

Interviewer:

So tell me about when did you go to Cal Poly Pomona?

Ted Williams:

1961. And...

Interviewer:

How did you get there? Because you were from Compton originally, right?

Ted Williams:

Right. '58. 1958. I met a man who was a legend. Name was John Scalinas.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Ted Williams:

He became the second coach in American collegiate baseball history to win a thousand games.

Interviewer:

Oh my gosh.

Ted Williams:

And he was a renowned speaker, very, very... He was a Greek Christian. And very demonstrative about his views and about his ethics. Well I met him in '58, when I was in the 10th grade.

Interviewer:

And was he your teacher?

Ted Williams:

No, he was a friend of two people. He was a friend of my high school baseball coach and he was a friend of my summer baseball coach. So when I met him I didn't think much of it. I thought he was just there to bring his expertise about baseball. Came to a high school baseball practice, talked to our coach and talked to us, and he left.

Three years later, when I graduated from high school, I really had no idea where I was going to college. I knew I was going because my dad said he'd kill me if I didn't. I just knew I was going, no idea where. So my summer baseball coach said, "I got a place for you." He calls Coach John Scalinas and they took me. And that's how I ended up at Cal Poly Pomona.

Interviewer:

Okay, so I'm going to actually go backwards. We'll end up back at Cal Poly Pomona, but that seems a major history. I want to go way back. I want to ask you what your name is, and whether you were named after someone else, whether there's anything significant to your name? And we're going to move

forward chronologically so that I make sure I talk to you about your grandparents, and also what you did for fun before college, and what your first date was?

Ted Williams:

My first date?

Interviewer:

Uh-huh. Okay, tell us about that.

Ted Williams:

My first date, Rosalyn... I can't remember Rosalyn's-

Theresa Williams:

Miller.

Ted Williams:

Yeah.

Theresa Williams:

I think Ros.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. She was an arranged date.

Interviewer:

Oh. How did that happen? Did she say she liked you?

Ted Williams:

She broke up with her boyfriend. She needed a prom date.

Interviewer:

Oh.

Ted Williams:

And her best friend was a good friend of mine, saw her pain, said you can't go to the prom alone. Ted doesn't have a date. So they orchestrated the two of us.

Interviewer:

So your first date was prom?

Ted Williams:

Prom.

Interviewer:

Whoa.

Ted Williams:

See, you got to understand, I told you my father said, "You're going to college."

Interviewer:

I never went to prom. So the fact that your first date was prom, I went to an all girls convent, okay? So you actually, are you a romantic still? Did prom set the bar?

Ted Williams:

I was never a romantic.

Theresa Williams:

Then or now. I was going to say, probably still isn't.

Interviewer:

Okay. So tell me about that prom? Did you bring her flowers?

Ted Williams:

Oh yes.

Interviewer:

What was she wearing?

Ted Williams:

She had a white dress. And the reason we got together, and the reason the date was orchestrated, she was 6'4" too. She and I were, when we stood up at prom pictures, we were head-to-head. So there weren't any boys available that were tall enough to go to prom with her.

Interviewer:

Hey.

Ted Williams:

And so that's why we got orchestrated to go together. In fact, I just found out last year, a good friend of mine, Dale Campbell, who was two years younger than me, just got married a year or so ago. Well, his wife is best friends with Rosalyn.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Ted Williams:

And she reminded her that she had gone to prom with me.

Interviewer:

Oh my God, we're going to have to get photos to put with this video.

Ted Williams:

And so consequently, I had forgotten, but she remembered.

Interviewer:

So tell me about your name. Were you named after someone else?

Ted Williams:

I didn't find this out till I was in my forties. I just thought my parents named me, Ted Williams, after the baseball player. So that's what I thought, until my brother told me, "No, your grandmother named you." And I said, "She knew a baseball player?" That's amazing to me. Because she didn't appear to be out the box thinking at all.

Theresa Williams:

Which grandma was it?

Ted Williams:

Mama Lina.

Theresa Williams:

Mama Lina.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Ted Williams:

And so I'm saying, you got to be kidding me. I thought all she had to do was beat kids and keep them in line.

Interviewer:

Well there you go. It's funny how our memories of people are locked into our impressions of them, right?

Ted Williams:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

But the fact that she named you opens up this whole doorway of who she is.

Marva:

What'd you say she named you, what?

Theresa Williams:

Ted.

Ted Williams:

Ted Williams.

Marva:

But on your birth certificate is what?

Ted Williams:

My birth certificate, my mother named me Theodore James. And in the state of Texas that's too many letters to put on a birth certificate.

Theresa Williams:

Too many, what do you call those?

Marva:

Characters?

Theresa Williams:

Characters.

Ted Williams:

Too many, yeah, too many characters. So to get it on one line, they shorten my name to Theo.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Marva:

On his original birth certificate was Theo, period.

Ted Williams:

T-H-E-O, period.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Marva:

Theo, period.

Interviewer:

My god.

Ted Williams:

So when I went and got a driver's license, they said we have to put on your driver's license, what your birth certificate says. I said, "Well that's not my name." They said, "We don't care. Birth certificate says this, that's who you are." So I had to petition Burleson County...

Theresa Williams:

Texas.

Ted Williams:

... Texas to rewrite it.

Interviewer:

When did you do that?

Ted Williams:

What, five years ago?

Theresa Williams:

At least.

Interviewer:

At least four years.

Marva:

It was longer than that because we needed a passport.

Ted Williams:

Well my father told me this, shows you how things change, his full name, birth name, Fred Robin Williams. His full name. When he got to California, they changed his name to Fred Robert Williams.

Interviewer:

They combined it?

Ted Williams:

No, no, they changed the Robin to Robert.

Interviewer:

Oh.

Ted Williams:

So instead of fighting the railroad, everything he signed from that point on with Fred Robert.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Theresa Williams:

Fred Roberts?

Ted Williams:

Fred Robert.

Theresa Williams:

Williams?

Ted Williams:

Fred Robert William.

Theresa Williams:

Did he just drop the Williams?

Ted Williams:

No, he dropped the Robin.

Marva:

The Robin.

Theresa Williams:

The Robin.

Ted Williams:

The middle name was not his given middle name.

Theresa Williams:

It was Robin.

Ted Williams:

Yeah.

Marva:

So he was born Fred Robin...

Theresa Williams:

Williams.

Marva:

Yes.

Theresa Williams:

But then he became Fred Robert Williams?

Ted Williams:

That's right.

Interviewer:

Just because someone changed it on the form.

Ted Williams:

Because someone changed it on his form.

Interviewer:

How crazy that a form could have more power than we have over our naming.

Theresa Williams:

How people can make mistakes-

Ted Williams:

He said, "I kept telling them it was Robin, I kept telling them. They kept putting Robert." He said, "I'm Robert."

Theresa Williams:

Forget it.

Marva:

And it was at a time when you were so marginalized...

Theresa Williams:

Exactly.

Marva:

... that you accepted it. You just, "Oh fine."

Theresa Williams:

You're lucky you have a name.

Marva:

And you don't have a leg stand on. You don't have any ground. You got to take what you're given.

Theresa Williams:

That's right.

Interviewer:

So you were born in Texas?

Ted Williams:

Yes.

Interviewer:

What year?

Ted Williams:

1943.

Interviewer:

So how did you end up in Compton?

Ted Williams:

We moved to California when I was 18 months old.

Interviewer:

Okay. Why did they move?

Ted Williams:

Segregation.

Interviewer:

Could you elaborate?

Ted Williams:

My father tells the story that he had four sons and two daughters. It was okay having daughters in Texas because they were not ostracized, so to speak...

Theresa Williams:

And not considered a threat.

Ted Williams:

... for being Black. But the four young men were potential targets because we were Black. And he said to me when he got to California, if someone ever touched my child, one of my sons, I'd kill him. So in order to prevent that scenario from being an occurrence, he said, "I had to move my family." And he said, "You need to understand, I gave up a lot. I had the mineral rights to my land. I had a good job." He said, "I had retirement, I had everything I needed, except the fact I had four black sons."

Interviewer:

Oh my God.

Ted Williams:

And he said, "I started looking for a place to take my family." He said, "My first trip was to New Orleans." He said, "I got off the train," because he was a brakeman on the train, so he could ride anywhere he wanted to. Worked for Santa Fe Railroad, so he had access to the country.

First trip was to New Orleans. He said, "I got off the train, looked around, and said, I don't see any difference here. This is the same as where I left." Said, "I got back on the train and I went to Detroit. One of the most depressive places I've ever seen." He said, "Can't come here." And even though we had family across the river in Windsor. So that's why he went to Detroit because we had family.

Marva:

In Canada.

Ted Williams:

In Canada.

Interviewer:

Wow.

Theresa Williams:

It might have been...

Ted Williams:

So he said, "Couldn't see myself moving to Detroit." He got back on train and he went to LA and he got off the train and said, "This looks like it."

Theresa Williams:

This is it.

Ted Williams:

So we backed up and we moved to California. There were already members of your grandma's family here, and the other, there was a segment of the Blue Family that were in Pasadena, Richmond, California.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Ted Williams:

So we had people in both places.

Interviewer:

Blue is the last name?

Ted Williams:

Grandmother's name.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Theresa Williams:

On your grandmother-

Interviewer:

On your mother's side. Yeah.

Ted Williams:

Your grandmother.

Theresa Williams:

Say her name.

Ted Williams:

That's your mother. Halle Mae Blue.

Theresa Williams:

Halle Mae Blue.

Ted Williams:

That was my mother.

Theresa Williams:

Is she up in Pasadena? Is she buried in Pasadena?

Ted Williams:

No, she's buried in Compton.

Theresa Williams:

In Compton, okay. I do cemetery history too, so...

Ted Williams:

Yeah, she's buried in Compton.

Theresa Williams:

And when he was 18 months old, how old was your eldest sibling?

Ted Williams:

18.

Marva:

Was that my mom?

Ted Williams:

It was your mother?

Marva:

My mom.

Ted Williams:

She was already gone.

Marva:

Left home, left the nest.

Ted Williams:

She was already gone.

Interviewer:

So were you a surprise?

Ted Williams:

Nobody ever said I was. Because the family lineage at that time when I was born was fifteen, thirteen, eleven, ten, and six.

Interviewer:

Oh my god.

Ted Williams:

So I don't think people had surprises in those days anymore.

Interviewer:

Yeah.

Ted Williams:

I think they just decided to have children.

Theresa Williams:

Yeah, they just did it.

Interviewer:

Your mother must have been so tired. Could you tell us about her? What was she like? What was her name?

Ted Williams:

Halle Mae Blue.

Interviewer:

You just said that, I'm sorry.

Ted Williams:

And my mother, two things about my mother. Everybody loved her, you could see that, because people always talked about her. They didn't call her Halle, they called her Mae. And so I said, "Who's Mae? Who is that?" "That's me." "Why they call you Mae?" "That's my middle name." "Oh, okay." And...

Theresa Williams:

How tall?

Ted Williams:

She was 5'4".

Interviewer:

5'4"?

Ted Williams:

Five foot four. But the best thing about my mother, that I learned from my mother, and I tell people her passing, when she passed, I was 20 years old. Devastating save this one point, best thing ever happened to me, best thing that-

Marva:

She could be fearless?

Theresa Williams:

No.

Ted Williams:

Taught me to understand that God took her, he'll take anybody. Okay? If one of the angels here on earth, one of the blessed people, one of the good guys can go, you better watch out because you could be next.

Theresa Williams:

Yes. Changed my whole approach to life.

Marva:

So you seize the moment now, take everything?

Ted Williams:

Well I understand you need to try not to talk badly about people.

Theresa Williams:

Get right.

Ted Williams:

You try not to treat them as you don't want to be treated. You want people to understand that you care. Because I learned this about life, having been in this sports field, you can say most anything, you can do most anything to almost anybody if they only can accept one thing about you, you care. They'll take verbal abuse, they'll take any kind of abuse, if they think you care. The minute they think you don't, you're in trouble. Because they will not take anything from you, good, bad, or indifferent if they think you don't care. And that's what my mother taught me.

Interviewer:

That's amazing. That's really big.

Marva:

When was the last time you saw a picture of your mother, until today?

Ted Williams:

The one in the basement, five, 10 years ago.

Marva:

When we went to church this morning, this picture, along with all these pictures...

Interviewer:

I'll just make sure for reference, because I'm going to get copies.

Marva:

... we're in church this morning because they just celebrated their 110th.

Theresa Williams:

11th.

Marva:

111th anniversary. And so-

Interviewer:

This is the one started by Bitty Mason, right?

Ted Williams:

Not that I know of.

Interviewer:

First AME Church?

Marva:

Yeah, she did the history for me on Grant AME. She said it was started by Bitty Mason. Is that...

Ted Williams:

I've never heard of Bitty Mason.

Interviewer:

You haven't. Do you want to know about her?

Marva:

Well not-

Theresa Williams:

Sure.

Marva:

We not...

Interviewer:

Yeah, not now, but I'll tell you about her sometime.

Marva:

You got to know, she got the whole...

Interviewer:

She's amazing. She's like my grandmother of LA to me.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. Uncle Fred and I are members of the original church.

Interviewer:

Oh.

Ted Williams:

The one that was on 108th.

Theresa Williams:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Ted Williams:

We started that one.

Marva:

That picture says on 108th.

Interviewer:

Oh wow.

Marva:

This was the mortgage burning. These pictures were all around the church.

Interviewer:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Theresa Williams:

She can send you though.. You can probably send them to her.

Interviewer:

Mm-hmm. You can send them to me in email.

Ted Williams:

Yeah, I was four years old at the one on 108th.

Interviewer:

So tell me about that church? Why is it so important to you?

Ted Williams:

It's all I know.

Interviewer:

Did you go to church every Sunday?

Ted Williams:

Yes. In fact it became so important to me that I was... My dad was Baptist. Mother, AME. So all the children, you got to understand, I look at my family as segmented. Okay? By the time... And here's you need to understand why, when I was 18 months old, I contracted diptheria. And I tell people that today, they go, "You got to be kidding. You had what?" Because the disease is almost unheard of. And I tell people all the time, I'm the medical anomaly of God's green earth.

Before they had all these vaccinations that they have now, every three month old baby gets a shot. It's called the DPT shot. Diptheria, pertussis, which is whooping cough, and tennis. At three months old, you

get that shot so you're vaccinated against all three. Before I was nine, I had all three diseases. Before the age of nine, I had all three of them.

Marva:

You did not get any of the shots?

Ted Williams:

They didn't have shots.

Marva:

They didn't have the shots. I see, now they-

Interviewer:

How did you survive? Your mom?

Ted Williams:

God.

Interviewer:

Yeah? So that's what you attribute it to?

Ted Williams:

Yeah, because the first one, diptheria, did kill me.

Interviewer:

You had a-

Ted Williams:

When I got to the hospital, they told my parents I was already dead.

Interviewer:

Do you remember that?

Ted Williams:

No. They said, "He's already dead, but we'll do whatever we can to save him." So the amount of medicine allotted to me, when they got me... Because they couldn't send me in the children's hospital because I was too far gone. And they were afraid all the rest of the children would contract it. They doubled the doses of medicine. And then they told my father, if they'd have given that amount of medicine to him, he would've died. The medicine would've killed him.

Marva:

Wow.

Interviewer:

This was in Los Angeles?

Ted Williams:

In Los Angeles, County General.

Theresa Williams:

County General, wow. And you were, how old is that?

Ted Williams:

18 months.

Interviewer:

So what about the other two? Was it all at the same time?

Ted Williams:

I had pertussis at three. Imagine a three year old have whooping cough. Then I had tetanus at nine.

Marva:

Oh my god.

Theresa Williams:

The scar.

Ted Williams:

And this is the scar from diptheria.

Interviewer:

Oh.

Ted Williams:

Because the had to put a trach in.

Interviewer:

Oh my God.

Ted Williams:

So I was quarantined for over a month.

Interviewer:

For over a month?

Ted Williams:

Right.

Interviewer:

Do you remember that?

Ted Williams:

No, but I remember the story.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Ted Williams:

That once I got to the hospital, mother couldn't come see me. The sisters and brothers couldn't come see me. They said they couldn't leave the house. My nurse was my mother's sister. So she's the one that saw me every day. My dad was allowed to visit me, but from a distance. So Aunt Baby, Marva, was my nurse.

Marva:

Baby was... I didn't know Aunt Baby was a nurse.

Ted Williams:

She was a nurse. She was my nurse at County General. So when I got released from the hospital, I didn't know my mother.

Marva:

How long were you there again?

Ted Williams:

Over a month.

Marva:

Wow.

Ted Williams:

I didn't know my mother.

Marva:

Oh.

Ted Williams:

I knew my aunt.

Interviewer:

That must have been so traumatizing.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. And the was to my mother. That's what I was told.

Marva:

At least a blessing that Aunt Baby was there.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. So she took care of me every day.

Marva:

I never heard that. Wow.

Ted Williams:

And so my dad, when I became old enough to understand what had taken place, because I don't remember any of that. I remember the whooping cough. I remember how bad that was. I don't know how bad diptheria, but a whooping cough, that was a killer. Because I don't know if you know what happens to you, you start coughing, and then you throw up, and then you keep throwing up. So it's like having...

Marva:

And that pressure pushes on your back sides too.

Ted Williams:

Oh, it just kills you.

Marva:

It just goes outright orthos.

Ted Williams:

So you're choking and gagging while you're coughing. And it just becomes reflexive. And I remember that. The tetanus I remember because I tried to hide it. I was out in the backyard walking around, and then we had just taken the fence down and the planks were laying down. And I shouldn't have been walking around out there. And just so happened to step on there and it went through my shoe.

Marva:

Oh.

Ted Williams:

And I knew I-

Theresa Williams:

I thought you were no shoes.

Ted Williams:

... can't tell anybody I'm doing this. Round about six o'clock that night I started to moving in a slow motion.

Interviewer:

Like instant?

Ted Williams:

Yeah, because I'm starting to get stiff. I'm starting to get stiff.

Theresa Williams:

Yeah, you're blood...

Ted Williams:

And my mother says, "What's wrong with you?" Now my foot's starting to hurt. And I'm moving stiffly. And so I told them, they took me straight to the emergency room. They gave me tetanus shot.

Interviewer:

Wow. Oh my God.

Ted Williams:

I was probably another 24 hours of being locked up.

Interviewer:

Have you ever had a near death, or an experience that was someone from the afterlife, or beyond the earth? Because you seem really spiritually connected.

Ted Williams:

Well, I'm spiritually connected for this reason, not that I've met anybody else, but I've seen enough. My dad told me when I was nine years old, after the tetanus one, the story about me almost leaving this earth, he told me that they had told me I was dead. He didn't say what he said to them. He told me what he said to God. He said that if you will leave him here, I promise he'll serve you. If you'll leave him here.

My wife and I both understand this, that scenario, because we had one, it wasn't near death, but it was traumatizing just the same. Our youngest had an intestinal blockage at a year old, almost the same age I was, that could have led to the same thing. As soon as the doctor told us that, I prayed the same thing. I prayed the same prayer. If you leave him here, I promise he will serve you.

So what was he 19 when he committed? 19 years old, he gave his life to Christ, unsolicited. Nobody told him that he needed to do that. He had a major surgery, which looked like it was going to curtail his career. When he got out of bed, he went straight to his profession of faith, told people they needed to start a Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter on campus, because I've just given my life to Christ.

Theresa Williams:

And how old were you when you gave your life?

Ted Williams:

15.

Interviewer:

Tell me about that experience.

Ted Williams:

I had been in church. Wait, the church, I had been there for six years because we left the 108th Street when they built the new one, which is in '52. I was nine. So started that church at nine years old.

Theresa Williams:

On 104th.

Ted Williams:

On 104th. And kept seeing people go down. One day I just got up and said, "I'm going. Don't know why, don't know where, don't know how, but I need to go." So I went down and gave my life at 15. Didn't know what it meant, but I thought it was something that I needed to do regardless of how I understood.

Because see my dad told me this at nine years old, I was going to seminary, I was going to be preacher. "I'm going to do what?" "You're going to seminary school." "What does that mean?" "It means we're going to take you out of school, and going to put you in seminary, and teach you how to be a minister, because I promised God, if you survived, you were going to serve him."

"I don't have no say about this?" "No." So I stewed over that for about a month or so, thinking how am I going to get out of this? This is going to take some really good doing.

Then I went to my mother, and the voice of reason echoed loudly in her. I asked her, "Do I have to go? Dad said I got to go do seminary. Do I have to go?" She said, "No." She said, "God knows where you are. And when he wants you, he'll come get you." So I've had two deaths in my lifetime that were close to me, really exceptional people, personality wise, caring, loving, sharing people. They affected me to the point where I understand God is no respecter of persons, but it does give you a chance to show who you really are and who you really want to be.

And I tell people all the time, there are verses in the Bible that direct you. Matthew 18:19, who says, "Band together and pray. Where two of you gather together in my name, I'm in the midst of you." If you ask, I'll do it.

Matthew 21:13, "You ask and believe in my name, I do it." Galatians 6:9, "Never tire of doing good, for in due season, you'll reap of the Lord." Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ because it is his strength that strengthens me."

Interviewer:

It makes it so much easier when you have the strength like that.

Ted Williams:

You understand, you don't need the strength. You don't have to have it, because it's His.

Marva:

The knowledge of it, the knowledge of that.

Ted Williams:

And then 2 Timothy 1:7-

Interviewer:

It's the righteousness that you know you're doing right.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. 2 Timothy 1:7 "He didn't give a spirit of fear, but power, love, and sound mind."

Interviewer:

It seems like you have imparted that to your former athletes.

Ted Williams:

Well...

Interviewer:

Based on what I saw yesterday, there was a lot of pure adulation of what you taught them, which is such, to me as a teacher, you know that's gold. But I didn't see... I didn't know if you were feeling it.

Ted Williams:

Well-

Interviewer:

Because sometimes when people do great things-

Ted Williams:

... I'm not emotional.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Theresa Williams:

You're not what?

Marva:

Not emotional.

Ted Williams:

I'm not emotional.

Interviewer:

I was worried that you were getting tired.

Ted Williams:

No, no. I...

Theresa Williams:

Just listening.

Ted Williams:

Just listening.

Theresa Williams:

He's a good listener.

Marva:

Right.

Ted Williams:

And my wife always says this about me, I am really good... I'll give you this example. You'll love this story. Do you know what separates-

Interviewer:

I'm sorry?

Ted Williams:

Do you know what separates average from good and great? I'll give it to you in a pictorial. I want you to do something. Okay? But I have to push the right button to get you to do it. If you're average, all your buttons are visible. I can pick them out. That one makes you turn around, that one makes you laugh, that one makes you cry.

If you're good, they're not so visible. I have to make choices to get you to do what I want you to do. The great ones, they're never visible. They're never visible. So consequently, you don't know what changes me, what disturbs me, what makes me laugh, what makes me cry. I learned to be great at concealing my weapons.

Theresa Williams:

Wow.

Interviewer:

How did you learn that? Because I can't learn that. I just want to punch people and like... And I mean, I really expressed myself way too much. And I'd like to tamp that down so people didn't know they'd get at me.

Ted Williams:

I had an experience. I look back on it, it was one of the worst experiences of my life, but it would change my life. I had done some good things, and I had done what I thought was the right thing, and I got persecuted for it, to the point where the person who persecuted me went to my superior and my told my superior that I had done wrong.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:29:04]

Ted Williams:

... And told my superior that I had done wrong. So my superior lit into me for a solid hour, and I sat there and I was thinking of all the ways I'm going to kill him. I mean, this guy, Aaron Wade, I admired this man, he was a great boss, but here he was taking that guy's side over me and he raking me over the coals. And I'm sitting there saying, "I'm going to kill you. I'm going to kill you." But I didn't open my mouth. I got up when it was all said and done and walked out of that room. For a whole year, I didn't speak to that person, because I was still that mad. But at the end of that year, when I got beyond him, I said they never knew how I felt.

Now, Aaron Wade, the person who was raking me over the coals, he knew me. He could look right through me, and tell me, "Hey, if I walk over there, he'll kill me. Or he'll try. He knew, but he never said a word about it. And he said to, in fact, the next guy who followed me who got the same tongue lashing, backpedaled, wavered. And he said to him, "At least the guy in here who was in here before you took it like a man. Made no excuses, alibied for nothing." He said, "At least you could be a man." But that experience taught me that. And it was good, because that was my third year teaching in high school and coaching in high school, and it really helped me in terms of, hey, never let them see you sweat. Whatever you got to do.

And later on in life, I got into another situation where I had a boss that I really didn't like him. He was a good person. I still don't like him. To this day, he still doesn't know, and he'll do anything for me. If I ask him for the Brooklyn Bridge, you ask [inaudible 00:31:14]. Because he never knew. Because I look at it from this standpoint: hate consumes the hater, not the hatee.

Speaker 1:

Every time.

Ted Williams:

Basically, most cases, hatred's one way. 'Cause the person you hate don't hate you. He don't even know. Or she doesn't know.

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 00:31:38].

Ted Williams:

So they really don't care. So if they don't care, what's the use? What's the use? Well, I know what, my dad decided to move to California. When I was nine, he went back to Texas. We used to go every Christmas.

Interviewer:

And this is Plano?

Ted Williams:

Lyons. Lyons Somerville. And I was invited to go to the movie show. So we get to the movie show, and I walk in downstairs, and they tell me, "You can't go in there." [inaudible 00:32:17] "I just paid my money. How come I can't go in there?" "[inaudible 00:32:20] sit up in the balcony." "No, I'm not sitting in the balcony."

Interviewer:

What theater was this? And where?

Ted Williams:

Somerville.

Interviewer:

In Texas.

Speaker 1:

Texas, okay.

Ted Williams:

"You got to go upstairs." "No, I don't." They hog tied me and drug me out of there, 'cause I was starting to yell, "I'm not going in the balcony." Because I'm thinking in California, they don't make you do that. What makes this place special? It's a little old dinky theater.

Speaker 1:

It didn't even have a name like [inaudible 00:32:48] like AMC.

Ted Williams:

So they recognized that I was about to get the real trouble.

Speaker 1:

Now, this is when you went back to Texas as a young adult?

Ted Williams:

Yeah. No, it's Christmas when I was nine.

Interviewer:

So nine was a lot [inaudible 00:33:02] for you.

Ted Williams:

[inaudible 00:33:02] Left me at nine years old.

Interviewer:

Yeah. Wow.

Ted Williams:

Because if you remember, Marvin, at nine years old, I was one them brash young people.

Interviewer:

As you should be.

Ted Williams:

I was treated as if I lived in the South and so I knew how to South operated, and I didn't. So at age nine, I told my... That's the last time I ever saw my grandmother.

Speaker 1:

Mama Lina.

Ted Williams:

Last time I ever saw her. 'Cause I told her, I said, "Do you know where Compton is?" She said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, come visit me, 'cause I'm never coming back here." And that was the last time I went to Texas. I was gone from Texas from 1952 to 1990.

Interviewer:

What brought you back in 1990?

Ted Williams:

I just wanted to take a look. I was scouting for UCLA, and I had a trip to Houston. So I drove from Houston to Somerville, just to see.

Speaker 1:

Wow.

Ted Williams:

It was amazing to me, see the street sign says, "Lyons, Population 40."

Interviewer:

Oh yeah. Everybody left. And now, Lyons is where you guys grew up?

Ted Williams:

No, I never, grew up there.

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 00:34:22] Mama said she was born in Lyons. Was she?

Ted Williams:

Your mama wasn't born in Lyons. Only Fred and I were born in Lyons.

Speaker 1:

Oh, okay. So where was she...

Ted Williams:

Somerville.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Ted Williams:

Which is around the corner. I mean, you get to the Lyons sign... Here's something you'll find fascinating. I was born at home.

Speaker 1:

By a midwife.

Ted Williams:

By a midwife. Where my house used to be, it is now part of the largest manmade lake in the state of Texas. Lake Somerville.

Speaker 1:

They made a lake?

Ted Williams:

They made a lake. It's a fishing lake.

Interviewer:

Did they just flood it?

Manmade, or was it already...

Ted Williams:

No, no, no. The state of Texas made it a lake. So the property, because we sold it, became annexed. And it's now, if the house were there, it'd be on the wall.

Speaker 1:

[inaudible 00:35:16].

Ted Williams:

There's a gate, right? There's a gate there where the house would be.

There's very little I hang onto. I can pass by...

Interviewer:

Well, it's also in Texas, so I [inaudible 00:35:31].

Ted Williams:

Yeah. Yeah. And for years, I hated Texas. Just could not stand it.

Speaker 1:

All parts of Texas you hated?

Ted Williams:

No, because of my relatives. Some of your lines. In fact, I told my wife, my brother Fred, he was my go-between, because he knew I didn't grow up in Texas and didn't understand the ways in Texas. My life was in California. So I was told by one of my relatives that I need to be in the house by 5:00.

And I'm saying, "For what? I don't do this at home. Why I do that here? "'Cause I said so." So I didn't make it by five o'clock. So when I came in the house, "I thought I told you be in here at 5:00." I ain't say nothing. And understand, I'm from California. She put on the table grits, sunny side up eggs, and bacon. Me being from California, "What is this?"

Speaker 1:

For dinner.

Ted Williams:

For dinner. She said, "That's your dinner." I said, "No, it's not."

Speaker 1:

Nine years old.

Ted Williams:

Nine years old. "No, it's not."

Interviewer:

So were you the darling of the family then? Seems like in California you got your way.

Ted Williams:

Well, no.

Speaker 1:

I can say-

Ted Williams:

I can say this.

Speaker 1:

What I remember, he was, because he's only five years older than me.

Interviewer:

It seems like you might have been a little spoiled.

Speaker 1:

He was. Can I talk? He was. And I just want to say this. I remember as a young kid, Grandma used to call him Sweet Tea. Sweet Tea, and he didn't like it, because she'd call out "Sweet Tea!" Up the square [inaudible 00:37:36]. You had a lot of friends, they loved you, and it seemed like you had multicultural friends.

Ted Williams:

Yeah, I did. Because we were in a multicultural neighborhood.

Speaker 1:

And it almost is like he, to me, acted like, if I can say this, a white boy, kind of like. He was not the typical black boy.

Interviewer:

He didn't have any fear.

Speaker 1:

But he was very intelligent, and he was very quick thinking and confident. But not real cocky, but just confident. But he just was the flip of the generations that had come out. The other brothers were, they were cool. My uncles, all my uncles are cool. But he was different.

Interviewer:

I think part of it is the post-war period, too, right? That was a new generation of people.

Ted Williams:

I was raised differently.

Speaker 1:

Different. Because [inaudible 00:38:22] in California, you were a California baby.

Ted Williams:

I was from California, I didn't know about Texas.

Speaker 1:

He didn't have the [inaudible 00:38:26].

Ted Williams:

I had no Southern background.

Interviewer:

Did they ever spank you?

Ted Williams:

Are you kidding?

Speaker 1:

With the dishtowel, she'd-

Ted Williams:

No, no. She hit me. When my mother wanted to get me, she had to go get me, "Get a switch."

Speaker 1:

Peach tree.

Ted Williams:

My dad-

Speaker 1:

Belt.

Ted Williams:

My dad whipped me four times in my entire life. Four times. I never did any of those things ever in my life again. For the four reasons... I mean, because the whippings were severe.

Speaker 1:

And they're belts, right?

Ted Williams:

Heavy leather belt.

Speaker 1:

He took off his belt 'cause he tried to whip us with the belt too.

Ted Williams:

Heavy leather belt. And he would lecture you while he whipped you.

Speaker 1:

Yes.

Ted Williams:

So I can tell you what each of those four things were for 60 years ago. That's what an impression he made up on me not to do those things again. My mother treated me one way, because of my daddy treated me the other.

Speaker 1:

Balance.

Ted Williams:

But there was no way possible that you could ever walk into my dad's house and say, you're going to be spoiled. Not if you want to live. In fact, the reason I laugh about this...

Interviewer:

So it was a different word.

Ted Williams:

Very different.

Interviewer:

Well loved.

Ted Williams:

When my dad came home-

Interviewer:

Just don't use the word spoiled.

Ted Williams:

My dad came home, he said three words that would strike total fear in my heart. "Where's the boy?" When I heard "Where", I was out the door. Out the door. 'Cause I didn't want to hear, "The boy", 'cause I know he was looking for me.

Interviewer:

So he seemed like he might have been angry sometimes.

Ted Williams:

Just the way he worked. He didn't have to be angry.

Speaker 1:

Don't you have to understand, to be a black man in that day who was a very proud man and had integrity, dignity. He was disrespected in so many ways, and so many times, but still came home and... It was amazing to me when I think back, because he always was dignified.

Interviewer:

And he had to put up with so much crap.

Speaker 1:

Exactly.

Ted Williams:

And his words were in no uncertain terms, "When you leave this house... " He never said who... "Know whose you are." You belong to me. So understand.

Interviewer:

So he was very proud of you, too, though.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. Oh yeah.

Interviewer:

He claimed you.

Speaker 1:

Very proud man. Very proud of his family.

Interviewer:

In fact, he did not want me to go into education. He didn't.

Speaker 1:

He did not what?

Ted Williams:

Want me to go into education.

Interviewer:

What did he want you to do?

Ted Williams:

He wanted me to be a doctor, lawyer, or an Indian chief. He wanted something prestigious, because his sisters were educators. In Texas. And he equated their low esteem and their low pedigree in the state of Texas with educators everywhere. And it's funny, because to me, there's no way I would've gotten as far as I got to become as successful as I became without education.

Interviewer:

Absolutely.

Ted Williams:

No way.

Speaker 1:

Without education.

Ted Williams:

Without education. I took the high school path, the college path, the professional path.

Because nothing in life for me came easy, nor did it come early. I didn't become educated till I was 23, 'cause I had to stay in school longer, because it took me so long to figure out who I was and where I was going.

Interviewer:

That's pretty young to figure that out, though.

Ted Williams:

Well, but see, I started early. I just turned 17 when I started. So when I graduated, I'm about to turn 24. So I was in college seven years.

Speaker 1:

How old were you when you graduated from high school?

Ted Williams:

17.

Speaker 1:

17. So earlier. Now it's 18.

Interviewer:

Let me ask you about-

Ted Williams:

I started my senior year at 16.

Speaker 1:

Wow.

Ted Williams:

Just like Auntie Bill. Auntie Bill and I are the same age.

Speaker 1:

Okay.

Interviewer:

Let me ask you about your siblings, because I want to make sure that you talk about each one of them.

Speaker 1:

We don't want to miss out on his journey through the colleges. There's UCLA.

Interviewer:

No, I do want to ask him about all of them. But I want to ask you about your siblings and your mother.

Speaker 1:

Okay. All right.

Interviewer:

For people who need to be remembered.

Speaker 1:

You got it, lady. I trust [inaudible 00:42:46].

Interviewer:

And I also want to know how you met your wife. You guys, it seems like she's got your back.

Speaker 1:

Front, side [inaudible 00:42:50].

Interviewer:

And knows a lot more about football than any person I know, except for my brother, of course. But she's really a fan as well. Big support system. So tell me about how you met her, and then I'll ask you about your siblings.

Ted Williams:

Well, I had just lost a wife, and someone had told me that this young lady was a corporate executive who had an interest in buying some Rose Bowl tickets.

Interviewer:

Oh, okay.

Ted Williams:

The person who was making the request was a mutual friend. So me thinking nothing of it, I said, "Well, let's get you some points." He said, "No, but it may get you something." And I said, "Okay, give me her number." I said, "I don't know what we're doing or [inaudible 00:43:54] we're going to do it, but as soon as I know, I'll communicate." So when we get the ticket allotment, what we can do and when we can do it, I called him, and said, "I'm Ted Williams, friend of Trent Walters, said you're looking for Rose Bowl tickets. Here's what the deal is. Here's what I can do. Here's what I can't do." "Fine. You let me know, and I'll do it. Whatever you say we need to do, because I want to buy two tickets." She's going to give it to her sales rep.

Well, make a long story short, the deal fell through because we couldn't find the sales rep to consummate the deal. So she said, "Forget it." Because I said I had so much time to get it done, and we couldn't meet that deadline. So she said, "Well, if you're ever in this area, in Seattle, look me up and we'll have a drink."

Interviewer:
Seattle?

Ted Williams:

And I was in LA. And I said, "Well, if I'm up there, I'll buy you dinner, 'cause I don't drink." She said, "Fine." One my of my best friends was in Buffalo. He transferred back to Seattle. So I was going to go see him. So I called her and let her know I'm coming to... She knew about the friend that I was going to see. And I said, "I'm coming to visit a friend of mine. He's moving back to Seattle. When we get together?" So we get together, and first thing we do is lay our cards on the table. She don't want anybody. Neither do I.

Speaker 1:
I'm not looking to [inaudible 00:45:42].

Ted Williams:
I'm not looking to-

Speaker 1:
Get married.

Ted Williams:
To get together.

Interviewer:
We're going to get her version. We're going to get her side of the story next.

Ted Williams:
All I know is this, that this is one story I can tell that has no holes in it. It's the gospel truth.

Interviewer:
I believe you.

Theresa Williams:
It's the truth.

Ted Williams:
It's the truth.

Interviewer:

But it's really interesting to hear other people's impressions of the same events.

Speaker 1:

Events, yeah, how they saw it.

Ted Williams:

And we sat down at Houlihan's. Went to Houlihan's, sat down at 8:00. We closed at the restaurant at 3:00 AM.

Speaker 1:

I like that.

Ted Williams:

Talking about everything. Everything but being girlfriend and boyfriend. Everything. Who I am, who you are, what do you do? What do you do? What do you don't do? What do you don't do? I mean, it was a conversation you had with, it's almost like a job interview for a friend.

Speaker 1:

A good friend.

Ted Williams:

I want you to be my friend. So I want you to know everything there is about me so you can decide if you want to be my friend. So if you say, well that's a check, it's a knock. No. You're fine. I'm okay with that. I have nothing to hide, I have nothing to lose. And after that, she called me about a month later, and we started communicating by phone. And two months later she says... We had decided to get together again. Have a second date, so to speak. She said, "Now, the next one going to be in Pittsburgh. Is that going to be a problem?" And I said, "Why should it be? I had the front get on a plane to go to Seattle. Why should Pittsburgh be any different?"

Speaker 1:

Oh, it was all a problem.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. So after our second date, we became a couple.

Speaker 1:

Wow. But your second date didn't come for two months?

Ted Williams:

Three months.

Speaker 1:

Three months. Long time thinking about that conversation.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. [inaudible 00:47:47].

Interviewer:

Yeah, they lowered the lights.

Ted Williams:

So it took us three months to become a couple. And I laugh about it, because show you how strong the bond was. The reason I still laugh about this. I went back to... Because I was working in San Francisco at the time. I used to, every spring I took two weeks to go to San Francisco and do my scouting. Well, someone gave me tickets to a AFL football game. Opened the Coliseum. And I told her that I had two tickets. I said, "You got anybody you want me to take?" She said, "Yeah, one of my sales reps." So she gives me the number and I call her. Lady answers the door, and she goes, "You ain't what I was expecting." Because I was about four inches taller than her, and she was tired of going out with short men. She said, "Trisha didn't tell me she knew you." I said, "Okay, are you ready to go?" I took her to the game. She had a great time. Introduced her to some players that I knew, and the coaches. She had a great time.

She got in the car and I took her back to her apartment. She said, "What are you going to do now?" I said, "Go home. Goodbye." I said, wherever this is headed, I ain't going. I was already in awe of her because she-

Interviewer:

Why were you in awe of her?

Ted Williams:

Because she was a corporate executive and she didn't have a... A no nonsense, non mess around kind of attitude. So I said...

Speaker 1:

Totally left brain, isn't it?

Ted Williams:

I could slip up and...

Interviewer:

I've only seen love and gushy out of you. Not left brain. I see now.

Ted Williams:

Think I'm getting away.

Speaker 1:

Wow. You returned wishes [inaudible 00:49:56].

Ted Williams:

I didn't think I could get away with it. So I said, watch [inaudible 00:50:03]. I let her go. And I told her about it. I said, "Your friend seemed like she was looking for something else, but you know what I told her? I got to go."

Speaker 1:

Wow. That was a good test.

Theresa Williams:

I think part of what happened with us is that we were so honest. I mean, it was such an interesting beginning that it overwhelmed both of us. Because as Ted mentioned, neither of us was looking. His wife died in July. We met in February. The next time we saw each other was in May, because I got transferred in March. So when he was planning to come up in February, he wanted to get together on Valentine's Day. And I already had a date. So we had to get together on the following day. And then, because I had been with the same sales rep that wanted these Rose Bowl tickets, I was tired. I was exhausted. I was a sales manager on Mercer Island, and I was trying to get out of the dinner, because we had not met, we had talked on the phone about these tickets, and had talked often about these tickets. Enough for me to know that was an intelligent person on the phone...

Speaker 1:

Accomplished.

Theresa Williams:

Nice guy. And by this time, our mutual friends had decided that hmm...

Speaker 1:

Something's up.

Theresa Williams:

This really could be something. Could be something. So Trent, who was at University of Washington, and I went to church together, and I was kind of like his little sister because I was new to Seattle and he'd been there. So he and his family kind of adopted me, and I was adoptable and that kind of a nice lady. And then his friend from Buffalo transferred to the Seahawks, and once he met me, he was like, "Yeah man, you better... Yes. You should meet this lady."

Ted Williams:

His words were well preserved.

Speaker 1:

He said...

Ted Williams:

Well preserved.

Theresa Williams:

So it was interesting...

Interviewer:

What year was this? How old are you to be so preserved?

Theresa Williams:

Well, one of my recollections... No, I was early thirties. Yeah. So one of my early recollections is that when I was trying to get out of it, I had said, "I am really tired. I'm really exhausted." He says, "Well, you have to eat, don't you?"

Speaker 1:

Yeah. Good answer. It was just like that. Because he's the very practical sort and unemotional, detached. And even though they had set me up, he wasn't going to be all hot and bothered. And I found that attractive. And then when he said, "You have to eat, don't you?" "I guess I do." And he says, "Well, then let's just go eat and then I'll bring you right back." I said-

Ted Williams:

'Cause she was starting... I could feel her frustration coming through. I said, "Well, maybe that might change your attitude."

Speaker 1:

Boom.

Theresa Williams:

He clearly was not doing anything to draw me in.

Ted Williams:

Enamor.

Theresa Williams:

Okay. So I said to myself, "Okay, let me just get this over." I'm thinking to myself, "Let me just get this over with."

Interviewer:

Because he's not going to quit.

Theresa Williams:

And then we're good. And then we're good. And because, see, my recollection is that he did get the tickets. Because see, one of the other abrupt conversations we had had was when something like, "Well, because you really went through a lot of extra efforts to get my sales... She's my number one sales rep. And so if she asks for something... " She never asked me for anything. I says, "Let me just try." So I was really trying to get her these tickets, and my recollection is we got the tickets. Because I then said to him, "When you come back to Seattle, I would love to thank you by taking you out to dinner." And his reaction to me was, his retort was, "When I come to Seattle, I'm taking you out to dinner."

And he was doing all this abrupt talk. And I'm saying to myself, this guy is really not trying to win any favors with me.

Speaker 1:

He's being himself.

Theresa Williams:

He's just being him himself. And I said, "Okay, nothing for me to get excited about. So let's just get this done." And when he picked me up, he brought me flowers. And hence that kind of diffused.

Speaker 1:

Yes. That balanced it.

Theresa Williams:

Yes. And I'm saying to myself, "This is not the same guy I was talking to over the phone. Okay. He brought flowers." And as he said, we went to Houlihan's. It was early. And sure enough, we talked till closing.

Speaker 1:

Closing. Wow.

Theresa Williams:

By the time we talked till closing, like I said, we had talked about... Because there was no expectation.

Speaker 1:

Which was cool.

Theresa Williams:

Boy, was this going to be a great friendship. Somebody that I could really just be myself.

Speaker 1:

Mind to mind.

Theresa Williams:

He can be himself with, and we can just connect on a whole nother plane. Well, he left town the following day, but I left work, Mercer Island to Bellevue, to go see him off. And we happened to kiss goodbye. And when we kissed goodbye, it was just a different kind of a kiss.

Speaker 1:

Who initiated, do you know? Was it just a magnet? Before you knew it, it just happened. Slow motion.

Theresa Williams:

Yeah. We were beginning to hug goodbye, and it just became a kiss.

Speaker 1:

Wow.

Interviewer:

Did you see stars?

Theresa Williams:

Well, not stars, but it was like-

Speaker 1:

Dizzy? A little dizzy?

Theresa Williams:

But it was like, "Wow, I wasn't expecting that."

Speaker 1:

He's giving mixed signals.

Theresa Williams:

No, no, no, no, no. See, this is it. They weren't mixed signals. He was giving me him. He was all of what he was representing. And frankly, I was liking what he was representing, because he wasn't trying to win me over. He wasn't trying to, trying to get me. He was just being himself.

Speaker 1:

And it was a different approach.

Theresa Williams:

And because some of it was, he can be kind of snotty, because his abruptness was just him. He was being direct. That was him being direct. And unemotional, detached. Just giving me the facts and figures. Not dressing it up, not trying to make it attractive, not trying to make it cute. Not trying to make it nice. He was just being [inaudible 00:57:13], because he was quite content with who he was. And he was being pursued in LA, so it wasn't like he was in need of a companion. Right. In need of a friend. He wasn't. So we often laughed that we want each other because we did not need each other. We really didn't even want each other. So by the time he left, I knew that something was different. This had some potential. Because the guy I had been to Valentine's Day with, I said to myself, "I think I like Ted better than the guy was at Valentine's Day with." Because that was new. That was a new friendship. When I got the promotion-

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:58:04]

Theresa Williams:

When I got the promotion a month later, because we had talked so often leading up to that promotion, I let him know that. Because when he left, he talked about coming back, because he said his next break would be, because he's on a college schedule, the next break would be Memorial Day. So that was the

window when he could travel again. He says, "I'll come back up to Seattle, if you want me to, Memorial Day." I said, "That would be great." So we knew that we would not see each other for three months.

Speaker 2:

Right. So this is from Valentine's week to Memorial?

Theresa Williams:

But then in March, when I got the promotion to Pittsburgh, it was like, "Well, okay then, I won't book the ticket for Seattle. I'll book the ticket for Pittsburgh, and I'll come to Pittsburgh." By the time he came to Pittsburgh, three months later, we knew that this was a relationship, because during the three-month window we talked ad nauseam. It was very interesting, the conversations. It wasn't about all Baby, Baby Boo. No, it was talking about the world. It was talking about life. It was building on the exchanges. "What do you think about this? And I read about that because you mentioned that matters to you." And then one of the big things that had influenced me so much about Ted was that he sent me scriptures.

Speaker 2:

Oh, he loves to do that. I have books and books that he sent me, lessons.

Theresa Williams:

He would write to me and he would send me scriptures. And that was just so unique about other relationships that I had entered into.

Speaker 2:

And can I just say this? Why would that be so unique? Because your dad?

Theresa Williams:

Especially because my dad. But then it was also because I knew that I'm looking for a quality relationship.

Speaker 2:

Godly man.

Theresa Williams:

I'm looking for a man of character.

Speaker 2:

Man of God.

Theresa Williams:

I'm looking for a man who will meet me intellectually, because the emotional stuff matters when you're younger. By the time you get a little seasoning on you.

Speaker 2:

That's why we got to [inaudible 01:00:36].

Theresa Williams:

We'll work on all of that, but right now I need some substance. Because Ted is seven and a half years older than I am, but I felt like he was my equal. Because I was at thirty-ish, I was...

Speaker 2:

Accomplished.

Theresa Williams:

I was put together. Between my parents...

Speaker 2:

Ready to roll.

Theresa Williams:

My upbringing, between Eastman Kodak, I had a strong idea about what I wanted and where I wanted to go in life. And if it was alone, I was fit for that too. If it was with someone, it had to be the right someone. But the idea, by the time time that Ted came to Pittsburgh and we knew we were going to have an exclusive relationship, we saw each other every month for the next two years before we got married. And I was only in Pittsburgh for a year. The next time I got to New York, that was the next promotion. A year later, I had a conversation with him. "I've got to transfer to New York. I know people in New York. If this is still going to be just a friendship, then I probably need to go to New York detached." Because I had already spent internships, summers, time, my brother was in New York, new people. It was great. This is going to New York. I'm Good to go.

That was the extent of me asking Ted to marry. Because if I'm not going there as an engaged person, then I'm going there as a single.

Speaker 2:

Yes, with eyes wide open.

Theresa Williams:

And it was one of those, we had gotten accustomed to having mature conversations like that. So it wasn't like it was an ultimatum. It was as much as, "You need to know where my head is. You need to know where I'm coming from. I'm not trying to kid you. I'm not trying to string you along. Let me work up a few things while I'm in New York City."

Speaker 2:

Very factual.

Theresa Williams:

"I want you, but if this is not where this is going, then I'm in my thirties and Mama can get a man."

Speaker 2:

I can switch reels, change tracks.

Theresa Williams:

Yes. That was when we started planning to get married. And we got married a year later, and I left New York and moved to California.

Interviewer:

So tell me about your wedding.

Ted Williams:

I planned the wedding.

Interviewer:

Oh, okay.

Theresa Williams:

Oh, okay. Let's hear about this.

Speaker 2:

That's interesting. I didn't know that.

Ted Williams:

Because it was going to be in LA, so I had to do it.

Theresa Williams:

It was in Pasadena.

Interviewer:

Oh, where in Pasadena?

Ted Williams:

The Chapel of the Roses.

Interviewer:

Oh, okay.

Ted Williams:

I had invited her to the Rose Bowl, and she came to the Rose Bowl and fell in love. And she says, "I want to get married in Pasadena near the Rose Bowl." Okay. So I looked around and looked at the phone book and saw this place, Chapel of the Roses, and went in to visit it. Told her about it. She says, "Sounds great to me." So I had to go book the chapel. I drove around the surrounding area and found a country club for the reception, but I had to book the country club. Then I decided how many people we're having. Other words, I'm doing all the planning. How many people can this hold? Who can we invite? Who can we disinvite?

Interviewer:

Did you pick the invitations?

Ted Williams:

Did we have invitations?

Theresa Williams:

We had invitations.

Ted Williams:

That part, I don't know.

Theresa Williams:

So I must have done that.

Ted Williams:

All I know is that all the venues, I got them.

Theresa Williams:

Set it up.

Ted Williams:

I did the menu, the venue.

Interviewer:

What did you eat?

Ted Williams:

Oh, we had steak and shrimp.

Interviewer:

What year? What's the date of it?

Ted Williams:

We got married in '85.

Theresa Williams:

February 16th, 1985.

Two years and a day after we met.

Ted Williams:

Exactly. We got married on her parents' anniversary.

Interviewer:

Oh, that's really sweet.

Theresa Williams:

And again, this was all planned around the football.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. Because she asked me, "When can you get married?" Not, when we get married? When can you get married?

Theresa Williams:

When you got time.

Ted Williams:

Yeah, when you got time.

Theresa Williams:

Set your calendar.

Ted Williams:

And I looked at the calendar and said, "Second week of February." Because football signing periods are first week in February.

Theresa Williams:

So you'd have a little bit of a break.

Ted Williams:

Well, always had a vacation the second week of February.

Theresa Williams:

And we should say that she fell in love with the Rose Bowl because you were...

Ted Williams:

I was coaching in UCLA. You came to the Illinois?

Theresa Williams:

[inaudible 01:05:48].

Ted Williams:

Illinois/UCLA Rose Bowl. It was our second consecutive trip.

Theresa Williams:

Did you win?

Ted Williams:

Yes, we won. We won nine consecutive bowls. We set a record before Florida State broke it. So we had nine consecutive. Our first loss was in 1981. It was my first bowl game ever. After that we won nine in a row.

Interviewer:

Okay. So tell me about your experience there then.

Ted Williams:

I got there in '80.

Interviewer:

Okay. After Reagan was elected?

Ted Williams:

Yeah. I got there in 1980.

Interviewer:

From Compton College?

Ted Williams:

High School.

Interviewer:

Okay, from Compton High School?

Theresa Williams:

In fact, all that championship, all that football experience at Compton High School put him...

Ted Williams:

I had a player, he didn't show up yesterday. The quarterback they're talking about, Ricky Turner, he was the quarterback, but he wasn't the guy UCLA wanted. They wanted Danny Greene he was a high school All American, played at UDUB, played for the Seahawks, fabulous player. He was being recruited by UCLA. Well, they came to watch us play, and in 1980, after the 1979 season, when they got beat, 45 to 14 by USC, they lost nine coaches. Dick Tomey went to Hawaii. Dave Fagg went to South Carolina. A couple other guys quit. Dwain Painter went to Northern Arizona. So we had a lot of openings.

They came to see me coach. They recruited my player, but they came to see me coach. They were impressed with the sideline organization, the demeanor in which players were taking orders, following orders, disseminating information and accepting direction. That impressed us. Their season ended 45 to 14, and then they had to recruit. Well, the receiver coach, who was recruiting my receiver, somebody I knew, and he told me they were going to be openings.

He gave me Terry's phone number. He says, "Call this number." And he said, "I think you can coach at this level." I called and I get a rejection, because recruiting is so important and the deadlines are so

short. He said, "Yeah, I got openings, but I'm not talking to anybody right now, because I got to recruit. I will talk to you when this is over." So I took him to mean, "Yeah, right. You're going to call me? Sure, you are." I moved on. In the meantime, I started looking for a job, because I decided at the end of my high school season I wasn't going back even though we were very successful. We'd won three league championships in a row and we would win a state title in between.

Interviewer:

Why did you want to leave?

Ted Williams:

You'll find this odd, but this is the way I am. In the fall of 1979, I was this close to leaving to take a job at Oregon State. That close. Had the guy who was my candidate gotten the job, I would have left. Craig Fertig got the job, the old SC quarterback. He got the job. I had another player on that team by the name of Michael Richardson. He was a Super Bowl cornerback for the Chicago Bears. When they went to the Super Bowl, he was the cornerback.

Well, he was being recruited to Arizona State. The interim coach was persuaded to hire me so I could be the LA recruiter for them. He didn't get the job. They hired Darryl Rogers from Michigan State to take that job. So now I'm saying, "I have just spent two months looking for a job. How ethical is that? These kids deserve better. I can't stay here anymore because I don't have their best interests at heart, I have my own. And while I'm out pursuing a job, I'm not pursuing their interests." So even though I don't have a job, I quit. Because that's the only fair and logical thing to do.

Interviewer:

That takes so much self-awareness. You were really young, and you had that consciousness already. Was there someone that you felt would be better?

Ted Williams:

No. Just the fact that they had put this desire in my heart to pursue my dream, and I felt it would be incorrect to pursue my dream and hold onto theirs. Here's what really showed me the wisdom of my thoughts. I had labored 11 and a half years to get my dream job. My dream job was to teach college prep biology. I got my job.

Interviewer:

That was your dream job?

Ted Williams:

My dream job.

Interviewer:

Biology?

Ted Williams:

I was a zoology major in college.

Interviewer:

We have to talk about that.

Ted Williams:

I graduated with a degree in physical education. My fifth, sixth, and seventh year was all spent in zoological science.

Interviewer:

Wow. Do you have animals at a home?

Ted Williams:

No. Don't like animals.

Interviewer:

Okay. Just biology? Cells.

Ted Williams:

Yeah. Just the science of the animals.

Speaker 2:

The insides of the animals.

Ted Williams:

And so consequently, I get my dream job.

Theresa Williams:

Not a veterinarian.

Ted Williams:

And I have so many young minds to shape and change. And I wanted to pattern after a way I was taught in college. I had two professors that taught the same way. They were really gifted in the way they taught. They never told you to read. They never told you to study. They created an atmosphere where you had to. You walked into class every day, there was a test the first five minutes of class. Every day.

They didn't tell you to read chapter 27. They didn't tell you to remember the lecture notes. They didn't tell you to study. Just going to take a test every day you come in here. So consequently, it forced you to stay up. It forced you to realize, "I need to know the material because they're going to ask me."

Interviewer:

Trial by fire.

Ted Williams:

Trial by fire. And then the way of testing your knowledge is they would tell you, "There will be no multiple choice tests in this class. No true and false." And you had to take a final to qualify to take

another final. If you didn't pass the honors final, you couldn't get an A or a B. In order to pass the honors final, you had to pass the other final to take the final.

Interviewer:

You skipped something. You were an honor student.

Ted Williams:

I was when I got to grad school.

Theresa Williams:

"Why am I not up to par? Why am I feeling sick all the time?" And I had asked a friend, the fears, friends from Washington State, and of course they suggested you could be pregnant. And I said, "No, that definitely could not be it." You could be pregnant. So when I found this doctor, because we had just moved there. The doctor said, "Well, for every new female patient, we always run a pregnancy." I said, "You don't have to do that. I'm not pregnant. We know that's not it." Because keep in mind, I was also an older mom with my first child and just knew that we were not having a second child, because I had negotiated long and hard for the first child. I just wanted one. I just wanted the experience.

Went to the doctor and after that pregnancy test came back that I was pregnant, I was scared half to death.

Interviewer:

How old were you?

Theresa Williams:

I had my first pregnancy, my first childbirth was at 35. My second childbirth was at 45. And the fact that I had to go to camp, because he's already at football camp, and when they go to camp, they're gone for a couple of weeks. I had to go to camp and let this man know that, "I'm so sorry I am pregnant." I was really afraid to have the conversation. And his reaction to me just assured me of the kind of man that I had married. He was less hot and bothered by it than I was, and he was all in from the beginning. I am sure it wasn't the news and the conversation that he was anticipating, but he quickly went into Ted mode. "Okay, that's what we got to do. I'm going to have another baby. Okay."

Ted Williams:

My answer when she says, "What do you think?" I said, "Well, we don't get a chance to give him back, so let's go ahead."

Theresa Williams:

That was Ted.

Ted Williams:

I was concerned, because she didn't tell me right out. She said, "Are you busy?" I said, "No." And she went off on another tangent. She said, "I need to talk to you." I said, "Okay." Then she went off on another tangent. So I'm saying, "Why is she delaying? Who's in trouble? My daughter in trouble? Son in

trouble? What's wrong? What's happening here?" It took four attempts for her to tell me. And she says, "I'm pregnant." And I said, "Okay." I says, "We can't give him back. Let's go ahead. We'll be all right."

Interviewer:

And I hear he is just the apple of your eye.

Ted Williams:

Well, he is for one reason and one reason only, not to mention he's my son. Four children. He's the only one that actively chose me. From the time he could sit up and open his eyes, he's looking for me. I would come home late at night, he'd be sitting in a highchair. "My dad's home." He's such a sponge. Whatever I said to the 31-year-old, soaked it up. He would listen, regurgitate, reenact what he thought was something that would benefit him.

Speaker 3:

What a terrific trophy.

Interviewer:

He's in the Hall of Fame for Compton High School as an amazing thank you coach as well as alum.

Theresa Williams:

Thank you.

Speaker 3:

Fantastic.

Ted Williams:

Thank you. Appreciate it. Yes ma'am.

Theresa Williams:

But I think part of the thing with Dan too is that being that last child, Dan has been mature for a kid. He benefited from having five parents. He benefited from everybody's experiences. And he learned early there was some things that he did not want to do and some things that, "I want to do." Then I think his own personality drew him in certain directions.

Because frankly, I think his personality is very much like his dad's. He's a very thoughtful person. And unlike Ted's formative years, Dan was a talker. He was always on red light when I'd go pick him up, because he was trying to be the...

Interviewer:

Boss?

Theresa Williams:

He was trying to be the man.

Ted Williams:

He competed.

Theresa Williams:

He was trying to get the attention. He was a jokester, fun-loving kid, and just like his father, has evolved into this man that we're constantly shaking our hands. "Where did he come from?" Because those early years to where he is now, he has matured faster than our kids. He has been more responsible earlier than our kids. He is the one that has a five-year girlfriend. We don't have any grands.

Ted Williams:

We don't have any marrieds.

Theresa Williams:

Yes. And everybody loves being our child. They like having their freedom to be our child, and so relationships sometimes get in the way. It's not that they haven't had them, but they don't let them interfere with them being our child, our children. They are always available.

Interviewer:

Oh, that's wonderful.

Theresa Williams:

... to be with us. And hence, Christmas is a couple of weeks at a time. They start to plan. "Okay, when are we coming?" And they want everybody to be there.

Ted Williams:

What are they going to do?

Interviewer:

So is Christmas in New Jersey?

Theresa Williams:

Christmas is in New Jersey. Dan looks like Ted, has mirrored many of the things. He has his football mind. He has his competitive nature. He loves being the quarterback. And this is from a kid who started playing baseball at four years old. He was a pitcher. And from 4 to 12, Danny was accepted into the People to People Sports Ambassador Program. So he went to Vienna, Austria and played baseball. And because he was so successful there, he sat down and negotiated with me. "Mom, I really wanted to play football. I really did everything that y'all have asked me to do up to this point. You were very proud of me," because we went to Austria to support him. "Isn't it time? My grades have been good. I'm such a good kid. Isn't it time for you to then let me play football?"

And so in eighth grade we let him play football, and he's never looked back. Football really is his love, even though baseball has been his experience. He pitched a no-no this year in college, and he was last year's MAC Offensive Player of the Year as the Stevenson quarterback. And then he also helped to found the FCA program, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, at Stevenson. He does a radio broadcast. And he's maintained over a three point average the whole time he's been in college. And he started the master's program, because he has another academic year because he lost a [inaudible 01:22:36].

Interviewer:

So it seems like he makes it look easy.

Theresa Williams:

Huh?

Interviewer:

He makes it look easy.

Theresa Williams:

But it's not. He really has to work hard. He is not a child that we would've said would pursue advanced degrees.

Ted Williams:

Even though our thought process was all of our children have to go to college, he seemed the least likely to be successful at it.

Interviewer:

Okay.

Theresa Williams:

He would do enough to accomplish the goals, but not extra, because it would be that much work for him to accomplish the goals. His first master's class, he got an A. And then he went to Europe. He went to Dublin and to Lisbon for an international business class this spring. The kinds of things that he wants to do, the kinds of things that he's done, it's like he's started to manipulate his own life. Even though we planted the seeds and there are three other degreed siblings, it's like his conversation with me. "Dan, I'm so proud of you that you've been able to maintain a B average since you've been in college." He said, "It's what you sent me here to do." It's like, "What's the big deal?"

Ted Williams:

That's my job.

Theresa Williams:

What's the big deal? That's my job. And like I said, in that, it's been very interesting to see him become. And he loves his siblings. When you asked earlier about sibling rivalry, honey, they love him. And they know, the other three know he has it better than they do, because our world revolves around Dan's schedule. But he's 21. He's the last one. So it's as it should be. Now we think the 30-year-old may have been a tad jealous, because he had been the baby for so long and then here comes this kid. And so Danny more or less grew up without a brother, because the one who was 10 years older really had no use for this little baby.

Ted Williams:

He detached himself from that.

Theresa Williams:

Yes. And because it was always [inaudible 01:25:17] Terri would be with Donnie, the 30-year-old, so much that you would think that Terri was his mother. He didn't do the same thing for his younger brother. If anything, he wanted to detach himself.

Ted Williams:

Totally.

Interviewer:

But they'll probably become great friends as adults.

Theresa Williams:

Oh no. In fact, in he called this morning. "You know I'm coming to the game on Thursday." But the game is...

Ted Williams:

Seven hours away.

Theresa Williams:

... away for him, but he's driving up from South Carolina.

Interviewer:

And is he married?

Theresa Williams:

Nobody's married.

Interviewer:

Oh. And is that the pressure for grandchildren? Are you doing that?

Theresa Williams:

No, there is no pressure.

Interviewer:

Don't do that.

Ted Williams:

No. Just the opposite. Our philosophy, Teresa's and my philosophy, if you have children, make sure you have them for you. We don't need any grandchildren. We have children that span the whole gamut. Danny serves all purposes. He's a child and a grandchild all at the same time.

Interviewer:

Yes.

Ted Williams:

He serves every person that need him to.

Theresa Williams:

Because a lot of people thought he was our grandchild, because we're so old.

Ted Williams:

So no, don't have any children thinking you need to fulfill a promise to us. No.

Theresa Williams:

Our children now span 40s, 30 and 20s.

Ted Williams:

Each decade. 40, 30, 20.

Theresa Williams:

We don't want them to have children, because we still don't think they're ready to have children. And yet, some of my close friends are the age of my children.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:27:04]

Theresa Williams:

Or the age of my children. All right? And it's interesting because some of them have kids who are in college now. But it's just a different mindset. And I think that the sports environment has maybe fostered some of that because it's been fun for them to be his child. I mean, when you think, they've been exposed to Compton High School, they've been exposed to UCLA, Washington State not so much because it's so far away... We were there three years... University of Arizona not so much. We were only there for a year. But the NFL, being with the Eagles, they had been exposed to that for 20+ years, and they love it. Danny-

Ted Williams:

Doesn't know anything else.

Theresa Williams:

Philadelphia Eagles is all he knows. And so for them to have, and especially with Terry and Darryl and Danny... Donnie has been away and more detached from it because he's in Columbia, South Carolina. So I think that has influenced them in their choices and their lifestyle because they're athletic, they're engaged in sports. I mean, outside of church, a lot of our conversations are sports. I mean, and if it's not Danny playing, Ted coaching and/or scouting, it's just the game.

Speaker 4:

And all of their friends. You have a family that is all connected through the football.

Ted Williams:

Yeah, that's true.

Theresa Williams:

Yeah, so-

Speaker 4:

And they love you so deeply. I mean, that's why I was kind of teasing you yesterday about did you hear them, because what you gave those players was more than coaching. It was family.

Ted Williams:

I remember I took my wife to a high school game... Who was it? Washington State?

Theresa Williams:

Mm-hmm.

Ted Williams:

Took her to a high school game, Long Beach [inaudible 01:29:16]. And there was a Compton High alum sitting in the stands, and he came up and introduced himself to my wife. And he said, "I went to Compton High School. I didn't play for Ted because he wouldn't let me." She looked at him like why wouldn't he let you? "Because I was into drugs. I was into gangs." He said, "I was a bad character," he said, "so I didn't qualify, but I wish I had." And, wow, I didn't know you felt like that. But we set a standard. We were the first... I think I can say this. We were the first high school academic institution to institute the C average rule. That was in 1977. What I mean by that was you had a C average to get into the athletic class, which was sixth period PE. So if you were not in the program and you were petitioning to get into the program and join the athletic class, you had to have a C average. If you were in the program and your average fell below C, you had to justify it. In other words, you had to have somebody explain to me that's the best you can do. And then what we going to do to fix it? But if you fell out of grace because it wasn't the best you could do, you had to go. We checked you out.

And I'll never forget, when we set that standard, there were young people coming up to me almost every day wanting to get into the athletic class, be on the football team. And my first question would be, "Bring me a copy of your transcript." I took nobody's word. "Bring me a copy of your transcript." "Why would I do that?" "Because our rule is C average to get in here." "Well, I had a couple of classes where I didn't..." "I don't care what you had. Bring me your transcript." You never see them again. Never see them again. And I'll never forget, once we set that standard, I'll have kids coming up, lining up to get into the class, and the players who were already in the class would look at me and go... because he just wants that jersey. He just wants to impress the girls. He don't belong in this place. So they policed themselves, that, hey, he don't belong here.

Speaker 4:

But I realized that what I saw yesterday was a sense of belonging that very few people had beyond high school. You gave them a community that very few institutions follow up with in our society. We see that sometimes in great coaching, or great teaching, but as a society, we don't see that replicating. They were all talking about high school as though nothing happened after, though we know a lot happened after. But because that moment was so precious to them in terms of their self-definition.

Ted Williams:

Yeah, I-

Speaker 4:

And I want you to know that's very rare what you do.

Ted Williams:

I agree because I didn't understand the totality of it until I heard the stories about I have my own company now. Everybody in my company, if he got here 15 minutes early, he's late. That's what I learned. I learned, hey, you never give up your position of leadership, never give up your position of stature to let somebody else have an opportunity, because you may not get it back. And what you've worked for, you've earned, hang onto it. I'd never heard that before. So it was profound in that regard, that you understand that the thought process when I had the vision really came to fruition. So that's why I [inaudible 01:33:36]. It's amazing to me what you have become. I never envisioned when I started that that would happen. Here's what transpired to create the culture. I'm thinking what year... '72, 1972, we had a riot on the football field.

Speaker 4:

Oh, in Compton?

Ted Williams:

In Compton. Millikan High School versus us. Something transpired [inaudible 01:34:22] the stands empty, empty. The league takes action [inaudible 01:34:34] Compton High School. So the next year we have to play all of our games on the road. No one would come to Compton to play a game. So we're the visitor five times. This goes on for a couple of years. We get a new president, and he said, "I paid my pennants. We're going to play at home. We will have... We will hire as many policemen as we need to hire. We will have discipline [inaudible 01:35:12]. We're going to play [inaudible 01:35:13]."

Speaker 4:

Was Millikan a White team?

Ted Williams:

Yes.

Speaker 4:

From the South Bay, right?

Ted Williams:

Long Beach.

Speaker 4:

Long Beach. Okay.

Ted Williams:

And the league said, "We won't come." And I love [inaudible 01:35:32] when he said, "That's okay too, because when it's your turn, you'll forfeit. And when it's your turn, you'll forfeit, and when it's your turn, you'll forfeit." He said, "I don't care if you come or not. We will play though. Your choice. So just let you know, we're going to petition [inaudible 01:35:53] we have security, we have what we need, but you're not going to be punished forever." Even criminals get pardoned. So we're not going to be punished forever. So-

Speaker 4:

And that's a whole new set of students, five years.

Ted Williams:

Yeah, exactly. So then we started playing at home, and the crowds initially started coming back. When we first started playing, wasn't nobody coming. I mean, their side of the field would be empty because they were afraid. We overcame that. But the thought process stayed in my head. White America sees Black America as belligerent and a threat, in some cases with good reason. [inaudible 01:36:54] the Black community plays in the daytime, for good reason. We never had to play in the daytime. We played at night. So that being said, how do you disarm this?

Speaker 4:

Winning.

Ted Williams:

Winning doesn't disarm the threat of fear. Here's what I learned. That's when we instituted you show up on Friday morning in a shirt and tie. Okay? White America doesn't see that as a threat. They see that as being on purpose. So wherever we went, wherever we showed up, we were dressed business-like. Give you an example. In 1979, we took a busload of football players to Visalia, California [inaudible 01:38:03] the White coach there, his town, to play Mt. Whitney High School. We drive into town, and we're driving for 10 minutes inside the city limits, and I don't see an African American anywhere. So I touch my friend. I said, "Did you see any Black people?" "No, I didn't." Okay. This will be an experience. But here again, we're dressed. They feed us dinner. We go to the game. We win the game. After the game, their team comes to the motel where we're staying, and the kids mix and mingle for another two hours after the game is over at the motel.

The next morning we get up to go have our team meal for breakfast to go home. They get off the bus still dressed in shirts and ties, and they go to the restroom. There's a older White gentleman driving down the street with his wife. He sees them going into this restaurant. He said, "Who are they, and what are they doing here?" He pulls up in the parking lot, parks his car and gets out of his car, he and his wife, and walk inside to find out what was this all about. I'm still at the hotel closing up business and getting ready to go home. I get there, don't know he's had breakfast with those kids, he's talked to those kids. He walks outside. He says, "Are you the coach?" I said, "Yes, I am." Whips out his card, and he said, "I saw these young people. I was impressed with the way they looked. I didn't know them, didn't recognize them, wanted to know who they were and why there were here." He said, "After talking to them, they were delightful young men." He said, "Here's my card. If you ever need anything, you call me." He was the secretary of agriculture in the state of California, in the state of California, the secretary of agriculture.

So it just solidified in my mind you're dressed for success, people recognize it. And what it doesn't do, doesn't allow you to be a label.

Speaker 4:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ted Williams:

I learned that recruiting. And my wife laughs about this all the time. People ask me, "Why would you dress in a three-piece suit to go recruit high school players? Why would you do that every day?" Because of what I learned. Most college coaches show up at a high school, junior college, with their logo on. Immediately what I learned was you're a label. You are a college recruiter from such and such a place. You're no different than anybody else. I showed up at a high school in a three-piece suit, three other college recruiters there. They all their logos. I'm the last one through the front door. I see the secretary talking to those three coaches, telling them they had to sit down, they had to wait. Class would be over at such and such time. They'd be allowed to talk to so-and-so at such and such a time. I'm the last one through the door. She says, "May I help you?", because she doesn't know why I'm there, doesn't know what I'm doing and what I want. I'm dressed in a business-like fashion, must be on purpose. So she needed to ascertain what is it she could do to help me.

So I would always ask the [inaudible 01:42:01], "Which way is the counseling office?" "That way." And I was allowed to get on campus and do whatever I want to do. I'd go out and see the coaches, go see a teacher. Had a young man told me this one time. This is what solidified it for me. I'm walking by a classroom, and the guy says, "Hey, Ted." I look up. He's a friend of mine. He's a teacher. He said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "I'm recruiting." He said, "Come on in." I walk into his classroom. It's a bungalow. The kids are on one side, and his desk is on the other. I sit down. We start a conversation about the old days. All of a sudden I realize there's nobody in that classroom talking. The teacher's not talking. He's not talking to them. So why haven't they lost their focused? Why are they just at ease? So I looked at him, I said, "What'd you tell them? What did you tell them?" He said, "I told them you were FDA." That's when I got it. Because the way I was dressed, they couldn't tell what I was.

And I said that's the way I want it to be. I want to be distinguished, but not noticeable, so that I'm in control. And the way to produce control is wear a shirt and tie. So that carried on throughout high school, and people respected us more and feared us less. So consequently, we got the benefit of the doubt. It happened one time, we were playing in a state playoff game, and five White football officials on the field. The referee is a good friend of mine, knows me from years of teaching and coaching. In fact, he became an NFL official. He and I were in the NFL together for 15 years. And he retired. Well, you can tell as the game progressed on that the prejudice against us was mounting.

Speaker 4:

Was he African American too?

Ted Williams:

Mm-mm. None of them were African American. And at one time, they threw so many flags, we were second down and 63. And one of my coaches said, "Do you see this?" "Yeah, I do." I said, "We've got to persevere." Toward the end of the game, the referee recognized what was going on. He took care of it. He didn't tell them to stop throwing flags. He threw enough on the other team to get them second and 35. That's because he knew me and he knew that, hey, we hadn't done anything wrong that that we

were blamed for. But creating a discipline, because when I was told about the kids taking drugs and drinking wine and having no discipline, my first question was, "Why didn't you tell me?" I had two young players that were going to be seniors, taught me a lot. They said, "It wasn't your problem. It was ours, and we're going to fix it. The senior class let us down. It ain't ever going to happen again, not ever, ever." Because I would've dealt with it. They said, "No, no, no. The problem rests with us." And then we began to recognize what needed to be done, and that's when we started having the team meals and the dress code.

Probably if I had known, I would've addressed it. I'm not saying [inaudible 01:46:20] because I know they couldn't be, but when you sell education, when you sell I want a scholarship... Because that not only is free education. It's prestige. So when you're selling that and they become prestigious enough to get one scholarship to USC, scholarship to UCLA, scholarship to ASU, they can brag about that. In fact, in 1979, there's a one square... Most people don't know this... there's a one square mile block of homes and houses just west of Compton High School. In that one square mile, there were PAC-10 players.

Speaker 4:

15 what?

Ted Williams:

PAC-10 players. 15. People said, "How can that be?" Said, "No, how can that not be?" They're probably even more than the 15, but they chose a different path. But athletically, 15 kids came out of that one square mile area and played in the PAC-10.

Speaker 4:

I want to ask you if you could do it all over again, what would you do?

Ted Williams:

Probably start earlier.

Speaker 4:

Start earlier?

Ted Williams:

Yeah. Like I said, I felt like the two years I spent, '74, '75, my hopes were probably higher, vision probably brighter than what I got, because I didn't realize what it took. I just thought you just did it. Getting the kids... And here again, to be a Compton High School football player required a lot of sacrifices, a lot of sacrifices. We had a 336-day program. 336 days you were at the high school, every day except Sunday. And from September to December, you were at the high school at 5:00 in the morning. Your day started at 4:30. 15, 16, 17-year-old, 4:30 AM your day starts. So [inaudible 01:49:10] why? Because we were selling education. And I just felt like how could I send this kid home after a two and a half, three-hour practice that start at 6:00, I mean, sorry, 3:00 in the afternoon? He's getting home at 7:00, 8:00. He's going to eat dinner. That's going to take him a half an hour. He's going to start studying at 8:30, 9:00 at night. When is he going to get up? That's hypocritical.

Speaker 4:

So no afternoon?

Ted Williams:

Here's what we did. We planned 5:00 in the morning all the things that would take up the auxiliary time that you had, film study, weight training, chalk talks, meetings. We did that from 5:00 to 8:00 in the morning, did it all, so that when we got to 3:00, all we did was practice. No meetings, no explanation, because they've already been given it. We went from 3:00 to 4:30, so at 4:25, they were walking off the field, because we didn't do any extra coaching, because they were going home and studying. So I would tell the parents, "If your child is not home by 5:00 in the afternoon, look for them, because he ain't here." He should be home. Like you heard one guy said that you had to be in the house by 10:00, I threatened them. See, I had a Matador. It was white with gold stripes. So it was very unique, so everybody knew when I was coming. So I threatened them by saying, "Hey, I'm driving through your neighborhood at night. If I see you out, you're done."

Speaker 4:

Did you do that?

Ted Williams:

No.

Speaker 4:

I have to ask you about the Watts riots.

Ted Williams:

I was in college. The thing I remember about the Watts riots, what I heard about it, I knew exactly it. In fact, it started-

Speaker 4:

Avalon and 108th? Is that right?

Ted Williams:

More like Central, because [inaudible 01:51:35] South Park, right there, that little part right there. No, it wasn't Central. It was Will Rogers Park.

Speaker 4:

I think they renewed it. Did they?

Ted Williams:

Yeah, I'm sure they did. But back when I was a kid, it was Will Rogers, because South Park is down on 55th Street. But it started at that park. So I'm in Pomona, and I'm calling home, and everybody said, "Fine, stay where you are. Everything's good." So on the weekend, I wanted to go home. Can't go home. Became very creative, because you couldn't drive through. So I drove Imperial Highway to Lynwood, drove Lynwood to Long Beach, came in the back way, came up by Alameda, and then came to where I could get to my house. Otherwise, I wouldn't hit all the barricades. So I came home, assessed, everybody was doing fine, doing okay, went out the same way, went back to Pomona.

Speaker 4:

What was your impressions of the damage?

Ted Williams:

I only saw... You couldn't get to the damage, because you weren't allowed to drive your car that way. So I never drove up that way. I didn't see the damage until maybe three months later. And then you saw all the bullet holes and the things. And it's too young to figure out what happened. Because I was a junior in college, so I was still just 20 years old and wondered how this happened. Because you never get the full story of why, why this happened. You see the end result, but at 20 years old it's hard to understand ideologically why it happened. But you know that it could, and you see the end result. But in both riots, the Rodney King riot, I wasn't in Los Angeles. Here's what I [inaudible 01:53:42], if you want to know really what I am, I'm a person who believes in this, the first rule of life is who are we? First rule of life.

Speaker 4:

Who are you?

Ted Williams:

Who am I? I'm a man who understands the process of life, because until you understand who you are, you have no idea what you are. Now, the what is important, because if you have no idea what you are, the world will tell you.

Speaker 4:

So when did you first realize you were Black?

Ted Williams:

When I was four or five, when I was told that segregation exists, when I first learned of segregation.

Speaker 4:

In Texas?

Ted Williams:

In Texas. And what I was told, the races didn't mix, they didn't go to school together, they didn't socialize together, and I'm saying what world you living in? It ain't the world that I know. And that's what I'm about what you are. The world will tell you what you are. You have to be able to stand up and say do you know who you are? Yes, I am, no, I'm not, because the two steps that you follow, who am I, what am I, will lead to the ultimate step, where you're going. Where are you going?

Speaker 4:

Where are you going?

Ted Williams:

Where am I going? Now, I'm going to ascertain the best way to live my life and be of influence to others where I am, where I am, without saying that I'm going to do X amount or X amount of that, because I've done all that. But nevertheless, if asked how could I be of service, let me know. Let me know.

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Speaker 4:

I'm going to end this interview here...

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:55:48]