday. Soul searching, there won't be much of that. There won't be much of that at all for me. Crazy thing is my two boys are running around in the locker room after the game was over, so I had no time to even think about the game anymore. They want to know what's going on right when we get home. So having my boys around will allow me to get away from the game. But I will still be in tune with what I need to do to help our team win, and that's my mindset. But as far as soul searching, we're a veteran ballclub that's won a championship, that's won a couple championships, that's been to four straight Finals. We know what it takes to win. We've just got to go out and do it. I don't really get caught up in what pressure is all about. I mean, just go out and play basketball, play as hard as you can and live with the results. For me, I do whatever it takes to help our team win. If it's me going one on one to try to help us win, if it's me getting guys involved and taking threes in rhythm, then I'll do it. But I don't really get caught up in the pressure. You definitely don't want to it's not on my shoulder. It's not. I understand I get a lot of the limelight in the press and all that, but it's not all on my shoulder. I take a lot of it, but I do it for my teammates and I want them to put a lot of pressure on me in that sense. But going into the first quarter is how you start games off, and you don't ever want to go into the second quarter being down. But it is what it is. That is the way the series has played out thus far. You know, we have another game on Sunday to kind of right the ship and get better from it, and not be down like we've done in these first four games, because it's not been a successful ingredient for us. I don't even know what that means . I got an engine underneath my hood. I have no idea what that means. I mean, that should be the goal from the start, you know. Whoever can make plays and put your teammates in position to win, all the stones should be unturned. That shouldn't happen in The Finals. That should happen from day one. You come into training camp and you find guys, you put guys on the floor to complement each other, and you put guys on the floor, and we all help each other on the floor from the coaches to the players. So shouldn't wait until you get to The Finals for that. Thanks for clarifying that, too, because I had no idea what you were talking about |
| Oh, I mean, mixed emotions. Started off very well as a team. We had a great first quarter. But from that point on, they were the better team, and that's why they're the champions in 2014. I haven't even really thought about that just yet. Not disappointed in any of my teammates, just wish we could have came through, played a better series, but obviously we ran up against a better team this year. Like I said, I haven't even thought about it yet. I'm not even nowhere near at that point. You know, we went to four straight Finals in four years. You know, we're not discrediting what we were able to accomplish in these four years. We lost one, we won two, and we lost another one. Take 50% in four years in championships any day. Obviously, you want to win all of them, but that's just the nature of the game. You win some; you lose some. You've just got to come back the next year and be better as an individual, as a team, and go from there. But I know me and D. Wade and C.B., not proud of the way we played. All three of us, that's the last thing we're thinking about is what's going on this summer. I haven't heard it. It really doesn't matter to me what people say at all. Just wanted to try to inspire my teammates and came out very aggressive, made some shots, got to the free throw line. Tried to inspire my teammates to try to get a win. Obviously, I didn't do enough. I would agree. They were the much better team. That's what team basketball and that's how team basketball should be played. You know, it's selfless. Guys move, cut, pass, you've got a shot, you take it, but it's all for the team and it's never about the individual. That's the brand of basketball, and that's how team basketball should be played. I mean, it's hard to say anything. I mean, everyone is going through their own emotions right now. Everyone deals with it a little differently. For me, I keep my head high. I understand the position I've been able to put myself and put this team in since I got here, so my head stays high and I'm going to stay positive and use this as another opportunity to get better next year. But everyone is different. I mean, I play for my teammates every single night. I don't really get involved in management and all of that. That's not my job. I play for my teammates. I try to lead my teammates. I try to inspire my teammates. I let guys do their job and I do mine. Very efficient. I mean, he's very efficient. The first two games he didn't play so well. I thought he attacked more in the last three games, shot the ball extremely well. Every year you gain more and more confidence. Guys give you confidence, and he played extremely well. I mean, I will deal with my summer when I get to that point. Me and my team will sit down and deal with it. I love Miami. My family loves it. But obviously right now that's not even what I'm thinking about. You guys are trying to find answers. I'm not going to give you one. I'm just not going to give it to you. When I get to that point, I'll deal with it, and when it gets to that point. First time I lost, as a team we were excited to get there. We were more excited to get there than to win. You know, obviously, we would have loved to win that game and win that series, but the Spurs were more dominant than us. They were more seasoned. They had been there a few years and they took advantage of our youth and inexperience. Three years ago, our first year here, that was probably more hurtful than this one in the sense of we had put so much into it, we were going through so much. That Dallas team was the better team in that series as well. Obviously, they all hurt. This year they dominated us from every facet of the game offensively, defensively. I mean, they all hurt, but I've been able to be a part of five of them, and I would love to sit up here and say I was 5 0, but I'm not. I'm 2 3. But a lot of guys don't get this opportunity to even compete for a championship, and I've been blessed to compete for five of them in my 11 years so far. I don't think it's just the Spurs. It's the whole league. The whole league continues to get better every single year. Obviously we would need to get better from every facet, every position. It's just how the league works. The Spurs continue to get better. Obviously, they kept those three guys intact, but they continue to put guys around them, high basketball IQ guys around them, high energy guys around them that fit into the system of what Pop wanted to do. Obviously, it's not just about the Spurs. It's about the whole league. The whole league is excited about returning next season, and we'll see what happens. |
| At the end of the day, we're all a brotherhood. NBA is a brotherhood, and you never want anyone to get injured, even in combat. So that's what went through my mind. Obviously, I love competing versus anybody who loves to compete as well. He's one of those guys that was competing throughout the night, throughout the postseason. I'm not sure the severity of the injury right now. But I hope he has a recovery, whatever it is. You just don't want nobody to get hurt like that. I've been fortunate enough to play with some shooters to help spread the floor for myself and what I do best, and that's being in attack mode. To be able to play with one of the all time greats in Ray Allen, and also play with Mike Miller and Shane Battier and James Jones still, and then you get a guy like J.R. Smith, who's able just to shoot the ball and have the extreme confidence that every time they let it go, that it's going in. I've been blessed to play with guys like that. When you have guys like that, you have to utilize them while they're on the floor. Coach drew up a play, and we just try to run it to perfection. He drew up a play, and Double T came up and set a screen and roll. I was able to get to the middle of the floor. The ability, the way we were shooting the three ball tonight, kind of kept those last two defenders at bay, and I was able just to turn the lane and make a big play for our team at that time. Get him here, and I'll take care of it. Yeah, I got him. You get him here, I got him. Yeah, I got him . We have a great coaching staff, first of all, that gives us a game plan. We kind of, throughout these six days, we've kind of been balancing ways we can try to not stop what they do, but just try to limit some of their touches, limit some of Kyle Korver's touches and some of their other three point shooters. We're the number one defensive team in the playoffs, and it has a lot to do with when we go out, as a coaching staff, they give us the game plan. And for us as players, we go out and execute it. For us to win ultimately, we have to defend. Tonight we shot 44 percent from the field, but we defended. We gave ourselves a chance. When you defend at a high level, you give yourself a chance to win every night. Me and J.R.'s history go back long before he came into the NBA. Before he came into the NBA, he came to my hometown, and we worked out multiple days, multiple times. For me, as a leader of a team, you always just want to try to give someone an opportunity. With the talent this guy presents, I knew the man he was, and I didn't really care about what everybody else thought about him. Obviously, our front office, they have the last say so, and for me, they have the last say so, but when they made it and said they were going to do it, I was definitely all for it. I felt like, for me, we were getting a great piece, not only on the floor, but off the floor, as well, because I'd known him before he even got to this point. To answer your second question, to be able just to make plays to help your team win is all that matters for me. We have a guy like this that was shooting the ball extremely well, who broke the game open, but also the contributions from Delly off the bench again, and the two bigs, both of them having double doubles. That was big time. Like you said, in the third quarter, I went to contest DeMarre Carroll's three point attempt, and the cameraman, I guess his foot was out further than it should be, but I stepped on his foot and turned my ankle. I'm happy that it didn't cost me the rest of the game. I was able to go out there and make a few plays. I think, to answer your second question, we can't worry about how many points we're up or how many points we're down; we have to continue to play our game. It starts with me. I take all the responsibility for it. In fourth quarter, I played way too much isolation basketball, one on one basketball, a lot of defenses set, and I was letting the clock run down way too much. I just had to take the shot or I was giving it to my guys late in the shot clock, and they couldn't do nothing with it besides shoot it or turn the ball over. So I will do a better job. I'll probably watch the game over again tonight, as I try to get my body ready for Game 2. So it starts with me. It's tough, and I know it sucks for him. This is the moment he's been waiting for. This is the biggest stage. Physically, he's not capable of doing what we all know he's capable of doing, and it's starting to, I guess hopefully, it doesn't continue or hopefully it doesn't get into his mind. For me, that's my role at that point, to let him know when he's on the floor, no matter what he's going through, we need him to be aggressive, as aggressive as he can be with the injury, and not worry about things that he cannot control; only worry about the things that he can control. Like I said, that will be my job to help him understand, no matter what he's going through physically, never let it creep into his mind where it affect him mentally. We started to get kind of a rhythm of what they wanted to do, but we also just put pressure not only at the point of attack, but when the ball was moved from side to side. Like I said, our coaching staff gives us a game plan, and it's up to us to execute it. They're going to make shots. They're one of the, if not the best with Golden State, best offenses we have in our league. We just try to make it tough on them. I kind of sense it. I sense it during the game a little bit, and it's tough sometimes with our main ball handler not being on the floor, and that's in Kyrie. That's something that I'm not happy with, something I'm not really comfortable with doing. I can do it, but I don't like to play that much isolation basketball late in the game. I'd much rather get the ball moving from side to side and get a good look after that. So like I said, I'll be more conscious about that in Game 2, if that opportunity presents itself, where at least I can get the ball moving to start and then maybe at the back side, or like the third option I can get it back at the end. At least we got the defense moving instead of them just watching me pound the ball for 24 seconds. That's not good basketball. |
| I've just seen every coverage that defenses can offer me, and I always try to be a triple threat on the floor, being able to score, to rebound, to pass, whatever the case may be, however the game presents itself. Just get my confidence I give my teammates the utmost confidence that when I throw them the ball, to shoot with confidence. I just try to put it exactly where they need it to be, where all they've got to do is catch and shoot or catch and drive and make things happen. So it's something I learned when I was a youngster, understanding how important a pass is and how important it is giving your teammates confidence. When you have guys like the guy next to me and Delly and J.R. and the rest of the guys on down the line, I'm able to do what I love to do best. Well, for us, offensive rebounding is part of our game. Three point shooting is a part of our game as well. We get 30 looks at the three point line, and we had 11 offensive rebounds that converted into 13 second chance points. That's all a part of our game, it's part of our DNA. When we do that, we're very successful. I'm able to make adjustments throughout the game, just knowing how the defense read and react. Obviously, when you've got guys like here, who shot the ball extremely well tonight, the defense starts to go further and further away from the paint, and I'm able to see creases. When they react to me, I'm going to find my guys. I'm going to know exactly where they're going to be every single time I drive. That's just a repetition we have through our practices and watching the film and knowing where your guys are going to be, and they have outlets, and they make themselves presentable, and I just try to put the ball right where it needs to be. I'm able to gauge the game and watch the game and able to replay it back in my mind and understand what I can do to help us win. That's how the game presented itself. When I was attacking, I was seeing guys open. When they were bringing two to me, I was seeing guys open. Like I said, I have the most confidence, the most confidence in my teammates to make shots and make plays. For me, that's my job is to put energy behind that ball when I'm finding them. All they need to do is catch and shoot or catch and drive or make a play, and the game presented that tonight. I was able to be aggressive at times getting to the rim, and then there was times where they brought two and three guys towards me, and I was able to find my guys, and they knocked them down. Why that is, for me, more than scoring, you always get the excitement of two guys being able to benefit from a pass. If I score the ball, if I'm in an iso situation where I score the ball, it's just me, and I've always been accustomed to team basketball. When I'm able to put pressure on the defense and then make a pass to a teammate and he's able to knock it down, I've always got the excitement of that more than anything. But I have a gift, and that's why I'm able to keep defenses off guard because, you know, they say, okay, we're going to make him score or make him pass. They really can't make me do what I don't want to do. I go out, and I play the game the right way. And whatever that moment, that possession presents itself, I try to do what's best for our team at that very moment. We've gotten smarter. We've ramped up our communication to a level that, at times throughout the season, I didn't know we could get to, and we're flying around, and we're just helping one another in time of need. It starts with this guy, first of all. Look at those all defensive teams, and obviously he has a small window with us, but he will be on the all defensive team in this league very soon. It starts with him, his approach. I love the defensive side. You have a guy like Dellavedova, who he takes a challenge and Double T protecting the rim. Mozzy as well in the starting lineup tonight. And everyone else, everyone takes it seriously. We understand that ultimately, if we want to win long term, we have to defend. It's going to give us the best possible chance to win because the ball don't go through the rim all the time, and you have to be able to get stops. We've been able to do that thus far in our 4, 10, 12 games in the postseason. It's a total 360 from our last series. We were terrible in the third quarter versus the Bulls. We understood, if we want to be really good, we have to come out with a little bit more sense of urgency. We have to play more pedal to the metal in the third quarter. Defensively, we've been locked in. When the ball is entered, either if it's their possession or it's our possession, we've just been very, very in tune with the game plan, and that's allowed us to get some leads in the third quarter and push the game out of reach. How do I want to answer this question? We're the No.1 defensive team in the postseason for a reason. Obviously, it's a great offensive team that we're playing against. You can't stop a great offensive team. You just try to make it tough on them. That's all we're trying to do. We're just trying to make it tough on them every night contest all their jump shots, be in tune with the game plan, keep a body on a guy like Korver, who can break open a game by himself. And that's all. That's all we can do. They're going to make shots, which they did tonight. They still made some shots. There were some possessions where we thought we could have been a little bit more in tune, but we just try to make it tough on them. That's all we can ask, and our coaching staff gives us the game plan, and it's up to us to go out and execute it, and that's what we've been doing so far in these first two games. It's next man up. Guys are just taking the challenge. It means everything to me to be able to share this podium with multiple teammates. On every given night, Delly and Shump and J.R. and Ky and Tristan. It could be James Jones next. It could be anybody. It means a lot. It means that, first of all, what they do, they do it very well. I got teammates that they don't try to outdo what they can do. They do what they do at a high level, and for me, I just try to lead them. Lead them the best way I can, and they go out and work for me, and I try to do the same for them. Well, we learned from Game 1. In Game 1 we had a big lead, and we started to play the clock, and that was my fault. I took that straight to the head. I knew, if I got that opportunity again, I wouldn't let that happen again. So we happen to have the same thing happen today, and we just kept our foot on the gas. We had early shots in the shot clock, we took them. If not, we executed, and we were able to continue our roll and continue to defend as well. That was very important. |
| I gave it everything I had tonight. My teammates did. Played our tail off, and to be able to win the game like this, with so many ups and downs and so many lead changes, it's a huge win for our team. I was struggling earlier. I missed a lot of shots that I know I'm capable of making, obviously. Missed a lot of layups. Missed a couple threes, and my teammates kept me afloat. I think I was 0 for 9 at the end of the first quarter, but it was 21 24 at the end of the first quarter. We were in the game because of my teammates. They picked me up, and I just tried to do some other things while we were struggling offensively as far as shooting. For me, offense, as far as scoring, doesn't define my game. I've always wanted to be a triple threat in this league, being able to rebound and to assist and also to score. So when I wasn't scoring and those guys were picking me up, I was able to do other things to help us go. Every game is different as far as the Game 5 in Detroit. Compared to this game, it's so much different. It was a 2 2 series at that point being in Detroit. Tonight is a 2 0 series being back home. This is much different, but the win feels great. How am I feeling? I've been better. It will be around the clock treatment, as usual, to get my mind, get my body ready for Tuesday. Well, we needed it tonight. We gave ourselves 19 offensive rebounds, extra possessions when we weren't shooting the ball well. For me, we played a lot of small ball tonight. But even when we're big, I just try to help our bigs out, try to help rebound. It's good offense for us when I'm able to rebound, able to push the break. Just being in that mindset that I tried to get every rebound possible that was in my lane. One or two I could have got, like you said, but just being in the mix and just helping us get extra possessions. No, it's probably, it's the same thing. I play to exhaustion. I play hard and I give my teammates, and I give myself as much as I can give. Sometimes the body just kind of shuts down at times, and that's what happened tonight at one point. Even in the overtime, I asked to come out, but I had a second thought, and there was no way I can go I wouldn't have felt right about the situation, win, lose, or draw, if I'd have went to the bench and not being out there for my teammates. So it was mind over matter at that point. What does that mean? Well, you just play the game the right way. At this point, you try to do whatever it takes to win. You don't want to hurt nobody. No one, I think, in our league goes around trying to hurt people, but you don't take the aggressive nature out of the game. I think in the case of ever since you were a kid, the ball on the floor, the first man to the floor usually gets the ball. There's no difference between what Delly did to Kyle Korver last game and 18 guys diving on the floor late in the game tonight. It was like six or seven guys diving on the floor for that loose ball. Delly was on the floor. J.J. was on the floor. Mike Scott was on the floor. Shump was on the floor. J.R. was on the floor. Just no one got hurt. There's no difference between me boxing out or Al Horford boxing me out and Delly boxing someone out. That is a fundamental box out. That's all it is. And we all know that. We don't never want to play with the integrity of the game and try to get people hurt. That's not what it's about because we all want brotherhood at the end of the day, NBA family. But I play to win the game, and you play aggressively. That's what it's about. I need to shoot more from the corner . No other three has been good to me, basically, is what you're saying. Which side of the credit? The I'm not shooting so well credit or I mean he does, for sure. We work every day, just trying to get the ball up there and not think about it too much. First of all, the offensive rebound by Double T was huge. I seen in his mind that he wanted to go back up for that shot, and I yelled his name probably as loud as I could yell it because I wanted another opportunity. I just seen Paul Millsap running a little out of control, just gave him a pump fake, and I just stick to my routine. Things that I worked on all year long, make or miss, and I would be satisfied with the result. Well, not a few years ago. A few is probably like three or four. I was still going to The Finals at that point. Probably 23, 24, 25 maybe. I think just because I've had experience. It's not about the younger LeBron or anything like that. I've been able to have experience over the years that's helped me to get to this point. I really don't my game is so much better than it was when I was younger, and I just try to everything that I've worked on over the course of years and the mental side of the game, I just try to incorporate that on the floor, no matter if I'm making shots or missing shots or whatever the case may be. I got it. That's not really our concern. Obviously, I'm a little bit off about it because this is my guy, this is my teammate, and this is a guy that goes out and works his tail off every single night, and people are trying to give him a bad rap. He doesn't deserve it, and I don't like it. But I'm not going to get involved in anything that's outside of basketball. That's not my place. What I care about is how we prepare every single night, how we prepare in the film session, which we will have another one tomorrow, and how we go about trying to win a basketball game. That's going to get 99.9 percent of my mental. But I will protect my guys for sure. Just got to do we defend. Our coaching staff will give us a game plan, and it's up to us to go out and execute it. We had a lot of mistakes tonight. We did some things well, but we had a lot of mistakes tonight that we can clean up on. If we come in with our defensive mindset, as we've had the whole playoffs so far, we give ourselves a chance to advance. If not, then there will be a Game 5. It's current, so I would say yeah. I don't remember how I felt two years ago in a certain situation, but I'm playing through a lot. It doesn't matter. I don't want any sympathy. There's no rest for the weary. If I'm putting on a uniform and I'm on the floor, I have to make things happen for our team. It's that simple. I'm not the only guy that's limping. I'm not the only guy that's cramping. I'm not the only guy that's hurting. There's a lot of guys out there that's playing as well, and I'm one of them as well. So I've got to go out and help our team win, no matter where I'm at. Those three guys, obviously, J.R. and Shump, to answer the first part of your question, they were huge tonight. J.R. gives us a double double, and no one talks about it. Gives us 17 and 10. And obviously, what Shump does, he rebounds, he defends whoever you need him to defend, and he gives us 15 points tonight as well. And the guy next to me, he's been thrown into a situation that he wasn't thrown in all season for the most part, and that's starting, being our starting point guard, with Kyrie being absent the last couple games. And those three guys have answered the call. They've played exceptional basketball. They've defended. They've done everything we need them to do. We need them to do it a little bit more. It's just every game is going to be challenging. As hard as it was to win tonight, Game 4 is going to be just as hard as it was tonight. But those three guys are playing unbelievable basketball. Without them, we wouldn't be sitting here at this point. |
| 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. |
| No, my mindset was we're either going to go out of here with a win or going into overtime. I'm going to get the last shot. Actually, Shumpert was able to get another look at it, but I got to where I wanted to get, step back, made them before. We had our chances. I mean, you just said it. We couldn't get a good look. We couldn't get nothing to drop, including myself. J.R. had a really good look on the three at one point, but they just ramped it up a little bit. They got to the free throw line, and we didn't get it. I mean, we really only had zero points, and I got the lay up at the end, but that didn't mean much because they did a good job closing it in overtime. Well, I mean, we had a lot of miscues tonight. I think they would say the same. We had a lot of breakdowns, a couple of transition threes they made that we kind of pinpointed on saying we don't want to give those up. But at the end of the day, we gave ourselves a chance, man. I missed a tough one. But we had so many opportunities to win this game, and we didn't. It's up to us now to look at the film, watch and make some adjustments, what you need to do and be ready for Sunday. It was very tough to see. I just see how hard he worked these last eight days just to get himself to play at this level tonight. Seeing him walk out of the locker room on crutches just now, that's a tough blow for our team. Well, I mean, it's the next man up. If Kyrie can't go, Delly's number is going to be called and everyone else has to pick each other up. They outscored us 35 9 on bench points. But, you know, we still had a chance to win. We had a few miscues defensively. Had a couple of turnovers offensively, but we were right there. Like I said, they just made a couple more plays than we made. We all have to be better, including myself. I don't think I was great. I've got to do better things out on the floor to help us be more precise offensively. I've got to communicate a little bit more defensively to help our team get over the hump. It's not about me. It's not about the next guy. It's about all of us. We have to we're going to watch the film and get better for Game 2. What do you mean? I mean, I think everyone was out there just playing through it, just trying to fight through it. Both teams have been off for so many days that fatigue may have set in. But both teams were fighting and both teams wanted to win really bad. Well, they expect for me to make plays. It's nothing I did tonight. It's nothing different than what I've been doing all postseason. That's just been our game plan. Guys have been able to step up and make shots and make plays. So it has nothing to do about beast mode or whatever the case. It's our game plan, and our game plan worked. We put ourselves in a position to win, we just didn't come through. |
| Well, our bench was big for us tonight. We needed everything that we got from them. They came in and did an excellent job of contributing offensively and defensively. They were pretty good. Well, it's going to be the same as it has been being out here. Round the clock treatment, get my body, get my mind ready for the game. I get an opportunity to go home. I haven't seen my wife, seen my kids in four or five days. Give them some big hugs, big kisses, and then I'm going to lock back in. So it's the same thing for me. Just letting them understand and telling them about the moment, the moment that we're in, not about the game. I think the game is such a small thing, when you think about the moment and compare it to the moment. We have a chance to be a part of history, but it's the small steps that you take to get to that point. So mentally, physically, just having those guys ready, throwing things in their ears to try to let them understand what this is all about, and they responded very well. No, I think he's unique in his own way. Obviously he's a guy that's been counted out his whole life. Probably people have been telling him he's too small, he's not fast enough, can't shoot it enough, can't handle it good enough, and he's beat the odds so many times. The confidence that we have in him allows him to be confident in himself. He goes out and he just plays his tail off, and when a guy like that does that, he gets great results. Well, he was very calm. Before you get to the free throws, just to follow up on the missed three by J.J., usually when J.J., J.R. and Mike Miller shoot, we don't rebound, because most of the time they make them. So for us, for Delly to be able to crash in and get that and go up there and knock two free throws down, that was huge. Well, I mean, I don't need any extra motivation. I think our guys love it. Our guys love the fact that we've been counted out and come into the series being an underdog. They're pretty much saying that especially after Kyrie got hurt and the series was over. I think our guys are using that as motivation. I use a little bit of it, but I have a lot of motivation already to just be a part of greatness and be a part of this and be a part of this atmosphere. My motivation is to make sure my guys are ready and prepared every night we step on the floor. And I have some other motivation that I won't talk about right now, but I have so many different things to worry about than being an underdog or guys counting us out. It had everything to do with Delly. He just kept a body on Steph. He made Steph work. He was spectacular, man, defensively. We needed everything from him. When Steph shoots the ball, you just automatically think it's going in because he shoots the ball so well. I mean, he stunned me on one in the fourth quarter where he just took an in and out dribble and raised for a three and he nailed it and that wasn't on Delly. He just did a great job. Just trying to make it tough on Steph. That's all you can do. You make it tough on him. You get a contest, and you live with the results, and I think Delly did that. Yeah, that's what it is, it's the grit squad that we have. It's not cute at all. If you're looking for us to play sexy, cute basketball, then that's not us. That's not us right now. Everything is tough. You know, we're going to come in with an aggressive mindset defensively and offensively. And for us to win a Finals game shooting 32 percent from the field, it's just a testament of how gritty we can be. It has to be that for the rest of the series, no matter how many games it takes. It just comes from the work ethic. When the 20,000 plus fans aren't there and you guys aren't there, I mean, you see it because you're probably with me every day and some of your other guys or some of our other beat writers, you guys see how much work I put into my craft every day, before, after practice. When you put that much work in there, you live with the results. For me to be able to go out on the biggest stage and to be able to make plays happen for my teammates is the ultimate feeling for myself. That's why I take my profession, I take my craft very seriously. Well, am I built for it? Well, of course I'm built for it . I mean, it's a maximum of five games left in the NBA season. So I'm ready for whatever. Did you see how I walked in here? I'm feeling it. I'm feeling it right now for sure. That's why I've got one of the best trainers in the world in Mike Mancias who will make sure I'm ready for Game 3. We already have started on my rehab. Already started on my session. I will get rehab on the plane. We've got a five hour flight back home, and we've got all around the clock treatment tomorrow and get ready for Game 3. I'll be ready. I mean, all we can do is go out and play hard. We're undermanned. I mean, we're without two All Stars, and I don't know any other team in this league that would be able to do that, to be able to be without two All Stars on their team and compete the way we compete and be a force. So the guys are taking that very personal. For us mentally we can't allow the one thing we can't allow is what everyone is saying about us affect what we need to do out on the floor, because that's just smoke and mirrors of what everybody else says about us or what they think is going to happen with the series. What truly matters is what we have as a game plan and how we go out and execute it. That's all that matters. Well, the good thing about tonight, I took 34 shots, but I had my 11 assists. Once again, I was knocking on the 40 door again. So they let me score 40 again. That felt pretty I'm happy I'm able to do that in a win. So just to go out I'm not a high volume shooter. I've never been in my career. But things have changed on our team where the shots that Kevin and Kyrie would have has now been placed on myself and the rest of the guys as well. It's what needs to be done to help our team win. Am I going to be in the 30s every game or things of that nature? I'm not sure. I would not like to. But if that's what the case has to be to help us win, then I don't have a choice. It means everything. It means everything to be able to be a part of history and to get this win for this franchise, for our city, for all the Cavs fans all over the world. And if I can leave my fans with something, these fans here are pretty loud, pretty good, really good. I'm looking forward to seeing our fans and I can't wait to see our fans. I've heard our fans pretty loud before. A couple instances my first postseason appearance was really loud, and me coming home against the Knicks at the start of the season was pretty good. But I know we can be much, much louder than any fan base in this league. I know they're getting ready, and I can't wait to see them. |
| No, I just seen them run that set before, and I was telling the coaching staff that I was in tune and I knew it was coming. Well, I mean, I know one thing I'm going to count on Delly as always is how hard he's going to play. He's going to give everything he's got. His body, he's going to throw his body all over the place. And he's going to compete at a high level however many minutes he's out on the floor. Tonight it was 30 1/2 minutes, and for 30 1/2 minutes he gave everything he's got. It was great to have someone like that out on the floor that was willing to sacrifice everything for the better of the team. Well, we said it from the beginning that in order for us to win, we have to defend. My guys do a great job of coming out and defending. Everyone knows their role, and we all play our role to the best of our ability. We don't step outside our box. When you have that type of chemistry out on the floor, it makes everything work. I don't have a reaction. I'm just trying to do whatever it takes to help our team win. If it's high volume shooting, if it's high rebounding, if it's high assists, whatever it takes to help our team win. We're out two All Stars, and we're out a starting center, so I have to pick up some of the shot attempts. I'm not a high volume guy. I don't like to shoot high volume shots, but it's The Finals, and it's whatever it takes. I don't have a comment for Steph. That's not my concern. What my concern is how I come out and play, be aggressive. If it's high volume shooting, I'm living in the paint. I'll shoot 34 shots, but I only took six threes, and one of them was a heave at the end of a shot clock. That lets me know I'm being aggressive. Absolutely. They were unbelievable from the start to the finish. We fed off them, and we just tried to give it all back to them for 48 minutes. As loud as they were, they need to go home now and start soaking up a lot of tea, drinking a lot of tea for the next 36 hours, whatever the case may be, because they need to be just as loud Thursday night. So I need you guys to get those voices right. But they're going to be unbelievable Thursday night as well. Those guys, everyone, they were amazing. I mean, I'm not okay with it. I'm not okay with it, but I'm so outside the box right now. I went seven straight seasons with improving my efficiency. Seven straight into this year, the previous seven seasons, seven straight seasons with improving my efficiency as far as shooting. But this is a different challenge. This is a totally different challenge. I've never played where two All Stars were out. So it's a different challenge for myself, and it's outside the box, but it's not too far. It's not far for me to go grab. I'm just trying to do whatever it takes to help. I know you guys keep hearing me elaborate on whatever it takes, but that's what I'm trying to do. I'm high volume shooting, but it's not like I'm going out there and I'm high volume shooting and I'm not doing anything else. I'm doing everything for our team to help our team win, and that's all that matters. No, I mean, I don't think those guys lacked life. I think they came in and we just tried to put pressure on them like we've done the first three games, the first two games and then tonight. But those guys, they got a rhythm in the fourth quarter. Part of it is because we allowed them to get into a rhythm in the start of the fourth. We had some costly turnovers as well. We let Steph shake three, but some of Steph's threes were some he made in the fourth quarter, were some of the same he missed in Game 2 or earlier in the game tonight. We had some heck of a contest, but he was just he let them go. But for us we've just got to continue to put the pressure on them. Try to keep them below their averages. They're going to make great shots. They're a great team, great players, great coaching staff. We'll just live with the results. It's not satisfying when they end the game with 91. We hold them to 55 points for three quarters and we allowed them to break off with 36. That's not satisfying at all. We've got a lot of film to watch tomorrow. We're a young group, and we have to learn from our mistakes. We had a lot of mistakes in the fourth quarter. I think everybody's going to remember the turnovers we had late. But it started from the beginning. We have to learn from those things. We're a young group, and like I told the guys, it's okay. It's okay. We haven't been in a lot of these situations, if any, with this group. But the best teacher in life is experience. We experienced it tonight. We're going to watch a lot of film tomorrow on ways we can get better, close out games the best way, and we'll be ready for Game 4. I think our relationship continues to grow every day. To have a guy like that who has been around the game of basketball for so many years, he wants the best out of his team. He wants the best for himself as well and his coaching staff and to be able to be the leader of the team. I just try to give it all back to him. My mind is always working throughout the game. Sometimes I'm able to say it verbally, sometimes I'm just thinking the game and hoping the coaching staff and players and the guys and Coach Blatt know whatever I'm doing, it's for the best of the team. And he's allowing me to do that, and I respect that a lot. We just can't afford any more injuries. We just can't, especially from a guard perspective. I just thought about his shoulder. As soon as it happened, I knew exactly which shoulder it was, and I was just hoping for the best. When he came back on the floor with his shoulder wrapped and knowing that he wasn't at a hundred percent, which is his body out there, and still competing, it means everything to the team. It means everything to me. It means everything to him as well. As you can tell, he came back out there. But, yeah, we just can't afford any injuries right now. We're already depleted. A scarier opponent in our league? I mean, we have some very great basketball players in our league, and Steph happens to be one of them. His ability to shoot the ball is probably I've never seen someone that can shoot the ball off the dribble like himself, ever. So he's always keeping you off balance. Every game is different. He caught a rhythm in the fourth quarter tonight and hit some big shots. But for us we just try to continue to make it tough on him. He's a great player. He's a league MVP, and that's all you can ask. Our defense, we held this great team to 40 percent shooting. It's not just about one guy. Even though he's going to get it going, we've just got to make sure we do a good number on the rest of those guys. Well, the regular season can never compare to a playoff game. Just because we play so many games throughout the regular season, and you're going from city to city, players to players, different systems to different systems. You don't have much time to really get into the books and get into the tendencies and things of that nature. In the postseason you're able to kind of not get a rhythm, but know what's going to go on. Because once the playoffs start, not many teams are going to change. You've worked so many months to work a system that that's what you're going to see. For us, for our coaching staff to be able to put us in a position where we feel like this is best for us to win, as the players, we just try to go out and execute it the best way we can by playing hard, competing, making them take tough shots and also attacking them on the other end. The playoffs is definitely a great way to just lock in on a certain team and not worrying about having to fly out and be in another city here or be in another city there or see another opponent the next night. |
| We don't have many options as far as lineups we can go to, but we can make adjustments. That's what you do throughout a series. We'll get to the film and make the necessary adjustments coming into Game 5. But as far as lineup changes, we don't have many different lineup changes we can actually go to. I was just trying to regain my composure, and I was holding my head. It was hurting. I was just hoping I wasn't bleeding. But obviously the camera cut me pretty bad. Our medical staff did a great job of stopping the bleeding. I knew I had to shoot the free throws or I wasn't going to be able to come back into the game, so it didn't matter what was going on with my head at that point in time. I had to go up there and shoot those free throws so I could continue to play. I don't put too much pressure on anyone else. You continue to stick with them. We all struggle at times. We all have a couple games here, a couple games there we won't play so well. We know we can help the team, but just not falling for us. But you don't give up on anyone. We all got to this point together, and you stick with them. He's been huge for our team all year. We wouldn't be at this point without him. So hopefully he can get it going, which we believe. Oh, well, I was hoping our team could buy me a few minutes. I ran through those 12 minutes in the third, and I gassed out. Just tried to put us in a position Steph hit a big time three at the end of the third, put them up six, I missed one, but I was pretty much gassed either from driving, creating opportunities for my teammates, getting to the free throw line, getting offensive glass, just trying to make that push. And I was hoping our team could just buy me a couple minutes. We weren't able to do that tonight in the fourth quarter, and, I mean, it's difficult. You want to be out there, but also you don't want to be you want to be effective while you're out there too. So they made a huge run, and we just couldn't regather after that. No, I mean, no excuses. The schedule is what it is. We knew that coming into the series. We knew it was going to be every other day when we got home, and those guys were going to have two days in between when they went home. But I think defensively we were still very good. Offensively we were terrible. You can't always you can't always bank on your offense. Sometimes your offense just doesn't show up, and there is no way we go 4 for 27 from the three point line and expect to win. We outrebounded them still. We had 16 offensive rebounds. We had 20 second chance points. But we just couldn't get the long ball going tonight, and that definitely hurt our offense hurt us just as bad as anything. As far as Delly, I think Delly said he felt great. We thought he was great. He just didn't make shots, and that's what happens sometimes. Well, I already got the stitches. Obviously, you can't see them. That's the coach's decision if he decides he wants to go deeper in the bench. We haven't played many guys throughout this playoff run. I think it would help some of the guys that are playing some high minutes for sure. Just give guys a couple minutes here, a couple minutes there. But I think the coaching staff will try to do what's best to help us be physically and mentally prepared for Sunday. Enough to close it up. He's one of the X factors, and he came to play. He shot the ball extremely well. He hit four threes. He was in attack. He got a couple dunks in transition early on in the game which got him going, and he was really good for them. Coach Kerr did a great job of mixing the lineup up. They have so many different interchangeable players where he can kind of decide how he wants to go with his lineups in that nature, and to start him tonight gave them that boost. No, they doubled me a little bit more tonight. They kind of made me get a ball up, seeing if some of my teammates can beat those guys. Like I said, we couldn't make any shots from the outside, but we'll take those looks again. Those guys, my guys did a great job just stepping into them, trying to make them being confident about them. But when you go 4 for 27 from the three point line, there's not much success offensively. Yeah, their pace has been pretty good all series. It's just that we've made shots and we've made them take the ball out of the basket instead of getting it off a rebound. Tonight we shot 33 percent from the field. So when you're getting the ball off the glass or you're getting the ball off the rim, your pace is much better than when you're taking the ball off the net. So it's just a product of us not shooting the ball well at all. That's a decision I think Coach Blatt and the coaching staff will either make or not make. He's been great for us coming off the bench. He's been great for us starting. So we'll see. We'll see what the coaches have him playing. We're going to go with him, we'll continue to give him the ball. He's a spark for our team, whether he's in the starting role or not. I don't have any comment about it. I mean, I came out of the game as well early. So we were on the same page. Well, obviously, you're going to have a lot of guys on the perimeter. When your big is accustomed to guarding a big for three straight games and there is a change, now our big, meaning Timo, has to make a change. He has to guard a smaller guy, which he's not been accustomed to ever. So he definitely gave us a little different look defensively to start the game. We still started the game pretty well. We were up 7 0, but Steph making the three, Iguodala hits the three, Harrison Barnes makes one, Draymond hits one. And they offensively got it going. They got in a rhythm, and you could start seeing it. It's something like I said, while it's going on, you kind of like: What do we do here? What do we do there? And that's what the days in between games are for. You're able to look at the film and go from there and see ways you can just be better. I mean, it's three games left possibly. You just go out and play. You know you go out, you play hard. Coaching staff gives you a great game plan, you go out and execute it and live with the results at the end of the day. That's all you can ask. It's the biggest stage in the world, but I don't put too much added pressure on myself about basketball. It's just that's all it is. It's just basketball. No, I didn't have to go through any concussion protocol. I had a slight headache, which I think every last one of you guys would probably have if you ran into a camera. You might have a little bit more than that. But I didn't go through any protocol. I'm fine. Like I said, I got a few stitches and I got a little slight headache right now, but I'll be fine with that. I don't know if I get the feeling or not, because I don't really get involved in it, the whole thing. I understand how important this city is and what I mean to this city and what our team means to the city as far as even with other professional sports teams that we have in this city, but I don't get caught up into it. I just go out and play my game. I try to lead the best way I can, and if I can put my team and this franchise in a position to win the title, I'm grateful for that, and that's what I'm trying to do. Well, I mean, if I told my teammates six months ago or whatever the case may be that it would be 2 2 and we had an opportunity to be 2 2 in The Finals going on the road, would you take it? With three games left, I think all of them would accept that, and that's what it's about. I mean, this is the biggest stage. It's being covered by everyone in the world, and you should just be happy to go out and just compete. Win, lose or draw, you go out and compete. And that's all that should matter. It shouldn't matter what everyone is talking about or what everyone is putting pressure on you or things of that nature. It means nothing. I mean, in the scheme of things. You go out and you play, and you've been playing basketball your whole life. You live with the results after that. You don't let any of them go. Both teams are in The Finals for a reason. You can either look at it, okay, we stole home court and they stole it back. Or you could look at it and say they won two on their floor; we won two on our floor. It would be the same thing. If they won Game 1 and Game 2 and we came home and protected home court, it would be 2 2 and we're heading to Game 5. So the story line is different. It just depends on what day it is and how you guys want to write the story. Biggest challenge of my career was being down 3 2 going into Boston. That's probably the biggest challenge of my career. Game 5 at Golden State is not that big when it comes to going to Boston and you lose multiple times in that arena, and the franchise that I was with at the time had never won a playoff game in Boston. Now that's pretty challenging. So I've been through a little bit in my pretty cool career. |
| No, I mean, at the end of the day no matter who is on the floor, we have to come up with that rebound. That's what it is. We just have to come up with the rebound no matter if Double T or Mozzy are not in the game. We've got to come up with those rebounds. That just can't happen at the free throw line. I don't know what happened with him. I mean, we kept going to him. He just missed some shots. He came out aggressive, which we wanted him to do. We kept finding him. He started off well, he just cooled down. It's just a make or miss league. He took some great shots. Some of them was in a rhythm, and some of them after he hit a few, he loves to go to the heat check, and we're all okay with that, and he just missed them. Well, you cope with it by understanding it's just one game and looking at the opportunity we have on Tuesday to force a Game 7. Obviously, for myself, I want to do whatever it takes to help our team win, and I haven't been able to do that the last two. So hopefully I can do a better job coming in on Tuesday. We all as a unit can do a better job, and we'll be fine. Well, we don't want them celebrating at all, no matter if it's on our home floor or their home floor. We've come this far, and we've been very good at home. We have to understand why we weren't good in Game 4. We had a lack of energy. We had a lack of effort in a lot of areas in Game 4, and we can't repeat that or they'll raise the trophy for sure. I thought he was great. You tip your hat off to a guy like that. He made seven threes. I don't know, were any of them not contested, hand in his face, falling, stepback off the dribble? I'm okay with that. We're okay with that. I mean, you tip your hat to a guy who makes shots like that, and he's the guy that can do it in our league. He's the best shooter in our league. But that's not why we lost. We gave up 18 fast breakpoints. We gave up 15 second chance points. Steph was special, obviously, but him hitting those stepback threes is not why we lost the game. I think tonight, obviously, Steph got it going. He hit some huge shots which kept us at bay. They got a couple of offensive rebounds that didn't work to our favor. You know, we needed our best defensive quarter tonight in the fourth quarter, and we didn't get it. We gave up 31 points in the fourth. Some of them were free throws, but a lot of them were them just breaking us down. So we've got to do a better job of that. I don't know. I don't put a ceiling on what I can do. I don't know. I mean, tonight I gave up two offensive rebounds one to Barbosa in the first half, one to Harrison Barnes, which allowed him to get an and one with Iguodala with the left hand trick shot. I had a couple turnovers, a couple miscues defensively, and I've got to be better. I don't know. Like I said, I don't put a ceiling on what I'm capable of doing. I know I'm shouldering a lot of the burden, but it is what it is. No. No, I feel confident because I'm the best player in the world. It's that simple. No, I mean, it's The Finals. It's something you dream of when you're a kid. For me, I put the work in. I put the work in every single day, either when you guys are there, either when you're not there. Some of our beat writers see me. They know how much work I put into it, and I give everything to my teammates. When you're true to the game, it doesn't matter if it's a regular season game or a Finals game, you just go out and trust what you put into the game and you live with the results. So shouldn't be crazy when I make threes, though. It's just a shot. Okay. All right . When you're going up against a high offensive power team like this, to get them to miss, it's very deflating when they get a second chance point or a second chance crack. Even when they don't make it, they're looking for those three pointers, they're looking for Klay and Steph when they get offensive rebounds. So those are very deflating. But we've got to do a better job of hitting bodies, coming over the ball. They're going to get offensive rebounds because they shoot a lot of jump shots and a lot of long rebounds, but when that happens, we've got to match up very quickly and not allow them to make shots. Nope. Nope we're going home with a Game 6, and we've got enough to win it. We protect home we come here. We'll worry about Tuesday first. But if we protect home like we're capable of doing, we force a Game 7. I feel confident. Well, there are a lot of things that hurt us tonight. Steph being one of them. That had nothing to do with going small. I think we were much more active tonight than we were in Game 4. And some of the shots that they made, like I said, some of the shots that Steph made, you've got to tip your hat to a guy like that. I mean, he's between, behind, crossover, stepback threes, with a contest, you're okay with that. That had nothing to do with us being small. When we don't get back in transition, those are things we can clean up. When we get offensive rebounds on free throws, those are things we can clean up. Those are things that can hurt you. But it had nothing to do with us being small. Whoever's in the game needs to do their job and do it at a high level, do it to the best of their ability and you live with the aftermath after that. |
| Well, I mean, we had many chapters. We had many chapters in the season. I don't know. I mean, for me, it's never a success if you go out losing. But I think we put ourselves back where this franchise needs to be, being a contender. But we've still got a lot of work to do. Well, I think you even go before that, losing Andy, one of our heartbeats of our team, another playmaker for our team. Then you lose Kev, an All Star, and then you lose Kyrie, another All Star. Tried as much as we could to try to make up for those guys, but it's a lot of talent sitting in suits. I've had a lot of playoff runs, been on both ends, and I know one thing that you've got to have during the playoff run, you've got to be healthy. You've got to be healthy. You've got to be playing great at the right time. You've got to have a little luck. And we were playing great, but we had no luck and we weren't healthy. My family is happy. That makes my job a lot easier. For the fans, I go out and try to just leave it all on the floor and hope it's enough. There's not much you can say really. I mean, you get to this point, and I've been on the short end of this four times, and I've been able to win it twice. It's really no great feeling when you lose. Only thing you can do is just try to pick yourself back up whenever that time may be and then just go at it again. I'm a guy who is just trying to be successful in whatever I do, and I give everything to my teammates, give everything to the coaching staff. When you fall short, it hurts and it eats at you, and it hurts me to know that I wish I could have done better and done more and just put a little bit more effort or whatever the case may be to help us get over the hump. But it just wasn't our time. I haven't thought about next season at all. Yeah, when the numbers went to zero and we lost tonight. That's when I doubted. That's when it was over. I mean, obviously, I knew it was going to be a tough task, and I continued to tell you guys we were undermanned. I don't know any other team I've been watching basketball for a long time. I'm an historian of the game. I don't know any other team that's gotten to The Finals without two All Stars. I cannot remember thinking of it. I can't remember in the back I don't even know if it's ever happened, for a team to lose two All Stars and still be able to make it to The Finals. Even what Andy brings to our team as well, that's another double double guy. We had three playmakers in suits this round and even throughout the playoffs. You've got to have all the playmakers. You've got to be healthy. You've got to be at full strength to win it. We weren't. We just wasn't. Well, I mean, I enjoy the competition. And whatever it takes throughout the competition I'm fine with. I don't enjoy being as non efficient as I was. I don't enjoy that. I don't enjoy dribbling the ball for countless seconds on the shot clock and the team looking at me to make a play. We had 14 assists tonight. I had nine of them. I did not enjoy that. That's not winning basketball. Like I said, we had two big time playmakers on the sideline. We've got another one that's been out since early in the season. And it was what I had to do. It was what was needed. If I could have gave more, I would have done it, but I gave everything I had. I felt I mean, it was a great series up until they blew the game open in the fourth in Game 5, but we had a chance there. Tonight we had our chances, but, you know, we ran out of talent. We ran out of talent tonight. We gave everything we had. The guys played as hard as they could as long as we could. But that team across the way, you tip your hats to them. I cannot remember a team like them being healthy all year for the most part. All the guys, I mean, they did a great job. Guys being healthy, guys playing their system, and it showed in these Finals. Well, of course you question it, especially when you get to this point. I always look at it would I rather not make the playoffs or lose in The Finals? I don't know. I don't know. I've missed the playoffs twice. I lost in The Finals four times. I'm almost starting to be like I'd rather not even make the playoffs than to lose in The Finals. It would hurt a lot easier if I just didn't make the playoffs and I didn't have a shot at it. But then I lock back in and I start thinking about how fun it is to compete during the playoffs and the first round, the second round, and Eastern Conference Finals. If I'm lucky enough to get here again, it will be fun to do it. But put my body through a lot, you know, but it's the price for your body feeling this way for winning. Did I win? I didn't win a championship, but I've done a lot of good things in this first year back, and hopefully I can continue it. All four of them are disappointing. It's not one that's higher or lower or in the middle. You don't win, it's disappointing. It's not just one is bigger than the other. No, you lose in The Finals, they're all disappointing. Doesn't matter if I'm playing in Miami or playing in Cleveland or playing on Mars. You lose The Finals, it's disappointing. Well, I think the last couple games he played well. He played great, especially offensively. He made us defend him. He knocked down open shots. Defensively, it's never a one on one battle. Guys get caught up in this whole one on one thing, and it's never a one on one battle. Every time I'd get past him, another guy would step up, Draymond Green or whatever the case may be. It's never one on one. It's not this isn't Bird versus Magic or that old video game, Jordan versus Bird, or whatever the case may be. There's no one on one. But I think his ability to play multiple positions for their team along with some of those other guys allowed their team to be so dynamic. He made us pay. He made us pay tonight with big shots, timely shots, getting out on the break, getting rebounds, getting assists. He was pretty good for their team. |
| I think for us, it's never -- our game plan is never dictated. I think for us, we want to push the tempo. We want to move the ball from side to side, and we want to attack. With myself and Ky, we love to live in the paint. We love to attack, and then when the defense collapses, we're going to spread out to our shooters. Tonight they wanted us to be in the paint, and we just tried to take advantage of that. We had 56 points in the paint, and everyone was still in a great rhythm. I think probably the least amount of threes that we've shot and made probably in the postseason so far, but as I keep telling you guys every single day, we're not a jump-shooting team. You guys kept looking at me crazy about it. We're not a jump-shooting team. We're a balanced team, and whatever the game dictates, we're able to adjust to that. I don't predetermined what is going on or how they're going to defend me. I read and react. They played me straight up in the post. I just tried to make quick, solid moves to get into the paint. If they brought help, I was still going to be able to find my guys. You know, whatever the defense is doing in that possession, I'm able to read and react and know what's going on. I've seen every coverage, so definitely we have to be better in Game 2 because we know they're going to have some changes, and that's what the series is about, being able to adjust from game to game, and they're going to make adjustments, and we have to be ready for whatever. Well, we didn't rest. We just didn't have a game. We didn't rest. Coach Lue gave us one day off. Other than that, we was in the gym working, keeping our rhythm, keeping our legs ready for whenever the game was -- whenever we was going to play, so we didn't rest. We just didn't do -- we didn't have a game in front of cameras. Our whole mindset was whenever our game was going to present itself, we was going to be ready to play our game and do it the same way we've been doing that all postseason, and we were able to accomplish that tonight. I don't think we have complacency in our minds right now. We have a goal, and our goal was not nine wins. It's just not my focus. I've won nine games in the postseason before, won 14 games in the postseason before. It's not my goal, and as the leader of this team, I'm going to continue to make sure that these guys understand what our goal is and they know. They know what our goal is, and tonight was just another step in the direction that we want to head into. And we will face some adversity. We will. And we have to be able to handle that, which I think we'll be ready for. Just having the opportunity to play the game that I love in front of some unbelievable fans and unbelievable teammates. When you make plays like that, you know, it's the passion that came through. It was the excitement that my teammates was getting, looking over at the bench, the other four guys on the floor and the 20,000-plus fans that was cheering it on at that point in time, so that's where it came from. You don't know when it's going to happen. Sometimes it just happens. So yep. Well, I think no gas, the Kyrie that I see on a daily basis when you guys are not around is the Kyrie that I envisioned. He's grown every single day, every single week, month, and over the course of these last two years or year-plus, becoming a leader and becoming a staple of our team. We all knew how talented the kid was and how talented he is still today, but his growth and what he demands out of all of us, you know, as the point guard, as one of the leaders of the team. That's what's the best part about it. I mean, you roll out a ball any single day of the week, and he'll play. When you're that age, you can play as long as you want to anyways, but his growth, his mentality, and it's what's great about him right now. Well, the game ball definitely goes to our bench tonight. I mean, you look at plus-24, 20, 18, 17, all the way down, those guys gave us a boost in that second quarter, and I was out there with them. But Channing, Shump, Delly and R.J., at that moment they pushed the tempo. You just got to work at it. In practices we do a lot of work together, but we've got some very smart, cerebral players. Coach Lue is able to mix and match some lineups that he feels best fits, and that's one of the lineups that's been working pretty good for us throughout this postseason that we did not -- like you said, did not use in the regular season. So we've got to continue to work our habits. It's not going to always be as great as it was tonight in the second quarter, where we outscored them 33-16, but we've got to continue to work at it and continue to see ways we can help each other, and if we do that, we'll be fine. |
| I've seen everything. I've seen a lot, and the best thing about it, my teammates have read and react, and either given me space or given me outlets for me to make a pass to them. Tonight was another example of that. Well, I mean, it's always difficult to deal with me. I think it adds even more when you have two All-Stars with you, two guys that command multiple eyes any possession. They're so in such a great rhythm right now, I've been able to just pick my spots and do other things to help us try to win ballgames while those guys take the load. Tonight was an example of them giving me a little bit more space, and I just tried to make some plays. I don't think it feels like a streak. I think it feels like we won one game. We won the next game, and how do we prepare and be better the following game. We've taken one step at a time. We haven't overlooked any steps along this process thus far, and I think that's part of the reason we're in this position today. We have to be much better, obviously, in Game 3, going into a very hostile environment, going in there where they're extremely loud. They play well, they play faster. But we've enjoyed the process to this point, and once we got to it, we've tried to take care of business, and then once it's over, we want to learn from that instance and move on and see how we can get better the next time. Well, it's hard to say. Obviously last year there were no excuses even with these two guys out, and for me personally and the rest of the guys, we gave it everything that we had. So I didn't feel sorry for myself, didn't feel sorry for any of my teammates. We didn't feel sorry for nothing because we gave everything that we had. As far as my body, I've been telling guys all year, this is the best I've felt in a while, and I've been able to do things outside of the game that kind of help me, and then when I get to the game, obviously you have two guys like this to help you. It takes a lot of everything off of you when you have two All-Stars that can do great things. Well, I think it's a collective workload that we all put on each other throughout the break. Like I said, Coach Lue gave us one day off, and that was the game after the Sunday game in Atlanta. I believe we got Monday off, and from that point on, we all worked together just to mentally prepare our bodies, physically prepare our bodies, waiting around to see who we were going to face in the next round, but we just stayed on top of each other, trying to understand, and how can we learn from the Detroit series when we swept to the next round. We've all put in our individual work. When we're not at our practice facility, and then when we all get together, we just combine it all and just try to make the most of it. Well, first of all, for me being in a position where -- it just always takes me back to my childhood and watching so many of the greats playing basketball and saying I wish I could be a part of that or at times saying there's no way I could be a part of such a great league, there's no way. Just the statistics don't look right for me as an African-American kid growing up in the inner city. I played both sides of the fence as a kid growing up. To be in this position today where I see my name linked to a lot of the greats that have played this game and paved the way for myself and Kyrie and Kev, it means a lot. It's very humbling. It's an opportunity for my family to be proud, for my fans to be proud, so that's just a lot of respect with that. I was actually, to your second question, jogging into the locker room like we usually do off the floor, and obviously I saw a legend outside of our locker room, and I slowed my pace up drastically just to embrace a legend being in our building, watching us play. What he did for the game, the championship runs that he had with the "Showtime" Lakers and him being the all-time leading scorer in NBA history and so on and so on and so on, it's just respect. When you see a guy like that, when you put him in a class with like Jim Brown and Muhammad Ali and Oscar Robertson and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, those guys all laying that same thing, Bill Russell. It was a pretty cool moment. Elaborate. We're good. We've got Tristan on our team. . We don't need them. We've got Tristan. I think it's just the even-keel mentality that he has. He's always preaching next play. Just always next play. We come to a timeout, no matter what's going on in the game, he just continues to breed confidence and talk confidence to us, the unit that's on the floor, the unit that's off the floor. Just a sense of calmness. The game is so fast. The possessions come so fast. There are a lot of things going on in between the game, and when you come to a timeout or whatever before the game or at halftime, there's just a sense of calmness. T-Lue has been great for us as the captain of this ship, and us as the soldiers or whatever you want to tell us or call us on the boat, we're just trying to follow his lead and execute it the right way. |
| Well, first of all, I give a lot of credit to Toronto. They played an exceptional game tonight. We didn't play our game, and they made us pay for it. I mean, it is a little adversity. Why not? It's the postseason, and you lose a game. This is our first loss of the postseason. I would count it as a little adversity. We've got to go back to the drawing board, not fix everything, just fix a few things, and be much better on Monday. Obviously we weren't as great as we've been tonight. I think early on at the start of the game we weren't as physical as we should have been, especially coming into a building that we knew we had to be a little bit more physical. Understanding they were going to play with a lot of speed, a lot of force, so we didn't start the game as physical as we should have at the point of attack. Also I think we lost track of some of our keys that we came into the game with, allowed us to kind of get sidetracked throughout the course of the game. Then in the second quarter, our second-quarter lineup didn't do a great job of paying attention to detail, and they was able to bust the game open and score 33 points in that second quarter. They had 39 for the whole second half. Allowing them to score 60 in the first half is not the type of game that we want to play. I think it's good for them. It's good for them. First little adversity, first individually in a long time, and I think it's good for them. I think they'll be much better obviously on Monday, but it's good for them. When someone is not shooting the ball extremely well, obviously we don't want two of our big guys not to shoot the ball -- it's going to be difficult for us to pull the game out like that. Even though with our shooting in the 30s, it was still a five-point game at one point in the third quarter. But we know they'll be much better. J.R. did a great job of trying to pick the slack up for both Kyrie and for Kev. Channing [Frye] tried as well and I did as well. But those guys will be better. They'll watch the film, and they'll be much better on Monday. That's what he's been at home and every playoff and every regular-season game. We understand he feeds off the crowd, but he's also a huge impact on the glass at home. He gives them a lot of energy, he gives them a lot of second-chance points. He had eight offensive rebounds. He cleaned up the glass on all of our misses in the first half. I think he had at one point 14 rebounds and no points. The guy just stays in his lane. He definitely gave them a boost tonight. Same way you've got right now. We don't really have a reaction. He has a great block, we're trying to get back on defense. We're not watching him wave his finger. But he probably admires him. We all take something from somebody. If I shoot a fadeaway, I got it from MJ. Throw a no-look pass, I get it from Magic. He [J.R. Smith] shoots fadeaway threes, I don't know where he gets those from. We all admire somebody, so it's no big deal. That's a great question. You know, obviously teams and a lot of players are kind of taking it a little bit. At the end of the day, I'm important to this team. I can't afford to react in any kind of way that will get me thrown out of a game, but I will protect myself. I will protect myself. When I was in high school, I got low-bridged playing in an AAU tournament as a junior in high school. A kid just low-bridged me and I fell and broke my wrist. That kind of thought always plays in my mind either when I'm getting thrown to the ground or if it's a borderline dirty play. I always think back to the Jay Z phrase and a line he had: "If I shoot you, then I'm brainless; if you shoot me, you're famous. What am I to do?" That always plays in my head. Every time I feel like I want to react, I've got to keep my brain. I'm not trying to sell a call. I got hit with an elbow. I didn't know from my own teammate. I thought it was DeMarre , but I watched the replay, it was from my teammate. So no -- sell a call for what? There was no call there to be sold. That's it. I was going to say something else to you, but I'm going to leave it alone. |
| It wasn't enough because we got off to a horrible first half once again in this building, and you're playing catch-up the whole game. So every defensive possession feels even more intensified when you've given up so many points in the first half. I think they've averaged 58 or something like that in the first half here, and in the high 30s the second half. It gets a little bit more intensified, but it just goes back to the first half. We're not starting off games the right way. The second quarter has been really bad for us here, so we've got do a better job of that where we can't dig ourselves such a big hole and now every possession feels even more intensified late in the game. Well, I mean, of course. We've got to be more well-balanced. We started the game, we had some great looks, but when they're not going, you've got to be able to try to switch it up and get into the paint and see what you can do. I was able to get into the paint a little bit, Kyrie [Irving] as well. But we just haven't shot the ball from the three-point line. That's part of what they're doing as well, but it's part of us being a little bit more conscious about, okay, if it's not going down, then we've got to get into the paint a little bit more and then kick out for threes as well. I think I played to the game plan that I wanted to play, both offensively and defensively. For me, I gave everything that I had in the 46 minutes that I played, both offensively and defensively. I felt great. Tried to get my guys involved, get myself involved. My individual game plan was pretty good. I don't know. I've got to watch the film to see the mistakes that we made. But they put it on us good in the second quarter, obviously 30-17. I think Kyle [Lowry] hit some huge shots in that second quarter. DeRozan hit some big shots as well. I've got to go over the film, but obviously 30-17 is not a good ingredient for a win. Well, first of all you tip your hat to DeMar and Kyle. They did a great job. They're All-Stars for a reason. That's why they're here today. They've carried this team all season. But even at the end of the day, as well as they played, we still had a chance. We still had a chance to win the ballgame. That's all you can ask for. But what we can't do is dig ourselves the hole that we did in the first half. I think defensively when we made that run, we played some really good defense. I think we had a couple breakdowns that I know in my head that happened throughout the run, but they also made some tough shots. They made some tough shots. They made some tough shots while we were making that run. Cory Joseph made a tough runner over the top of me going right. I think Kyle made a couple tough ones. DeMar made a couple pull-ups as well. We followed our game plan as much as 95 percent of the time. I can remember two plays that I'm not going to say right now that I wish we had back. But while we made our run, our defense stepped up, and that was good to see. I think whatever lineup coach [Tyronn] Lue puts on the floor can go the distance. We're all professionals. We have a great group of guys, so no matter who's on the floor, we have to execute. We have to play to our identity. I think our second unit did a great job of giving us a boost and whoever comes in after that has to continue to play at a high level. We do a great job as a first unit at times of picking up our second unit, and then at times our second unit does a great job of picking us up. At the end of the day, whoever is on the floor, we have to play with the same intensity both offensively and defensively. I've been blessed with a gift to pass the ball and to see the floor, and I just try to take advantage to help my teammates. I think that's one of my biggest gifts. I love getting my guys involved and making them feel a part of something special. Even me being in my 13th year in the NBA, it all started when I was a kid. My little league coach always said, There's no I in team. Obviously, we've all heard that, but when you get guys involved, it makes the game a lot easier. It's always stuck with me to this point today. I think it's a sense of the outsiders, which I've never really got involved with, saying we may never lose another game. I don't get involved in it, besides talking to you guys and when I see you guys, is all I know about it. I don't know anything that's going on outside because I don't watch. I don't watch sports TV. I don't read news clippings. I go home and I watch cartoons with my kids and watch movie channels and Man Vs. Wild and things like that because that's what really is important to me. What the outside people say, I don't really get involved with. And I am a confident guy. I'm always confident in my ability and what I can bring to my team, whatever the case may be, whatever the circumstances are. Going back home, we have to play a lot better, and I think we will. I definitely thought we had finally got over the curve of how we wanted to play here in this building. But you've still got to get stops, and they did a great job of just making shot after shot after shot, even when our run was happening. You give them a lot of credit with that. They withstand our run and us giving up 54 percent shooting, a lot of it in the first half. Like I said, when you dig a hole like that, I think we were down by 18 at one point. Again, when you dig a hole like that, like I said, every possession after that is so intensified. We got to a point where we were up, but we made a couple more mistakes and they was able to pull away. I think they did a good job of kind of moving him around. With me on him, they feel like trying to get me up off of him with a screen, either with a guard so they can force the switch -- that's part of our defense. But when they screen with a big, we have a goal that we want to try to attack. I think we'll be a lot better on what we want to do and how we want to handle those two guys, because they're playing exceptional basketball. They're 28 for 43. I mean, that's top-of-the-tier numbers right there, and they both went for 30. We've got to be much better in our schemes and doing it a little bit harder as well. |
| We understood that coming back from Game 3 and Game 4 we just didn't play our defense the right way. We didn't play how we should have played, and they took advantage of every moment. We had to get back to our staple. We had to get back to what we wanted to do defensively in order for us to play a complete game. That was the most satisfying thing, the way we defended, holding these guys to 39 percent shooting. I've been a part of some really adverse situations, and I just didn't believe that this was one of them. So it's just been very calm about the whole situation, understanding that our guys knew what we did and what we didn't accomplish in Toronto. I'm not taking away from the fact how big of a game this was, because it is -- it's a Game 5 on our home floor and the series tied 2-2. But from the very moment that we lost Game 4, I was just very calm about the whole situation, seeing the good that we can prepare and get better for Game 5 instead of looking at all the bad that we did. Just mentally just having these guys focus, and they answered the call. Well, first of all, like you stated in the first part, having someone like Kevin who can make that pass. He's been throwing outlet passes, chest passes full court, for a long time now, probably all the way back to high school. Obviously we saw it at UCLA, we saw it at Minnesota, and now we're starting to get that connection here, and we have it. For me, it's fun for me that I can be a receiver again, taking me back to my football days, and just try to keep the cornerback on my hip and not look up until the ball gets there, and then I'm able to finish. It was a huge play, and in that particular case, we kind of even talked about it while the jump ball was going on with Swish [J.R. Smith] and he was able to lead me to the rim and I was able to finish. Well, I don't believe that's true to the first part. Kevin has always been out of his shell; he just doesn't do it around you guys because it's not about that. What we do as a team, we keep everything in house, and besides RJ [Richard Jefferson] bringing out Little Kev recently, everything has been in house. But Kevin is a great guy, a great teammate, and tonight was just a bounce-back for him. He knew he didn't play his style of basketball or how he wanted to play to help us win in Toronto. He wanted to make a different outcome of it, and he did that tonight. He's a true professional. : I mean, it's very difficult and you feel like you're by yourself. I've been there before, when you're a big part of a puzzle, and things just don't go the way you either dreamed about it or the way you thought it was going to be. You feel like you're by yourself for 24 hours or 48 hours or however long the case may be. To see him come out the way he did tonight, just aggressive from the beginning, his first bucket, his first paint touch -- his first touch was in the paint, a right-hand jump hook. We knew from that point on that that's where he wanted it, and we continued to go to him. So it was great to see him bounce back like that. Because we didn't get to this point in our season by me taking over every game. I kind of laugh at it when I hear from you guys, when I do my media availability, people saying take over the game. My presence on the floor is much bigger than what numbers talk about. When you have a young superstar like this guy [Irving], you have Kevin, who's a superstar as well, and they've helped us get to this point, so you don't just throw in the kitchen sink because we lose two games or we didn't play as well as we could. There may be a time when I may have to have one of those big games, but until then, just relax. It's great for sure. Any time you're able to clock in under, for me, 35 minutes, it's great. But my body has been trained all season to do whatever it takes. Tonight was one of those instances where I didn't need it as much, but I've trained my body over quite a few months now to -- whatever Coach needs me, whenever this team needs me, I'll be ready for it. That they were ready for it as well. They were ready for this moment. Our crowd was ready for this moment. They were amazing, as always. Give a lot of thanks to those guys. They were amazing from the beginning. It starts with our floor general. Our floor general came out, and I think he had 12 in the first quarter. He got to where he wanted to get on the floor, his pull-up was working, his three in transition was working; e led the team, put us in position to succeed. And obviously Kev had a huge first quarter as well. Everybody else just followed their lead after that. Well, for us, rebounding is always a big part of our staple, especially for Double-T [Tristan Thompson] and for Kevin, for myself, and Ky is starting to get down there a little bit as well. We want to get stops. We want to defend, and when you're able to make a team miss, you want to clean the glass, and we were able to do that tonight. We held them under their shooting averages obviously from the previous two games, so we were able to clean the glass and that allowed us to get out on our break. It's a huge key to our success. If we understand that, we put ourselves in the best possible chance of winning. We showed it in Toronto Game 3 and Game 4 when we got down 16 or 18. We showed we're capable of doing -- all the way down to Game 4 we had a chance to win. We've got to come out from the beginning, and it starts with the Big Three. It starts with myself, Kev and Ky, and we've got to do a great job of pushing the tempo, getting these guys ready, and we'll be much better. We'll be more prepared. Our coaching staff gave us a great game plan in 3 and 4, and we didn't execute it. But we'll be more prepared. Well, you were the first person to bring it up to me. I had no idea. I really don't play my career off accomplishments. If they happen, so be it. I've been blessed to be in a position where I can play the game that I love and be around some great guys, and my kids get an opportunity to see me do some special things. My only mindset is to at this point get our guys mentally and physically prepared for a heck of a game on Friday night in Toronto, and if we're able to come home victorious, then the streak continues. If not, we prepare for Game 7. But that's my mindset. My mindset has never been about, I guess, records or streaks or things of that nature. |
| 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. |
| No, we're not a team that loses our composure over anything. We played well in the third quarter to get ourselves back into the game, even taking the lead a couple times. It was a six-point game to start the fourth, and we just didn't start the quarter like we should have, and they did a great job of pushing the lead up to double digits really fast. When you get outscored 45-10 on the bench and give up 25 points off 17 turnovers, no matter what someone does or doesn't do, it's going to be hard to win, especially on the road. And that's what it was. Obviously the game ball goes to Shaun Livingston. Came in, gave them a huge spark. But don't matter what you do with Steph and Klay, don't matter what you do with Draymond. Give up 45 points off the bench and 25 points off turnovers on the road, it's not a good ingredient to win. Well, we've got to be much better in Game 2, obviously. I think defensively we had a game plan and we followed it as much as possible. Well, as great as we could for 48 minutes. We had some breakdowns, which we know we can get better with. Offensively, we've got to be much better. We've got to be much better moving the ball, moving bodies. They're a great team when you just hold the ball and pound the ball. So we've got to do a better job with that, which Coach Lue and the coaching staff will make sure we do in Game 2. So we look forward to the challenge again. Just two days in between doesn't help. It doesn't feel good. But it gives our body a chance to get some rest. I don't quite get your question. I think you're wrong in the fact of saying it was just Klay and Steph. I mean, they got to the point where they were last year and won a championship because of their whole team and their bench. And they're here once again in The Finals because of their whole team. So nothing has really changed. They're a team that's had another year under their belt, and they've exceeded what they did last year. So it's kind of hard to answer that question because it's not really true. What happened? They scored 45 points, we scored 10. That's what happened. Well, I think they look forward to seeing what we can do better tomorrow in our film session and seeing ways we can get better going into Game 2. Yeah, we've got some young guys, but as far as confidence in those guys not believing, that's never been the case for us or any of the guys in the locker room. I know they're excited. We had a chance in that third quarter to do something special, but we didn't counter and do it. Didn't make it happen in the fourth quarter. So I'm looking forward to seeing the film session and seeing ways we can get better going into Game 2, and I think our team will as well. At times I was and at times I wasn't. We've definitely got to do a better job getting the ball moving side-to-side, getting their bodies moving. They're a great team. When you have the ball on one side, they're able to load and do things of that nature. So, you know, we will have a better game plan going into Game 2 for sure offensively. Sometimes your offense dictates your defense, and the fact that we had 17 turnovers and that led to 25 points is not a good ingredient for our offense for sure. Well, he's great at doing that, for sure. Just got to do a better job protecting the ball. It's that simple. |
| Neither. I'm not disappointed in our guys or frustrated. We've just got to do a better job. We've got to be better at all facets of the game both offensively and defensively, both physically and mentally. They just beat us at every -- we didn't win anything. No points of the game did we beat them in anything. Even when we had an early lead, they beat us to 50-50 balls, they got extra possessions, they got extra tip-ins. They beat us pretty good tonight. Selfish is probably the wrong term. I got myself in a lot of trouble tonight personally. Turned the ball over way too much. And I said after Game 1 we just can't turn the ball over against a great team and expect to win, and I had basically half of the turnovers. We had some in the fourth quarter, but we had our third group in. They had some. But I had half of the turnovers when I came out, and it resulted in them getting some easy baskets. So I've got to be better. I've got to be better with the ball. You know, trying to play make for myself and play make for my teammates at the same time, I've just got to be more solid. Well, that's one of them. That's one way to slow them down a little bit. You're able to set your defense. The game kind of broke open when we had two straight turnovers. I think game was at 28-22, I turned the ball over. Draymond got it and was able to hit I think Livingston for a dunk. And then we had another turnover and Klay hit a three, and that kind of slowed us down. Even though we were still getting back in the game, it just slowed us down from that point on. We had the lead, and it started with my turnover, and I can't just be careless with the ball, especially in the paint where a lot of reaching and things of that nature happen. So 18 turnovers once again for 26 points, I think it was 17 for 25 in Game 1. It's just not good basketball. I give my teammates stuff throughout the whole year. All the time. It's no different. We understand the moment that we're in, and it's not -- it's not every year that you get an opportunity to be in this situation, you know? And some of the guys on our team, it's their first time and they've waited their whole life to get to this point. So we know we've got to just do a little bit better. We've got to play better. We've got to play a lot better in order to get this series turned around. I know the other side is looking forward to coming to our building where they had a lot of success last year, so we've got to bear down. We've got to get back to the film and we all have to figure out ways we can help the team be successful. It's hard for me to kind of pinpoint what's not working and what could work right now. Obviously not much is working, especially offensively. Defensively we've been good at times and then at times we just looked like, okay, we're a step slow. We messed up on the coverage. We don't get back or we're just one step behind where we should be. We should be closer to our man. When you're behind these guys, they make you pay every single time. We can't have as many mental lapses. More on the physical, it's a lot of mental as well. These guys put you in so many mental positions where you have to figure it out, and they make you pay for it when you don't. What we've done these last two games doesn't put a damper or a cloud over how we got to this point. We're still here and we have a chance to turn this series around if we come in and do what we need to do both offensively and defensively. So I'm not worried about that side or what the conversations may be about. Internally we have to figure out how we can be better. We have to figure out how we can help one another. We definitely have to figure out how we can get more guys involved. 15 assists, it's not winning basketball, especially versus this team. We've just got to figure it out. Coaching staff will give us a game plan, and it's up to us to go out and execute it. 2014 is something I haven't even thought about. This is a great team, and I stated that before the series ever started. They've got two of the best shooters that we've ever seen, and they're a great team. So I've already stated that. The next couple days will be not -- I won't be reflecting. I'll figure out ways I can be better, starting as soon as I leave this podium. Probably go back to the room and watch the game, re-watch for ways I could have been better. I had a lot of uncharacteristic unforced turnovers which resulted in those guys getting 26 points off turnovers. So I'm one of the guys who kind of always wants to shoulder the blame and take the blame when we don't play as well as we should. It's just who I am, and I've got to be better. He made shots. Give credit where credit is due. The guy made shots. Not only when we left him open and contested late, but he made shots in our face. He had five threes. And we know he's a key for their team, we all know that, an All-Star for their team. And he made some big plays both offensively and defensively, obviously. We know what he does defensively for that team, so game ball to him. |
| At the end of the day, no matter if you lose by 30 or 1, it's just one win. And you have to be able to have a short mind but also learn from the mistakes that you made the previous game and just try to better yourself in the following game. And that's what we're able to do. We had a great shootaround yesterday. We had a great shootaround this morning. Coach Lue and the coaching staff gave us a great game plan and it was just up to us to go out and execute that, and I think we did that tonight. Don't think it's an issue. You know, it's just something that we wanted to pinpoint and do better. You could say we wanted to move the ball better the next game. We want to dribble-drive the next game. Those are not issues. Those are things that we want to be better at in the next game, and I think we did that tonight. Well, it started with the defense just trying to get my hand on Steph's pass, and I was able to get a deflection, and he kind of bumped me a little bit, kind of threw me off a little bit, and I was able to regather from off the floor. I knew we had a break going, and I didn't know exactly which one of my teammates was running the left wing until I got back up off the ground and saw Kyrie. I threw it to Kyrie and I made, I think it was Klay, just shift a little bit, and I knew he was going to throw it up there. And I had to go get it. He threw it, I had to go get it. Well, they're a great team and they have a great starting lineup, and they have great complementary players that come off the bench. It's never about us versus their starting five. It's about the whole 15 group. Our 15 guys versus their 15 guys and who can execute as close to 48 minutes as possible. We did a great job, and I gave the game ball to RJ. Getting the start tonight with Kevin being out, he just came in with so much aggression, so much attention to detail. He was on the glass. He gave us eight rebounds and nine points. But some of the things that he was doing out on the floor did not show up in the boxscore. So we just want to try to play our game. We finally got back to our game tonight, and it started with the floor general to my left. The sharpshooter to my right got it going, and it was just good basketball. It was a good flow, and everyone felt like they were a part of tonight's win. So it was just a collective team win. It wasn't about us versus their starting five. It was just about how everyone can get the job done whoever is on the floor. My teammates got me going. They told me to be aggressive, and that's what I was. Well, I mean, he's like you said, he's a two-way player. Defensively all year long that's what he's been doing. The offense comes very free to him and very easy, but the defensive side is what's making him so great. The contribution that we got from him from the scoring was all predicated on what he did defensively, you know, and he got in great rhythm. He hit some huge shots for us tonight, obviously, but I think it all started on the defensive end where he was much better than he was offensively. Oh, well, when you have the greatest shooter in the world trying to get an easy one or trying to get in rhythm, it's our job to try to keep him out. No matter if it's after the whistle or not. That was just my mindset. Anytime, if you're a great player and you see the ball go in, no matter if it's after the play or during the play, then you start feeling it. Not that you feel good because you know what you're capable of, but it helps. So I didn't want him to see the ball go in, even though he still made some. Well, I mean, I just wanted to play a little bit inside and outside. I started off the game going in the interior and just trying to fan out their defense a little bit. We did a great job of spacing out with RJ, with Ky, and also with Swish, so it gave me a little bit more room to work down in the post. I missed a ton of chippies, but I was loving the space that I was getting and my teammates created for me. So just kind of following the game plan. It's something that we wanted to do tonight and were able to execute it. Coaching staff gave us a game plan and we went out and executed it. No, I didn't change my approach, and I didn't take over this game. Kyrie pretty much took over the game, especially early and late. He closed the game out. He started the game, and I just sprinkled in, you know, my production along the whole game. He took the game over, I guess, from that standpoint. I just try to lead these guys to victory. |
| I don't know. I'm trying to replay it back. I'm not quite sure what we ran out of timeout. Yeah, I'm not sure what we ran out the timeout when we came back out on the floor. But our offense did stall a little bit in the fourth quarter. We played a little bit too much random, trying to dribble drive, get guys looks, and then we started settling a little bit for the three-point shot when we kind of got down. Which obviously we've got to do a better job of that. But we had our chances. I think the third quarter was a momentum swing for us, and they took advantage of it. My mindset is get one. You know, we've got to go out there and play obviously better than we played tonight. Better than even we played in Game 3. But we've got to get one. It's not about overlooking this. It's about getting one on their home floor where they've been very successful. So, you know, we've got to come in with the mindset that our coaching staff is going to give us a great game plan and we've got to execute that. We're about the results after. Oh, nothing got me going. You know, Draymond just said something that I don't agree with. I'm all cool with the competition. I'm all fine with that, but some of the words that came out of his mouth were a little bit overboard, and being a guy with pride, a guy with three kids and a family, things of that nature, some things just go overboard and that's where he took it, and that was it. No, no. That conversation was competitive conversation. I'm okay with that. Well, it's been like that all year for the most part. I'm not quite sure what I can do personally to get to the free-throw line, but I've got to continue to be aggressive for our team. I'm getting hit, but the refs are not seeing it that way, on my drives. But I've got to continue to be aggressive for our team. That's who I am, that's what opens up the floor for a lot of our shooters, and just worry about the results afterwards. You know, it's tough playing 46 minutes and only going to the line four times, as much as I attack the rim. So it's just a tough situation for our team. Well, I don't know what should happen. It's not my call. That's the league office. They'll take a look at it. We all saw it in the locker room. You know, like I said, as a competitor, I love going against Draymond, and I'm all about going out there and leaving it out on the floor. But when it gets a little bit more than what it should be, that's what caused me to have words with him. So as far as the play, I think the league will take a look at it. Obviously our locker room has seen it, and we'll see what they say. No. Obviously, if you want to look to that side, then you put too much pressure on yourself. I think for me as the leader of this team, we've just got to get one. Let's get one. We've already got to take a flight home back anyways, so we might as well come home with a win and play on our home floor again. Being a confident bunch we feel like the chips have been stacked up against us all year anyway. So we've got to learn from our mistakes tonight, which we made some and we go out with the mindset let's get one and then bring it home. No. Not at all. Well, we've got to be aggressive. Our coach, Coach Lue told us to be aggressive. And obviously, we don't like to hear it in that form. We want to get our guys involved and keep our guys in a good rhythm. I just think it was just the way the game played out tonight. Well, first of all, he's a great player, and we know that. And we knew he was going to come out and be aggressive. Because of how the first three games went, and we knew he was going to be aggressive. We made some mistakes and he made us pay for them. He made us pay every time we made a mistake defensively, and he shot the ball extremely well from the three-point line. We tried to keep a body on him when he went to the paint, where he struggled a little bit, but when he went to the three-point line, he made us pay. They started making shots and then they started getting stops. They did it on both sides of the floor. It starts with, I believe, Harrison Barnes' three at the top of the key. That was a big shot to kind of get their rhythm going. Then they got some offensive rebounds, some second-chance points and then defensively they got stops. I didn't talk about the referees. I was asked a question and I answered it. I'm going to save my 25K, okay. So I have not talked about the referees. Don't put me in that cloud. I haven't been solid with the basketball. A lot of it is making plays not only for myself but for my teammates. Some of my aggression turnovers I'm okay with. I think I had two careless ones. One came at the end of the game where Steph picked it off. Another one came early in the third quarter where Bogut trapped the box and I tried to hit Double T. Draymond stepped in front of it. But some of them were attack turnovers. Trying to squeeze the ball into tight places as a quarterback would, and I'm okay with those. But some of those that are careless, I'm not okay with that. Well, for two years, any time we've gotten anyone back from injury or sickness or whatever, it's been a boost for our team, and tonight was another one. I mean, getting them back, seeing him out on the floor and him making the impact, especially in the first half when he hit a couple shots, he was able to get a layup off a offensive rebound. He started the fourth on a post-up, that was a big play for us. So I know he probably felt out of rhythm. It was a different situation for him that he hasn't experienced in quite a few years. But anytime we get someone back from injury or anything, it's a boost for our team. |
| I think from a mental standpoint it wasn't about anybody that was on the floor. We just had a mindset that we wanted to come in here and just try to extend our period and have another opportunity to fight for another day. And that was our main concern, and we were able to do that. Our coaching staff gave us a great game plan, and as one of the leaders of the team, we just went out and executed. You've got a guy like this who is very special, it's probably one of the greatest performances I've ever seen live. To put on the show that he did, you just go out and follow the keys and play winning basketball, and we did that tonight. I think the main thing is that we were able to give ourselves another chance. Going into Boston, being down 3-2, you know, we understood that, hey, listen, the season is over if we don't go out and try to take care of business. Being a big part of our success, I had to come out and do some things to help us win that ballgame, and tonight was just another example of that. Understood the magnitude of this game. I knew how great of a team we were playing, but I just had to come out and just -- I know my teammates trust me, I trust them, and that was the result of it. At this point, it's whatever it takes. Obviously making shots and things of that nature are something that you sometimes really can't control. Sometimes the ball go in; sometimes it don't. How hard you play, how locked in you are on the keys to get a victory, what the coaching staff put out for us. But he was -- obviously this guy was special, and we rode him to the victory line. Just calm. Just calm for 48 minutes. Obviously he played 40 minutes, but even in the 8 minutes that he was sitting down, he was just calm. Timely bucket after bucket that led our team. The fourth quarter, I mean, he hit timely shot after shot after shot when those guys were trying to get back into the game. Defensively he was phenomenal as well, guarding Steph and guarding the rest of those guys, whoever he was matched up on. They tried to post him a few times with Harrison Barnes, and he just made it tough on him. Got his hand on the ball a couple times on the post. He was just locked in on both sides of the floor. So that's what I saw, and that's why I said what I said. Well, it's the only time. I mean, obviously it's do or die for us. Coach Lue said he wanted the ball in my hands a little bit more. I finally did a great job of not turning the ball over and got to my spots, got my teammates involved. Just tried to put us in position to be successful. Obviously it's not always a bed of roses on the court for 48 minutes, but you just try to go out there and trust your keys. That's something I'm very comfortable with, and I've been comfortable with before in the past. Coach wanted to make that adjustment, and I was able to take advantage of it when I had the ball in my hands. I mean, I guess when you're done with a game of basketball and big moments like tonight and moments throughout your career you wish you could get back. No matter how loud you turn the stereo system up in your house, you'll never be able to get it back. You just don't take these moments for granted, no matter if you're at home or on the road. That would classify as date I think it was then. I think it was like as soon as I was coming back to the team, I think we clicked right away. First of all, I'm not on social media right now, so I don't even know what Speights said, and I really don't think that even matters . You guys make me laugh. I swear, you guys do. My only motivation is my teammates and my coaching staff, especially being in this building. It's just us, us versus the Warriors. They have an unbelievable fan base. So many other things that we have to be challenged about. So my only motivation is how can I be there for my teammates and my coaching staff. That's it. I mean, at the end of the day, nothing else really matters. Well, I pride myself on not holding the ball as much. I did that early in my career, and I wasn't very successful. So I understand how to play efficient basketball. Also, when a guy has it going like Kyrie had it going, I'm able to find cracks and move without the ball and get it with the live dribble and things of that nature. And all our teammates do a great job of keeping the space, keeping it available for me to cut through the lane and things of that nature. Just try to be an outlet, an outlet when Kyrie doesn't feel like he has a great look and just try to put pressure on their defense. |
| I give a lot of credit to my teammates and my coaching staff to put me in position to be successful. I mean, without the ball moving, without the screens being set, without the coaching staff putting out the game plans for us offensively then, what I've been able to do, it doesn't happen. So those guys definitely get the credit. Well, I mean, we know we can't turn the ball over versus this team. They make you pay anytime you make a mistake, and for us to only have 12 turnovers today for 16 points is definitely key to our success. You can't turn the ball over versus anyone in our league, but especially in The Finals versus the defending champions. You can't do it because they'll make you pay. So we did a great job of not turning the ball over, including myself, and I just try to put myself in position, put my teammates in position to be successful. Well, I mean, we just focus on the next game, focus on the next minute, and we focus on the game plan that we had to master up to try to even get to the next play. And it wasn't even trying to get to a Game 7. We were like, okay, well, once we went to Game 5, we went out there and being down 3-1, we were like, okay, well, we've got to go home anyway, so let's go home and play in front of our fans, and we were able to do that. And tonight, these guys were, I mean, unbelievable. Once again, Double T's energy and activity, his level, his rebounding, obviously giving us extra possessions, but his defensive rebounding from the beginning was at an all-time high level for himself, even though as great as he is, he was spectacular tonight. And Kyrie's just a floor general. He does what he does. It's no surprise what he does. And we put ourselves in position to be able to be in a Game 7. I'll take it. It don't matter to me . Like I told you guys the other day, it's two of the greatest words in the world, and that's "Game 7", so I'll play it anywhere. No, I'm actually not really thinking about it too much right now. I'm ready to start my treatment session, get home, getting something to eat, lay down, get ready for the flight tomorrow. I'm very just chill right now, actually. I'm just out there playing, just reading, reacting. My teammates, like I said, have put me in position to be successful either when I have the ball or don't have the ball, they give me the ball wherever I would like it. Setting great screens and trying to put pressure on their defense. I've been fortunate enough to see the ball go through the hoop the last couple of games. So, you know, I feel pretty good. They deserved it. They deserved it. We knew what we were going to get out of them, and now it was up to us to go out and give it back to them, and I think we held up our end of the bargain. We knew what we were going to get out of those guys, all 20,000-plus. They were phenomenal from the time we ran out on the floor. So they deserved tonight, and it was special to be out there for them. Nope, I don't. I just play. I know what I put into the game. I know how true I am to the game. I know how true I am to these fans. So, no, I don't let it get to me. Oh, I mean, obviously, at the end of the day for me I think -- I don't really get involved in that. I try to be the best player I can be for this team every night, lead these guys out. I mean, I actually had a competitive shooting game with my kids last night. You know, we were shooting baskets last night between myself and my two boys, which ended up not going so well for me at times. You know, those guys have home-court advantage over me. But at the end of the day my whole mindset is how I can put myself in position to help these guys be successful and I could be successful as well. I don't really get caught up in what everybody else talks about. I think you should know me by now. I see what you're trying to do, though. Well, when you're prepared and you're well-prepared, then you have a lot of confidence going into a game. I was a freshman at St. Mary, we were well prepared. We had a great high school coach in Keith Dambrot, who is now the head coach at Akron U, who prepared us throughout the whole Playoffs, and then when we got to the state championships. So we were prepared. So we went out and just let it happen. Let it play, and let it play out. Now at this point in my life, sitting here today, we're well prepared with T Lue and our coaching staff. They prepare us, and it's up to us to go out and play, so we play with a lot of confidence and understanding that it's not -- there's nothing on the court that will blindside us because we're just a prepared bunch. I guess we just take one day at a time. We haven't rushed to get to a Game 5. We didn't rush to get to a Game 6 today. And we won't rush to get to a Game 7 on Sunday. At the end of the day this is going to be it for all of us, including you guys. One more game left, and you guys are going to give it all you've got, we're going to give it all we've got, and the Warriors will do the same, and we'll live with the results. That's how you go about it. Well, Klay went on his own barrage for the last three-and-a-half minutes in the third quarter, and we were up 20 at one point and he kind of went on his own 12-0 run or whatever the case may be, just hitting threes, getting to the lane and just kind of took a little bit of momentum from us. He looked at me and I was like, I just didn't want to come out. I felt like those first couple minutes of the fourth quarter were going to be very important, and I just wanted to be out there for my teammates and try to make some plays happen, and I was fortunate enough to do that. Well, you have to defend, and that's what we've all been talking about since we got together even from last year that in order for us to be ultimately successful, we have to defend, and I mean, if you don't defend versus these guys, you see what happened. I mean, we've all seen it all year for the last couple years. If you don't defend these guys or you make a mistake, they make you pay. So our antennas have to be up throughout the course of a 48-minute game on every possession, because as soon as you make a mistake, they get a three here, they get a slip to the rim here. They get offensive rebound and everyone's in the paint and they seek out to the perimeter for extra threes. So our antennas just have to be up, and I think it's been there, not every game, not as well as we'd all like, but the last few games our antennas have been razor sharp. Well, I think all my coaches throughout my career have had a meaningful part of my career. Everyone's been different in their own ways of how they philosophize the game and things of that nature, but I could talk in the present right now. I think me and Coach Lue just kind of, we connect that's something that's bigger than basketball, our upbringing. Being from a single-parent household, being from an inner-city community, being a statistic that you weren't supposed to make it out and there's no way you're going to make it out. You're going to be another one of those African-American kids, and we both made it out from tough situations growing up, and people just saying there's no way you can do it. So before we even met each other, you have a sense of that type of feeling. Then I came into the league and I'm a huge basketball fan, obviously, and I watched The Finals when he was with the Lakers and seen the spark that he gave that team when Phil Jackson gave him the nod. And I think everybody's just so caught up in the shot that AI made when he stepped over him, but people don't realize the impact that he made on that team, and the guy that just accepted his role. He's able to win a championship. So our relationship has just grown over the years, and just being a competitor, going against him and then seeing him as a coach, going against him again when he was in Boston and things of that nature and with the Clippers, and then when I came back and he was the assistant coach, continues to grow. I think it's like anything, when you're around someone every single day, I guess it's like a marriage or a girlfriend. You're around her every single day, they get better and better and better if it's genuine, and that's what it is here with myself and T Lue. 103 consecutive games, correct? I mean that's phenomenal. It's a testament to his professionalism as a young guy, him keeping his body not only in shape but understanding that it's more than just playing basketball. Kid takes care of his body every single day, he's been durable for this franchise even before I even came back. It's a great feeling when you can walk into a building and know that that guy's going to be in uniform. No matter what's going on, no matter what's happening, you know that guy's going to be in uniform and he's going to give it everything he's got. It's been great, and 103 on Sunday, and hopefully out of all those games he's played, we want that one to be the best one he's played. So look forward to it, and I'm done. |
| 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 |
| It's too hard to say. Just trying to make plays for myself, make plays for my teammates, keep the defense off balance throughout the course of a 48-minute game. The coaching staff and my teammates do a great job of putting me in a position to succeed, and I just try to come through for them every night. Tonight was another one of those games where I made a couple plays to help us get a win. But it was definitely our two bigs that set the tone. Kev [Love] and Double T [Tristan Thompson], they were phenomenal. I don't think it's no momentum. I pretty much know how many guys I'm going to see throughout the course of a game. I know the guy that's going to start on me. I know the guy that's going to shift off onto me if a sub happens or if they go small or if they go big. For me, the only thing on my mind is how we can execute the best way we can and get a bucket in this possession, either if I can get myself a shot or if I can drive, get my shooters a shot, or if I can get a double-team in the paint or get to the free throw line. It's not an individual matchup for me, no matter who's in front of me. My mind is always racing on how I can make this the best possession at that particular time. Well, for me I saw that in Kev this morning. I knew what type of game he was going to have. I mean, he came through for us. We want the mentality of Kevin from Minnesota, but his usage rate don't have to be as high as Minnesota. Obviously we all know that he was a featured guy pretty much every possession going down the floor, and here that's changed a little bit because we have other guys. But his mentality needs to stay the same as Minnesota, and I think as he continues to get even more comfortable and comfortable -- tonight was one of those instances where every time he got the ball, it was a small guarding him or somebody was in the post, he was aggressive. He grabbed every rebound for the most part with him and Tristan in the paint, and he was very aggressive with his shot. He also got to the free throw line 10 times -- well, nine. So definitely that mentality from Minnesota is what we all love. We put in a lot of work. We put in a lot of work. Coach gave us a couple days off after we closed the series in Toronto, but after that we've been on the practice court or in the weight room training as if we were playing. There's no way you can substitute a game. We all know that. But the work that we put in this week, we just tried to be as up to speed as possible when the game did come. Tonight was just another opportunity for us to implement our scheme. Our coaching staff gave us a great game plan, and it was up to us to go out and execute it. Well, I think it's the mindset that you have to have when you go on the road for a Game 1. You can't start the game off lax or shooting a bunch of jump shots. That's my mindset. We've got guys that can shoot the heck out of a ball, and obviously Kev showed that tonight. But for myself, I have to be in attack mode and just put the pressure on the defense and see what happens. I was able to do that and kind of just set the tone early on what we needed to do. Once I started to see the defense start to crack in, then I started to find my shooters. I don't even think we played that great tonight. We definitely didn't shoot the ball as well as we're capable of shooting. I know Kyle had three or four very, very good looks that he missed when we had a good stretch. But I think the energy and the effort and the mindset was where it needed to be starting on the road, especially in the Eastern Conference Finals. |
| No, I didn't see it. And what are you going to do about it at the end of the day? My only job is to try to be the MVP for this team every night, put my teammates, put our franchise in position to be successful and ultimately compete for a championship. For me, I know what I bring to the table. This league knows what I bring to the table. That's for you guys to write about. It's not for me to be concerned about. We just want to try to get better. I also told you we had another level. You looked at me crazy when I told you that. I believe we've got another level as well. As well as we played tonight, there were still some things we could have done better. We had a few bad turnovers offensively that we could do better. We had a couple miscues defensively where we gave up some open looks. We can get better. That's the positive for our ballclub. There's no complacency with us right now. There shouldn't be. It's the postseason. But we like where we're headed and the direction we're headed right now. Well, that's a huge compliment, but there's no such thing for us. We don't have a perfect roster. We don't have a perfect team. But we can make up for mistakes, and we can make up for maybe some deficiencies that we may have because we communicate, we fly around and we sacrifice for one another. That could put us as close to perfection as possible, which you can't ever get to. But our communication level, our sacrifice, what we give to each other every night kind of covers that, kind of covers some of the faults that we may have. And with the faults that we do have, we try to get better and better at it so we can be as great as we can be every single night. I don't know. I'm a guy who lives in the moment. Our team is in a great groove, and I'm happy to be a part of that groove. At the end of the day, we want to try to put ourselves in position to win every game. That's the goal. Can you do that? Sometimes you come out with an L, but it's how you learn from those experiences that's going to help you out the next time. We are in a good groove as a team, and we want to try to continue that going home. No, I don't really pay attention to those things, to be honest. I only pay attention to what's going on with our guys and how we can put a lot of pressure on the opposing team, from IT to the rest of those guys. Obviously we didn't see him in the second half. Marcus Smart started the second half, but that was not our concern going into the second half. Our concern was not get complacent. Don't do what we did in Game 1 in the third quarter here, where we gave up I think 36 or something points in that quarter. Don't allow them to get into a good groove. It's not my concern. Well, they're going to make another adjustment, and we have to be ready for that going into Game 3. We're going to watch film tomorrow and see ways we can be better. We do have some great perimeter defenders that take the challenge, but we also have great third-line defense as well with our front line, which communicates pick-and-roll coverages or pin-down coverages or whatever coverages and allow the guards to get up into the ball or do what they need to do to be successful versus their guards. Absolutely. We have a veteran ballclub. We're one of the oldest teams in the league, so we all push each other. We're here for one reason. When you sign up to be here, we're here to compete. We're here to sacrifice for one another. And if you're in garbage time or if you're in in crunch time, you need to be a professional. RJ [Richard Jefferson] has done that. Champ [James Jones] has done that. Channing [Frye] is doing that. You see guys playing one round, a huge piece for one round, but then the next round certain things change. Guys just continue to stay ready. Guys continue to stay professional. It's great to be in a locker room like that. |
| Momentum. We didn't continue to press the tempo. Marcus Smart started to hit a lot of threes. They started to get momentum, and that's what happens -- you give a team a life. They played so freely without IT, and they just made play after play after play, and we couldn't weather the storm. I had a tough game, period. Not just in the second half. Me personally, I didn't have it. My teammates did a great job of keeping us in the game, building that lead. But me personally, I didn't have it. That's all I've got to say about my performance. No, it's never that. We've been playing so well, but like I said, you let a team grab momentum like that, you almost knew that that last shot was going to go in. It was like, you already knew. As soon as the ball went out his hands, you kind of knew that shot was going to go in because of how the game was just played throughout the second half. No, no, they didn't mix up the coverage. They did a good job of sprinting back, leveling to the ball, doubling me a little bit more in the post. But like I said, my performance personally was all on me. I mean, a lot of things went wrong. I don't know; I can't play the game right back in my head right now, and I'm looking forward to seeing the film tomorrow when we get together. But they moved the ball, like Double-T said -- 28 assists -- and they kept us at bay. We couldn't get stops. We couldn't get out in transition a lot. Those guys made plays. They made a lot of plays. They got some second-chance points. We only had two fast-break points, so they neutralized what we wanted to do. No, I was just pretty poor. I mean, what do you want me to say? Well, we're going to crack down on the film tomorrow, for sure. We've got to be a lot better. It's the postseason. You win some, you lose a couple, maybe, but how can you be better from game to game? And like I said, they was better today than we were, and we've got to figure out how to be better than them in Game 4. But we look forward to the challenge. I think it's great -- what happened hurts. It's a loss in the postseason. But I'm glad it kind of hurt, that it happened the way it did -- let our foot off the gas a little bit, didn't keep the pressure on them like we have been accustomed to. But we have to play a lot better in Game 4. I said that before the series even started about Brad Stevens' ATOs. If you go back and look at my transcript, I said he's very good out of ATOs. He has so many different wrinkles, misdirection, thinking the ball is going this way, he has a misdirection going the other way. You've got to kind of keep your head on a swivel. He has a lot of packages. So you can plan for a few, but then he might run something you've never seen before. If we communicate a little bit better out of timeouts, it'll put us in position to be more successful against that. A little bit of both. A little bit of carelessness. I had one when Kev ducked in, I should have faked high, bounced low. But I just threw it, and that lets me know I didn't have it tonight. Jae Crowder got his hands on it. We had a couple more turnovers where we just were either overpassing or overthinking or whatever the case may be. That definitely resulted in us not being as fluent as we've been offensively. Well, I feel some adversity is all part of the postseason. I feel like you have to have some type of adversity in order to be successful. If it was going to happen, let it happen now; let us regroup. Let us regroup and all the narrative and everything that was going on, let's regroup and let's get back to playing desperate basketball, which they did tonight. So we've got to be a lot better, for sure. |
| Nothing. Same thing I've been saying since I got here. I've been saying he's a special kid. He's a special talent. As the stakes get higher and higher, his game gets higher and higher, but it was nothing surprising for me. But he rose to the occasion, and he put the team on his back, and we definitely needed that effort from him. Like he said, he's been just kind of dictating the game and being a playmaker and things of that nature throughout the Playoffs or even throughout this series so far, but tonight, he showed why he's one of the best point guards in the league, and he commanded us to be better, especially in the second half. Just trying to be aggressive. Obviously I couldn't be as aggressive as in the first half because of the foul trouble, so if I'm on the floor I've got to be aggressive and try to make plays, help our team be successful and read the defense. I was able to still be aggressive and find two of our shooters for two threes, found Kev, found Swish [JR Smith], so it was just trying to read the game, the game in between the game, and it worked well for us. Yeah, my rhythm for the most part is broken when you -- I can't remember the last -- I don't think I've ever had four fouls in a game before in the first half, so my rhythm is kind of broken and you've got to figure out ways you can still help the team, and my teammates said be aggressive, be you. You got us to this point and continue to do that, so I just tried to find ways to get into the lane, get into transition, when they backed off shoot the jumper and felt very comfortable with it, so I was able to get back into a rhythm very fast. At the end of the day, you play the game that's in front of you. We didn't take care of business in Game 3, they played well. Tonight they played well again, but we was able to play well, especially in the second half, and we defended. If we defend, then we're going to always give ourselves a good chance to win. We look forward to the next game. It's a difficult challenge because our preparation going into the series was going against a team with Isaiah, so now they're playing a lot differently now, so we're trying to figure out exactly what they're running and things of that nature, so it's been very difficult on us without IT on the floor, but now this is two games that we've been able to see them and we're going to get a better understanding. We should be a lot better in Game 5. Yeah, like I say, we game planned -- because their series went to [Game] 7 we game planned for both teams, and they're a different team when IT is -- I won't say a different team, they run different things just because of IT being a huge piece of the puzzle for them offensively. So they had to kind of reshape, and that's the beauty of having Brad Stevens as your coach. You're able to reshape what you do offensively and still be in a good rhythm. It's been challenging for us to kind of -- plays out of time-out, kind of been killing us on ATOs and keeping us off balance, but in the second half we kind of got a little bit of rhythm, and think we'll be better in Game 5. No, I mean, listen, they're well-coached, and they've got guys that's always kind of been counted out throughout their career, so they play with a lot of pride. And then you add the green on their back and this is history, this is a franchise that you kind of no matter who's out on the floor, you have to play for that franchise and play with pride. You know, they're giving us everything that they have, and we're expecting it, and we want the challenge. It's the postseason. At the end of the day, you just want to win the game. It doesn't matter who you're going against or how you get the job done, you're just trying to figure it out, and I think we did that. Yeah, I mean, when you look at some of the greatest rebounders in our game, guys who create extra possessions, you've got to figure out a way to try to take him out, and not take him out like in a bad way, but how do you keep him off the glass, and they're doing a really good job the last couple games of putting two or three bodies on him. But when you do that, you allow our other frontcourt player who's been a monster rebounder his whole career to come up and do the thing that he did tonight, and we needed that. We needed the 17 rebounds from Kev, and it was huge for our team. have. I have. I think I missed one in Boston before. I've missed a couple drunks in my career. I think I've made more than I've missed though. Percentages are pretty good. (Laughter). When I came into the league or my first seven seasons in the NBA? I mean, the kid is special, and he basically was just waiting for an opportunity to be able to blossom, and I'm just happy and blessed that when I decided to come back that I was able to help him blossom, I guess, because he gets to play in games that he's always been built for. He just never had the opportunity because of the team at that point in time. With me coming back and we're getting Kev and making a trade for J.R. and T-Mo [Timofey Mozgov] and Shump and all the pieces and all the pieces started coming together and Double T [Tristan Thompson] gets better and Delly [Matthew Dellavedova] and all that, and in year 1, even though it wasn't the successful season we would have hoped for, it gave him some experience that he didn't have in his first -- I don't know what he had, four seasons before I got here, that he didn't have. But he was already built for it. His game was built for it, and I'm happy, like I said, to be able to, I guess, sit back with four fouls and see him do what he's always been built to do. He was born for these moments. Well, in order to be successful, you have to defend. You have to defend. And especially versus a team like this who moves the ball, shares the ball, moves bodies, and they're very precise with their offensive sets. You have to defend, and it allows us to get to our best attribute at times and that's to get out on the open floor. I think that allowed us to outscore them by 17 in the third. Well, it's all -- the close-out game is always the hardest, and also you're doing it, and Boston is going to make it even harder. We have to go in with a bunker mentality that we had in Game 1 and Game 2 to go out and do what we do, but we have to defend. We have to execute offensively. We have to have low turnovers, and we have to try to make them miss because some of those guys play a lot better at home. That's just how the game be played. But we'll play the game, and we'll see what happens. |
| 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. |
| And that's -- it wasn't just the third quarter, it was the whole game. It started with myself having some turnovers, especially in the first half. I pride myself on not turning the ball over, and I did it too much. So 20 turnovers for 21 points on the road and 56 points in the paint, we did a great job of covering the 3-point line, but other than that, they played a hell of a game. No, I don't think so. But I also know that you cannot simulate what they bring to the table. No matter how many days that you have to prepare, you can't simulate what they have. So it's great to get the first game up underneath us. We made a lot of mistakes; they capitalized. And we get an opportunity to get a couple days to see what they did and see what we did wrong and how we can be better in Game 2. Kevin Durant. I mean, you take one of the best teams that we had ever assembled last year, that we saw in the regular season and in the post-season, and then in the off-season you add a high-powered offensive talent like that and a great basketball IQ like that, that's what stands out. I mean, it's no if, ands, or buts. It is what it is. We got to figure out how to combat that, which is going to be a tough challenge for us. But that's what stands out. No, we was victims of ourself, for one. Like I said, we had 20 turnovers, and there's no way you're going to win a ball game having 20 turnovers against this team and on the road. But at the end of the day, we gave up a lot in transition. They had 27 points on fast breaks. That's part of our game. That's part of our game. It's what got us here. So we definitely want to be more in the 20s in assists, but that's what got us here. And we got to be able to make shots. We got to be able to move the ball. We know that. But playing iso ball has helped us get to this point, and it has gave us success in the last three years. So we don't want to have a high steady diet of it because the defense becomes stagnant and our players become stagnant, but that's part of our package. Well, I think that -- I mean, a couple instances. First of all, we got to stop the ball in transition. There was a few times where we fanned out to the 3-point line and let guys just go right down the middle for a dunk. And I know, I believe, K.D. had two or three of those. So when you turn the ball over, you got to know that that's their best. That's when they become very dangerous because those guys, they sprint down the lane, they sprint to the 3-point line, they put a lot of pressure on your defense. But the ball is the number one thing. We got to stop the ball first and then fan out to the 3-point line if those guys go there. No, I wasn't surprised at anything. They are a high-powered offensive team. They can shoot the ball from the perimeter, they can get into the paint. They do everything exceptionally well, if not great. So never surprised by anything that they can do. Just get focused on Game 2. We made a lot of mistakes. There's nothing really needs to be said. We know we're capable of playing a lot better. We didn't play as well as we know we're capable of, so we look forward to the next one. Just to be themselves and do what they have done throughout the course of the season, throughout the course of the last couple years. Play with energy, play with effort, play with their mind and their bodies and understand what we're trying to accomplish. So it's going to be -- this is The Finals, and we don't care about making mistakes, just play as hard as you can and follow the game plan, have your mind in it. And if your mind is fresh and your mind is into it, then a lot of things take care of itself. Well, the game is -- I mean, it's played how it's played. I don't know. I mean, first half I had six turnovers, second half I had two. So could I have turned the ball over more in the second half? I mean, the game is just -- the game is just played that way. |
| Well, I wouldn't say frustrated. Just you never want to be down 2-0 in a series against anybody. So we had some things that we need to do better obviously from Game 1 and Game 2 to get Game 3 tomorrow, and we look forward to the challenge once again. We know it's a tall challenge for us, but it's a great moment to be a part of, so we look forward to what tomorrow brings. Well, at the end of the day there's other things that I can do better and hope that I can do better to help this team be successful. It is my leadership, and try to use my inspiration to help the guys as well. So we all have a job to do, and we want to all try to do it even better than we can at times. So if I can give a little bit more, then I will. But I leave everything that I have out on the floor every night, so I'm always satisfied with the way I play. I don't know, I don't remember how I felt last year being down 2-0. That's last year and I don't even know the feeling anymore. So just mentally I'm just mentally strengthening my mind and getting my mind ready and focused on what tomorrow's going to bring, and so I look forward to it. No, it doesn't change anything. We got to protect home. It starts with tomorrow. One game at a time, one possession at a time, and cleaning up on some of the miscues that we have had in the first couple games and not have as many. I don't know. It takes a mental toll just when you lose. No matter if it's a series or game or whatever the case may be, in the post-season any loss always takes a mental toll on you. But how can you refocus your mind, how can you refuel it to understand that at the end of the day it is a series. So you got to try to focus on the next game and focus on your job and what you can do to help your team be successful going into the following game. Yeah, it's something I am accustomed to. It's something that I feel like is -- that it's okay for me to kind of always go back and know that I can refocus. I can get my guys ready, get myself ready. But you hate to continue to put yourself in these positions, but at the end of the day it's still just basketball, man, and that's what gives me comfortable and I'm more comfortable about it because it's just a game. I prepare myself, I'm going to go out and do my job and live with the results. I don't really know. I never really understood that question as far as my game. I play my game and I don't change it no matter what the series is, I don't change it what the course of the day is, I don't change it what the score is. I just play my game. My game is being aggressive. My game is getting my guys involved. My game is getting into the paint, shooting some outside shots when they're available. But my game is -- it is what it is. So it's not going to change because a series -- I'm down 2-0 or up 2-0. It's going to be the same. That's not our game. We don't play slowdown basketball. We play at our pace. We play our game. We got to this point playing our way. We have won a lot of games playing the way we play, so we're not going to change. For myself, I can only speak for myself, I don't know what -- I mean, for me, like I said, no matter win, lose, or draw, if you give everything you got to the game and you prepare yourself mentally, physically, you do your job, then there's nothing to be afraid of the moment for, there's nothing to be disappointed or about the game or how the outcome is. If you prepare yourself, then you can be okay with the outcome. I mean I can. I speak for myself. Take great shots and not turn the ball over. We had an opportunity, last game, we cut it to four, and then they made a couple plays here, I think. If I remember, it was -- I think it was 86-82, they come out, I did a stupid strip foul on Livingston, he hits two free throws, we come down and turn the ball over, and then they hit a three and it went from a four-point game to a 10-point game that fast. So just can't make bad plays against a team that's that great. I think he does a great job of it as well, but it's just some of the sets that we call, and that's just -- you can say it, you can put him in position to be successful, and we just try to lay bodies on his guys that's guarding him, make -- if he's open, just get him the ball on time, on target, and let his talent take over from there. Yeah, I mean, some of these questions are kind of out of my hands, as far as when you talk about lineup changes and what y'all should do offensively. I'm one of the players on the team. I'm a big piece of the team, I know that, but I'm not in control of who should be in inserted into the lineup, who shouldn't be. I think we have all trusted each other, we have all been in position where we trust each other out on the floor. And whoever is on the floor has to do their job, and we trust that they will do their job. So we look forward, like I said, to whatever our coaching staff has planned for us tomorrow night. We just want to continue to play how we did in Game 2. I thought we were much more physical, we had bodies on bodies and we have to do that against those guys, because if we let them run free, then they are even that more dangerous. So like I said, if we do a good job of not turning the ball over and forcing turnovers like we did in Game 3, that will put us in a lot better position as well and just continue to get contesting their shots. They do make a lot of contested shots, and some of those we can live with, but some of the ones that we can't live with or we don't have a hand in or we give them open looks or things of that nature or messing up on communication on some of our defensive sets, but if we -- we have a great game plan, and if can follow that for the full 48 minutes, then we give ourselves a great chance to win. |
| Well, we didn't have any -- not many worries after the game. I'll figure it out within the next 48 hours. Obviously it's a dramatic situation to be in, but it is what it is and we got to get ready for Game 4. So we're going to come in tomorrow, watch some film, see ways we can get better and just try to take it one game at a time. They made some shots and we didn't. We had some really good looks. We had some really good looks. I had a turnaround jumper in the post fade-away, I make a ton, didn't go in. Kyle had a corner three, really good look, right in front of their bench, didn't go in. They came down and Steph, one ricocheted off the backboard, he got a tip in, K.D. got a pull-up on Tristan, and then he shoots a bomb in transition. So it's a miss-or-make league. We make a couple, they miss a couple, and it's the other way around. But it didn't happen that way. Well, of course, but for me personally I don't get involved in what people talk about. That's not -- I've been out of that department I told you guys for a long time now. So mentally, me personally, I got to go home, start my treatment right now, get my mind focused and get my body focused and get my body ready for Game 4, and we take it one possession at a time. No, only missed shots. We missed shots. I gave everything that I had, so at times throughout the game I was tired, but that's just because I was just playing as hard as I could. But I was able to get second and third and fourth winds. I don't contribute as losing this game because we got tired. We missed some shots, and they made some. What do you mean my mindset? Well, I seen him getting ready to pull up, he uses a rhythm dribble to get a good look, and when K.D. shoots, he falls forward, and I wanted to get a contest. The last thing I want to do is foul a jump shooter. So I wanted to jump and contest it, but I know he -- when he shoots, he kind of leans forward a little bit. So I just stayed there, high hands, contested, and he made it. Of course we thought we was going to win. That's just -- we had an opportunity. They had opportunities as well. And they made the most of them, and we didn't. So, yeah, we came in the game believing we was going to win for sure. We were playing good basketball. Kyrie got it going, JR got it going as well, so we had some really good looks, like I said. I can't go back and think of it right now exactly all the possessions that we had in the fourth quarter, but we had some good looks. I mean, it's so hard to say, but like I said, for me personally, I gave everything I had tonight. So win, lose, or draw, you live with the results. Like I said, they played a really good game as well, but they made shots, they made shot down the stretch. They got stops, which they have been doing. We shot in the low 40s again. They got stops and then they made play after play down the stretch. Yeah, I mean, before the series even started we knew what we was dealing with. I said it after we won the Eastern Conference Finals that we're getting ready for a juggernaut. It's probably the most, most firepower I've played in my career. I played against some great teams, but I don't think no team has had this type of firepower. So even when you're playing well, you got to play like A plus plus, because they're going to make runs and they're going to make shots and they got guys that's going to make plays. So we made enough plays tonight to still win the ball game, but they made a couple more. On me personally, I mean, obviously it's physically and emotionally draining because I give everything to the game and want to put myself and my teammates in a position to be successful. So but I lay it all on the floor, and I did that tonight, gave everything that I had, both mentally and physically. So obviously I'm drained right now, ready to get home. But you're going against a team like this and you put together a game like we had where we had an opportunity, it's definitely draining. No. No, I did, like I said, I gave everything that I had to this game, so I don't look at it saying I wish I could have did this or I would have did that. I left it out on the floor. |
| I think I was -- it was a transition play, and I believe it was Kyle on my right side that was running the wing, and two of their players were back and I was just trying to engage one of them so I could get Kyle a shot in the corner, and they both went to Kyle, I believe, and I got caught in the air. So that's the only thing I could think of. I didn't want to travel, and Draymond was kind of playing Double T, and Double T kind of had his back towards me, so I just threw it off the glass and went and got it. Well, we're going to watch the film when we get to Golden State, and let's see ways we can be better. We didn't play our type of game in Game 1 and Game 2. And if we don't do that, if we play like we played in Game 1 and Game 2 of this series, the series is over. So we have to continue to play how we played at home. We have to be physically -- be physical at the point of attack, we got to continue to move the ball, share the ball. And tonight we had 27 assists, and that's very key. That's part of who we are. We set a lot of records since we kind of assembled this team the last couple years. And that's just part of who we are. We got guys that can stretch the floor, make big shots, and they did it tonight, from Ky, Kevin, and Swish, and everybody else chipped in as well. Well, I didn't hear it, but some of the other guys heard it and told me that that they wanted to celebrate on our floor once again and they wanted to spray champagne in our locker rooms, and I think it came from Draymond, which is okay, that's Dray anyway. But so I just told guys, I didn't stress anything besides just live in the moment. Live in the moment. We have a great opportunity to give ourself another opportunity to keep going. We played well in Game 3, well enough to win, and we just didn't do it. But tonight we came out and we stuck to the game plan our coaching staff put together and we -- this was as close to a 48-minute game we played in the post-season. Even in the first couple first three rounds, this was close as -- to a 48-minute game as we played. It was big for us. Well, I think the last two games we have played Cavaliers basketball. We have been physical, we haven't turned the ball over, and we have shared the ball. In Game 3 we just -- down the stretch we couldn't make any shots, and they did. And that was just -- it's a make-or-miss league at that point. So in the last couple games we have been playing Cavaliers basketball, and it's resulted in us just playing better and us getting this win tonight. No, they got us where they want us. Listen, at the end of the day, we want to just try to put ourself in position to play another game, and we did that tonight and hopefully we can do it Monday night where we can come back here. So our mindset is try to go up there and get one. Which is probably one of the toughest environments we have in this league, along with our building. And so we look forward to the challenge and the matchup. He's just been very special in closeout games. On both sides. Us being able to close out a team trying to close out on us. He's just been built for that moment. I said that over and over again, that he's always been built for the biggest moments, and tonight he showed that once again. It's not surprising. He's just that special. I don't know. I don't like it. It causes too much stress, man. I'm stressed out. Keep doing this every year. But listen, at the end of the day we just got some resilient guys. The Warriors have championship DNA, and we do as well. We're battle tested, they're battle tested. And getting swept is something that you never want to have happen. Especially this point. You get all the way to the Finals, you hate to get swept, lose two games on your home floor. So I think a lot of guys had that in their mind today, and they came out and played like it. I'll be all right on Monday. I'll be all right on Monday. He's a big piece of our puzzle. We all know that. He's been huge for our success the last three years, and they did a -- they have done a great job of putting him in the game plan and neutralizing what he does best, and that's offensive rebound and giving us extra possessions. And it's been very tough on him in this Finals so far. But he didn't get down on himself. He came through when we needed him the most, and that was tonight, getting 10 rebounds and also dishing out five assists. So that was big time. Yeah, I have. I'm not here to tell you guys what I've been talking to him about or what I -- but he knows what I expect out of him. Like I said, tonight we needed him the most, and he was there. No, I didn't have to work into believing it. At the end of the day I had the same game day ritual. And I slept great last night, came to shootaround, got my work in, I went home, took my usual pregame nap, got up, ate my pregame food, came to work. I didn't feel anything, actually, I was just excited about the moment. It is what it is. You come to work and you put in the work and you study the game for myself, and you just do everything to put yourself in a position to succeed. There's no reason to add any more pressure to it. And I'm not saying it was the result of a win, because I've done the same thing for a long time now, but for myself, just being able to just stay even keeled no matter the situation, I think it's good for our ball club. I'm about there. I'm about there. It lets me know that I did what I was supposed to do when I'm emotionally and physically drained at the end of a Finals game. If I'm not, then I didn't do what I was supposed to do. So that would be two games in a row where I felt like that, and now I got to get my mind ready once again. Well, it's quite a long flight going out west, and so we try to get a little bit of sleep. I try to get a little bit of sleep and then I get up and get treatment on the plane. Just give my body as much treatment as I can on the plane and get a couple hours of rest. Obviously it's going to be probably not too -- it won't be a long -- it won't be easy for me to sleep tonight because I'm still going on with the game and things of that nature, my body is not feeling as great, but I'll be fine tomorrow. I stunk in the first Finals. I don't stink anymore. No, I don't see it. So I can't talk to my teammates about it because I don't see it. Unless one of the guys brings it to me, either as a joke or something they want me to see, but I don't -- it don't go -- I don't have notifications on my phone. I don't have none of the apps on my phone right now so I can't even like click on it and accidentally click on it. I don't get involved in that, man. Because I'm like, I know, like I'm like every other mention when I play. And I don't -- I don't like it because people just be talking like -- people talk crazy, man. I'm going to leave it at that. So I know better. At the end of the day the game is supposed to be played physically. Both teams were wanting to put themselves in the record books and put themselves in basketball history. So try to do whatever it takes to win. I think both teams definitely are trying to do that from game to game. No. You can't. First of all, if you take a minute to see what's going on versus this team, they hit you with a 50-point quarter. There's no -- you can't -- we were just playing in the moment. We're just playing good basketball. We were in attack mode, and it results in us having 49. The reason we didn't hit 50 is because I can't shoot a free throw. So, but I'll be better in Game 5. |
| Well, for me personally, I left everything on the floor every game, all five games. So for me personally I have nothing to be -- I have no reason to put my head down. I have no reason to look back at what I could have done or what I shouldn't have done or what I could have done better for the team. I left everything I had out on the floor every single game for five games in this Finals, and you come up short. So it would be the same if you feel like you wrote the best column of you your life and somebody picked another one over you. That's -- how would you feel? You know, so you wouldn't hold your head down, but you would be like, okay, it's just not my time. So Golden State is a worthy opponent, obviously been the best team in our league for the last three years, the best team this year, and they showcased that throughout the post-season, and we were another opponent in their way. It's just unfortunate for some of the guys on our team that's never been able to get this far and not be able to hold the trophy up. And those are things that kind of bother me more than anything. Guys like Kyle and Derrick and Deron and Kay and Edy. So, emotions are all over the place right now. No, I don't think I've ever -- not one time did I feel like we were overmatched until probably like I looked up, there was like a minute 20, and we were down 13, I believe, or something at that point. And I was like, okay, we left everything on the floor, and it still wasn't enough. So that's -- they assembled a great team. We were able to get them last year, and they went out and got one of the best players that this league has ever seen, so they did a good job of -- a great job, their front office and their players, by doing that recruiting, the things that they did in the summertime, and obviously it paid dividends. Well, it's a two-sided question because for me personally -- I don't know. I need to sit down and figure this thing out. And so I don't know as far as me personally right now. But as far as that team, they're going to be here for a while. They're going to be around for a while. Pretty much all their guys are in their 20s. Pretty much all their big-name guys are in their 20s, and they don't show any signs of slowing down. So there's going to be a lot of teams that's trying to figure out ways to put personnel together to try and match that if they're able to actually face them in the Playoff series, both Eastern Conference and Western Conference. Because they're built for -- from my eyes, they're built to last a few years. So we'll see. I don't know. This is my 8th trip to the Finals, and I've had some pretty good ones in my day. And like I said, I just try to do everything to just try to help this team win and more. For me to go out there and for the guys that allowed me to be the leader that I am and allow me and trust me that I'm going to make the right plays and I'm going to do the right things and have the right intention, that's a compliment to a my guys, it's a compliment to the 14 guys that allow me to do at that and the coaching staff. And I just try to put in the work. I put in the work individually, in the film room, in my mind, my body every single day to prepare myself for whatever obstacle that this ball club entails. Does it always result in us winning? No. This is my third year here, and we haven't won every game. We haven't won every Finals, obviously. We lost two of them. So but like I've always told myself, if you feel like you put in the work and you leave it out on the floor, then you can always push forward and not look backwards. I don't know. I probably won't stop working out. I think it's just a lifestyle for me. So I probably will be back in my gym in the next couple days just because it's just who I am. As far as being back on the basketball court, I'm going to take a while. I don't need to be back on the basketball court right now. I need to get off of my feet and let my joints and let my body kind of recover from being out on the floor for 14 straight years. So but I'll train. I'll train all summer. It's just a part of who I am now, just a part of my lifestyle. It's a great feeling. When you're able to work hard, you're able to put in the work and accomplish a feat like that, it's something that we all dream about. Growing up in our inner cities, a lot of hard work and through high school, through college, if you went to college, and through the NBA, you always hope that you will be in a position to be able to not only compete for a championship but win a championship, and it's a great feeling. Our team, our ball club? We had some good times. We had some bad times. We had some times where -- the biggest thing of this season is we weren't able to get healthy. When we finally got healthy, the Playoffs was right around the corner. And we showed what we're capable of doing when we got a full unit. It would have been great to see us at a full unit throughout the whole season so we can continue to build and build the camaraderie and build the chemistry out on the floor so you don't have to wait until April to see what you're capable of doing. And, yes, we were able to hit the switch, but those games in January, those games in November, games that people think that's not important, they're important to me, and they would have been important to our ball club. But, whatever, we figured it out and got to the post-season as a two seed. We controlled home court and were able to win on the road in the Eastern Conference Finals in Boston, and we were able to punch our clock into competing for a championship. And as a ball club and as an individual, that's all you want, is an opportunity. Now, obviously, we ran against, like I said, a worthy opponent, one of the best Playoff teams that this league has ever seen, obviously, and we weren't able to get over the hump and accomplish what we ultimately wanted to do. But it's no such thing as a failed season when you put in as much work as we have done individually and as a ball club since September. Since late September. Well, I don't know. I'm not a -- I'm not the GM of the team. I'm not in the front office, but I know our front office is going to continue to try to put our ball club, put our franchise in a position where we can compete for a championship year in and year out. Like I said, teams and franchises are going to be trying to figure out ways that they can put personnel together, the right group of guys together to be able to hopefully compete against this team. They're assembled as good as you can assemble, and I played against some really, really good teams that was assembled perfectly, and they're right up there. So we will see, but I will get away from the game a little bit, probably watch some WNBA games, though. Can't get away from it. I'll probably watch -- my son's tournament is this summer, so I'll be a part of the game. But as far as me actually playing, I won't. I won't be a part of the game much this summer. No, not really. I don't believe I've played for a super team. I don't believe in that. I don't believe we're a super team here. So, no, I don't really, I don't -- you guys want one more question before I leave and not see you guys for a long time? Well, I'm not happy he won his first. I'm not happy at all. But at the end of the day from when I played him in the 2012 Finals to now, like I said, experience is the best teacher in life, and he's just experiencing and experiencing and experiencing. And it also helps when you are able to experience some things with this team as well. He felt like he needed to reassemble and reassess his career and come here. So like I said, having -- getting that first championship for me was like having my first son. It was just a proud moment, something that you never, ever forget. And at the end of the day, nobody can -- no matter what anybody says from now on in your career or whatever they say, they can never take away from you being a champion. That's something that they are always going to speak about, about you. It may be like the last thing they may say, but they are always going to have to say that you're a champion. Like I said, when you put in the work and things pay off, then you can always be okay with whatever else that happens in your career. |
| I thought they had great game plan Game 1. He was the start of it. He was my matchup, and I think they did a great job of communicating throughout the whole game, knowing where I was and knowing where our teammates was. Brad and the coaching staff did a great job in Game 1. You commend that. We have an opportunity to look at a lot of film tomorrow, and see ways they were making us uncomfortable, making myself off balance and not have a rhythm all game. So we'll be much better in Game 2. No, I've seen every coverage, pretty much. For me, Game 1 has always been a feel-out game for me, if you've ever followed my history. So I've got a good sense of the way they played me today and how I'll play going into Game 2. Every year is a different challenge, no matter if you're going against the previous Celtics team or the present. They've always been well coached. They've always had multiple guys on the floor that can do multiple things, and they've always had two-way players. That challenge has never -- it's not like it's been different. It's always been that same challenge. So for me as an individual I just try to get better every year to put myself in a position where I can be successful. Well, I mean, three-point shots is a part of our DNA. It's what makes us the best team that we can be. I think even early on with the shots that we had, we had some wide-open looks that just didn't go. I think in the first quarter, J.R. [Smith] and Kev [Kevin Love], G. Hill [George Hill], they had some great looks, they just didn't go. We're okay with that. We're absolutely okay with that. And we're going to take those same looks going into Game 2 if the opportunity presents itself. Well, like I said, I'm going to get the opportunity to break down the film tonight and tomorrow and see ways that we can be better to offensively have a much better rhythm. Well, I mean, you definitely have to adjust. That's what part of the playoff series is about. The teams adjusting from game to game and seeing ways you can be better. I think that's an obvious question. Well, I mean, you're asking a tactical question as far as something I can't control. That would be a Coach [Tyronn] Lue question if he wants to change the lineup or not. I think our coaching staff will give us the best game plan to go out and win, no matter who is in the starting lineup going into Game 2. The three-point shot has been a big part since we pretty much assembled this team four years ago, and I think it's going to be a big part of it throughout the series, as long as we continue to get the ball moving and guys feel in good rhythm. I think it started from their momentum and what they wanted to do started from the tip ball. Horford tipped it right to Jaylen Brown and it looked like we had two on them, and next thing you know he's getting a lay-up right off the tip. So that kind of set the tone right there. We missed some shots, they made some shots. Horford hit a big three and also was able to get an and one and get Kev his early two quick fouls. So it kind of just started from the beginning. What do you mean? Are you asking me were they more physical or are you saying? No, physical basketball is part of playoffs. That's what you expect. I don't think you can just say that because you're not on the floor, but physical basketball is part of the postseason. So it's easy to make a narrative when you win or lose to say, okay, you guys played bad offensively and you lost, and then you win, and it's like, oh, you played better. So physical basketball started from Game 1 in the Indiana series when Indiana punched us in the mouth too in Game 1, and it's been like that throughout. I don't think so. I thought offensively we got to where we wanted to get to, but they also shut off a few things that they wanted to do as well. But I don't think it was a rhythm thing. We had some really good looks. We had been off before in previous years when we had weeks and week and a half. So that has nothing to do with it. At the end of the day you play the game when the schedule comes out and you get ready to go. What happened? We ran them -- the first possession we ran them down all the way to two on the shot clock. Marcus Morris missed the jumpshot, fouled it up, they got a dunk. We came back down, we ran a set for Jordan Clarkson, and he came off and missed it. They rebounded it, and we came back on the defensive end and we got a stop. They took it out on the sideline. Jayson Tatum took the ball out, through it to Marcus Morris in the short corner, he made a three. We come back down, missed another shot. Then Tatum came down and went 94 feet, did a Euro step and made a right-hand lay-up, timeout. There you go. I have zero level of concern at this stage. I didn't go to college, so it's not March Madness. You know, you get better throughout the series. You see ways you can get better throughout the series. But I've been down 0-1, I've been down 0-2. I've been down before in the postseason. But for me, there's never no level of concern no matter how bad I played tonight with seven turnovers, how inefficient I was shooting the ball. I'm just as confident going into a series whether it's a 0-0 series or I'm down 0-1. So we have another opportunity to be better as a ball club coming in Tuesday night, and we'll see what happens. |
| I felt like I needed to go back to the locker room, which I did, and kind of recalibrate. It was a tough blow. Obviously incidental. His shoulder hit me right square in my jaw. Just wanted to go back to the back and make sure everything was fine. But I don't think it -- it didn't affect my game after that. No, I don't think so. I think that's easy to say. I think we had some good looks. We had an opportunity. It was a two-possession game. We were down six. We had a great trap in the corner on Jaylen Brown, and I felt like we played great defense and a foul was called on Al Horford, he goes and makes two, we don't score, and it kind of sends it back to a 10-point game after that. Not as well as we would like to play in the second half. It was a two-possession game at one point. We had a great defensive sequence that ended up in a foul for them, so that didn't work out for us. I think Marcus always makes plays at the right time. His ability to play multiple positions, but they put the ball in his hands and they trust him to take plays for others. He has a really uncanny ability to get into the lane and either creates for himself or create for others, and he did that tonight with the nine assists and also had some offensive rebounds and also some missed shots. He's always been very productive for their ballclub. With turnovers. Turnovers and not defending full shot clock, especially in that third quarter. We've had our third quarter woes this whole season, and tonight was another example of that. We have an opportunity to go back home, protect home court. We're going to use these days to really dive in on what needs to be done to help our ballclub be successful. They did what they had to do, and that was protect home, and now it's our time to try to do that, as well. We have a few days, like I said, and we're going to see what we're made of on Saturday. I was checked for multiple things, and I passed them all. That's why I was able to come back and finish the half. How will I digest it? I'm going to go home tonight and see my three kids, see my family, recalibrate, see my mom. I think I'll be fine. I'm not going to lose sleep over it. You go out and when you lay everything on the line, at the end of the day, you can live with that. I'll recalibrate as far as how I can help this team continue to be successful, how I can do some things to make us be even more complete, and I probably -- the only way I probably won't get no sleep tonight is if Kev [Love] don't get asked a question asked. I'm going to lose a lot of sleep if someone doesn't ask him a question. I'm leaving. I mean, it's the Playoffs, so we expected for it to be physical. I wouldn't expect anything less. I think we matched the physicality today. We gave ourselves a pretty good chance with 36 minutes, and that 12 minutes in the third quarter, that killed us. But as far as the physicality of the game, I think we was what we needed to be as far as that. |
| Just tried to put myself in position to help our team. I think tonight as a group, even when things broke down, we just covered for one another. We made them make extra passes. We made them make extra dribbles. We were flying around, and I just happened to be one of the guys on the floor that wanted to fly around as well. I don't know. I think my passing is up there with every other aspect of my game. It was something I kind of just knew I had when I first started playing the game of basketball, to be able to see things develop before they actually developed. Then it was on me to kind of put the ball on time, on target to my teammates ever since I was a kid, and I started playing at age 9. To rate those -- first of all, with Tristan and Larry, being able to set the screen and get the man off my body for me to create some separation. The first left-handed pass to Larry, I was able to keep my defender on my back for a little bit. I saw their bigs step up just a little bit, and me having the ball in my left hand, I could pass with either hand so I was able to kind of shuffle a bounce pass to him for him to dunk it. The second one to Tristan was going right. Tristan set a great screen, and Marcus [Morris] tried to steal for the ball so I was able to go behind my back to the left-hand side and then I saw [Aron] Baynes step out onto the floor so I was able to wrap that around him to Tristan. And then on the third one, I rejected a screen-and-roll and Baynes stepped up again. I saw Marcus trailing me a little bit, so I saw I had the wrap-around pass because the other defender on the weak side didn't pull in on Tristan. I don't know. Seemed easy, right? They're all pretty difficult. Don't try it at home. (Laughter). It's very important for our guards to be aggressive. No matter if they are making shots or not, we want them to be aggressive. It just keeps the defense at bay. It allows me and Kevin to have more open lanes as well when those guys are being aggressive, looking for their shots. You saw that in G-Hill's mindset to start the game. He just had an aggressive mindset that if they're going to slide under his pick-and-rolls, he's going to shoot it. He gets a swing-swing, he's going to shoot it. He's going to attack. And the same for J.R. We always sit up here and talk about how much pressure me and Kev try to take off our teammates. Those guys took pressure off us tonight. Their aggression just settled us in and allowed us to play free as well. Well, I think if you look at any boxscore throughout the postseason or throughout the regular season, if you're able to get four, five, six guys in double figures, most of the time that team is going to win. You look at the shot chart -- me with 12 and Kev with 12; G-Hill with 11 and even Jordan [Clarkson], his 18 minutes throwing up 11 attempts as well is just well-balanced. Obviously every game doesn't work out that way. We can sit up here and say why doesn't it happen like that every game, but it's just not how the game works every game. But tonight was good ingredients of that for us to be able to get everybody involved. Even Kyle [Korver], his shots in the second half, J.R.'s shots, everybody felt in good rhythm. It's my job when everybody is in a good rhythm to just make sure I get the ball exactly where my guys need it, where all they can think about is just shooting it and just trying to put it on time on target. |
| Obviously we were a lot better defensively, flying around and making them take contested shots and making them make the extra pass and still being able to fly around. Our communication level has been up obviously in the last two games. As loud as it is in the Garden, we've got to be able to transfer that energy and that communication into Game 5 in order for us to be better than we were in Game 1 and 2. I mean, we don't know what we're going to see in Game 5. Only the game gods know that. We know it's going to be a hostile environment. We know their fans are going to be very energetic. But we have to just have our same mindset we had when we came home for these two games. If our minds are there, we put ourselves in a position to be victorious. I've loved Kyle ever since we made the trade to get him here. I have no idea how Griff [David Griffin] was able to pull that off still to this day. He's just a true professional. There's not many of us '03 class guys still around. I feel like we're just cut from a different cloth because we've been around for so long. We have this work ethic and you see him every day putting in the work, putting his mind, his body into it. It's not about his age. I think it's just always keeping his body in the right position, especially in tonight's game. He's guarding -- how old is Jaylen Brown? Can somebody help me? 21? He's guarding Jaylen Brown, one of the most athletic wings we have in our league. He's 21 years old. Jaylen can fall on the ground 10 times and probably spring up and just as likely never feel it. I don't remember Kyle falling too much like that. I've got to keep his body as fresh as possible. But listen, he's doing whatever it takes to try to help us win, with the blocks, with the strips. Obviously his shot making is very key for our team as well, but it's just the intangibles he's doing for us defensively that has put him in a position to be on the floor. Like you guys always hear me preach about, the best teacher in life is experience. From Game 1 in Indy until now, the experience, the atmosphere, he understands what the postseason is all about now. The more and more time he gets, no matter if it's the 10 minutes he got tonight or if it's the extended time in Game 3, he continues to play good ball for us. That's key for our team, and it's key for him as well as he continues to grow. Yeah, there's not a defense that I have not seen. There's only so many that you can actually provide on the basketball floor, and I've seen them all. Pretty much through when I started to play high school until now, so I've seen them all. But they do a really good job with their communication, trying to force you to do things that you -- try to not do so well or kind of second-guess yourself. For me, that's why I put in the work in between days and try to work on my game to where I don't -- you can't force me to do something I don't want to do or I don't have too much of a weakness. I work on every aspect of my game. But more importantly, my teammates are putting me in position and wanting me to be in attack mode and trusting me to put our guys in position to be successful. It's not about me. It's about the collective group, and I'm one of the byproducts of that. I don't know. Listen, any time I'm in the same breath with the greats, I know you guys hear me say it over and over, it's just humbling. To know where I come from, you guys know a little bit of the story. But you guys don't know the full story about where I come from and the struggle that I had. You guys know about the single-parent struggle, and y'all done heard that story. But there's a lot more to it, which I'll talk about when I'm done playing ball. But to know where I come from, small city 35 miles south of here, and to hear I'm in the same category or talked about and jumping these greats in the playoffs -- it's like I was a kid and I watched the playoffs so much and I was like, I would love to be a part of that, that moment, that atmosphere. I think it's pretty cool. You hear the scoring, the field goals made, and for a kid that really doesn't care much about scoring. I'm just watching them, breaking down film and seeing what's the best possible chance for us to be successful versus their defense. I think this league is all predicated on trying to find mismatches. That's every team. If you look at the four teams in the postseason now, Houston is trying to find mismatches, Golden State is trying to find mismatches, Boston, and us as well. We're all trying to find mismatches for us to try to be successful offensively. It's not much of a secret. You just try to execute once you get the mismatch or you feel like you have a position where you can be successful offensively. Then you try to execute or just try to get a bucket. We've been very successful in the last two games with doing that. Boston was very successful the first two games with doing that. Tristan has been everything for our defense since he got back into the rotation, got back into the starting lineup. He's just been who who I've grown to know over the last four years. Just always taking the one-on-one challenge. Just having this meanness and toughness about him, not only offensively but more importantly defensively versus anybody. He will guard anybody. That's not saying that they won't score on him, but he will always take the challenge. He won't shy away from any competition. He's been great in the postseason. It's not even these last two games, but in the postseason in general. |
| I had my moments. But I think everybody at this point is tired or worn down or whatever the case may be. Still trying to make plays to help our team win, put us in position to win. We had moments. We had an opportunity, but we didn't make enough plays. Well, I think defensively we held them to 36 percent shooting. I think turnovers was another thing. We had 15 turnovers for 15 points. But defensively we were in tune. We gave up 96 points. Offensively, we couldn't make. We couldn't make. We were 9-for-34 from the three-point line, missed seven free throws. Obviously in the postseason, scoring 83 points, you're not going to win many games like that. But defensively we gave ourselves a chance. We stuck in the game. Even in the fourth quarter we made a run and cut it down to 11. At one point we had two opportunities to cut it to single digits and missed some really good looks, two three-pointers. We couldn't make. And if you don't make, it's going to come back to bite you. We've got to defend like we did tonight. We've got to make some shots; that definitely would help. I think going back home, we have a comfort level. A lot of our guys have a comfort level of being back home and playing off the fans and playing off our crowd, playing off that court, being more comfortable being back home for Game 6. We look forward to having an opportunity to force a Game 7. It's up to us to see if we can come back here for one more. No, not at all, because I've never went to any season saying, OK, let's have a Finals streak. It's just all about just win every game and it should put us in position to play for a championship. I've been in championship mode since probably '09. We weren't able to get there then. Obviously I made the move to Miami. I was able to go there four straight. And three straight since I've been back here. It just happens because I've been able to play with some great players, play with some great teammates, coaching staffs that have been able to put us in position to go to The Finals. I've never said, OK, this is my third one or let's try to take to a fourth. It's just the way the game has been played and I've been able to be successful. We have another opportunity on Friday to be as good as we can be, play Cavs basketball on our home floor and force a Game 7. You're asking me or -- my confidence? Well, for me I think I look forward to seeing us respond on Friday night. I know how well we've played at home in this postseason. That's the only thing I can worry about right now. I'm not worried about a Game 7. You have to worry about Game 6. You can't put yourself in that moment until you take care of the present. We're going to have another opportunity tomorrow to watch some film, go over some things that we can do better -- as we've done after every game in the postseason -- and see ways we can be even better for Game 6. I don't know. I have no idea. You have your coaching staff prep you. They put you in position. They feel like this is the best for us to be as good as we can be as a ballclub, and it's up to us to go out and execute it. Everybody is different. I know how I prepare myself. I know how I prepare going into each and every game, no matter if it's elimination or 0-0, whatever the case may be in a playoff game. So I can speak for myself and know what my mindset will be on just trying to help us, like I said, do every facet of the game, to try to extend the series. We'll see what happens. No, I knew exactly what they were going to do tonight. They switched it up a couple times with their defense as far as what they were doing with my pick-and-rolls when I was either setting or handling. But at this point, it's not even really about X's and O's. I've seen all the defenses that they can put out there, so nothing was surprising. I'll speak in the present, and I think they're a very well-coached, well-balanced, hungry team. They've got a bunch of young guys that were drafted very high and drafted very high for a reason, because they can do multiple things. They can be aggressive offensively. They can defend. They can shoot. They can put the ball on the floor. They can make plays for themselves and for others. I can speak for this moment right now. I don't want to really talk about other previous teams I've played against. I've played against a championship Boston Celtics team before, in '08, when they beat us in seven games. But right now this is the present, and this team is really good. Like I said, they're well-coached, they're well-balanced and we like the challenge. No. No. I'm fine. And I didn't mention the fatigue, either. One of you guys did. I'm fine. I had two turnovers where I felt like they were really bad. My first turnover, I saw something happening and Marcus Morris did a great job of reading it. I threw it up ahead to Kev [Kevin Love], and he picked it off. My second turnover, I went baseline, lost my footing on Marcus Morris, another turnover. A couple of them, one in transition to Jeff Green, I thought I put it on his hands, and he kind of fumbled it. Wish I could have that one back and maybe bounce pass that one. I had a backdoor one to Swish [J.R. Smith]. It hit his hands. Maybe I should have not thrown that one. It was a little bit in traffic. Al Horford was right there, but it hit Swish's hands. Maybe I should have taken that one back. I had a post-up on Terry Rozier that they doubled from the baseline. Jayson Tatum got his hands on him and I had a guy wide open. I should have faked high and thrown it low. My last turnover was just very, very careless on Terry Rozier. We had a pick-and-roll, I got the switch and I just lost it out of bounds away from their basket. So that's my six turnovers. I think out of those six, maybe three of them were just careless. I think the other three were attack turnovers, and I'm OK with that. |
| I think they responded exceptionally well. Our second quarter, our guys that came off the bench -- Jordan [Clarkson], Jeff [Green], Kyle [Korver] and Larry [Nance Jr.] -- they just gave us a huge boost in that second quarter. That's the reason why we outscored them by 16 in that second quarter. It was just huge. We needed it obviously more than ever tonight with the situation that we were in. I didn't get a good look at it, either, or I would have been able to avoid it. After the game, I didn't know who got me. But after the game Larry asked me if I was I OK, so I'm guessing he was the culprit of it. I just felt someone fall into my leg and my leg kind of went in. I felt some pain throughout my entire right side of my ankle into my leg. I was just hoping for the best, obviously, because I've seen so many different injuries, and watching basketball with that type of injury, someone fall into one's leg standing straight up. Luckily, I was able to finish the game. The love of the game causes reactions like that. Understanding the situation and understanding the moment that you're in. It was just a feeling that you can't explain unless you've been a part of it. That's all. Just try to put myself in the best possible shape each and every year to be able to go for the long haul. Now, obviously I get a minute, couple minutes here, per quarter, would be great, but it's not what our team is built on right now. Our team is built on me being out on the floor to be able to make plays, not only for myself but make plays for others. It's just the way we've been playing, and we've been succeeding with it. I was able to play 46 minutes today. I got my couple minutes, I guess. Well, I wasn't coming out in either case. Obviously, I would have had to literally have a real, real, really bad injury -- I don't even know if this is ... that's not even wood; I'll find some on the way out -- to come off the floor with the opportunity we have to be able to force a Game 7. Just go out, trust what you've built on all year. For me, I don't put too much added pressure on myself. I just go out and play my game. It's a Game 7. It's something that you wish you had when you're done playing, but more than that, it's just basketball for me. I know what I'm capable of doing, and I'm going to trust everything I put into it. As soon as I leave here, I'll start to prepare. I'm going to get in the car and head back to Akron. As soon as I get home, I'll start my treatment. I'll do the same all day tomorrow from before we leave to go to Boston, and then once we get into Boston I'll do that as well. Try to get as much sleep as I can with tonight and with tomorrow and even on Sunday before the game. That's the best recovery that you can possibly get, is when you're sleeping. It'll be around-the-clock treatment, and we'll see what happens. I don't know. I don't really talk to myself much, to be honest. I don't talk to myself much. I just go out and play. I have a drive. I have a love of the game. I have a passion for the game, and while I have the opportunity to lace my shoes up and put a uniform on, then I try to go out and do my job to the best of my ability. Does it always work out? Obviously, no. I'm not undefeated in my career. Does it always -- me playing great? I haven't always played great in my career. But I just always want to try to maximize when I'm on the floor, and I've been able to do that in my 15th year so far. You've got to be poised. You've got to be able to handle a punch or two. And you've got to be able to combat that and be just as solid and just as aggressive on the offensive end. We know it's challenging. They're 10-0 on their home floor, and they've been very successful against us, obviously, at home. But if you love challenges, then this is a great opportunity. What's your name? I appreciate you saying I've been clutch my whole career. There's not many like you, I tell you. There's not many like you. Either you're being very kind to me because it's National Wine Day or you know I love Brazil or I don't know what it is right now, but -- OK. There we go. No, I guess just being -- first of all, my teammates and my coaching staff have given me the reins to take the shot or make the play late in games. When you have that ability and when you have that confidence from your 14 teammates and then your coaching staff and then you put the work into it, it's just a matter of just trying to come through. Like I said, I haven't always done it in my whole career, but I've never shied away from it. That's either making a shot or making a play. I was taught the game the right way ever since I ever started playing the game of basketball. My first year ever playing little league basketball, we won a championship. My coach at the banquet gave everybody an MVP trophy. Everybody. And that right then, I knew that this is a team game. It's not about one individual and how much one individual can do in order to win championships. In order to win, you have to have a full team. And that's what it brought it down to me. The second year we won it again, and we all got MVP trophies again. It's just been instilled in me since I was 9 years old, when I first started playing, of what it means to be in a situation where your teammates rely on you. Just making the right play no matter if it's a shot or if it's a pass. I've always just been taught that. I've embraced a lot of situations as you grow up. I think that's just all part of experience and things of that nature. I mean, I love being a husband now. Did I embrace that at 18, 19? I don't think so. I mean, I've never been around married couples. As you get older, you just grow into more things. I didn't love wine until I was 30 years old, and now every other post is about wine, National Wine Day. So you learn and you grow and you know what's best for you as you get older. That's just all of us. I think that's what being a human being is. You find ways that you feel like you can grow and what you like and what you dislike. At 18, I don't think I'm the same player that I am today at 33, and I shouldn't be. I don't think me personally I should be the same person that I was at 18. I'm just much more seasoned. |
| 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. |
| I thought I read that play just as well as I read any play in my career, defensively. I seen the drive, I was outside the charge line, I stepped in, took the contact. It's a huge play. It's a huge play. We got to move on. This game is over and done with. We had opportunities. I would never give up on JR. That's not my MO. I don't give up on any of my players, any of my teammates, so I don't think that even needs to be said. No, he didn't. My eye's been better. It's pretty much blurry, and it kind of got worse and worse as the game went on, after I drove and Draymond poked me right square in the eye. So I'll deal with that over the next couple days. I don't think a message needs to be said. We're in the fight now. The Finals have started, and they've got a great taste of it tonight. They know what to expect when we play again. Like I said, I read that play just as well as I've read any play in my career, maybe in my life. I seen the play happening. I knew I was outside the charge line, and I knew I took the hit. I don't know what else to say. I just try to do whatever it takes to help our team win and try to be a triple threat out on the floor offensively and being able to score, rebound, and get my guys involved. So I just tried to do that tonight. No, we were told they were reviewing if I had my feet outside the line. And when I knew that, I was like, okay, that's going to be our ball. I knew I was outside the charge line, so that's what the communication was to us. We were over on the sideline, drawing up a play, you know, to try to execute, try to go up a couple possessions. Well, I mean, we take this one. We understand how difficult and how challenging this task is. You take it all the way throughout the night thinking about it and ways you could have been better and plays that could have happened that could have gone your way and didn't go your way or things you could have done, and you wake up tomorrow with a fresh mind and you move forward. I don't know. I do not. I do not. Because it's right now, I would say yeah. I always live in the present. I don't know how frustrated I was after a loss in the past. I think we played as well as -- tonight we played as well as we've played all postseason, and we gave ourselves a chance possession after possession after possession. There were just some plays that were kind of taken away from us. Simple as that. What do you mean what's my version? How do I know that? No, they asked me if I talked to JR about it. I said no already. I knew it was a tie game. We were down 1. George Hill went up, he made the first one. We got the offensive rebound, you know, I thought we were all aware of what was going on. That's my view. So I don't know what JR was thinking. I don't know the question you're trying to ask. No. No, I don't know his state of mind. |
| I think I only got tired once tonight. So, I mean, they doubled me a few times when I caught the ball in the post, something they didn't do in Game 1. So I got off the ball, trusted my teammates. But as far as working harder, I think I got tired once. Every shot that he takes that goes in, he has the business of making them. That's what he does. So shouldn't be surprised or deflated at it. Take the ball out, move it forward, and try to execute on the other end. I mean, they're a dangerous ballclub no matter what. It starts with those four guys, obviously, the four All-Stars. Everyone else just does their job, and they don't miss a beat when they put someone in or they take someone out. You know, it's not something that's surprising. Well, I think at the end of the day we have a Game 3 to play. You know, we've got an opportunity to go home, and we played some really good basketball on our home floor. But that shouldn't give us any comfort. We should still be uncomfortable with the series as we were in Game 1 and as we were tonight. No, I don't really get caught up in that. I mean, the odds have been against me since -- I don't know, since I was five, six years old. So we're talking about basketball here. It seems like I come up here and tell you guys this all the time. The odds have been stacked up against me since I was an adolescent. So I put our team in position to try to win a championship, to compete for a championship. You know, it's my job to make sure that we're as focused, laser focused as possible, do my job, and continue to instill confidence into my teammates until the last horn sounds. That's my job. That's my responsibility. That's my obligation, and I need to continue to do that, which I will. They did that. But like I said, we want to continue to be uncomfortable. Just because we're going home doesn't mean we can relax. This is the last team in the world you want to relax against. They've proven they can win on someone else's floor, no matter if it's through adversity as people may call it like when they were going through the Rockets series or whatever the case may be. They've proven they can win on someone else's floor and do it in any fashion, in any way. I will continue to stay uncomfortable, and I hope our guys continue to stay uncomfortable no matter with us going back home. No. Absolutely not. I mean, it sucks to lose. It sucks when you go out there and you give it everything that you have and you prep and your mind is in it and your body is in it and you come out on the losing end. But nothing would ever take the love of the game away from me. I think the love of the competition is something I live for and something I wake up every day and train my body for and train my mind for. Yeah, I mean, it sucks to lose, that's for sure, but it definitely won't stop me from preparing to be better the next day. Yeah, I mean, I'm going to have to work around it until it's not bloody anymore. I mean, it's not going to keep me out of a game. I'll be active -- what's today? What is today? Sunday? When do we play again? Wednesday? So I'll be active. I'll be in uniform, and I'll continue to try to make plays and help our team be successful and try to get one up on the board. The eye has looked a lot better. My daughter don't like the way I look right now (laughing). Yeah, she didn't like the FaceTime that we had earlier. She was a little weirded out about it. But I'll be fine. So everything's good. Appreciate it. |
| I mean, it's definitely a tough loss, and we had our chances. But we have another opportunity on Friday to win on our home floor. We've been pretty good throughout the postseason. So that's a good thing for us that we have an opportunity to extend the series, but we've got to come out and play 48 minutes. We know this team that we're going against are the best -- first of all, the best third quarter team in the NBA, and once again they showed that tonight by outscoring us by 8 after we had a lead at halftime. So we have to be dialed in and play like we did in the first half and in the fourth quarter tonight. To answer your second question first, the margin of error is very low. You can't -- I mean, it's almost like playing the Patriots, you can't have mistakes. They're not going to beat themselves. You know, so when you're able to either force a miscue on them, you have to be able to capitalize and you have to be so in tuned and razor sharp and focused every single possession. You can't have miscommunication, you can't have flaws, you can't have "my faults" or "my bads" or things like that, because they're going to make you pay. When they make you pay, it's a 3-0 or 6-0 or 9-0 run, and it comes in bunches. The room for error, you just can't have it. We know throughout the course of a 48-minute game there are going to be plays where, you know, it was a miscue there, it was a miscue there. But for the most part throughout 48 minutes you just can't have a bunch of those, not especially against this team. To answer your first question, yeah, I twisted it pretty good, but I'll be in the lineup on Friday. Oh, well, I mean, you guys ask me what is the difference between the Warriors -- you guys asked me this last year, what was the difference between the Warriors the previous year and this year, and what was my answer? All right. There it is. Kevin Durant was my answer. He's one of the best players that I've ever played against that this league has ever seen. His ability to handle the ball, shoot the ball, make plays at his length, his size, his speed. So there it is. At the end of the day, if you want to compete for a championship or win a championship, you've got to go through the champion, and they're the champion. No matter -- everyone gets so caught up on saying they're vulnerable or they're not playing so well, and then they go down 3-2, and then they go to somebody else's floor and win. Or they win at home and send it back to somebody else's floor and win in a Game 7. That's what championship teams do. That's what championship players do. They rise to the occasion, and that's what Golden State has done the last four years. Tim, for me, tonight will be tough. Tomorrow I'll replay some plays and some moments and things of that nature. When I wake up Friday morning I'll be locked in on the game plan of what needs to be done to help our team win. That's just who I am. So the rest of the night will be tough. I'm not sure what time I'll end up getting to bed. Tomorrow we'll come in and watch film, so it will replay in my mind throughout the day. But Friday morning when I wake up, I'll be locked in and ready for Game 4. No, that wasn't the same shot. The one he made tonight was about four or five feet behind the one he made last year. Last year we were up 2, and he pulled up pretty much right at the three-point line and got a great contest, but he made it. Tonight they're up 3. They come off a pick-and-roll and he just stopped behind and pulled four or five feet behind the three-point line. So same wing, different location. But you definitely tip your hat. I mean, that's what he does. He's a scorer. You know, he's assassin, and that was one of those assassin plays right there. That's the challenge right there. That's the challenge. You know, that's why they've retooled this team, went out and got K.D. to where there's really not much pressure on -- you know, I won't say any of them to score, but if one of them has a bad game, they have three or four guys that can actually pick up the load. And as you've seen with K.D. picking it up today and Steph picking it up in Game 2, they all have the ability to -- we can't ever forget about Klay. He's a guy that scored 40 in a quarter before. So that's the luxury of having guys like that that you can always -- any given moment, they can kind of go off for a game. Even though we held Steph to one three tonight, the one he made was huge, huge. So we've got to continue to just grind and defend as we did tonight. I mean, out of the nine threes made, K.D. had six of them. They were 9 for 36. And that's, you know, pretty daggone good, holding that team to shooting to the free-throw line. But we've got to add a little bit more, keep grinding. To your second question, I thought Rodney Hood was Rodney Hood tonight. That was Rodney Hood, man. He was just aggressive from the beginning when he got in the game, even though he missed his first three. He had a wide-open shot, but he just continued to push and push. His athleticism and his length and his touch around the rim, you know, it was more than just what he did for the team, I think for himself, that was just a huge moment for himself. That was good to see. That was great to see, actually. I actually think you should be like a psychiatrist. You want to keep trying to get inside somebody's mind, is the whole thing, Mark. What's in my mind? Miss it so we can get the rebound. No. Say that again, please? Well, I can take you back kind of to the battles I had with the Spurs when I was in Miami. You just knew that they wouldn't beat themselves. You just knew that like every possession we were playing San Antonio when I was in Miami, you just knew if you made a mistake, Manu, Tim, Tony, Pop will make you pay. At times they did make us pay, and then you sprinkle in what Gary Neal did to us one game, what Danny Green did to us one game. Then Kawhi, you just couldn't -- you could never relax. When you have great basketball players but also that can also think the game and be very cerebral about the game, that's what adds the level of stress, because you know that you can never, ever relax. And you should never want to relax. It's The Finals. It's the playoffs. Even though this is a regular season game, you should always want to be on your toes. That's what the part of competition is about. So it adds to the level of stress. When you have Timmy D. and Manu and Kawhi and Manu, and now Draymond and Klay, Steph and K.D., and then you sprinkle in Iguodala and Livingston and all those guys as well, it adds a level of stress. Because you know that you can never relax. You know if you relax, they make you pay, and making you pay could cost you a game. So it's tough, but it's all part of the competition, which I love and which I continue to lace them up every night. Hopefully I got your answer for you. Appreciate it. |
| What happened? Self-inflicted, postgame after Game 1. Very emotional. For a lot of different reasons, understanding how important a Game 1 is on the road for our ballclub, what would that have done for us, the way we played, the calls that were made throughout the course of that game. I had emotions on the game was taken away from us. I had emotions of you just don't get an opportunity like this on the road versus Golden State to be able to get a Game 1, and I let the emotions get the best of me. Pretty much played the last three games with a broken hand, so that's what it is. I mean, I have no idea at this point. The one thing that I've always done is considered, obviously, my family. Understanding especially where my boys are at this point in their age. They were a lot younger the last time I made a decision like this four years ago. I've got a teenage boy, a pre-teen and a little girl that wasn't around as well. So sitting down and considering everything, my family is a huge part of whatever I'll decide to do in my career, and it will continue to be that. So I don't have an answer for you right now as far as that. For me personally? I have no idea. That's for you guys to kind of figure out how you want to characterize my 15th season. It's definitely been a whirlwind. There's been ups and downs. It's been good, it's been bad. For me, I just try to be consistent throughout the course of the season. Be the leader I know I can be for this ballclub, for this franchise every night, no matter what was going on from the outside or the inside, and be reliable every single day. Showing up to work every single day. Putting in the work and grinding every single day. I have no idea how the story will be talked about of my season, but, I know I punched the clock in every single day. That's for me to understand that, and I'm okay with that. No, I feel like '10 was the toughest. For me personally? And the team. I wondered if we could hit a switch some way, somehow, just because the course of the regular season it was just like, I don't know. You guys ask me a lot, our beat writers kind of ask us throughout the whole season, and then we made the trades. And right before the playoffs, a couple weeks before the playoffs: Do you feel like your team is ready for the postseason. I didn't know. It was just the unknown. I mean, our season was kind of the unknown. I wondered if we could hit a switch in the postseason. I figured if I stayed laser sharp, if I came in with the right mentality, if I came in with the right mindset, that I could help fast-track this throughout a lot of the games in the postseason because of my experience and because of some of the other guys that experienced a lot of games. I was able to do that. We were able to do that. I mean, I don't know. I think it's never a success in the postseason when you lose, not for me. I have no idea. But for me personally, like I said, being reliable to my teammates, being able to play the game at a high level with as many games and as many miles as I have on my body and put together a run like I had in the postseason, it's something that I can kind of remember. The ending is obviously still fresh and still new, and you never want to lose, especially in this fashion, being a competitor. But it is what it is. Like I said, I punch my clock every day. Well, I mean, at the end of the day, I came back because I felt like I had some unfinished business. To be able to be a part of a championship team two years ago with the team that we had and in the fashion that we had is something I will always remember. Honestly, I think we'll all remember that. It ended a drought for Cleveland of 50-plus years, so I think we'll all remember that in sports history. When you have a goal, I think any individual, anybody, male, female, whatever the case may be, when you have a goal and you seek that goal out and you dream about that dream, and you put everything, and you care to -- you guys like this brace, huh ? You guys like this cast, huh? You want me to sit it right here for you? I don't even know where I was. I'm sorry. Next question. I'm sorry. Well, it's definitely not the most comfortable thing to start a team from scratch, because the most important is health, because you need to build chemistry so fast and camaraderie so fast on the floor. And if you have multiple injuries or you have multiple bodies out, when you're starting fresh, it's too hard. I think with this season, that's what you kind of saw. The difference between this season and the difference between my first year in Miami, we didn't have many injuries at all. And we were definitely fresh together. But myself and D-Wade and Bosh, you know, UD (Udonis Haslem), Mike Miller had a few injuries, but (Mario) Chalmers was available, and pretty much our team, we were pretty solid as far as being injury -- not being injury-prone. Obviously, my first year back here we were headed in the right direct, and then we hit the postseason. Kev had a separated shoulder, and then Kyrie goes down in the first, second possession of overtime of Game 1 in The Finals. So, I mean, that's just huge. So being a part of the start-fresh mode is something that you definitely don't want to be a part of. It has its pros and it definitely has its cons. I mean, that's a trick question at the end of the day, and I'm not falling for that. Yes, it is. I mean, for me, I still have so much to give to the game. Like I said, when you have a goal and you're able to accomplish that goal, it actually -- for me personally, it made me even more hungry to continue to try to win championships, and I still want to be in championship mode. I think I've shown this year why I will still continue to be in championship mode. Well, I mean, I'm not going to take you throughout the whole process. That's not fun. But at the end of the day, like I said, when I decide what I'm going to do with my future, my family and the folks that have been with me for the last, you know, 20 years, pretty much, will have a say-so. Then it ultimately will come down to me, and so we'll see what happens. No, I don't think so. I made the move in 2010 to be able to play with talented players, cerebral players that you could see things that happen before they happened on the floor, and your teammate can do the same throughout the course of a season, throughout the course of a game, throughout the course of a playoffs, throughout the course of a Finals. So when you feel like you're really good at your craft, I think it's always great to be able to be around other great minds as well and other great ballplayers, in my instance, and other great just, I think, studies of the game itself. That's never changed. Even when I came here in '14, I wanted to try to surround myself and surround this franchise with great minds and guys that actually think outside the box of the game and not just go out and play it. Well, that top athlete money-per-year thing came out last week and I was sixth, so I'm in no way, shape and form putting myself in a position right now to own a team. I think Floyd (Mayweather) was 1 at like 252. Obviously, I don't have a boxing hand. So boxing won't be the sport I'll be going to. I don't know. At the end of the day, for me, staying around the game, being around the game will be something I'll probably do for the rest of my life, either while I'm playing for this later stage of my career, advising people in the NBA or whatever the case may be. I've got two boys that play the game as well. So I don't know. I can't predict the future on ownership and things of that nature. But I have a lot of knowledge of the game. I understand talent. I know talent. I know the right questions to ask certain guys and see if they're smart enough to actually think the game as well. So we'll see what happens. |
| We just tried to follow the game plan. Try not to foul and put teams on the free throw line because those are easy points and we just trust our game plan. We trust our, what we've been doing all throughout the course of this whole year. We have a lot of length out there with myself, AD, Dwight, KCP and Danny at the start of that third quarter, and we were able to get some deflections, get some turnovers and get out and do what we do best on the break.You know, just having that type of size and that athleticism helps tremendously. Well, yeah, we knew the first quarter definitely wasn't Laker basketball, Laker defense. We just had some break downs. We had some break downs, took a quarter for us to kind of figure it out. Not saying that we fully figured them out because it's too early in the series to say that but started to get a better feel and rhythm defensively and started to get some stops in the second quarter and build that lead up going into halftime. Pissed me off. That's my true answer. It pissed me off because out of 101 votes, I got 16 first-place votes. That's what pissed me off more than anything. You know, not saying that the winner wasn't deserving of the MVP. But that pissed me off. And I finished second a lot in my career, either from a championship, and now four times as an MVP. You know, like I said, I never came into this league to be MVP or to be a champion. I've always just wanted to get better and better every single day, and those things will take care of itself. But some things is just out of my hand and some things you can't control. But it pissed me off. No. I don't know. I'm not going to sit up here and talk about what the criteria should be or what it is. It's changed over the years since I've gotten into the league, I know that. You know, it's just changed. It's changed a lot. You know, sometimes it's the best player on the best team. Sometimes it's the guy with the best season statistically. Sometimes -- it's changed over the course -- over the course of my career. I mean, you don't know. You don't know. But you know, Giannis had a hell of a season, I can definitely say that. I mean, I'm fine. Don't get it twisted. I'm going back to my room. I'm perfectly fine. We're 1-0 in the Western Conference Finals. I'm absolutely fine. So don't -- like I was pissed off at the reaction earlier when I saw it. I'm absolutely great now. I'm going back to my room, drink some wine and sleep very well tonight. Let's not get it twisted. I'm great. It's just the voting scale is a little weird to me sometimes. I mean, it you take 2012. If you just stick with me -- or 2012-13, I had a chance to be Defensive Player of the Year and also MVP in the same season. And that year [Marc] Gasol was [voted] Defensive Player of the Year, but he made Second Team All-Defense, okay. So that doesn't make sense. It's like being MVP of the league but you make Second Team All-NBA. That's when I really started to look at things kind of like differently. I was like, how does that even make any sense. It's like being Rookie of the Year but you make Second Team All-Rookie. And then I looked at the Most Improved this year, and rightfully so Brandon Ingram was amazing and I thought he should have won it. But did you see the vote that Devonte' Graham got? He averaged four points last year compared to 17 and a half. If that's not improving, what is? And it's a weird thing sometimes that you just have -- I don't know how much we are really watching the game of basketball or are we just in the narration mode, the narrative. I don't even remember. I don't remember, actually. I don't know. I don't remember. I don't remember to be completely honest. It would be hard for me to answer that question. |
| Did you see my reaction? No, did you see my reaction after he made it? I tried to chase him down just like every last one of the teammates and staff that we had out there. Special moment for a special player. Happy to be a part of it.It's not about making a shot. It's about having a belief of just taking it, for one, and living with the result. I think right back to our game right before COVID hit. We played Brooklyn at home and he had a similar shot right on that left wing in front of their bench to win the game and he missed it. He was down on himself, but at the end of the day, I told him, if you're open, and I was able to drive that particular game and find him wide open and he just missed it.But it's just the confidence to take the shot. You're not going to make them all, but the belief to just take it and live with the results is what it's all about. Tonight was his moment. Tonight was his moment to find a space, hunt the ball down and one of our top 10 assists leaders, Rondo, found him and he knocked it down. A big-time play.No, it's not about an individual matchup. It's about us trying to execute and him just coming through for us. That's what he did. It wasn't, okay, your turn, my turn. It's about playing the game and trying to find ways to make an impact.Obviously, those two big shots that he had at the end, one was the floater to take the lead. Joker was able to get the tip-in, and he comes back in with the three. Just big-time plays, like I said, for a big-time player.I don't know. That's actually an AD question. Just happy to have him. I know what he brought to the table. I know what he's about. I know his skill set. That's why I wanted him here so badly.That's what this floor right here that we're all on right now is all about. It's the practices; it's the shootarounds. We talk about every single scenario possible: up three; down three; up two; down two; do we have a foul to give, do we not; do we have a timeout, do we not; are we going full-court; half-court; BOB, which is baseline out-of-bounds; SOB, sideline out-of-bounds. You talk about all those things. You want to be a championship club, you have to be able to do that on the fly.So knowing we didn't have a timeout, we were able to get into a situation to a set that we worked on in practice and get right to it. The first option, for me if Do [Rondo] saw me over the top, and if not, AD flashes. And the rest is history.When you are trying to play high-level basketball, you have to have high-level IQ players, and he's one of them. And not only does he have high-level IQ, but he also plays with high energy. We know what we're going to get out of him every night.It's not about him making shots. We know he's going to defend and he's going to play at a level that he's capable of playing at, and we all know that once he checks into the game every single night. We know what to expect out of him. To be honest, when he makes shots, it's extra credit for us. But he puts that work in on his offensive skill set to get better and better. We love everything about him. For sure. I know we're here playing the game, but I'm not losing the fact of what's important, as well. More than a vote, it's about protecting black voters and voter suppression that goes on in our communities. Like you said, change isn't made by sitting on the sidelines. That's one of our slogans and we're very proud of that. Getting the people that want to join us, getting them gear and wearing the T-shirt and wearing the hats and wearing the hoodies, because when they go in their community, that's something that they can continue to enlighten, continue to educate, continue to make people empowered about this movement. We always talk about change in our communities, and now we have an opportunity. We have an opportunity to really create change for the better and we look forward to this opportunity. To be completely honest, man, it was probably one of the greatest moments of my career up until that point. Just knowing the situation, we were about to go down 0-2 and we had home-court advantage. We knew how powerful that Orlando team was, playing against actually my teammate now in Dwight. So for me to be able to hit that shot was a huge moment for me. I was still a young kid at the time, so big-time. The one thing I wish AD had tonight with the shot that he made, I wish we were playing at Staples. We miss our fans so much and I can imagine in -- I probably would have blue the roof off Staples Center, AD hitting that shot with our crowd. I would have loved to have that moment -- I know what it felt like for me when I was able to hit that shot that you mentioned against Orlando, Game 2 of the Eastern Conference Finals at the buzzer. I think just staying even-keeled. That's what it's all about. The playoffs and the postseason, the more you advance into the postseason, the emotions and the adversity, it's going to be a roller coaster at times. No matter if you're up, no matter if you're down, being able to keep your composure and your mindset on the main thing is very important. This is the furthest he's gone in his career up to this point, and. I'm just happy to be here with him to give him any advice and lean on me. To be completely honest, in the second half, I leaned on him, and he brought us home. So I just tried to set the example early on, and we leaned on him, especially in the fourth quarter, and he brought us home. I don't know. I think for me, it's always been about the man in the arena, the quote from Theodore Roosevelt. It's about the guy that's in the arena that's gone through everything -- the blood, the sweat, the tears and, in our situation, the competition. I's about the work that you put in and the belief in yourself. It's not about the doubters or the naysayers or the people who are going to try to talk to you and slander you and bring you down every single day. It's not about them because they have never been in the arena. They don't understand. AD, he knows how special he is and when he doesn't, I'll be the first one to tell him how special he is. He wanted to be here. I'm happy he wanted to be here, because if he didn't, we wouldn't have a moment like tonight. That's what it's all about. You put that pressure on yourself when you don't really care what other people think, because what other people think doesn't really matter because they don't understand. Anybody can talk from outside, but if they got into the ring or they got into the arena, probably 10 times out of 10, they [expletive] their pants. |
| I think it was the same in Game 2, same thing that we were able to get by with AD's shot, turned the ball over too much. We couldn't get to the free throw line, and you know, I give credit where credit is due, though. Denver came in and played exceptionally well. They played better than us, more aggressive than us through three quarters, 36 minutes, but you know, we've got into the penalty in the third quarter with like nine and a half minutes to go and we had some turnovers that led to some easy buckets for them. We had 16 turnovers for 25 points and put them to the line 29 times. It's not going to be winning ingredients for us if we continue to do that and we knew that, even after Game 2, we talked about that, trying to assure that. Got to be better than that Game 4. I think offensively we were very good. At times, we weren't. I think we just got to do a better job, like Coach was saying, of getting to the paint and once the defense collapses, just finding our guys weak side; if it's a guy that's slashing, through a weak side to the paint or if it's a guy that's spotted up on our side off one of our bigs, getting behind the defense for a lob. So Denver has been a pretty good defensive team all year. We understand that. I'm looking forward to seeing our film -- our film session tomorrow and continue to get better. I think it's a bit of both. I think we played with a lot more energy, and we understand we had 12 minutes left to try to make a game out of it and we were able to do that. We were able to switch some things up defensively, going zone here, man here, trying to keep them off balance. When you dig yourself a hole like that, every shot that they make and every shot that we miss, feels like the game is collapsing. So you know, we played some pretty good ball in the fourth quarter, but those first 36 minutes, that hurt us obviously. I've never in my 35 years ever condoned violence. Never have. But I also know what's right is right and what's wrong is wrong and I grew up in an inner city in a black community, in what we call the "hood," the "ghetto," however you want to picture it. And I've seen a lot of counts, firsthand, of a lot of black people being, you know, I guess racially profiled because of our color, and I've seen it, you know, throughout my whole life. You know, and I'm not saying that all cops are bad, because I actually throughout high school and things of that nature, I'm around them all the time and they are not all bad. But when you see the videos that's going on and you can see not only my hometown but all over America, you continue to see the acts of violence towards my kind, I can't do nothing but to speak about it and see the common denominator. But not one time have I ever said, you know, let's act violent towards cops. I just said that what's going on in our community is not okay, and we fear for that and we fear for our lives. It's something that we go on every single day as a black man and a black woman and a black kid and a black girl, we fear; we fear that moment where we are pulled over or -- I just seen something, I believe yesterday or the day before, of a guy in Wisconsin was renting a house, and the next door neighbor called the police on him, and the police came in the house without a warrant, without anything, and arrested the guy, a black man because he was sitting out on the porch, and if you can't tell me that's not racial profiling, then I don't know what the hell -- or what the hell we are looking at. But I do not condone violence towards anyone, police, black people, white people, anyone of color, anyone not of color, because that's not going to ever make this world or America what we want it to be. So -- and I have zero comment on the sheriff. It's some of the risk passes that we're making, including myself. I mean, I had five turnovers in the first half and one in the second half, so I understood what I was doing in the first half and made an adjustment. There are some passes that we have been able to complete throughout this season, but versus Denver we have to be a little bit more careful and make more -- more sound plays with the ball, and protect the ball, because like we always preach, every possession is very important. When you give up 25 points off 16 turnovers, that's not good. We did the same thing in Game 2, we had 24 turnovers and luckily it didn't bite us in the butt but it should have. We just got to do a better job of that and it's a conscious effort that not only starts with me because I'm the point guard of the team, and it trickles down to everyone else. I was just setting a screen and his elbow got high and was able to strike me -- strike me across the jaw. I don't -- I don't care about flagrant ones or flagrant twos. I don't want him to come out of the game. I like the competition. I don't think it was blatant but I don't know mindset, but I don't think he did it on purpose. I was okay with it. You know, went down for a little bit. Got back up and was ready to play. I was cool with the ruling. I was okay with them saying a flagrant one. I ain't here to fight. |
| I knew it was winning time, and Jamal had it going. The kid is special. He has an array of shots. Triple threat from the three, mid-range and also in the paint. For me, it's just trusting my defensive keys. Trusting my study of film. Trusting personnel. And living with the results. I told my teammate that I had him and everyone else can kind of stay at bay and stay home. I was able to get a couple stops and we were able to rebound the basketball, which is the most important thing. I think at times we're doing a great job. At certain times, we can do a better job with our spacing, especially on our post-ups. They are doing a little doubling on the post at times, so we've got to get a better outlet for AD when he is posting up and get the ball swung-swung as quickly as possible to get more looks. I thought we did a really good job, more importantly, tonight of not turning the ball over. The thing we talked about in Game 2 and Game 3 is we cannot turn the ball over against this team. We did a great job of that tonight. Not for me. I don't reserve any energy. I'm on the floor, I give it all I got. If I need a break, I ask for a break. Coach has done a good job of getting me out throughout the course of the game. I don't look at it as a reserve tank. I've got pretty good energy when I'm on the floor all the time. It's winning time and I don't have a chance or time to be feeling tired. I'm tired now. That's when I'm tired, when it's zeros on the clock. That's when I'm tired. I'm not tired during the game. It's just about playing to our capability. Coming out with the game plan and executing it for 48 minutes. If we do that, we give ourselves a good chance to win. Dwight was a beast. Gave us opportunities when we missed shots, which as a team, we missed a couple. AD didn't miss any, but as a team, when we missed a couple shots, he was cleaning glass both offensively and defensively. Got us put-backs and was able to control the paint. We know we got smashed in the rebounding category in Game 3, so we wanted to do a better job in that. Dwight brought that physical presence. It was great for our ballclub. Tonight, late game, Do [Rajon Rondo] was running pick-and-rolls. I was able to run a couple. But we just made our free throws. We made our free throws down the stretch, and that's what closes games out. You've got to get your stops defensively, make your free throws when you're fouled. And I thought we did that. See how low his brow is. If his brow is really low, then you know not to talk to him. If it's higher, then he's accepted the fact that you're allowed to come into his office and talk to him. Yesterday his brow was very low in this part and no one talked to him. So we already knew the mindset he was in, and he came out and did it. I think at the end of the day, respect. You just look at the history of America and the disrespect that Black women have gotten for the last 400 years. You can't turn a blind eye to that. When I look at my household and see my daughter, who is five on her way to six, my wife and my mom, rest in peace my grandmother, so many Black women have done so many things for me. Seeing the sacrifices they made, especially my mom when I was growing up. They were disrespected along the way and it's still like that today. In the case of Breonna Taylor's case, it's just shown once again that the walls of the neighbor is more important than her life. So not only did I want to acknowledge all the queens in this world, all the Black queens in this world, but the ones in my life, the personal ones, too. I just kind of had a moment yesterday. I mean, I have a lot of moments, but felt like it was important to let Black women know that you're not alone. No matter the disrespect or what they may feel, don't stop. Because that's exactly what they want you guys to do. They want you guys to stop. They want you guys not to be as powerful as you guys are, not as strong as you guys are, as determined as you guys are. They want you all to be at bay. They want you to accept what's going on. For sure, I won't allow that. When they are feeling down or feeling like there's no journey for them or gateway to be heard or to be seen or be respected or be accepted, my job is to continue to let them know that they are. They are important to everything that goes on, not only in America but in the world. Everything that goes on for 24 hours in day, 365 days a year, 366 in a leap year. That's what it's about. We didn't talk about that. One thing, we wanted to be there for our brother, Do. As much as it's devastating to us, you can only imagine it happening in your backyard. Do being from Louisville, we knew how tough it had to be on his family and the locals there. No, we didn't discuss that one bit. But can't say that we were surprised at the verdict. None of us are surprised at it. That's what's more devastating, that none of us were surprised at what the outcome was. Do has been in a lot of playoff games. He's won a championship. He's played at the highest level, and he's someone that we can trust. In the postseason, every possession is so important. When you can have guys that have been in the moments and can understand and also be able to make adjustments on the fly, and know that you can count on them down the stretch, it just makes the team and you individually feel so much more confident in the outcome. Do has been, ever since he got back from injury and we saw this playoff run, he's been exceptional. Thank you. Reminded me. I think the best thing is that we have been together. We're able to see what's going on and be able to bounce things off one another and to be there for one another. This game is so much bigger than just us getting on the floor and running around and calling out screens and running plays and making mistakes and trying to figure out how we can be better the next time. There's also a big thing called life that's involved in this, too. And to have, like you said, things that happened in Kenosha, and the Breonna Taylor case and so many other things that are going on in America, as we speak and as we move forward, being around people that you can trust and confide in, be able to talk to, bounce things off and not feel that you have to tackle it by yourself, I think that's very important when you have a support system like that. The best thing that you can have is a close-knit group, because we're together more than we are with our families. So having that support is pretty amazing. |
| 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. |
| Paying attention to detail. I don't think in the beginning that we were physical enough. You have to get a feel for how hard Miami plays. I think they smacked us in the mouth, and we got a sense of that. And so we knew how hard we had to play if we wanted to try to make it a game. You know, from that moment when it was 23-10, we started to play to our capabilities. We started flying around. We started getting defensive stops. We started sharing the ball a lot better offensively and just got into a really good groove. I don't feel anything. I expect it out of him. Didn't need to give him no advice. We've been preparing for this moment all season. He's been preparing for this moment all season. I'm happy to be on the same floor with him and in the same uniform. He was, once again, a force in every facet of the game, offensively and defensively. Felt great. Felt great. I've been preparing for this moment for quite a while. Fans, no fans, the inner challenge for myself and the way I prepare myself, it felt amazing to be playing in the Finals once again. We've got so much more work to do. The job is not done. We're not satisfied with winning one game. It's that simple. The best teacher in life is experience. I've experienced moments in my career where you have all the momentum in the world and you felt like you had the game under control, and one play here or one play there could change the course of a series or change the course of a game. One in particular that always rings home for me is Game 2 of the 2011 Finals in Miami versus Dallas. D-Wade hits a three right by their bench. I believe it put us up either 13 or 17. From that moment on, Dallas went on a hell of a run and finished it off with a Dirk Nowitzki left-hand layup to steal that game. That (expletive) burns me to this day. I always talk about the best teacher in life is experience, and I've experienced a lot. That's what prompts me to be who I am today, is being able to have those experiences. Yeah, absolutely. I think you can learn so much more from a win than you can in a loss. I can't wait for tomorrow for us to get back together and watch the film and see ways we can be better and see some of the breakdowns that we had, especially in that fourth quarter, especially in that first six minutes of the first quarter where we can be so much better defensively and also so much better offensively. So I can't wait. I'm extremely amped up about watching the film with our ballclub tomorrow. I'm going to watch some tonight obviously by myself, but I'm looking forward to getting together as a group tomorrow. Because we have great spacing and great shooters. KCP, Danny Green, Kyle Kuzma and Markieff Morris, a list of guys that can spread the floor, it allows myself and AD to be able to do the things that we do in the interior. We try to mix up our game, too. We try to mix it in in the interior and the exterior. But when you have guys that could space the floor like we have, it allows us to do some of the things that we do in the paint. I'm not sure. I've never called him that. We've never called him that. We only call him Do. So that would be a Do question. But you know, just having him in this moment, having him on our side, and I think he mentioned yesterday or whenever Media Day was for the Finals, you just don't -- you never know. You don't get these moments a lot. It's been over a decade since he's been in the Finals. I think he's just cherishing the moment, but also just playing the game that he loves to play -- the cerebral way, the determined way, the championship way, as he's been playing for quite a while now. |
| You know, obviously being in high school, watching the Kobe-Shaq duo was the most dominant duo that I have personally seen in my life from a basketball perspective. Obviously we knew the force that Shaq brought to the table, but the elegance and force that Kobe played with, as well. They were very dominant in what they did on the floor, on both sides of the floor. So to be in the conversation with those two guys, myself and Anthony, myself and AD -- he's going to kill me -- myself and AD, is just very humbling, because I know I grew up watching those guys. I grew up admiring Kobe; obviously, a kid coming straight out of high school. Admired that, as a kid when I was young, and obviously got the opportunity. And the force that Shaq played with. It's very humbling that we can be even mentioned with those greats. I definitely agree. Myself, Coach and AD were not happy with our defensive presence tonight. We know we can be a lot better and we're just, myself and AD, we're not satisfied with just the win. We want to be great. We want to be great, as close to 48 minutes as possible. I know I said it after Game 1, but I'm extremely excited to watch the film tomorrow, as well as a group, to see ways we can be better. We're playing against a very dangerous team in Miami, where they have five guys on the floor that's a threat, as they have shown tonight. So we have to continue to stay on our P's and Q's and cross our T's and dot our I's throughout the course of a game, and if we have a breakdown, being able to cover for one another. But they do a great job of putting your defense in positions that you may not be accustomed to. We definitely were not happy with our performance defensively tonight. Hopefully we can be -- well, we know, not hopefully, we know we can be better in Game 3. Well, I guess if you look in the sense of the size and the power and the speed that Shaq at his size played with, you could look at my game throughout the course of my career and say that. And then you look at the elegance and the ability to shoot the ball and the ability to play in the paint as well as post up and get to the perimeter, I guess you can say that you can have some of AD's game that could compare to Kobe's game in that sense. Obviously, all four of us are all different positions. Kobe was a natural 2-guard. I'm kind of a, I don't know, whatever position. Shaq is a center. AD is kind of a hybrid, as well. But I guess all four of us, we have a winning mentality and we just tried to make enough plays out on the floor throughout the course of the game that would benefit not only ourselves individually but for the most important thing, for the better of the team. I can't even believe I'm up here talking about myself and AD with Kobe and Shaq. Check his résumé. It's that simple. I mean, he's put in the work. He's been there through everything that the Heat franchise has seen. He's seen it all, done it all. Just check his résumé. There's not many guys that talk about it and also be about it, and he's one of them. If you want to be in the foxhole, that's somebody you want to be in the foxhole with. I think I was talking about force because Shaq's name came up. There's no way that you can talk about Shaq and not have that word come up. From the team's perspective, I think we've done a good job of, one, not turning the ball over, but also still being able to play with force, as you would say. Play with tempo offensively, get good looks. Get good looks that we like and, make or miss, live with the results. We have to play with that type of force defensively, but also from the cerebral side, as well. Thinking the game a little bit better as they are going through their offense and their pace and their force, as well. We've got to be a lot better obviously on that side. For one, from a competitive standpoint, going against Frank's teams in Indiana when we had our battles and I was in Miami, you understood how well those teams were coached. It starts with the head coach, and the players are an extension of the head coach. So I had that memory of that, just battling those Indiana Pacers teams. And then for me, I've always been a coachable player throughout my whole life. I've played for multiple coaches and I've always been a coachable player. So you know, the respect, more importantly, he's the head coach. The head coach should have the respect from all his players, no matter who you are, if you're really serious about trying to make an impact or really trying to do something special. It was just that simple for me personally. |
| We know that we can't turn the ball over versus this team. They are very active defensively. It starts with myself, being the starting point guard of the team, having five first-half turnovers, eight total for the game. Can't do that, obviously, because it gives them more possessions and doesn't allow us to set our defense. They are really, really good offensively, so you just can't turn the ball over against that team. I take full responsibility for that. I thought Jimmy was phenomenal. He did everything that they needed him to do tonight and he came through big time in a big-time game. We'll watch film and see ways we can be better going into Game 4. But I thought he was great. I mean, you just said it, he got into some foul trouble. You know, they even -- one of the shots he made when he had four fouls, they still tried to slide underneath him and get him a fifth in the third. I think the foul trouble made him a little passive, because he wanted to be out on the floor but he couldn't be his aggressive self offensively and defensively. I think the fouls slowed him down a lot tonight. They continued to make shots, and we had some turnovers. We didn't make shots. They came out and executed after we took the lead. Jimmy, like I said, he had his hand on all those plays pretty much. Obviously, we have to do a better job of that coming down the stretch. But I like our fight tonight, even as poorly as I believe we played. When you have an opportunity and you don't make the most of it, then you come back the next time. I mean, it's not like the series was over if we won tonight. We know for sure that Miami is never going to quit, no matter if we won tonight and they go into a Game 4, 3-0. I know how resilient that bunch is and how resilient that coaching staff is and their franchise. I don't ever feel like we let our guard down. Also, I don't feel like we're concerned. We're not concerned. We know we can play a lot better. We have another opportunity to take a commanding lead on Tuesday. You relish that opportunity. We learn from our mistakes pretty quick. You know, obviously right now with the games being every other day pretty much, it's the film room. It's the film room and it's how well we can make adjustments from the film and take it to the floor, and we have done a great job throughout this postseason. So we are going to definitely have to do that because we're playing against a very, very, very, very good team. We have to learn from our mistakes and be better on Tuesday. Love it. Love it. One of the best competitors we have in our game. We love that opportunity. For me personally, I don't know how many more opportunities I'm going to have, so to be able to go against a fierce competitor like that is something I'll look back on when I'm done playing. I'll miss those moments. Both. I just think we can be better, obviously. I don't think we started the game defensively in tune, and then offensively taking care of the ball. Like I said, we had some careless turnovers. It starts with me, like I said, and I take full responsibility for that. I'll be a lot better on Tuesday with that, understanding that they are very good with their hands. They are very good with the stripping. You can't allow this team to have extra possessions. You can't turn the ball over at that high a rate, especially at this point in the season, as well. I'll be a lot better with the security of the ball and the turnovers and things of that nature. We as a team will be a lot better defensively with our game plan. |
| At the end of the day, if you're on the floor at crunch time, then I believe in you. Whoever is out on the floor with me, I believe can make plays, and tonight was a case in point of KCP. Stays ready. He works on his craft. Like you said, that three in front of their bench was a huge three, and obviously the drive at the end of the shot clock was two big back-to-back plays in the fourth quarter, where we needed to continue to score versus this team. It's kind of two different things, two different points you're making. You never stop striving to be perfect or be great. And you know that a perfect game is not going to happen, but that don't mean you still don't strive to be as great as you can be every night. Now, every game has its own adjustments and things of that nature, and tonight was one of those games where we had to win on the defensive end and make some timely shots. But I think when you start thinking like, okay, well, I can't be great tonight or we can't be great tonight, okay, we just have to figure it out, then you sell yourself short. Me personally, I would never do that as long as I lace them up and put on a uniform. But I love what we did tonight. I think the fourth quarter, obviously it's winning time. You've got 12 minutes to buckle down defensively with the lead, kind of hold that lead, and then you have to execute offensively. Obviously, I didn't know the stat coming into tonight. But for us, that's just the mindset. We've got 12 minutes. If we have the lead, it's our job to outscore the opponent or to hold them to [as many] points as us, which is the same exact thing, because if we win the quarter, we win the game. That's kind of been our mindset all year long. He's a big shot-maker late in the shot clock, early in the shot clock, fourth quarter, first quarter, everything in between. It was just a great set up by Do [Rajon Rondo]. The possession before that, Do was able to fake it like he was going back to him, carry himself into the lane and get a layup. And then the very next possession, he was able to find him and AD just kind of stared at the shot clock, knew it was late in the shot clock and obviously trusted his shot that he works on consistently. So big-time shot, big-time play for our team to be able to put the game away. You kind of know momentum plays and momentum shots, the score and the time, what's going on within the last few possessions. They were going back and forth with us, and we were going back and forth with them. Duncan Robinson hits one off the glass at the end of the shot clock for a three. Bam hits one off the glass right there before that we thought possibly went out; obviously it didn't count. Herro hit some big shots. Me and Do had a clean rebound, we're both going for it and we smash each other in the paint. They kick it out to Jae Crowder and he hits a shot. To be able to get some stops and then make a timely shot, up six, you know if you make that shot, that three to put you up nine at that point in time of the game, then you know that you want to get one more stop obviously, but you have the time on your side because it's a three-possession game with 39 seconds. Most veteran ballclubs will be able to survive that. Just a big-time play, big-time moment not only for AD but for our ballclub and our franchise. No. I mean, for me, it doesn't matter. I can go every other day if that's the case. But I'm going to take full advantage of it. Gives me an opportunity to continue to get my body right, my mind, everything in between. I'll take full advantage of it, but it does nothing for me besides just getting a little extra day -- I guess it does. I guess it does do some, but it's not needed for me personally. There's certain momentum plays throughout the first half. There's a certain rhythm that you have either offensively or defensively that if that call is made correctly, then you continue to stay in that zone. You continue to stay in that rhythm. And if the call is wrong, it can throw you off of your rhythm. So we've wanted to challenge some things in the first half that we just felt like, okay, even if we were right, maybe that's not the time; we've still got our rhythm, we're good, whatever the case may be. But we felt like in that particular moment, we were playing some really good basketball. We were defending at a high level, and we knew for sure, we knew 100 percent, because I was guarding the ball, I knew for sure I didn't touch the ball. Herro tried to float it over me and it hit the backboard, then hit the wire. Coach is always kind of like, you know, 50/50 about it, and obviously as a player on the floor, you hate to tell your coach to challenge when you're not 100 percent. But I was for sure 100 percent about that play. For me, I mean, at this point in the season, I don't care about rest. I really don't. I don't care about sleep. I don't care about resting throughout the game. Obviously, I come out of the game. Coach has a rhythm and rotation that we live by and we go by. But I don't care about resting because I can rest in a week, max, if it happens to go there. I could rest for a month straight, which I won't do because of who I am; you guys know that. But I can rest then. I can sleep eight hours and get up and eat and then go right back to sleep if I want to. When I woke up from my nap this morning after our team meeting, I just felt that. I felt that vibe. I felt that pressure. I felt like for me personally, this was one of the biggest games of my career. I just wanted to relay that message to my teammates, the type of zone I was in, the type of moment it was, and the kind of team we were playing against. After the Game 3 win, that confidence they had, the confidence they still have even after tonight's loss. They are just a gritty, so damn-well-coached team. I feel like if we're going to be a championship ballclub, if we want to really be a championship team, that we got to have that same grit and that same attitude. It was my mindset. I'm still in it. You can see my mind kind of working right now. Yeah, that's why he's the Defensive Player of the Year. We said that all year. His ability to play one through five, guard anybody on the floor, take the challenge, not only guard on the perimeter, continue to protect the paint. Guards drive on him. It's hard to score on him. You see how high Herro threw that ball up? It went in, but he had to throw that thing up to the skyscrapers, right? That guy can do everything defensively. Guarding the ball, guard the post, slide his feet with guards, contest, can body up with bigs. I mean, need I say more? I think that's the best part. That's the best part. I get so excited -- like right now, I'm excited about our meeting tomorrow watching film and breaking that down and seeing things that we can do better. Seeing things that we did do well. Thinking about the adjustments that they possibly or will do, because I know Spo going into Game 5. That's the best part about it. It's a chess match. When you get to this point in your career, having your mind at a high level is so much more than the physical because we're all -- at this point, we're all great players. We're all here for a reason. We're in the Finals, Both conferences, anybody that is on the floor, they are on the floor for a reason. To be able to think through the game and understand and see the adjustments and try to make plays before plays even seem like they are going to be possible, that's the best part for me personally. |
| I mean for me, I've always stayed even keeled. You know, throughout the highs, throughout the lows, you stay even keeled and get better with the process. You stay in the moment, which I am, and understanding that we can be better. And how we make the adjustments and how we learn from tonight, tomorrow in our film session and when we get together and prepare ourselves for Sunday, will show the difference. Obviously it was back and forth, big play after big play. A couple, you know, questionable calls that swayed their way and put Jimmy to the free-throw line. Obviously, we can't do that. He's been damn near perfect at the free-throw line in the series. We just needed to get one stop. We felt like if we could get one stop, we could do something on the offensive end. But we got a hell of a look. We got a hell of a look to win the game, to win the series. Didn't go down. And then we got the offensive rebound, we turned the ball over. I thought we had a lot more time than I think we even thought after the offensive rebound, and a pass wasn't executed as we would like. But we've got to be better. We've just got to be better in Game 6 and close the series. Listen, at the end of the day, you don't predetermine anything and you take the game as it's going and you play. You play each quarter, you play each possession and you live with the results. You don't think about what could happen at the end of the game and things of that nature. You don't get caught up in the aftermath. You have to live in the moment and prepare yourself each and every possession, because if you start to wander and your mind starts to go, you make a mistake. One thing about this team that we are playing, they make you pay for every mistake. It's the same as when I was playing against Golden State all those years, you make a mistake, they make you pay. So we have to understand that. I mean, they’re vets. They’re vets. I don't think too much need to be said to them. I believe they will be much better and I'm not saying they even played bad tonight. Everybody in the lineup tonight that got minutes gave the effort. We just had some mental breakdowns at times, and they make you pay for it, like I said. We've got to look at the film tomorrow and see how we can be better. That's the beauty of the game, being able to compete at the highest level. You take those opportunities and you live in the moment. You're trying to make plays for your team and be successful on both ends, and we were both just trying to do that and trying to will our team to a victory. You know, he was able to make one more play than I was able to make tonight and come away with a victory. I thought AD made a heck of a play at the rim. I felt he was chest to chest with Jimmy, making him change the trajectory of his shot and the call didn't go our way. I felt like, you know, at that point in time, I think it was a tough call, but they made the call. We still had an opportunity to win. But we feel like, you know, with AD and with him at the rim and him contesting things like that, it could have swayed our way, but it didn't. Well, if he's on the floor – I mean he's a warrior, man. Just him being out there, hobbled, just brings a lot more confidence to myself and our team. We know the nicks and bumps and bruises he's played through throughout the whole season. We have to pick it up for him and pick it up for any one of our brothers if they are hobbling or lobbying or not at their full strength. Just the makeup of our brotherhood. I've always played the game the same way since I was a kid and I've had success doing it. And I won't let a play here or a play there change my outlook on the game and how I play the game. I mean, if you just look at the play, I was able to draw two defenders below the free-throw line and find one of our shooters at the top of the key for a wide open three to win a championship. I trusted him, we trusted him, and it just didn't go. You live with that. You live with that. It's one of the best shots that we could have got, I feel, in that fourth quarter, especially down the stretch with two guys on me, Duncan Robinson and Jimmy, and Danny had a hell of a look. It just didn't go down. I know he wish he can have it again. I wish I could make a better pass. You know, but you just live with it. |
| 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 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." |