

## Transcript for Shaquille O'Neal | Flat Earth Theory (Episode 602)

### Full show notes found here:

<https://theartofcharm.com/podcast-episodes/shaquille-oneal-flat-earth-theory-episode-602/>

SHAQUILLE: This is Shaq O'Neal and you're listening to one of the biggest podcasts around. The Art of Charm. Don't you hear it in my voice?

(laugh)

JORDAN: All right everybody. Today we're talking with The Big Aristotle, The Hobo Master, The Diesel, Shaq Fu, Big Daddy, Superman, The Big Agave, The Big Cactus, The Big Shaqtus, The Big Galactus, Wilt Chamberneezy, The Big Baryshnikov, The Real Deal, The Big Shamrock, The Big Leprechaun, Shaqovich, The Big Conductor, Shaquille O'Neal. We're going to talk about how he's assembled a panel to help him manage not only his career but all his important life decisions and how you can do the same. How he manages his emotions so he stays nonreactive on and off the court and life as one of the most visible people on the planet, and is the earth flat?

Enjoy this episode with Shaquille O'Neal but first, if you're new to the show, we'd love to send you some top episodes and the AoC Toolbox where we study the science of people. We discuss things like reading body language and having charismatic nonverbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, social engineering, networking and influence strategies, mentorship, persuasion tactics and everything else that we teach here at The Art of Charm. Check that out at [theartofcharm.com/toolbox](https://theartofcharm.com/toolbox) or on the iPhone app at [theartofcharm.com/iphone](https://theartofcharm.com/iphone). Also at [theartofcharm.com](https://theartofcharm.com) you can find the full show notes for this and all previous episodes of the show. We're glad to have you with us here today at AoC. Enjoy this Episode with Shaquille O'Neal.

You're getting a statue. You seen it yet?

SHAQUILLE: I haven't.

JORDAN: You haven't seen it at all yet?

SHAQUILLE: No I've seen drawings of it. I haven't seen the actual statue yet.

JORDAN: You've only seen drawings of it and I hope it isn't life size.  
There's going to be a bronze shortage, if they use it all.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Are you -- you're a Marvel fan then I'm guessing?

SHAQUILLE: Superman. Not Marvel --

JORDAN: Superman.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah I like -- growing up as a medium juvenile delinquent I always was on punishment. At least I had the opportunity to watch TV and just see superheroes and get entrenched inside the stories that they were telling. Superman was always one, Six Million Dollar Man was another one. I always wanted to be him. Hulk was another one. I got in trouble for being the Hulk one time.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: One time we saw a car that we thought was abandoned, but it wasn't, it was just stolen. It was just sitting there so me and my friend -- I played The Hulk and I'm -- I ripped off the mirrors, I just ripped off the doors, I ripped off everything. I got -- I got in really big trouble for that one.

JORDAN: How did they know it was you that did all the damage instead of the person who stole the car?

SHAQUILLE: Because everybody was out there.

JORDAN: Oh, everybody saw.

SHAQUILLE: Watching me, yeah. And I was going, "The Hulk!" And I took and break -- and bust some windows and then when the guy found his car he was like, "Who did this?" They was like, "Shaquille O'Neal. He did it."

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: And they came right to my house.

JORDAN: Yeah like but some other guy, he scratched up your lock really good when he stole the car.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, exactly.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Yeah so Marvel and Superman appeal to you. It seems weird punishment to put you in a place where you can watch TV and read comics and hang out and watch Six Million Dollar Man. Well you accomplished that goal. You get a lot more than \$6 million out of it.

SHAQUILLE: It actually changed my life. You know, it helped me -- it helped me put down on paper what I wanted to become. So, just say I'm flicking the channels and I see LL Cool J. "I want to be a rapper." Say I flip the channel again and I see a guy doing great sitcom. "I want to be an actor." Then of course I'm a sports guy, "I want to be Frank O'hara with the Immaculate Conception. I want to be Reggie Jackson, hit a home run." So it enabled me to put down on paper all these things I wanted to be and then my father taught me the way and said, "Okay, you want to be all these things? This is how you do it. Go out and get it done." And I've accomplished everything that I've set my mind to.

JORDAN: So wait, you wrote down all your goals when you were younger?

SHAQUILLE: Yes. Yes. My father made me write from A to Z what I wanted to be. So A was a basketball player, B was a basketball player -- I actually got in trouble for that.

JORDAN: You didn't basketball player for all the five -- twenty --  
SHAQUILLE: Yeah and then I -- and then C was a cop, and then D was a detective, E was an entrepreneur, and you know, F was a fireman. So like I just did, like a, you know, whole bunch of things that I thought I wanted to do.

JORDAN: And you've gone through and tried to knock all that stuff off the bucket list.

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: Because I've made a list of things that you -- you were doing before but I figured I would ask now because it seems like there's a lot of things that you've done. I mean, why now law enforcement? What's going on there? Why that?

SHAQUILLE: Well I -- two guys that are on my panel, what I mean by my panel -- my panel is a group of five men and women -- consists of five, total of five -- but men and women. Two of the guys that are on my panel are my uncles from the law enforcement. My panel consists of Lucille O'Neal, Mike Paris, Jerome Crawford, Dale Brown and Perry Rogers. That's my panel. They're the only ones that can call me and check me and I know not to say anything back.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Okay.

SHAQUILLE: Because I know they love me and they care for me and you know, when you respect somebody, see a lot of people in my position think they know it all they --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- don't have anybody they can respect. I have a panel. That's like me being a president but I answer to congress. So, that's my panel. But two guys on my panel are my uncles and they're law enforcement officers so -- I said to myself one day, and you know this was on my list as a youngster, I said, "One day I want to be a cop." But I don't think I -- you know with me being Shaq, me being a cop probably wouldn't be too good. But I think I can lead a force.

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: I want to run for Sheriff. So when I started pursuing that here in Los Angeles -- like a lot of people would give me badges and I was like, "You know what?"

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: "If you give me a badge when I go out on the street, the officer's not going to respect me." So I made them put me through two different police academies. Sheriff Leroy Baca was the sheriff at the time and he approved it and I had to go through two different academies and I became a full-fledged reserve officer. Level one. Level three is security guard status, level two is you have to ride with another officer, level one you can ride by yourself, you have full-fledged police officer duties. And I studied to a level one and I did that because when I do run for sheriff, I know I could probably get a lot of votes just from being Shaq.

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: But I really want my people that's working for me to know and understand I know my laws, I know what it -- you know, what you go through, I know what it takes. I want them to know and understand that and I've been a lot of places around the country with a lot of police officers and they were like, you know, "We really, really appreciate it." Because I appreciate them, you know? Teachers and police officers are definitely underpaid.

JORDAN: Yeah, My mom was a teacher --

SHAQUILLE: They're all underpaid.

JORDAN: -- So I heard all about that.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, they're underpaid.

JORDAN: Yeah. I mean, well you're underpaid for a cop. You're taking a dollar a year, right?

SHAQUILLE: Yep, dollar a year.

JORDAN: Yeah. I guess --

SHAQUILLE: You know what's crazy? They tax that.

JORDAN: Of course, yeah. So you get --

SHAQUILLE: 46 cents.

JORDAN: Really? Oh, my God, like at the bracket --

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. Exactly.

JORDAN: -- yeah, that makes sense.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: What have you learned on the job that you've been able to use or -- what did you learn on the team anyway, maybe that you've been able to use as a police officer? Like de-escalation techniques to get along with people and stuff like that.

SHAQUILLE: Well I always come in -- I always come in at zero and you know, a lot of times when you're dealing with people, you just listen first instead of react. And a lot of situations are dangerous so you have to come in high but there are a lot of situations where it's just people there talking and arguing, you just try to after -- you just try to de-escalate the situation, you know how -- the

fortunate thing for me is when I show up people just calm down automatically. So that's a fortunate thing for me.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: But, you know, for me it was just about learning it, mastering it, so when I do run for sheriff, the guys know I'm not just a celebrity figure.

JORDAN: Right.

SHAQUILLE: That wants a badge and a gun. So I've been -- let's see I went to L.A Academy, did a Florida academy, did a Phoenix academy, getting ready to go through a Georgia Academy because I plan on running for sheriff in either Georgia or Florida in 2020.

JORDAN: Wow.

SHAQUILLE: I had a dream that I saw a bunch of stickers on the car said, "Shaq's vision for 2020. Shaq for Sheriff, 2020."

JORDAN: Nice. So you -- you're actually going to run for office --

SHAQUILLE: I'm thinking about it. Yeah. Really thinking about it.

JORDAN: And what sort of policy do you think you'll put in place as the elected sheriff?

SHAQUILLE: It'll be para-military.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Martial law all around?

SHAQUILLE: No, not martial law --

JORDAN: I'm just kidding. I hope not.

SHAQUILLE: Just, you know, discipline. There's a friend of mine in Clayton county Sheriff Victor Hill. And I met him a couple months ago. He has the cleanest, most disciplined jail I've ever seen in my life. So I'm definitely going to get to know him a little better, study his tactics, because that's how I grew up. And you know teaches the young men and women that are in there, teaches them how to be responsible, teaches them honor, and you know, he does it in a polite way. There's no -- nothing crazy in there but it's just somewhat like -- his floors were shining and the pods in the cells, the clothes were folded and when he walks in the guys stand at attention --

JORDAN: Wow.

SHAQUILLE: -- and they salute. It was really awesome to see. Because I've been to jails where people, you know, seven, eight guys in cells. They're in there fighting and doing this and doing that but, his jail was very disciplined so I'm definitely going to be studying his techniques.

JORDAN: I think a lot of people would definitely vote for you because of the celebrity but it's good that you're trying to earn the same respect as the other officers otherwise you end up with the same problem that people have now where you have a lack of authority -- of real authority. And -- what happens when people show up to -- or when you show up to a call with other people there? I mean do they just go, "Holy crap it's Shaq." Or are there people who don't know who you are and they're just like, "Dang."

SHAQUILLE: At first when I was on patrol in L.A. it was -- it got to be, you know, it got to be sort of like a TV sitcom. Like I'd pull up in my suit and everybody -- "Hey is that Shaq?" And you'd see guys calling -- across the street and calling on their phone. And I got promoted to detective so a lot of time when I show up as a detective people think it's a joke or not --

JORDAN: Right.

SHAQUILLE: -- so what I started doing was, as a detective, when we go in four or five detectives, I would come in last. I'd let all the, you know, the real cops go in first, let everybody know what's going on, so everybody knows this is serious moment and then I would come in. Because if I come in first, people "Shaq Hello! Hey I saw you at the game."

JORDAN: Right. Yeah. Where's the cameras?

SHAQUILLE: It got to be -- it got to be where, yes. Exactly.

JORDAN: How often do you hear comments about your height and -- I assume all the time right?

SHAQUILLE: All the time.

JORDAN: And --

SHAQUILLE: But you know what? I learned at an early age not to take things so seriously.

JORDAN: Yeah?

SHAQUILLE: Because I hear jokes. How's the weather up there? I hear it all. I'm at the point in my life now, where I've actually been here a long time. Nothing can really hurt my feelings. I think the times we're living in, people are very sensitive. Like, I don't know you but I'm sure if we just have a good conversation -- and again, when having a conversation, we don't have to agree on everything.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: But I respect you, you respect me, I guarantee we have something in common. See a lot of people these days, you think a certain way and you try and influence me to think that way. Look the world's -- the world wasn't built like that. Every fingerprint is different, every DNA is different and everybody's opinion is different and a lot of times we react to people's opinions without listening. True story, it's a guy, a famous guy,

his name is Jimmy Goldstein, I think is his name. He told me one day, during a game, "I hate you."

JORDAN: What? Oh, that's rude.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, no he said, "I hate you." So I'm boom, boom, boom, boom. But I would see him at all the parties with us. Boom, boom, boom. So I finally, I said -- he's a -- he's a small guy so usually when a guy says I hate you, I want to go, "Okay well I hate you too, let's fight about it."

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: But, he's a real skinny guy so I asked him, I said, "Why do you hate me?" He said, "Because you're so dominant, it's unfair. I want to see you lose." So rather than reacting about what he said, by me having a conversation with him, I understood that. And I could understand, you're a fan you want your team to win. But you're going up against this guy Shaq that's throwing people around, I could understand the hatred. So, that was a valuable lesson for me because it like, when people say something, my reaction button is off. My intelligent button is on. "Okay what did you say? What do you mean?" And I analyze it, and I analyze it in a nice way before I react.

JORDAN: How do you do that, I mean especially when -- did you do that when you were 22, 23 years old?

SHAQUILLE: No. No, when I was 22, 23 I tried to answer everybody's criticism. And I realized that it's more than a full time job. It becomes stressful. You start getting anxiety then I realized that you can't please everyone.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: And, you know, this is the same thing that I tell my children now. I say, "See your hands? There's five fingers on your hand. Try to impress the five most important people in your life." That's my panel. Because as long as they're happy, I'm happy.

And whenever I start doing something crazy, 1,2,3,4,5 will let me know that I have to switch it back up.

JORDAN: How did you pick the panel? I mean 1 is your mother --

SHAQUILLE: One is my mother, two are my uncles, they always kept me out of trouble.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: And Perry is my agent, business manager, been that for a long time. And Perry is brutally honest. He's not one of those KYA type agents. I don't know if I can say kiss your \*\*\* on your podcast.

JORDAN: Yeah you can.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah but he's not one of those agents. So like, he'll tell you like, "What you said last night was uncalled for. Boom, boom, boom." He's very, very intelligent. He's a lawyer. You know lawyers think very different so, you know -- he wants the best for me and it's something that I appreciate and respect. Crazy thing about Perry, we're similar ages, so like he's probably the youngest guy on the panel. He's around my age but very intelligent, comes from a very intelligent family. Father was a brilliant businessman, mother was a brilliant business woman. So, you know, when you respect people, you listen to them. Especially people that help you get to where you are.

JORDAN: How did you pick -- when did you pick that panel, I should say. Because you -- did you pick it before your career started and everything?

SHAQUILLE: No, never. Never. I had to go through a lot of trials and tribulations before I figured all that stuff out. And you know, experience is the best teacher. And, you know, I had my basic core principles. Stay true to myself, have fun, never take advantage of people, never disrespect people. And then as I started getting older, I started adding more, you know, business

practical things inside that formula. And then I realized -- a movie that changed my life was The Fan. Robert De Niro, Wesley Snipes.

So, Wesley -- Robert De Niro asked Wesley, "So how -- you're a great player, you do this, you do that boom, boom, boom, boom, boom," and Wesley Snipes said, "I don't care." So I just stopped caring. Not caring to the sense to where it would, you know, affect my profession, but just stop caring about what people said. Once I started doing that, Pshh, blossomed.

JORDAN: Nice so you -- you actually went through a phase where you just went, "It doesn't matter."

SHAQUILLE: I cared about everything.

JORDAN: Yeah, I cared about everything.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, like like Shaq -- "The only thing Shaq can do is dunk he can't shoot jumpers." So then the next game I go three for 25 trying to shoot jumpers.

JORDAN: Oh, man.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah so -- yeah.

JORDAN: So you're just always challenging --

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: -- yourself to figure out --

SHAQUILLE: Always. Always.

JORDAN: And you've been successful for a long time. How come you didn't fall into those same traps that a lot of other athletes did? Is it the panel? Is that -- was that the panel?

SHAQUILLE: The panel and before the panel -- a lot of children don't do this today, but when I see tragic stories, I don't want to go that route. One tragic story, when Ben --

(taps foot)

SHAQUILLE: Len Bias passed away from using cocaine, my father came in the house furious. Furious. If you ever do this, "I'll kill you. You ain't going to have time to overdose, I'll kill you." So I always say, "You know what? No drugs for me." One time -- true story-- in Germany, West Germany, friends -- this was around, you know when you're a teenager and you get to go to parties and --

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: -- you know the parents are asleep when you come home. All the friends were into beer drinking.

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: "Hey let's drink some beer." So one night, true story -- Perry you never heard this story. So one night, snow storm -- because I lived in Wild [0:15:51:9] and the schools in [0:15:52:9] was about a 50 minute ride. So one time we go to the dance, and you know the guys had a beer and you know one of the guys had his license, his dad was out of town. He took his car and he was like, "Hey let's ride home." And the guys was drinking. And I was like, "You know what? No." You know, I heard a lot of stories about what happened. And tragic ending, they died.

JORDAN: Oh, my gosh.

SHAQUILLE: They crashed into a tree. Yep.

JORDAN: Wow so that could have been you. Real easy.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, exactly. Yeah it could have been me. So like a lot of things I've seen before they happen, and I don't want to go down that road. My father used to always come in and say, "I heard you hit

30 points, but what are you going to do when you hurt your knee?" Because it's an astonishing percentage of athletes that after they're done playing they have nothing. And we didn't want to be part of that statistic.

JORDAN: Yeah, 60 percent are broke --

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: -- I think within five years of retirement or something like that?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. Yeah.

JORDAN: I mean it's really sad. I mean you don't have that problem. You're still working. Probably because you've got six kids. You've got to work.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, got to work.

JORDAN: You can't retire.

SHAQUILLE: I definitely got to work.

JORDAN: How did you deal with not only becoming the most valuable player or visible player in the league but also a celebrity at the same time? I mean a lot of guys are going through the same visibility role but you had all kinds of things going. How come it didn't get out of control?

SHAQUILLE: I think it just never got out of control because even to this day, I don't consider myself a celebrity. My story is like a Rocky story. Guy from the neighborhood that's loved and respected in the neighborhood, had an opportunity to do something, and you know do something for the community or do something for his state or do something for a nation. That's my story. My story's not superstar, entourage, 50 agents, 100 diamond chains, that's -- my story is a regular guy. See me, I'm in the car by myself today. I'm in L.A. by myself. I go to a lot of cities -- I go to countries by myself.

I don't consider myself a superstar and when people come up to me, especially children -- always got to take care of the children. I just try to accommodate them. Unless I'm eating. When I'm in the middle of a meal, I'd rather not be interrupted. But if I'm out and I see a little baby and they want my autograph, I -- of course, I always oblige them. But I think what's made me -- what's made me relevant and you know in all these situations is that I don't consider myself a superstar. I'm just a regular guy from the neighborhood that did something astonishing and won three champions in L.A. and one in Miami. You know, he was a guy, he was always in trouble. He was a juvenile delinquent, we knew he could be somebody, that's more my story.

JORDAN: That's -- yeah that's great. Especially if you're not thinking of yourself as --

SHAQUILLE: Right.

JORDAN: -- as somebody extra special all the time.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah no, I don't do that.

JORDAN: And manages the expectations pretty well I think too. And you've always approached the -- even basketball as a business. And so was your panel advising you on that? And I'm sticking with the panel thing because I think it's such a great idea and most people are not doing this. Clearly the athletes that are going broke are not doing this.

SHAQUILLE: When I first came in, I was upset before I came in because I got an F in marketing. Marketing teacher at LSU said, "Give me something -- product, something that you can see sold in the future. Not now 2000 2000 blah blah blah." So you know me, I came with Shaq hats --

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: -- Shaq shoes, Shaq shirts, and he embarrassed in class. He said, "Oh, I see you put a lot of originality in this." And gave me an F in front of everybody. And I asked him, I said, "Why'd you do that?" He said, "If you look at the nature of a marketing NBA, big guys never sell." I was like, "You know what? Don't sell." So when I first got in -- you know you hear a lot of stories that the number one pick can name whatever he wants? So when I first got in, I was like, "You know, let me try this theory. I want this, I want this, I want to be able to have creative control over all my commercials or I'm not doing it." So my agent at the time, he got it done. So every commercial that we shot -- my thought process is, "Okay this is how I want people to see me, this is the message that I want to send, and at the end of all these commercials, I want to add a fun aspect to it." And I had arrived at that mentality because I'm looking at all the commercials and I'm like, "Big guys don't sell." My favorite commercial was the Spuds Mackenzie commercials. He never talked.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Dog never said anything. But why did people -- why did this dog have shirts, mugs, hats, everything. Book bags. Because he always added a fun element in his commercials. So I was like, "You know what? Every commercial I do is going to have a fun element in it. A product is a product but after that I'm going to give them -- like this and a Buick --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- or man up, or you know, something.

JORDAN: How are you going to teach your kids some of the same values that you had with your panel growing up? I mean do your kids have panels and stuff like that?

SHAQUILLE: They don't have panels. I try to -- I try to do lead by example. I try to teach them the same life lessons that I was taught. Yesterday we were at the mall and my son said, "I want to get some Jordans." I said, "Well you're going to have to donate 10

pairs of your old shoes." "I already did that." I said, "Well you need to prove to me." And he actually did. Him and my other son, they went down to the Good Will and they just donated their stuff. And we used to do that as a youngster. Like my father, we used to go to Goodwill and pick up some stuff and take it to all the, you know, the other families that were lesser fortunate. My father always loved homeless people. I love homeless people. My grandmother was a nurse so -- my mother and I started a foundation. We've sent over 100 nurses to college. Four year scholarships. So, I just try to lead by example. And, I don't put pressure on them. Like I got a couple sons that play ball, we don't even talk basketball. It's not important to me. What's important to me -- that they build what I started. One of my favorite nepotism stories is Nick and Micky Arison. So an article comes out in the paper that Nick Arison's grandmother left them 100, 200 million. This guy's 19, went to college at Duke --

JORDAN: Wow.

SHAQUILLE: -- and graduated. So he comes back and joins the team. It's a guy in there worth \$200 million cleaning up the locker room. And I'm looking, I'm like, "This kid's worth two -- he should be up hanging out with his dad." Because --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Because here, that's what you see.

JORDAN: Right.

SHAQUILLE: You see a lot of kids that hanging out with dad and dad does everything for them. But you had a kid worth 200 million, this document his grandmother left him 150 million plus 20 percent of the team --

JORDAN: Wow.

SHAQUILLE: He's down in the locker room cleaning up. Next year you see him in marketing. And then you see him doing -- you see him outside boom, boom, boom handing out flyers. And then finally in about 5, 6 years his father -- you know after he went to school and graduated, and learned the business from the bottom, then his father said, "Okay boom." And I think he made him vice president. That's one of my favorite nepotism stories and I have to do the same thing. You know rather than just give it to them. Like I tell my kids all the time, "You get no degrees, then you get none of my cheese."

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: That's my slogan around my house.

JORDAN: So they're all --

SHAQUILLE: No degrees no cheese.

JORDAN: So they're all looking forward to college then.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, yeah, yeah. They've got to be.

JORDAN: You mentioned shoes earlier. You've got the biggest pair of TOMS shoes that I've ever seen and I thought, "All right, where do you get shoes that big? You have to have things custom made."

SHAQUILLE: I -- I've seen -- I fell in love with TOMS about three years ago. I see people wearing them and I was like, "What is that?" And his story is incredible. You buy a pair and we'll donate a pair, love that story. So every person that I -- how can I get the TOMS? They give me a number, didn't work. Give me a number, didn't work. So finally about two years later, I've seen the owner of TOMS, him and his wife. We met in Westwood and I said, "Listen, I love your product. How can I get a pair?" He's like, "Shaq, to be honest with you, we don't have the 22 mold." I'm like, "I can't slow production down to make one shoe." And I said, "Well what's a good production day?" He said, "About a

thousand pair." I said "Well make me a thousand pair then." So I got a thousand pair that I ordered. I'm only into my first hundred and we're in discussions. We want to go to like one of these third world countries and hand out some shoes. So --

JORDAN: And find people with huge feet --

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: -- who need shoes.

SHAQUILLE: No, not huge feet, just whoever --

JORDAN: Oh, okay, got you.

SHAQUILLE: -- kids, old ladies, babies, yeah. Whoever.

JORDAN: Yeah, TOMS is the right company to do that with.

SHAQUILLE: Yes they are.

JORDAN: It sounds like, in the past, you've been competitive with pretty much everything, not just basketball. I've read an article online, I think it might have been on Reddit so article is using it loosely -- but you have the biggest bed in the world and then someone challenged you and said, "No I think my bed is bigger," so you doubled the size of your bed?

SHAQUILLE: Yes, that's true. I'm very competitive. You know it's all about having fun.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: It's all about having fun. I'm the doctor, the ambassador, the emperor of fun. Nobody has more fun than me. And our fun is genuine it's not -- I've been a class clown since elementary school. You know I -- the fun that I'm having now I used to get

in trouble for as a youngster.

JORDAN: Yeah sure.

SHAQUILLE: But it's called having a sense of humor. I don't take myself too seriously and you know it's just -- you know it's just interacting with people. And some guy, he tried to make a bed then I just had to double my bed. And I have more space so -- if I have to make my whole room a bed, I will.

JORDAN: Yeah, that's why they call it a bedroom right? So you're good.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah exactly.

JORDAN: You had some beefs in the past from that competitive spirit. When there's a conflict on a team, how do you address that and then [0:25:19:8]

SHAQUILLE: It's never beefs. It's never beefs. You know, my whole concept was there could only be one leader. And you can't be a good leader if your followers don't trust and respect you. Right? So I always have to make sure I was doing everything right before I challenged anybody. And then a lot of times, like for example, the Kobe situation, I knew Kobe could take it. And I knew that if you upset him, he's sort of like me. You know he'll try to prove you wrong. And you know, crazy thing about it is, people always say, "Oh, well don't you and Kobe could have worked out?" We did work out, we won three out of four.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Like I don't understand -- like I don't understand your question. It'll be a better story if we played together for eight years and had no championships.

JORDAN: Would you like that story better?

SHAQUILLE: No, I wouldn't like that story.

(laugh)

JORDAN: I didn't think so.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah it'll be a better story but you know, you can always have -- the key word is respect. Like me and you could have a respectful disagreement. I'm not going to beat you up. Like I was never going to beat him up. I'm like, "Do this do that," "No you do this da, da," and we have a conversation and then you just move on.

JORDAN: Do you regret at all hazing Yao Ming so hard and stuff like that?

SHAQUILLE: I wasn't hazing him. You know I kind of got in trouble for doing something one time but I wasn't making fun of him. As a youngster, that's what we saw.

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: We saw -- that's so --

JORDAN: Right, the Chinese [0:26:41.6 ] the Chinese, yeah.

SHAQUILLE: And so, I was just trying to, you know I was just trying to -- just trying to be cute and cool and somebody took it and --

JORDAN: "You're racist [0:26:50:6]

SHAQUILLE: I'm like, "Yeah, what are you talking like --" But, like --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: There's not a racist bone in my body.

JORDAN: He didn't seem to mind.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: Everybody else cared except for him.

SHAQUILLE: But you know what? Where I'm from, every Saturday we watch Chinese theater. And that's what -- and it ain't making fun, it's actually showing respect.

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: You want to fight like --

JORDAN: The kung-fu movies?

SHAQUILLE: That's why I came up with the name Shaq-Fu. I used to be in the house practicing that stuff and like I would get a white towel, act like I had a white beard. I love Chinese people, so --

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: You know sometimes you have to be careful -- and you know I understand like, you know some people are very, very sensitive and you just have to be careful with how you word things sometimes.

JORDAN: You'd mentioned that you could not get in Hakeem's head. Why do you think that is? Why could you not --

SHAQUILLE: I think I showed him too much respect. We had the same agent at one time and he was just a nice guy. I didn't want to -- and I didn't want to hurt my friend.

JORDAN: Got you.

SHAQUILLE: And he kind of set me up because during the regular season, I was having my way with him. So when we got to the finals that year and Orlando, I was real arrogant. We had ten days off, we was doing things all wrong. We were flying to Atlanta, partying, flying -- like it was out of control. We had a mini parade, because we thought we was going to win. Because I thought we

was going to win it. And then he just -- and then he just turned that switch on me and I couldn't get him to turn it off.

JORDAN: It seems like he didn't have any Hakeem-Fu or anything. You were just nicer to him [0:28:12.6]

SHAQUILLE: Yeah I was just nice to him, like -- usually a guy like that I would first play of the game, try to commit an offensive foul. That was my thing. Like I'd take three steps to the middle and swing the elbow around. And if you're face is there, you'd get hit. Three things are going to happen, make the score, I'm going to either miss, or the ref is going to call offensive foul. Every time. So the first play of the game, I'm letting you know that I'm coming with nothing but force so if your face is in the way, it's not my problem. So, but I didn't do that with him. With him I was real finesse and trying to be cool and cute and it cost me.

But it also taught me a valuable lesson that -- I said to myself, "If I ever make it back to the finals again, I'm going to throw a dominant performance so dominant, it's a -- it'll guarantee a win." I think that's why I got three Finals MVPs. Because I didn't want to have that feeling of letting everybody down, the panel, the family, the kids, the city. Because when you win, you get the praise. When you lose, you get the finger, and I understand that and I respect that and I accept that.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: How do you turn up the heat and get more physically aggressive on the court or more aggressive in the game, without getting angry or losing your \*\*\* a little bit.

SHAQUILLE: Because NBA stands for Nothing But Actors. In real life, I'm a nice guy.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: I'm terminator body with a Bambi heart

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: It's what I am. So on the court, this is my persona. I'm Shaq. Not only that, I'm trying to win. 17,000 fans in here that's relying on me, I've got kids relying on me, I've got millions of fans relying on me, I've got kids that want to be like me. I'm going to do the same thing for them that Dr. J did for me. Dr. J changed my life. Dr. J was the guy that said okay, now I know what I want to be when I grow up.

I had some good grades and my father took me to a game, we're way up in Madison Square Garden. Probably the top row. Boring game, Dr. J goes baseline -- throw it down, the whole arena stands up. It actually scares me because I thought something was happening. And then I look at my dad, I was like, "I know what I want to be when I grow up dad. I want to be down there." He was like, "Well this is what you've got to do, son." And so I want to be that person to a kid that's, you know, trying to do something with his life now.

JORDAN: So you and your dad outlined a plan to get all the way to the NBA?

SHAQUILLE: Yes we did.

JORDAN: How did look back then? I mean it seems like, a lot of people do that now but there's too many -- there's too much white space where you kind of don't really know what goes in between.

SHAQUILLE: He taught me how to play, the right way. Taught me how to work hard. Told me to expect not being as good as I wanted to be -- early, but that's okay, to keep working. Taught me to take criticism and use it as motivation. And taught me to compete at a high level. Like I've won on every level except college. Little league, AAU, Olympics, Junior Olympics, won on every level except college.

So as a youngster when I used to play and win, he would let me celebrate the trophy one day. I come home after school, he'd be gone. And he was the type you never asked him where's the

trophy at. So I finally asked him when I got older and he said, "I did it because I never wanted you to be satisfied. I want you to always want more as a player." So even as a youngster, when I was a player and I wasn't that good, that wasn't stopping me. Because I knew that, because of my work ethic, I was going to be somebody. And with him being a drill sergeant, I would have to get up at 5:30 with him and his troops. And his troops would go through the court first and I'd be right behind them.

JORDAN: He was literally a drill sergeant.

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: And he made you get up early with all the troops, and go work out?

SHAQUILLE: And I had to fold the bed and he'd drop a quarter on it, and the pillows had to be creased -- all that stuff. If not --

JORDAN: Wow.

SHAQUILLE: -- he'd mess it up and I'd have to do it again. He'd be like, "You only got five minutes! If you don't get it done in five minutes you're going to be on that track double time. Move it, Move it!" Yeah. Best thing that happened to me.

JORDAN: Your dad was pretty good at balancing being a nurturing caring father with being a real hard-ass, from the sound of it.

SHAQUILLE: No he was hard-ass 70 percent of the time.

JORDAN: Yeah?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. Military life, family, marriage, he was really a hard-ass. But he taught me, "Don't listen to how I say it, listen to what I say." Because when you're a drill sergeant, you've got to be like this at all times. So he was like that all the time but he could be really nice. Like he would be like, "What's up, Perry? How are you doing?" Like he would be yelling but he would be talking so

that was just who he was. And again, you know, he told me, he said, "Don't listen to how I say it, just listen to what I say." And so like, even with him yelling all the time, it wasn't a real yell, it was just how he was.

JORDAN: What balance do you take with your own kids between being tough on them and being nurturing when appropriate?

SHAQUILLE: I'm one of the luckiest guys in the world, I have six awesome children. They know and understand. I have face discipline with them. Like, all I've got to do is make a face --

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: -- and they know. And the face sometimes get me in trouble with the girls because they'll just start shedding tears immediately so, I have to limit -- I have to loosen up the face muscles with the girls. But the guys I'll just like, are -- really? "Say it again, I dare you." Like, but I've never had to spank them or never do anything so, that's good for me.

JORDAN: Yeah. So you -- they know what might be coming just from the look and that's enough usually.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah they -- yeah, they know.

JORDAN: I think most parents probably have that.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: If you don't have face discipline --

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: -- you've got a -- you've got problems.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: All I've got to do is just look at him.

JORDAN: How do you separate the game and fame from your personal life and not let one interfere with the other? Because you're really good at that.

SHAQUILLE: It is -- it is what it is. What you see is what you get. A lot of people like to use the word and Perry hates when break it down like this but this is how I break it down. Role model to me is you're playing a role. Right? I'm a real model. What you see is what you get. You know, I don't want to be one of those guys that acts a certain way when the cameras are on, when the marketing team is around and then get behind closed doors and do that because that's how -- one day you get caught --

JORDAN: Right.

SHAQUILLE: -- then people realize that you're a fraud and it'll be all over. It's happened so, I try to keep it real, but in a respectful manner. With me, what you see is what you get. I'm a funny guy in real life. I talk to people in real life. I love kids in real life. I love rims, and you know, I love hanging out. This is what I do. But I'm also very professional, I'm also educated. I speak the language and I think that's why running for sheriff -- I think I'll do a good job because I speak all types of languages. I can go on the corner and, "What up bro, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom." I can throw on a three piece suit and have a conversation with Warren Buffet and boom, I can go -- you know and go military -- like I could -- I speak all those languages but I just try to -- I just try to be myself. Like I don't -- I can't put on a façade just for this.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Because that will catch up with you eventually.

JORDAN: I think a lot of people in your position, do put on that façade otherwise we wouldn't be having this conversation. What do you think is the difference between the confidence to just keep

it real -- just be yourself all the time, and the cockiness that a lot of these other guys exhibit all the time?

SHAQUILLE: I can't speak for anybody else but you know, I'm in a position in my life -- it's all about having fun. Like I hate seeing people talk about how much money they've got. Who cares? You know what I love? I live in a neighborhood, and listen to me closely now -- I live in a neighborhood in Orlando. My house is 70,000 square feet. I'm not bragging.

JORDAN: 70,000 square feet?

SHAQUILLE: 70,000 square feet. It's not the best house in the neighborhood. It's a guy that has one for 90. And guess what? I don't know who he is or what he does. I've been trying for years to -- to just like "Who is this guy?" It's another house, down at the 50,000 it's one 40 -- like it's one that has a yacht in the back. Like, those are people I really respect, because they just do their work and they just come. They're not on Instagram, "Look! I'm living at the track, I got a yacht." Like I hate people like that. I would never do that. I mean like I -- every now and then I say, "Okay I got this just to, --" No, but I -- I don't like people like that.

JORDAN: Yeah you talk more about Icy Hot than your car collection.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah exactly. Exactly

JORDAN: You -- actually I looked at your car collection online and I noticed you have a Smart car -- and I got --

SHAQUILLE: That was a long time ago.

JORDAN: Okay, because I was thinking --

SHAQUILLE: I bought it as a bet.

(laugh)

JORDAN: What was the bet? I bet you can't fit in this Smart car or I bet you can't get out?

SHAQUILLE: A guy bet me 30,000 to my favorite charity that I couldn't fit in a Smart car. So I bought the car, got in the car, and then I gave the car to his daughter.

JORDAN: Really? So you didn't seat mod the car?

SHAQUILLE: No. No.

JORDAN: So you can really -- you really pulled that seat all the way back and you sat in that smart car.

SHAQUILLE: All the way back and I can fit. Yeah my knees were touching the steering wheel a little bit but I fit. And like, you know, even with the Buick, people are like, "Oh, you adjust the seat." The people at Buick wouldn't allow us to adjust the seat so I actually --

JORDAN: Really?

SHAQUILLE: -- really fit. I got tired of being asked do I fit in the Buick so much, I went out and bought a Buick. And one time I was speeding on the highway -- and I apologize to all the police officers -- and a cop stopped me and he comes up to the window, "License and registration." And he sees me and you should the joy in his face. And he says, "Oh, \*\*\*\* you really do fit in a Buick."

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: "Go. Be careful." And it was -- and it was a great story.

JORDAN: That's -- that is funny. Yeah because you get -- I would imagine like the Ferraris, you've got to mod the seats --

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: -- and all these little cars you've got to mod the seats.

SHAQUILLE: Yep.

JORDAN: But -- what other things do you have to have custom made? Shoes, beds, car seats occasionally, I'm curious -- a lot of people ask me that --

SHAQUILLE: Just clothes, but like, I'm a t-shirt, jeans, TOMS type of guy. And I've still got my Shaq shoes that I wear every day but just a -- I'm just a normal basic guy these days. So, I will buy them bulk because I don't like shopping. So like these jeans I have on today, I guarantee I've got 40 pair of each color. They're just in my house. So I don't want to be able to -- like three years from go buy jeans shopping -- I want to have like 200, 300 pair of jeans in each house.

JORDAN: Wow, so you just -- and do you buy the clothes yourself or you have somebody who's like, "Hey get him -- he likes these. Get 100 of them."

SHAQUILLE: I'm a regular guy. I do stuff myself. I go to Walmart by myself, I go to CVS by myself, I go to Waffle House, I go to Krispy Kreme, all by myself.

JORDAN: You own -- do you own a Krispy Kreme? I feel like -- yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Yes. In Atlanta.

JORDAN: And you --

SHAQUILLE: My legendary spot in Atlanta.

JORDAN: You own a lot of different franchise businesses and things like that. How do you decide what to invest in? I mean who do you even trust to advise you in that kind of thing?

SHAQUILLE: Well first I trust my panel of course --

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: -- and then myself. Like for example, if I don't like this water, and you being the CEO of this company, it's no amount of money you could offer me to drink this. And I -- and then I tell my panel, "Okay if they're interested, I'm sure somebody else will be interested. This is what I like to drink." And that's the story I tell everybody.

After we won our championship, Wheaties contacted us. But as a youngster, I'd seen the great Wheaties commercial but we couldn't afford Wheaties. For us it was Frosted Flakes, Fruit Loops, Dig 'em Smacks. So Wheaties contacted us and said, "Hey we want you to be on the cover." And I told my agent, I said, "I can't do it." They said, "What do you mean you can't do it? Breakfast of champions." I said, "I never ate Wheaties and I'm not going to try right now." Like my -- like if I'm eating cereal, it's going to be Frosted Flakes one, Fruity Pebbles, and then Dig 'Em Smacks.

So second championship Wheaties comes back again, I'm like, "Can't do it bro." Third championship, "Eh, I can't do it." Then the fourth championship, I think they just deal with the NBA and D Wade and myself was on it. And then finally, my dream came true. About three years ago, Perry came to me and said, "I got some good news, I got some bad news." I said, "Okay, what's the bad news?" He said, "Frosted flakes still not interested." Because I actually told him, I said, "Call Frosted Flakes, --"

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: -- "and tell them I'll be on the cover with Tony for free. They ain't even got to pay me." They didn't buy it. So he said, "Frosted

Flakes not -- they're not interested. But Fruity Pebbles is." And he said, "They want to put you on 13 million boxes." And I said, "Let me think about it. Hell yeah!"

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: So I was on the cover of 13 million boxes of Fruity Pebbles, which was awesome. I mean because growing up, that's what I ate. And in college, I really used Icy Hot, and it really worked. And I was like, "This stuff really works." So when they approached, I was like, "You know what? I know about this product first hand, let's do it." So, you know I have to be comfortable with the product, and then like if I'm not comfortable with the product, it has to be something new and innovative. Like I'm really into technology so like we meet with a lot of -- a lot of people that are trying to show us stuff and I'm a geek. A geek saved my high school career.

JORDAN: Really?

SHAQUILLE: I had a 69.2 in government class. And it was --

JORDAN: Like a D minus or something.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah a D minus and it was around playoff time and you know, teachers -- I wasn't a bad student I just wasn't getting it. And the teacher's like, "You know what? I'm going to give you a chance to retake this test," because we were like 33 and 0 at the time, like she's like, "I'm not going to pass you just because you're an athlete. But you work hard, I respect your work, you're not troublemaker in class. I'm going to give you an opportunity to retake this test. You've got to study with McDougal." McDougal was a --

JORDAN: Heh. Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- geek in school.

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: -- that everybody used to bully and I used to just stick up for him. Like they'd be messing with him -- because he was a smart kid he had the computer back in the day where you had to press spacebar, ESC, and delete near the big -- the you know, he had that computer back in the day. Everybody used to mess with him and I was the only one to be like, "Yo man, leave him alone. Just leave him alone." So, he was my tutor and he was the coolest guy ever. And he broke it down, so the way he broke it down, I made a B on the test, boom. Won the state championship, and I was like, "You know what? I respect geeks and how they think. I want to be a geek." And I've been a geek ever since. And I'm proud to say it. And if you see me in the streets you can call me big geek and it won't hurt my feelings.

JORDAN: Nice. You ever keep in touch with McDougal?

SHAQUILLE: No, I wish I -- I wish -- you know the crazy thing is, I don't even really know his name. People just used to call him McDougal.

JORDAN: Oh, so he could -- that could be anybody.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, I actually I have to look in my yearbook and see his name. He was a nice kid and my school was 9 through 12, 269 kids. 9 through 12.

JORDAN: Dang.

SHAQUILLE: And my senior class was 39 students. So it was a small school.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Everybody knew everybody so -- like if you were an athlete and you were picking on this guy, I didn't really play that. I'm like, "Yo man leave him alone." Just like, people would be messing with him. Because he just kept to himself and didn't say anything. But this dude had a 4.9. He was one of the smartest guys at school. Like, I could see people like -- when they were taking tests, I could see people looking over, "What does

McDougal's say?"

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Oh, see? See so I would always used to just stick up for him because I don't like people just messing with people for no reason.

JORDAN: Well you -- so you were always like that. You always had a good sense --

SHAQUILLE: Yeah always like that. Yeah.

JORDAN: -- of humor. Always --

SHAQUILLE: No.

JORDAN: No?

SHAQUILLE: I was a bully at first.

JORDAN: Really?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. And -- this happened in Hinesville, Georgia. I want to say 5th grade. So, previous before I got to school, my father said, "If you get suspended one more time, you already know what's going to go down when you get home."

JORDAN: Man, drill sergeant.

SHAQUILLE: The paddle. Yeah the Paddle. So, I'm in class, and I have a water bottle. I don't even know what I've got it for and I got some tissue. And I'm making this gigantic spit wad and I'm just lubing it up. Boom and it's the wettest thing ever --

JORDAN: Oh, man.

SHAQUILLE: -- and I throw it on the chalkboard and "Pshh. Splat." The kids, everybody, the kids going crazy, teacher turns around. I'm silent, so -- and at this point all the students know, don't mess with Shaq because he will do something to you. Take your lunch, whatever, whatever.

So I'm sitting there, and the teacher goes, "Who did that?" And the guy rats me out. Go to the thing, suspended five days. So now I get to go back to class with the slip that says I got suspended. I'm just sitting like, "Man, man, man." And finally around 2:50 -- we get out at 3:00. I look at the kid and said, "I'm getting you today. If I'm going to get an \*\*\* whooping, you are too." So I wait about an hour and I see him sneaking behind and I get him and I just start touching him and he starts having an epileptic seizure.

JORDAN: Oh, man.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, and some guy, an innocent bystander came, put a pencil in his mouth -- so the cops came to the house and they knew my father. And the guy's family didn't want to press charges but what my father did, he allowed the MPs to take me to jail. They said, "This is what would have happened if you'd have killed this kid."

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: And they put me through the whole process. Charging me, handcuffing me, put me in a cell, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. It was sort of like an uncut Gone Straight --

JORDAN: Yeah. Scared straight.

SHAQUILLE: -- like you ever see the show?

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah it was like -- but it was uncut. Because it was like a military prison. Those guys in there, they were tough. And after

that day I was like, "You know I'm not going to do that anymore. I'm done with that." I mean because it would have been a whole different -- if that kid would have passed away --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- it would have been a whole different story.

JORDAN: You didn't know that that was going to happen.

SHAQUILLE: No that was just, you know I was just trying to -- I was just trying to show off for no reason.

JORDAN: Where did you think you'd be today if you didn't become a basketball player?

SHAQUILLE: Be a cop.

JORDAN: Yeah? So you -- you've come full circle now.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: And, you know, I remember asking my father that. He said "You would be a somebody." It doesn't matter, like, you know. I don't brag to the fact that I did this, and I did that because we're all human beings, all put on this earth. We all put -- all males and females but their clothes on the same way. We're all the same people. Some people just have different circumstances. So, I try not to flash my circumstances in people's face. Unfortunate thing is, they know all my circumstances anyway so --

JORDAN: Sure, yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- I don't have to put it in their face.

JORDAN: Is it strange to you not being able to have like a private life that people will just leave you the hell alone if you wanted it?

SHAQUILLE: I mean I don't -- I don't look at it like that. I mean if I want to be unseen, I know how to get away. Like my go-to place to get away is Turks and Caicos in the Bahama. Rent me a little boat, and just look at the blue water and just relax. If I don't -- if I'm having a bad day, I'll stay at a house. Now see, I don't want to go out and "Give me an autograph." "Get out of my face!" Like, you know, I don't want that story to be out so, I know how to navigate my way through.

JORDAN: So you manage your emotions really well it seems like. You -- you're self-aware enough to know [0:49:12.6]

SHAQUILLE: I'm 80/20. I'm 80 percent humorous, 20 percent serious. And I don't really have to get serious a lot. You know I'm -- it's good that, you know three people on my panel handle 90 percent of my business affairs. Which is a good thing to have.'

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: They're -- they are the left side of my brain. So they -- I let them do all the intelligent thinking and we have conversations and then I'll help them make a decision at the end, which is good. Because I think if I had to do all this stuff by myself, I'd probably go crazy. So, nice to have -- nice to have teammates around you to help you win championships.

JORDAN: Were you always the biggest kid --

SHAQUILLE: Yes.

JORDAN: -- in the class growing up? Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Always the biggest kid and after I became a bully, I was like, "How can I get these people to like me and respect me? Bam! I'm going to be silly. I'm a funny guy. I watch Good Times, Sanford and Son, Brady --

JORDAN: Dy-no-mite!

SHAQUILLE: -- Bunch, Tom & Jerry. I like to laugh, I like to make people laugh, I like to dance. This is what I'm going to do to get people to like me." And it worked.

JORDAN: So I'm curious the social impact of people always looking up at you and commenting on your height, and asking, "Hey do you play basketball?" Because you weren't really a basket -- you weren't good at basketball when you were young because you were too big right? When you were really young?

SHAQUILLE: No I was just too -- it wasn't that I was too big, I was uncoordinated --

JORDAN: Yeah, that's what I meant, yeah.

SHAQUILLE: I didn't have the belief. And once I saw Dr. J, it's all about believing. Like a thought can just -- just turn up your whole internal structure. And it was crazy like, because I thought I was a terrible player, so I actually was a terrible player. And then one time, "I can do that." Like it just, it felt -- you know it felt like a movie like I -- like as soon as I said I could do that, it felt like --

(buzzing sound)

SHAQUILLE: -- just enter my body. And I just took off from there.

JORDAN: So you just -- you just kind of --

SHAQUILLE: I just thought about it.

JORDAN: -- thought about it and let it reprogram yourself.

SHAQUILLE: Because for so long, you know, with being 6'3", 6'4" and not being able to play and people whispering, "He's going to be terrible." Like you hear that stuff and you see it, you start to

believe it. I'm like, "Maybe I am terrible. You know what? Let me go to this local ROTC program and look at these pamphlets and see what the military life is really about." 18 to get in, boom, bam, bam, bam. I'm like, "I might be in the military." Then I just changed my thought process and then --

JORDAN: What age did that happen?

SHAQUILLE: 15.

JORDAN: 15, wow.

SHAQUILLE: Yep.

JORDAN: So you were pretty young still at that point.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah I saw Dr. J at 14. And then at 15 I was like, "Now it's time to go do something about it."

JORDAN: Is your mom coming out for the statue unveiling?

SHAQUILLE: Yes she is.

JORDAN: Yeah, yeah. You still turn to her for advice from the sound of it and --

SHAQUILLE: She's on the panel.

JORDAN: I mean she even had you sort of --

SHAQUILLE: She did. She's the head of the panel.

JORDAN: The head of the panel?

SHAQUILLE: She gets upset with me sometimes like, during the whatchacallhim (ph) beef, I'm not going to say his name, I don't want him to get sensitive --

JORDAN: I was about to bring that up but I won't do it.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. No you can bring it up, I'm not going to say his name though.

JORDAN: Okay.

SHAQUILLE: But, it got out of hand. And when she called, she said. "Squash it." Got to squash it. President of the panel, mama, she just said leave it alone. And I was having fun with it but, you know, mama said, "Hey leave it alone," I got to leave it alone. You don't question your mother.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: A man that questions his mother is not a true man.

JORDAN: Why did she get involved in that? Is it -- did --

SHAQUILLE: Because --

JORDAN: [0:52:23.6]

SHAQUILLE: No, it ain't got nothing to do with that. My mother is 1000 percent corporate. And she became that way -- well she's always been that way but she tells the story that, she had me at a young age, she sacrificed a lot. But because she invested her time in me, it's paying back. Her ROIs -- it hit. It's like Google or --

JORDAN: Yeah the IPO [0:52:47.1]

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, so yeah, it has hit so, it enabled her to go back to school and get her bachelor's, her master's, and her doctorate. So my mother is a sharp corporate business woman and she knows it's just bad for business. Like me with my whole man ego thing, you say you want to fight, we're going to fight. That's just how I am. And she's like, "Son." Like you know, she'll break it up. "You got babies looking up to you. Boom, boom," and it enables me to stop and like, "She's right. Shut it down. Boom, boom, boom." But again when you're man and you're competitive and you're -- you know people challenge you like -- like if you challenge me

now, I'm going to just get like this, and like I'm going to be in challenge mode. So but, you know she called me and just had to let it go.

JORDAN: Yeah. It seems like that's the -- one of the most powerful things around you is having other brains doing the thinking. As self-aware as you are, as willing and able as you are to manage your own emotions, having five other brains that go, "Whoa, hang on let's take a breath here," has been your saving grace for a long time.

SHAQUILLE: General Dwight Eisenhower said, "The greatest leaders are the ones smart enough to hire people smarter than you around you." Best quote I ever read in my life.

JORDAN: If someone's listening to this right now and they think, "I should do a panel. I should get my own panel." Where do you recommend they start looking for that?

SHAQUILLE: Family. And friends, and people that you trust.

JORDAN: How do you know who you can trust if you already have a measure of success right? Because those people then could have -- not your family necessarily, but a lot of people around you have an agenda by that point.

SHAQUILLE: Good point and you just have to -- you know you just have to -- it's like a -- I don't have a blueprint for it, just like a gut feeling thing.

JORDAN: Mm-hmm.

SHAQUILLE: One thing about Perry and my relationship is Perry didn't come looking for me. I found him. Uncle Mike and Uncle Jarome have been there since I've been a youngster. When I get caught stealing gum and the people call the cops, the cops will say, "Hey uncle Jerome, uncle Shaq, we got your nephew again." "We'll go get him." They come down. Instead of you know, hit me with the book they would explain. "Yo man you can't do this.

Boom, boom, boom." And my mother, you've got to love my mother.

And Coach Brown was a guy that offered me a scholarship when I was the worst player on the army base. He came in there and said, "Hey, I want to offer you a scholarship anyway because you know, you're saying you're not a good player and I know this army life your dad probably can't afford college. You can come to LSU anyway." So and that's why I decided to go to LSU, but that's why he's on the panel. So it's just like a gut feeling. One you can't have yes people. Like they've just got to tell you -- you know somebody you respect, and they've just got to tell you like it is.

And the good thing for me is I don't know everything. And if I don't know, I'll ask a question and I can figure it out. But, you know, you have to be able to have someone that you love and respect be honest with you by keeping it real. Like when you do something wrong and they say, "You shouldn't have did that," you've got to fix it. Like I'm not the guy, "Whaaaaat?" No, "You shouldn't have did that, you shouldn't have said that, boom bam, bang. I'll talk to you later." And then you know, I listen about it -- listen to it, think about it, and then we move on. Respect is the key word. Like Kobe, we had our ups and downs but we always respected each other. Want to know -- Want to know how I know we respected each other? In game seven, who did Kobe throw the lob to?

JORDAN: Yeah, it was you.

SHAQUILLE: Okay, and after the championship Indiana, who did Kobe run and jump into his arms?

JORDAN: It must have been you.

SHAQUILLE: It must have been me.

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: So, you know, after the game in Indiana, when Kobe sprained his ankle and couldn't walk, who said, "Jump on my back and I'll walk you to the bus?"

JORDAN: Yeah that was you.

SHAQUILLE: Exactly so it's all -- the respect is there. Forget the little tits and the tats. You can have that -- brothers have that.

JORDAN: Yeah, true.

SHAQUILLE: Sisters have that. Married people have that. But as long as you've got the respect there, it'll work. And that's what it's all about. Especially when deciding your panel.

JORDAN: When you first signed, it's -- you spent your first paycheck I think in -- was it 45 minutes? Or part of your first paycheck anyway in 45 minutes.

SHAQUILLE: It wasn't my first paycheck, it was my first big check from Classic Cards. And did a card signing there before I came in and it was a million dollars and you know when you're a young kid and you have no business etiquette, or you don't know anything about business, a million is a million. But you know, every man that works and every man that has to pay a mortgage knows that FICA --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- sales tax, state's tax, you know all -- like all those people are going to get their money first before you see that so. My check was about 750 and I didn't even know, like I -- my guy said, "Oh, yeah you signed for a million," and then I didn't even factor in his 15 percent, which is 150, and then boom and bam. So by the time I bought three cars -- I bought a car and then my father said, "I want one," and in my mind I was like, "150 minus a million. Oh, I've got 850 left, cool."

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: Bought another one and then my mom said, "Hey I want one." So I'm like, "Okay. 850 minus -- Okay boom 700. Let's do it. Boom." And then I got a call from the bank guy next day, said, "30 thousand in the hole." Because I bought rims and suits and baggy pants and Versace shirts and --

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: -- chains. It was wild. That's when my father came in furious and said, "See? See. It's going -- you need to get a business manager," and then that's when I started looking for people.

JORDAN: The lesson to take away from that is, one, get a business manager, and two, don't go to the car dealership with your parents.

SHAQUILLE: No, just -- not only that, you just have to be smart. Like I wish I'd have -- I wish I would have knew about leasing back then. I probably would have just leased the thing.

JORDAN: Yeah?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah rather than just spend it -- I could have just put like 5,000 down and paid, you know \$700 a month for three years. Rather than just give -- write a guy a check for 150 three times.

JORDAN: Expensive lessons man, expensive lesson Shaq.

SHAQUILLE: Yes it is.

JORDAN: Yeah what did you do before you had dough though? I mean, in college you must have had to sleep sideways on beds or stack beds together. I mean what was that like?

SHAQUILLE: I tried to get all the free stuff. And what I mean free stuff from LSU I could. So, I had about 20, 30 basketball Reebok sweat suits. That's all I wore.

JORDAN: Just tracksuits.

SHAQUILLE: Tracksuits, and T -- LSU football shirt -- t-shirt and then -- I got a Pell grant. So the Pell grant I got like \$1500 so I go --

JORDAN: Oh, yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- so I go to the bank and I put 300, \$100 bills -- 3 300 -- 3 \$100 bills and the rest in ones. And I'd like walk on campus like I had a big wad of money.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Just to feel like, "All right, I still got something in my pocket," huh?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. Yep, yep, yep.

JORDAN: Nice. Nice.

SHAQUILLE: Just to feel rich.

JORDAN: I guess that makes sense. I guess that makes sense, to make sure you've got something to show for it. Why the rap career, being in movies, you know it's -- I mean you went platinum so not bad, but what was the value at there? [0:59:27.3]

SHAQUILLE: Because for me it wasn't about doing those things, it was about following my dream. I'm in the studio with Notorious B.I.G.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: How many people can say that?

JORDAN: Not many.

SHAQUILLE: I'm in the studio with Jay-Z. Nas, Peter Gunz, Lord Tariq, Erick Sermon, Wu-Tang Clan. Like, those are guys that I grew listening to. Tribe called Quest, I'm -- that's making it. Forget

how it sounds and boom and bam, and sell albums. Because, like, I told a rapper this one time, "Rap money is nothing to me." It's nothing, like, you can sell a million albums, 2 million albums, you ain't getting a lot of that back. You know you've got to recoup and like, a lot of people don't understand that. You know so, for me it was just fun.

And then the movie thing is -- it's all about opportunity. I got Blue Chips from sitting in Jerry's Deli. The guy that wrote White Men Can't Jump was coming up with the script Blue Chips and he saw me and he's like, "Hey you're Shaq O'Neal right? Boom, Boom, boom. I'm doing a movie, would you like to be in it?" What do you think I'm going to say, no? "No I got a contract, I'm in basketball." Forget that. I'm going -- you've got to do it. And it was -- and I had to play me and it was one of my better movies, and then you know, out here -- meeting people and shaking hands. Like we get offered stuff all the time that we have to turn down but --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- it's all about opportunity.

JORDAN: That's -- and so you seize on those opportunities --

SHAQUILLE: Yeah.

JORDAN: -- as soon as you smell a good one, there's no hesitation.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah and then, you know, it's all about having fun. It's not like we're out there like, you know --

(panting)

SHAQUILLE: Like, "Hey we want you to do this." "Hmm that seems cool let's do it."

JORDAN: I think the, "The rap money doesn't mean anything to me," is something that only a professional basketball player can say.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, I mean because I was making 20, 30 million a year for basketball.

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: And then another 10, 15 from Pepsi and Reebok. And you know another from the Shaqs. Like we were -- like I could have sold 2, 3 million albums and got 3 million back, that's nothing.

JORDAN: Yeah, that's -- in a way, that's the most hip-hop thing you could possibly say right?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, like that's like --

(snaps fingers)

SHAQUILLE: -- like you know, this ain't enough for money for me. Like when you're talking about Shaq money but -- you know to be able to tell your kids or to have people know that you were friends with Notorious B.I.G and did a song with Jay-Z -- that's -- that's classic right there.

JORDAN: Yeah you've got the legendary status.

SHAQUILLE: And because again, and you know the thing is, if those people didn't -- didn't like what I was doing, they probably would have said no.

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: But they knew that -- they knew that, you know we all -- because we all come from the same place. We're all from the inner city. So on the way to the court, I got my [1:01:58.2] on, I got my fake rope chain on, I'm L L Cool J. As soon as I get there, I open my bag, I pull out my Chuck Taylors and I'm Doctor J. So, you know, so like, when I call all these people up, who a lot of

them didn't charge me by the way -- it was like, "Yeah man, we would love to do it." And they saw my passion and they saw that I really respected the craft.

JORDAN: Is there anything else on your bucket list that you haven't ticked off yet? Any plans to do anything?

SHAQUILLE: Yeah we actually talked about it today. I have a dangerous bucket list that if it don't go right, you could probably never hear from me again. I -- and I'm only let the world know about two of those things. I would like to skydive and I would like to have -- I would build a contraption that could survive the Niagara falls.

JORDAN: I would --

(laugh)

JORDAN: What does the panel think about that one?

SHAQUILLE: They don't like it but I want to do that. I mean -- because I'm -- I like to have fun, I think if we design it a certain way -- especially to where if I bounce around, nothing will hurt.

JORDAN: Sure.

SHAQUILLE: And it has to be strong enough to withstand, in case it hit a rock or something. But I would like to do that. And then put cameras in it and let people tune in and see if I make it or not.

JORDAN: Could stream it live, man.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, yeah.

JORDAN: Either way, it'll be a good show.

SHAQUILLE: And then I want to -- I want to climb the Himalayas. I hear that's tough.

JORDAN: Oh, yeah.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah, I hear that's very, very tough. So I would want to that. Went out with Bear Grylls and that was tough so -- yeah, I have a lot of things to do on my bucket list.

JORDAN: No MMA anymore, huh?

SHAQUILLE: Nah.

JORDAN: Nah.

SHAQUILLE: Nah.

JORDAN: If -- because I know that you and Charles Barkley were both kind of into that at one point.

SHAQUILLE: If I fought the NBA -- MMA would -- it would only be one guy I would fight.

JORDAN: Who would you fight?

SHAQUILLE: His name is Hong Man Choi. He's a 7'4" guy from South Korea I think.

JORDAN: Wow, yeah. 7'4"

SHAQUILLE: I never fought a guy -- never fought anybody my size. I would like to see how I would fair out --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- against that. That would all I want to do.

JORDAN: You could call Yao too. He might do it.

SHAQUILLE: Yeah. Yao don't want these problems.

(laugh)

JORDAN: All right, right on. So I love that, and you're not going to wrestle The Big Show?

SHAQUILLE: Probably not.

JORDAN: Nah, doesn't seem like a good use of --

SHAQUILLE: Probably not.

JORDAN: -- your lower back --

SHAQUILLE: yeah.

JORDAN: -- either. Yeah. I got to ask, or people are going to get mad, as we wrap up here. What's going on with the flat earth thing? Are you just messing with everybody with that?

SHAQUILLE: No the earth is flat. Would you like -- would you like to hear my theory?

JORDAN: Yeah, sure, tell me about it.

SHAQUILLE: The first part of the theory is, I'm joking you idiots. That's the first part of the theory.

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: The second part is, I said, jokingly that, "When I'm in my bus and I drive from Florida to California, which I do every summer, it seems to be flat. When I'm in my plane and we're getting ready to land, and I open up the window and I'm looking at all the land that we fly over, it seems to be flat." But this world we live in, people things too seriously. But I'm going to give the people answers to my tests. Knowing that I'm a funny guy, if something's controversial or boom, boom, boom, you've got to add my funny points on, right? So now once you add my funny points on, that should eradicate and get rid of all your negative

thoughts, right? That's what you should do when you hear a Shaquille O'Neal statement. Okay? You should know that he has funny points right over here. And what did he say? The guy had boom, boom, boom, boom. Add the funny points. You either laugh or you don't laugh, but don't take me seriously because when I want you to take me seriously, you will know by the tone of my voice that I'm being serious. So -- we live in a world today, and Denzel Washington said it best, "There's too much information right now." There's too much going on, so -- like if, you know somebody says something and you know they title and they send it out, by the time it gets to another guy and another guy, it's all messed up. So people actually really believe that I was serious when I said that. We --

JORDAN: Yeah.

SHAQUILLE: -- we actually had -- no, we actually had people calling my office long time, "Does Shaq really, --" No I don't think that, it was a joke. Okay? So know that when Shaquille O'Neal says something, 80 percent of the time, because 80 percent of the time I'm being humorous, it is a joke. And 20 percent of the time I'm being seriously. But when I'm being seriously, you'll know. You want to see me seriously? See me and Charles Barkley going back and forth on TNT. That's when I'm mad and when I'm serious. Other than that, you not going to get that out of me, so I was just joking people. The earth is not round, it's flat.

(laugh)

SHAQUILLE: I mean, the earth is not flat, it's round.

(laugh)

JORDAN: Shaq, thank you so much man.

SHAQUILLE: Thank you buddy. Appreciate it.

JORDAN: It's been awesome.

SHAQUILLE: All right, thank you.

JORDAN: Wow there was so much here. Really great. Shaq hasn't given anybody an hour of time since -- I want to say ESPN and I think 60 minutes a long time ago. Because you kind of have to do that for 60 minutes it's -- it's part of the show. So a great big thank you to Shaq. To him and his whole team. If you enjoyed this one, don't forget to thank Shaq on Twitter, we'll have that linked in the show notes as well. Tweet me your number one takeaway from Shaq I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter. Remember, if you want the show notes for this you can tap the album art in most mobile podcast players to see the show notes for this episode. We'll link to the show notes right on your phone. Our boot camps, our live program details here at [theartofcharm.com/bootcamp](http://theartofcharm.com/bootcamp). Look we're all each art projects. We can curate our input and curate those around us and shape our future selves. The Art of Charm is the study of how this is done and how to do it for ourselves and that's what you're going to learn here at boot camp.

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We'll also email you our fundamentals Toolbox that I mentioned earlier on the show which include some great practical stuff ready to apply, right out of the box, on reading body language, having charismatic nonverbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, networking and influence strategies, mentorship, persuasion tactics, and everything else that we teach here at The Art of Charm. This will make you a

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