

Quiet Strength

A Memoir

The Principles, Practices, & Priorities of a Winning Life

by Tony Dungy with Nathan Whitaker

[Fertig Notes]

- *If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.* Booker T. Washington
- Football was the first job I ever had that actually got me excited about heading to work. But football is just a game. It's not family. It's not a way of life. It doesn't provide any sort of intrinsic meaning. It's just football.
- My dad earned his doctorate by studying the effects of cigarette smoking on laboratory rats. I saw stunning slides of rat hearts and lungs that had been exposed to and damaged by cigarette smoke. From the third grade on, I've never had any desire to experiment with any of that stuff. It also taught me something I put to use as a coach: if I want my players to remember something, one picture isn't worth a thousand words – it's *better*.
- I've always hired coaches who value teaching and communication.
- What's important is not the accolades and memories of success but the way you respond when opportunities are denied. Things will go wrong at times. You can't always control circumstances. However, you can always control your attitude, approach and response. Your options are to complain or to look ahead and figure out how to make the situation better.
- Blanket rules don't always fit every individual. I need to treat everybody fairly, but *fair* doesn't always mean *equal*. If God has given you a lot of ability, I believe you should be held to a higher level of expectation.
- Chuck Noll: Champions don't beat themselves. If you want to win, do the ordinary things better than anyone else does – day in and day out. We're not going to fool people and outscheme them. We're just going to outplay them. Because we'll know what we're doing. When we get into a crucial situation, we won't have time to think. We'll play fast and fundamentally sound.
- Some people had suggested to me that I wasn't drafted as a quarterback because of my race. At first, I didn't agree. But after talking with coaches and scouts that first year, I grew less certain. Quarterbacking in the NFL was ultimately no different from playing quarterback at any other level. I believe I could have done it, given the opportunity. But I didn't get that opportunity, and whether it was because of my race or because of some legitimate factor, it was time to move on.
- I asked Willie Stargell about the noisy atmosphere in the clubhouse on game day. "Isn't it a little distracting?" Willie flashed that broad smile of his and then laughed as he decided the question was funnier than he first thought. "I've been playing baseball for a long time, Tony. When I look over in your locker room on game day, I can't believe how tight everybody is. As for me, every time I've ever heard the umpire get ready to start a game, he always says, 'Play ball!' I've never once heard him say, 'Work ball!' I think that's something you football guys have forgotten."
- How I lived on earth was just as important as my salvation. God had me here for a reason, and it wasn't just to play ball.
- Everything about the Steelers was first-class and all about integrity. In that respect, Art Rooney, the Steelers' owner, set the tone for the entire organization. He cultivated an environment of caring and closeness, and Chuck Noll reinforced that with his coaching.
- With those benefits, however, came responsibility. Wherever you go, you're going to represent us as a team and as a community, so govern yourselves accordingly. He was the most supportive man I could imagine. When we won, he would come into the locker room and shake everyone's hand until he had moved all the way through the ranks. When we lost, he'd come into the locker room and sit down and talk with us for a while.
- Chuck Noll always reminded us that "Football is what you're doing right now, but it's not your life's work." Occasionally it occurred to us that he had been in football for such a long time that it certainly seemed to be *his* life's work, but I don't think anybody ever had the guts to say it. Chuck often preached the importance of time away from the office, and we knew it wasn't just lip service. Chuck lived out his message. His philosophy was "Get the work done so you can enjoy the other parts of your life."

- I sometimes found myself on the job at three o'clock in the morning watching film with Marty (Schottenheimer). I still enjoyed coaching more than anything else I had done. After those crazy hours, however, Herm (Edwards) and I vowed that if we ever had the chance to make the schedule ourselves, we wouldn't spend, or allow our assistants to spend, that much time in the office. With Chuck Noll, I had seen firsthand that it was possible to work fewer hours and still be successful. I didn't like the burden my absence in the evenings placed on Lauren, who was at home alone with the kids.
- Marty had already decided to hire Dave Adolph as his new defensive coordinator. Dave and Marty were close friends, and Dave had been Marty's defensive coordinator in Cleveland. I reminded Marty of our conversation we'd had three earlier when he told me that he couldn't hire someone from the outside over guys who had been within the organization. He did remember our conversation, but he said this was a special circumstance he couldn't have anticipated. Lauren wanted me to stay on as the Chiefs defensive backs coach, but I didn't feel like that was a good option for me anyone, given the way things had played out. I knew I wouldn't be able to put my heart into my work – a crucial ingredient for success.
- After I became head coach, I had much more empathy for Marty's position. Things do happen that you can't anticipate. As a result, I've learned not to make any promises to players or coaches, and Marty and I remain friends to this day.
- Having the head coach direct the scout teams served two purposes. First, it made everybody realize the importance of the scout team and made the scout team players pay attention. Second, it gave Denny (Green) a great opportunity to get a firsthand look at his young players and backups.
- Denny also believed that his assistant coaches should interact with the media. There's a strong trend around the league these days toward silencing assistants, with various clubs having a "One Voice" doctrine. I can appreciate that to some extent; it makes it easier for a head coach to craft a message and keep everyone on the same page. However, league rules mandate that we give the media access to our players, so the reality is that information is flowing from various sources within the organization anyway. The only people a One Voice doctrine silences are those people who should be most loyal – the assistant coaches. If people really want to leak something to the press, they can and will do so – with or without a strict media policy.
- As I allow my assistants to interact with the media, they take some pressure off of me. More important, their work with the media allows them to develop these skills during their tenure with me. Their promotion at some point to a head coaching position will carry enough shock, and dealing with the media is guaranteed to be one of the most difficult transitions. I want to help prepare them.
- Speculation was circulating that Denny was on a short leash. A good friend asked me if I would take the head coaching job if the Vikings fired Denny. "No. Dennis Green gave me this job as defensive coordinator. I will not take his job." There were certain bridges that were not worth crossing, no matter what others think. Loyalty and relationships are important.
- God's plans don't always follow human logic. We often can't see what God is doing in our lives, but God sees the whole picture and His plan for us clearly.
- HEAD COACH of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. I was especially humbled when I thought about all the times I had fallen short and all the other African American coaches who had gone before me but had ever gotten this chance. I realized that the only thing I could do to help them – and the coaches who followed behind us – was to win. Actions speak louder than words. Winning would create greater potential for change than talk alone.
- When I was in Pittsburgh observing Coach Noll, I had learned that you need all types of personalities on a staff. The last thing I should do was surround myself with fifteen clones of me.
- I hired my staff with a few basic thoughts in mind. First, they had to be men of character and integrity. While I admire Christian faith, that was not a prerequisite. Integrity, however, is paramount with me. Second, they had to be good teachers. We are entrusted with the lives of others. We are responsible to help mold them into all they were created to be – as football players, teammates, role models, and productive members of society. Third, I was looking to create opportunities for African Americans who weren't already in the NFL. Finally, I was hoping for guys who would make a long term commitment to the Bucs.
- Frankly, I was never bothered by One Buc, the team's headquarters. I often thought of my dad teaching in the "separate but equal" days. He always told us it didn't matter what his building looked like; his job was to help his students learn just as much as the students in the other building were learning. There were

already enough excuses for the losing culture at One Buc, and we were determined to change that. We had to. That's the nature of the business if you want to be around for any length of time.

- Chuck Noll: Champions are champions not because they do anything extraordinary but because they do all the ordinary things better than anyone else.
- It doesn't matter how you win. You play to your team's strengths. The best way to achieve success is by attention to detail and a commitment to the fundamentals. I posted in our locker room: "No excuses, no explanations."
- Herm (Edwards) was my first line of defense. I've heard that he was known to tell guys, "We can either resolve this now and get it behind us, or we can get Tony involved. I don't think any of us want that." Very few things hit my desk.
- Football, like life, is unpredictable, but it was our job to train the team to remain disciplined even in unusual situations. There were always going to be moments of adversity and confusion during a game or a season, and players either adjusted or they crumbled.
- Whether you like them or not, the media will always be present in the NFL. It's a fact of life, so you have to deal with it and make it as positive as possible. If they hate you, they won't suddenly disappear. They'll just make your life miserable. So don't give them a reason to hate you.
- The Bucs had cultivated a fragile mind-set that had infected their play for years. They always expected something to go wrong, and it usually did. I began to sell the philosophy that we are responsible for what happens to us, not anyone or anything else.
- I was thankful we had a bye (since) at this point we were 0-5. During our bye week, Bryan and Joel Glazer took me to lunch. As Mr. Glazer's sons, they were in day to day control of the team. I was certain they were going to offer suggestions or at least point out that the Buccaneers had been better than this in 1995. But instead of giving advice, they assured me that they were in it for the long haul. They understood that my plan might take time to implement, and they were willing to wait. "Whatever it is you need to do, you have our complete support."
- Chuck Noll's advice to me was, "Don't change what you believe in. My first year we won our first game, then lost thirteen in a row. The next year we lost our first four games. Stick with what you want to do, even though it's not always going to be easy."
- I have always believed that if you tell people what needs to be done, they will do it – if they believe you and your motives for telling them.
- I also told the team I would hold each of them accountable.
- Knowing I can count on you is just as important to me as your talent. You'll always find excuses for not doing exactly what you're supposed to do. But that's exactly what creates a losing environment.
- Only VISION allows us to transform dreams of greatness into reality of achievement through human action. VISION has no boundaries and knows no limits. Our VISION is what we become in life.
- Chuck Noll: Watch the film, not the stopwatch. After all, the point is to select athletes to play football. Some guys test well, either with their foot speed, leaping ability, strength or other measurable physical traits. But some guys just play well. If given a choice, I'd rather select the guy who did both, of course. But I didn't want to discount a great college player simply because he had suspect physical traits.
- While life drags on when you're losing, it marches on when you're winning.
- During that stretch, Michael Husted, our placekicker, missed several field goals. Michael's mother was battling cancer in the middle of that season – cancer that ultimately took her life. Michael was a very private person, and while the team knew about his mom, the press and public were unaware of what he was dealing with. He was getting criticized for missing kicks, and I was getting criticized for not replacing him. It's not unusual – fans seem to think players live in a vacuum, not subject to the same pressures and problems as the rest of us. *They boo and yell their displeasure because a player's not playing up to their expectations.* Michael never used his difficult personal problem as an excuse. I told the team during a meeting, "Michael is going through some tough times on and off the field. But I don't care how many kicks he misses along the way; he will remain our kicker. If he misses, we'll need to rise up and get the ball back. But before it's all said and done, he's going to make some big kicks for us." We traveled to play the Colts in Indianapolis. With eleven seconds left, Michael Husted kicked a thirty-six-yard field goal to win the game. In the years since then, Michael has expressed his appreciation for my sticking with him during that time. I didn't do anything special. *I just treated him the way I would want to be treated.*
- Chuck Noll: I would rather play well and lose than play poorly and win.
- How would your business do if you spent the amount of time on it that you spend on your wife and family?

- If we get caught up in chasing what the world defines as success, we can use our time and talent to do some great things. We might even become famous. What will people remember us for? Are other people's lives better because we lived? Did we make a difference? Did we use to the fullest the gifts and abilities God gave us? Did we give our best effort, and did we do it for the right reasons? God's definition of success is one of *significance* – the significant difference our lives can make in the lives of others. It's found in the hearts and lives of those we've come across who are in some way better because of the way we lived.
- We were headed to Green Bay, the defending Super Bowl champions, for the second round of the playoffs. We lost 21-7. When we arrived back at One Buc, there were people everywhere. The Buc fans had been awaiting our arrival for hours. It was a good reminder to appreciate the joys of the moment – there would be time later to focus on improvement.
- Our quarterbacks coach, Clyde Christensen, attended church with Mark Merrill, a Tampa attorney who had started an organization called Family First. In the summer of 1998, Family First launched a new program called All Pro Dad. I hope All Pro Dad has touched many fathers and, by extension, their wives and children. I hope we've been faithful in using our platform as professional football coaches to strengthen our community.
- Every team has its own unique set of dispositions, gifts, talents and opportunities. What they all have in common, however, is the ability to control what they do with those dispositions, gifts, and talents when the opportunities come along.
- The best definition of success: We're not all going to reach the Super Bowl or the top of the corporate ladder, but we each have a chance to walk away from something saying, "I did the ordinary things *as well as I could*. I performed to the full limits of my ability. I achieved success."
- In the preseason of 1997, we had practiced against the Redskins. As the practices progressed, things got a little chippy. "Trash talk" flowed from both sides, and our guys weren't handling it very well. "Guys, they've got some talkers over there, but I don't want you to reciprocate." A few minutes later, Brian Mitchell said something to our linebacker Hardy Nickerson and pushed him. Hardy responded in anger, and a fight ensued. I told assistant coach Monte Kiffin to get Hardy off the field and into the locker room. When I met with Hardy after practice, he was apologetic. "Hardy, your response to a situation is always critical, but it's especially critical when you're on the field as a Buc, because you're one of our captains. I told all of you just minutes before about how to conduct yourselves. If I can't get the captains to respond appropriately and show the leadership I expect, how is anyone else going to respond?" Hardy got the message. He apologized to the team and said he understood that in order to lead us in the right direction, he had to play with emotion but not to lose his head. Because I had been willing to send even Hardy from the field, they knew the rules applied equally to everyone. That day galvanized our growth as individuals and as a team.
- I learned the art of storytelling from my mom. Each week when I prepare my message for the team, I try to include something the guys can relate to, some image they can visualize.
- Just because a decision is deliberate doesn't mean hindsight won't make it clearer.
- I had resolved during those long days and nights in Kansas City that if I ever had the chance to be a head coach, I would not spend all night in the office. Rather, I would trust my staff and get us all home at a reasonable hour.
- I believed we were moving away from some core beliefs as an organization by looking for the quick fix. Change isn't always bad; we should always be learning and improving. But the change I was seeing involved principles, not procedures. To my way of thinking, that was bad.
- When we adopted Jordan, we thought it was a little odd that he didn't cry when he got his first set of shots. The doctors in Gainesville gave us an answer: Jordan was diagnosed with congenital insensitivity to pain. Jordan is missing a gene, it turns out, and therefore doesn't feel pain the way other people do. God uses pain to protect us from further negative consequences down the road. Pain prompts us to change behavior that is destructive to ourselves or to others. Pain can be a highly effective instructor.
- Watching the impact of a single missing gene reminds me how intricately each of us has been designed and created. The line between what we consider normal and what we consider special is fine.
- I knew that if I was going to emphasize character, then I had to be willing to back it up with actions, even if those actions were difficult
- We are all role models for someone, but as an NFL coach, my sphere of influence was broader than it is for most people.
- The most common factor among male inmates is growing up without a dad in the home.

- Jim Irsay and I spoke by phone later that day for an hour, and none of it was about football. We talked about the Colts family, about values, about community. He said he wanted to win, but he wanted to win the right way. And if we ever did win the Super Bowl, he wanted Indiana to feel a personal connection, for it to be *their* team and *their* trophy. I'm not sure I would have been interested in coaching at all if Jim hadn't left me that message with his ideas about my role as the new head coach of the Colts. It was exactly in line with the way I wanted to coach.
- My key sale in seeking to bring about this paradigm shift was Peyton Manning. I had met Peyton once before. He was the Collegiate Player of the Year and I was the Professional Coach of the Year. We had shared a limo to the banquet. After the introductory press conference with Jim Irsay, Peyton came back to the facility to talk with me. He commented that we had met before but that I probably didn't remember. "I actually do," I said. "Me too. We shared a limo ride together. I sat in the back with you and your wife, Lauren, and you said you wished that someday you could coach me but that you figured I'd be the first or second pick, so that wouldn't happen." He then went on to recount the remainder of the evening, including details I had forgotten. I was amazed, and I learned something important about Peyton – he remembers *everything*. He went on, "Coach, I'm glad you're here. I want to be *coached*. I want to win. I want you to treat me like any other player and teach me what I need to do because I want *win*."
- "If we're going to win, you're going to have to trust me. You're going to have to trust me that as we add defensive talent, it's part of a strategy to build a complete team so we can win. We're going to be one team, strengthening each other." Peyton nodded, but I'm not certain he really believed it.
- I'm not saying, "When the defense gets better, we'll win." We'll win when we start to work together as a team and not as separate units. We have to complement each other. Your job is to get us ahead and then let the defense do its work. I promoted this philosophy to the Colts for about a year and a half before I felt everyone, including Peyton, really believed in it.
- I made it a point to let everyone on the team and staff know that their families were always welcome in our area of the building. "Be respectful of each other's spaces, but I don't view this building as off-limits.
- My family and I were in Tampa for the Bucs' magical three-week run through the playoffs. The comment we kept hearing was, "Thank goodness Jon Gruden came along to finish the job for Tony Dungy." That was painful to hear. Jon and the players were gracious in their comments toward me, and I appreciated that, but those three weeks were still difficult.
- Sometimes character lessons are hard to swallow, but I know that God used that period to stretch our faith and to help us grow and learn to trust Him more fully. Now I knew how Moses, the Old Testament prophet, must have felt. He had led the Israelites for forty years through the desert, but he wasn't allowed into the Promised Land. He got to see it, but only from a distance. That "growing experience" couldn't have been pleasant for him either.
- People look more closely at our actions in the rough times, when the emotions are raw and our guard is down. That's when our true character shows and we find out if our faith is real.
- Dave Driscoll: Talent is God-given; be thankful. Praise is man-given; be humble. Conceit is self-given; be careful.
- My mom used to say that a good leader gets people to follow him because they want to, not because he makes them – a principle reinforced by Coach Noll. He always told me that players want to be good and that the coach's job is to teach them and give them the tools they need to improve. I never have been the type to "get in people's faces," and I never will be.
- It's what is in our hearts that matters, even if our words say otherwise.
- We had scored three touchdowns in the last 3:43 of the game. No NFL team had ever come back from three touchdowns behind in the final four minutes, but we did it while playing poorly – on the road, on Monday Night Football – against the Super Bowl champions with the top defense in the NFL. In Tampa, on my birthday. It was nothing short of miraculous. That game reinforced that if we do what we do without panicking, we can accomplish great things.
- George Washington Carver: When you can do the common things of life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world.
- When I was growing up, my dad spent *quality* and *quantity* time with us. I hadn't always done that with my children. I had tried to shorten my work days and to make sure everyone got home at a reasonable hour. I knew I was spending as much time as I could with my kids, but compared to my dad, it just didn't seem like I was doing enough and was disappointed with myself. This was probably the first time I ever thought about purposely leaving coaching of my own accord. I had already made adjustments years ago –

starting meetings later so I could take my children to school, never sleeping at the office, allowing families to be together in our offices – and short of leaving the profession, I didn't think there were any other changes I could make. I began to give the idea some serious thought. Football is a vocation and an opportunity for ministry. But it's not a life.

- In June we got some great news from my dad's doctors. The leukemia was in remission. Less than a week later, the tide turned again. With his white-blood-cell count extremely low from the chemotherapy, his immune system had been vulnerable, and he had developed an infection. He died that night, only twenty-nine months after my mom had passed. In the space of two months, we went from the fears of a leukemia diagnosis and the rigors of the treatment to the euphoria of his recovery to loss and grief. After reflecting on all those memories with my dad, I realized that we just don't have family forever. When you're thinking about death, you get more focused on time – the time you have today – and how it seems to be screaming past.
- Coach Noll always emphasized that keeping ridiculous work hours doesn't mean you'll be successful. After all, he kept reasonable hours and still won four Super Bowls. But when I think about the time investment my parents made, I know I'm still away from home more than I would like. Holidays remind me to reassess our schedule.
- It wasn't until days later, when I was standing over Jamie's casket and preparing for the visitation, that it really started to sink in and become real. *I'm never going to see him again.* At some point on Christmas Day, Tom had told us, "Life will never be the same again, but you won't always feel like you do right now."
- Our guys don't always get great publicity for the tremendous things they do, while one negative thing will be replayed over and over and over.
- What's important is not the uniform or the number, and it's not what team you play for or whether anyone else sees your value; it's who you are inside.
- The Colts were surviving without me. They didn't need me, but I needed them. I thought back to the messages I had been giving for years. Times will get tough. God promises that He'll be there to lean on during those times. I thought it critical that, during this time of my own staggering loss, everyone watching our team see me live out those lessons rather than quit when times were tough.
- As a group, we had always leaned on each other in difficult times; I needed them now more than ever.
- Two years earlier, Trent Dilfer's five-year-old son, Trevin, had died. I told him I was certain I wouldn't be able to handle the death of a child with the kind of grace and courage Trent had shown. His answer was immediate and direct, "You could, Coach, if you had to. The Lord will give you the strength *at that time* to go through it, because you can't do it alone." When Jamie died, I realized Trent had been right.
- Sons and daughters, in their lifetimes, often bury their parents – but shouldn't have to bury their children
- Pressing on to help others is all I can do. It's all any of us can do.
- Chuck Noll: Leaving the game plan is a sign of panic, and panic is not in our game plan.
- We were hearing talk from the experts that our "window of opportunity had closed," that we would never win the big one. We had been putting ourselves in a position to succeed every year; we just needed to play up to our potential in the postseason. But even though I knew this, I also knew it would be a hard sell when so many people were telling our players differently.
- Lauren and I continued to work through our own feelings of loss and grief. Grieving parents and counseling pastors had told us that the death of a child can wreck havoc on even the best of marriages, but we were bound and determined that this wouldn't happen to us. Having said that, we quickly realized why losing a child is so hard on a marriage. No two people grieve in the same way or recover at the same rate. I don't think Lauren had very many good days at all during those first few months, and when she *would* finally have one, I would be having a bad day. And different things sent each of us into tailspins. Things that bothered her didn't always have the same effect on me, while some things that tore me up weren't a big deal to her. But gradually, we began to have some more normal days – together. Eventually, we began to return to the days when we could just talk and interact as husband and wife.
- Denny Green shared a story with me about Joe Montana. Joe had been with the 49ers for a number of years, helping them win several Super Bowls. Year after year, the team ran Bill Walsh's same offense. At the beginning of each season, Bill installed the offense the same way. The first play he installed – every year – was "22 Z In." Joe Montana could run "22 Z In" in his sleep. When Paul Hackett became offensive coordinator for the 49ers, he installed "22 Z In" just as Bill Walsh instructed. Paul realized that Joe knew more about "22 Z In" than he did, but when the meeting was over, Paul saw that Joe had taken three pages

of notes. He'd documented exactly how Paul wanted to run the play, as well as all of the basics of "22 Z In" and its details. That's what a professional does.

- 78% of NFL players are unemployed, bankrupt or divorced *within two years of retirement*.
- I gave them a handout I've given every team that I've coached, entitled "Five Things That May Get You in *USA Today*." 1. ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL DRUGS 2. BEING OUT AFTER 1:00AM 3. DRIVING MORE THAN 20 MPH OVER THE SPEED LIMIT 4. GUNS 5. WOMEN YOU DON'T KNOW WELL ENOUGH (OR THAT YOU KNOW *TOO WELL*) I have always believed that if our players were careful in these five areas, they wouldn't have many off-field problems.
- I read another article suggesting that the regular season didn't matter to the Colts, that only the playoffs were important. The author said he didn't care if we went 16-0, because it was meaningless. "Don't buy into this trash. *Everything* we do matters. This kind of thinking will destroy us. We cannot have the impression that we will glide through the regular season and into the playoffs, that our wins along the way don't matter. That is the perfect prescription for *not* making the playoffs. There is the kind of thinking that destroys talented teams."
- We started 9-0, but it was different than the 13-0 of 2005. In '05, we were playing well and winning by large margins. In '06, we were struggling to win. We were coming from behind, sometimes on the final drive of the game. The media didn't think we were very impressive – and they were right – but I realized that this was a good sign. We were winning games the hard way, showing character and building resolve. We were playing together, even without playing our best.
- In week thirteen, we headed to Jacksonville and we knew we would be in for a tough day. We didn't expect to lose 44-17, however, giving up the second highest number of rushing yards in the NFL since 1970. When I watched the tape, I didn't see anything that couldn't be fixed. We just needed to play a little faster, a little sharper, a little better. If anything, we'd simplify things a little to make sure our defense was playing fast and carrying out correct assignments. Sometimes change is needed, but usually people simply need reassurance and encouragement.
- I've learned that our past often prepares us for the future if we allow it to.
- I gave the team one final thought, "People will tell you that in the playoffs we have to 'raise our game to another level,' whatever that means. New England does so well because in the playoffs they play exactly like they play in the regular season. Smart, energetic, passionate, disciplined. And then when the other team gets uptight and self-destructs, New England keeps doing what they do. They play the same. Now we have the opportunity to match them, to avoid self-destructing and do what we do at the end of the game."
- Before the game, I had been in the locker room watching the Bears play the Saints in the early game. When the Saints fell behind by eighteen points, I said to myself, *That's three scores; the game's over*, feeling that the Bears were definitely going to the Super Bowl with that kind of "insurmountable" lead. For some reason, the fact that *we* were now trailing by eighteen points and needed three scores ourselves didn't seem a hopeless situation. The irony of that didn't hit me until much later.
- I tell guys to hang on to memories but to live in the moment because we never know what will happen down the road.
- Coach Noll had always told me, "Being stubborn is a virtue when you're right; it's only a character flaw when you're wrong." Through all these years, I had believed that the principles I was holding onto were right, that the way I wanted to build a team and win was good. So many people had told me I couldn't get where I wanted to go while doing it the way I thought it should be done. Through it all, however, I had stuck to my principles – and getting to that point with my team was deeply rewarding.
- We have not traveled an easy road, as a team or as individuals. But we have never wavered in our beliefs. Our perseverance put us on this doorstep. *It is our time*. Let's go win a championship.
- I didn't want to be an icon. I wanted to provide hope. I wanted my experience to open people's eyes to the opportunities available to all of us. Not necessarily just opportunities in football, but opportunity to knock down walls that divide us.
- I love coaching football, and winning a Super Bowl was a goal I've had for a long time. But it has never been my purpose in life. My purpose in life is simply to glorify God. We have to be careful that we don't let the pursuit of our life's goals, no matter how important they seem, cause us to lose sight of our *purpose*.
- We are all role models to someone in this world, and we can all have an impact – for good.