

EPISODE 152

[INTRODUCTION]

"RS: October 2019, she went to just a routine checkup and a portion of the tumor had grown back. And it was at a place to where they could still do surgery. She had already had her first surgery in 2013. And she finds this out on her own at a doc. Because I'm selling cars. I'm at the dealership. She calls me. She says, "Doctor said they see something on my scan. But I'm all right. You stay at work. And when you get home, we'll talk about it and I'll be okay. And see you later." All right. Get that phone call, go home. And then we're in the doctor's office and we're trying to figure out, "What's going on? What can we do? What's the remedy? What's the plan?" That's it. Straight into action mode."

[00:00:49] LW: Hello, friends. And welcome back to the Light Watkins show, where I interview ordinary folks just like you and me who've taken extraordinary leaps of faith in the direction of their path, their purpose, or what they've identified with as their mission. And in doing so, they've been able to positively impact and inspire the lives of many other people who've either heard about their story, or who've witnessed them in action, or who've directly benefited from their work.

And this week I have on the show somebody that I've met recently at a speaker's conference that I attended in Austin, Texas, during my last meditation teaching tour. We ended up sitting right next to one another. And I immediately connected to his story and knew that I wanted to have him on the podcast.

His name is Ray Singleton. Ray grew up in a musical family in South Carolina. And he'd been singing and performing his entire life, thinking that he was going to do it professionally. But more so, it was just happening in the day-to-day life where professionally, he was more of a salesman. He worked in car dealerships and mortgage companies. And then he met a woman at a party who changed the trajectory of his life.

Roslyn Singleton, who became his wife, she had been diagnosed with stage 3 brain cancer years prior to meeting Ray. And she had gone into remission and everything was fine. But then, a year into their marriage, the cancer came back, and Ray stepped up in ways that he never imagined possible to care for his wife in the last moments of her life on Earth.

And he started documenting their journey on social media. And then, after one post of him singing to her went viral, the couple was invited to be on the Ellen Show. And then, from there, the nation started labelling Ray as America's Husband. He then serenaded Ros on America's Got Talent. And then they were featured on Black Love. And now Ray continues to speak about the power of prayer and unconditional love and becoming a caretaker.

This was a very heartwarming conversation. And I already know that hearing it is going to inspire you to step up in ways that you never thought possible for yourself. It's an honor and a pleasure to introduce you to Mr. Ray Singleton. Without further ado, let us get to the conversation.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:03:09] LW: Brother Ray Singleton, it's a pleasure having you on the podcast, man, and getting into your story.

[00:03:16] RS: It's a pleasure being here, man. It is a pleasure being here. I'm so glad I met you, brother.

[00:03:19] LW: For the listener, you and I were at this master class back in Austin a few weeks ago. And we happened to be sitting right next to each other. I'm not sure if they put the black people together on purpose or if that was just a happy accident. But I felt, when you sat down – because you came in a little bit after me. And I felt, when you sat down, that I needed to know you. I needed to know your story.

And your reputation preceded you. Because a lot of other people who I met at a previous event who were at that event came up, and they saw your name on the table, and they said, "Do you know Ray? Have you heard Ray? Do you Ray's story?" I was like, "No. I don't know. But I can't

wait to see who this Ray person is." I was not expecting a young, boisterous, exuberant personality. But I'm so happy that we got a chance to connect. And I'm really happy that we get to dive in a lot deeper into your story.

[00:04:10] RS: Yeah, man. Yeah, let's do it.

[00:04:12] LW: Yes. Yes. All right. Both of us actually grew up – I'm from Alabama. I grew up in Montgomery, Alabama. I don't know if you've been there before or not. But you grew up not too far away, in Charleston, South Carolina.

[00:04:26] RS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. 843.

[00:04:29] LW: 843.

[00:04:30] RS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

[00:04:32] LW: Reflecting back on the earliest days, as a kid, what were some of your favorite activities? And what was the vibe like in your household?

[00:04:42] RS: I was raised by my – kind of like my entire family. Like, look, your uncles can raise you. Your aunt. I had a mother and father. They divorced when I was 11 years old. And they lived so close to each other that the court ordered split custody. I would live a week with my father and then a week with my mother, me and my older sister. I got an older sister. She's two years older than me. And we would move back and forth.

But when I would be with my mother, my mother went to go live with my grandmother, and that's where all my cousins and everybody would be. That's where family just really, really came into play for me. We were creatives, man. My family is baptized in music, bro. Everybody in my family can sing, other than my sister and my dad. Everybody else on my mom's side can sing their butts off. And music and joy has always been a part of it, man. My cousins and I, we got creative. My grandfather would always have a camera, record moments, like family moments, cookouts, things of that nature. We ended up getting the camera, and we would shoot music videos with the camera.

We'd have music playing. There was one song, they came out of the closet. I was the lead singer. They came out of the closet doing dancing. We found my grandfather's old church hats. We did Life by Casey and JoJo. Man, we were always creating stuff. It was always joy, fun. That's when going outside was cool. Playing in the grass. Going to the park. Swimming in the summer. Everything, man. It was just a lot of family around.

When I went to my grandmother's house, the neighbors – that's one of those neighborhoods where everybody knows everybody. You can go to Miss Jones and get some sugar. You can go, Miss Larry, and get some water. That was the environment that was in. And everybody just loved each other, man. We had – you had normal family issues. But everybody loved doing each other, man. My family is like none other. I got the greatest family in the world.

[00:06:40] LW: Back when I was growing up, they used to have the candy lady around the house. Was there a candy lady –

[00:06:45] RS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

[00:06:47] LW: An ice cream man and all that –

[00:06:49] RS: About three doors down. Yes, sir.

[00:06:52] LW: I love it.

[00:06:52] RS: Yeah, 25 cents would buy you a handful of stuff. Yeah, man. Good old days.

[00:07:01] LW: Talk about singing a little bit more. What did you get from it as a child if you can remember? And also, did you have to be trained at all? I know you had a natural ability. But was there some kind of we're going to put you through the family training to make sure your voice is correct?

[00:07:19] RS: The family training was get on the choir. That was the training. And when everybody's at grandma's house, sing that song you've been singing. I would say light hazing,

family hazing. They can figure out like you can hum or hold a tune, you're going to sing in my family. It was something we always did at dinners, after church, in church, family gatherings, funerals, birthday parties. We'll just get around and sing. I had on-the-job training, man. It's just been always a part of me.

My mother and my aunts have a gospel singing group down in Charleston called Lucas Sisters. They've been singing together for almost 30+ years. They've traveled all over the world. Got recordings and things of that nature. And they would rehearse at my grandmother's house. When I would be staying with my mother, they would come over there and rehearse their songs. And I would sit right behind my aunt, who was playing the piano. And that's how I learned to play. I never had any training. I can't read the licking music. But I can play anything by ear. I can't explain it. Yeah, music is in my blood, man. It's in my DNA, bro.

[00:08:29] LW: Do you remember the first time you recognized the power of music, of singing and playing the piano on other people?

[00:08:37] RS: I remember the first time I like truly got my first standing ovation. It was a sophomore year high school. My cousin, who was in the drama club, he knew that I could sing. And he told the drama teacher about me. She brings me in, and I sing for her, and she immediately puts me in Little Shop of Horrors.

We did that stage play. And somehow, they mixed in a Ray Charles song, and I sang it. And as soon as I was done, everybody literally got off their feet and stood and clapped. And I got chills. My hair stood. I was like, "Yeah, I got to figure out how to do this for the rest of my life." 10th grade, brother. 10th grade is when I got the bite.

[00:09:17] LW: Is that the vision? Like, I'm going to be a singer? That's what I'm going to do professionally. I'm going to make –

[00:09:23] RS: No. It's literally just a part of me, bro. I will sing for free. I do sing for free all the time. It's crazy that people pay me to do it. You know what I'm saying? Because I really, really love it, man. I wake up singing. I go to bed singing. I'm singing when I'm cooking. I'm singing when I'm cleaning. It's just a part of me.

I would absolutely love to be a professional singer and do all that, and I feel like I'm a semi-professional singer. I sang on some pretty big stages in these 33 years, man. And God just continues to give me opportunities. And singing at weddings and birthday parties. And I'm at a music festival on Friday here in Charlotte, North Carolina. I'm just doing it all, man. I'm doing it all, bro.

[00:10:08] LW: Back when you were at West Ashley High School, what was your aspiration for yourself?

[00:10:13] RS: I wanted to be an actor. Once I got into the drama club, Broadway, like musicals. We did *The Wiz*. I was the Scarecrow in *The Wiz*.

[00:10:24] LW: That was a Michael Jackson character, right?

[00:10:26] RS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. We did it all. Once I got that bite of people truly finding joy and something that I find joy in, you know what I'm saying? The fact that you don't always find that gift, the balance of those two. Something that you find joy in that can also bring other people joy.

Once I found that I wanted to just try to focus and pour into that – I love being on stage. I love having a microphone in my hand. I love – again, from being a youngster. Me and my cousins doing music videos and movies on my grandfather's camera. I wanted to be on – I wanted to be that guy. That was the aspiration. Just to bring joy to people.

[00:11:05] LW: And what was the plan? Go to college. Move to L.A.

[00:11:08] RS: Yeah. The plan was to go to college. But I wanted to go to college and major in music. But I found out that in order to major in music, you must know how to read music. And I tried to take a class over the summer. I was like, "I can't do it. I can't do it."

Then I switched my studies to theater. And I have a Bachelor of Arts in Theater Performance from Winthrop University. After that, I wanted to go to L.A. and have these big dreams and

things of that nature, man. But I got the opportunity to go to grad school. I stayed at Winthrop University. I got a Master's in Education. And then, immediately after that, I got into sales.

And sales, I'm using all those skills that I learned on the stage. I'm using all those skills, connectivity and the psychology of getting into other characters. When you're in sales, you got to be whoever you need to be to sell whatever you sell.

[00:12:04] LW: Before we get to the sales part, I want to talk about your fraternity experience. You pledged by yourself?

[00:12:12] RS: Yeah, man.

[00:12:14] LW: You must have been really determined to go pledge by yourself. What's that like?

[00:12:19] RS: It was different. It was different. I'm not going to say too much off-camera. But it was a different experience, brother. But I started with – there were two other guys that started with me. And they quit the first night. And I went back to the brothers. It was like, "Where are your guys at?" I said, "They quit." They said, "What you doing?" I said, "I'm here." I was the first person to pledge at my school since 1983. Pledge solo since 1983.

Yeah. That's garnered me a lot of respect in my fraternity world. And all those who are members of any fraternity and sorority, when you're here solo, it's like, "Okay. Yeah. That dude is the real thing." Yeah, man.

[00:13:04] LW: Did you help to revive the chapter at your school than like after you crossed?

[00:13:09] RS: Yep. Yep. I immediately became the chapter president. It was five brothers on campus when I came. And as I was getting in, three of them had graduated. And we had another junior. I had to get recruitment. I'm hosting the step shows. I'm doing community service. I'm trying to show people, "Okay, this is what we do." And helped grow the chapter, I think, another 15 to 20 members in the two or three years that I stayed.

[00:13:35] LW: Yeah. Because that's a valuable experience too when it comes to sales and everything you're doing now. You know, bringing people together.

[00:13:41] RS: Yeah. Yes, sir.

[00:13:43] LW: And being in a leadership role.

[00:13:46] RS: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Chapter president. I was a big man on campus. I won homecoming king. I was doing it all, man. I was doing it all.

[00:13:54] LW: Are you still singing?

[00:13:54] RS: Yeah. I had a band. That's when I actually formed my first band in college. We were named The Edge. The way we got that name, in the student center where we would play, that was literally the name of the little cafe in there. We had just got done with the event. It was like, "Man, we sound great. People were clapping and loving. We got to name ourselves." And we turned around The Edge. Like, "That's our name."

[00:14:25] LW: Was it like gospelly music? Or was it like R&B?

[00:14:27] RS: No. It was R&B. R&B, hip-hop. It was an open mic for my fraternity. We had to get events on campus for student engagement. And you know me. I'm all about music. I know a guy who can play the piano. I play the piano. I know a drummer. Let's get them down here. Have an open mic. Get the students engaged. And that's an event that's still going on to this day. I started that back in 2010.

[00:14:50] LW: Wow.

[00:14:50] RS: Yeah, man.

[00:14:51] LW: Sales-wise, you ended up at – was it a Nissan dealership or –

[00:14:55] RS: Monroe Nissan.

[00:14:57] LW: Okay.

[00:14:57] RS: Monroe Nissan. The way I got there, I was waiting tables after I got out of grad school, just trying to figure out if I wanted to go the council route. I have a Master's in Counselor. Trying to figure out which route I wanted to go. Waiting tables in the meantime.

And there was this GM of that Nissan dealership. He would always come sit in my section because of the service I gave him. I knew what he wanted to drink. I knew how he like the steak cooked as soon as he got down; all good. He was like, "Man, listen, I love your personality. I want you to come work for me."

I had no idea what he did at the time. And I thought I was signing up just to like to follow him or shadow him. I ended up in a five-hour job interview at this Nissan dealership. And they hired me on the spot. And I sell five cars my first week. The commission check was \$4,700. I said, "I'm going to do this for a little bit."

[00:15:48] LW: You know, I've written about this before, about showing up to whatever job you have, even if it's not your dream job. But showing up to it in an exceptional way because you never know who's watching you and what opportunities will come from that.

[00:16:03] RS: My entire work history is from that exact statement, bro. Because after I left Nissan, I sold the guy a car. He worked at Mercedes. He said, "Come work over here." It's a high clientele. I go to work at Mercedes. I'm at Mercedes for three months. I sell the CEO of a mortgage company his car. He says, "I want you to come work for me." That's how I get into the mortgage world. Literally, that's the story of my entire work career, bro.

[00:16:32] LW: I love it. Let's talk about selling cars. How did you sell five cars in the first week and make everybody at the dealership jealous and envious? Probably hating on you?

[00:16:42] RS: Listen, I had never stepped into a car dealership prior to that. I got both of my cars from my dad, who's a mechanic. I had no idea the stereotype or like the – I didn't know what a car salesman was supposed to be. I just walk in there, Ray Singleton. I'm talking to

everybody. You got the old-school guys. A certain person that looks a certain way, they're not going to talk to them because they're going to think – I'm talking to everybody. And I'm smiling. I'm shaking hands. And they keep giving me the paperwork. I don't know what I'm doing [inaudible 00:17:12]. I guess he bought a car. Bought a car.

And then, after I figured out what I was doing, that's what my business mind came into it. I've always been like this big visionary. Seeing this big goal of marketing guy, right? I turned myself into my own business. I had a pretty good follow-up on my social media with Willie Qool. So I turned my car business into – it was called Qool Cars.

I made a logo. I had it printed on T-shirts. I have my phone number. When anybody would buy a car for me, they'd get a T-shirt. I made a jingle. I printed my logo on this big whiteboard and called it the Qool Car Wall of Fame. If you bought a car for me, you could sign the board.

As I'm talking to customers and then sitting down and seeing all these signatures on the board behind me, it's like, "What's that?" "Well, those are all the people that bought cars from me. These are all the people that trust me." You tell them you don't want to sound right. I was a killer, bro. I was a killer. You hear me?

[00:18:14] LW: You didn't read a book about all this. You just devised all this on your own.

[00:18:18] RS: On my own, man. My brain has always worked like that. And I thank God that it has, man. I just always have been creative, man, from a small child. I've always been a leader. I've always been the one step out front. In high school, was the captain of the basketball team and the star in the drama club. I can go talk to the theater kids, and go talk to the basketball dudes and then go talk to the administrators. Everybody loved me. And I thank God for that, man. I thank God for that. That's a gift. Not everybody has that.

[00:18:49] LW: Going back to college really quickly, I know you got your name, Willie Qool, from your fraternity. But can you just talk a little bit about the inception of that name? Does that become your stage name for The Edge?

[00:19:01] RS: No. He gave me that nickname by accident. When I became chapter president, my fraternity brother was overall fraternity and sororities. He sent an email of how to send in your chapter roster. It had all these fake names, John Doe. Willie Qool was one of the names on there. I was like, "Yo, I'm taking that." And that's when Instagram had just came out. And I couldn't figure out what my username is. I was like, "Willie Qool." And look, that's the entire story, bro. That's the whole story.

People think there's some grand – no. There was a name on the email that I liked and it stuck. Now people really think my name is Willie. There's no part of my name that Willie. I'm sorry for everybody who's confused. But my name is not Willie. I wish I wore my T-shirt that said my name isn't Willie.

[00:19:52] LW: At the dealership, though, you had Willie Qool on the board.

[00:19:56] RS: No. It was just Qool Cars.

[00:19:57] LW: Qool Cars.

[00:19:59] RS: Qool Cars.

[00:19:59] LW: Okay.

[00:20:01] RS: Because I had already had the following with the connection to the cool. And it was just a great name. I was going to name it Qool Whips. But Qool Whip already had that name already taken up.

[00:20:20] LW: All right. Mortgages. Selling mortgages. You took the same plan from selling cars into selling mortgages?

[00:20:26] RS: No. Because that moves from selling a tangible item. Like something that people could see, touch, and feel. To now trying to get people to understand a different way of thinking. Because I went into the world of refinancing, what we would do is help people unlock the equity

in their home, refinance their mortgage, and take credit card debt, student loan debt. Put it all to one loan so they save money overall.

I had to now connect via phone. I was licensed in Texas, Kentucky, California, Florida. Now it's all phone work. Just, "Hey." I got a script. I'm practicing it. We do this thing in the morning called spar, where you have team members. You call on your role-play. It was a completely different game, man. But it was higher sales. It was a higher level, higher ticket sales. The mission was better.

[00:21:22] LW: Did you have aspirations for eventually leaping out of that and into something? Like being an entrepreneur? Being on your own in some way?

[00:21:29] RS: I've always had aspirations of being an entrepreneur, man, in times that I've tried to fight it and do the W2 world. And I always just wanted to do my own thing, man. I've always just wanted to be a free spirit. Now at times when finances don't allow you to do that, you got to get a job.

While I had to do what I had to do, I did it with a smile on my face. I showed up as the best version of myself. Even if it wasn't in my path or even if it wasn't a vision that I thought for myself, guess what? I'm in it right now. I can't be the best person in the vision that I want to see. This is my reality. Why not show up as the best version of myself right then? That's how other opportunities happen. That's the story that's played out in my world. Let me do that.

[00:22:19] LW: Okay. You're a young man. You got some money in your pocket. You're pretty good at this skill set. You're going to parties. You're hollering at girls.

[00:22:27] RS: Yeah.

[00:22:30] LW: And you end up at this one party in Charlotte.

[00:22:35] RS: Yes, sir.

[00:22:36] LW: Wearing these corny-ass sunglasses at night.

[00:22:40] **RS:** Yes, sir. At night. Woohoo.

[00:22:42] **LW:** Are you introducing yourself as Rey or as Willie?

[00:22:45] **RS:** I'm Ray. I'm Ray. I'm only Willie Qool on the internet.

[00:22:51] **LW:** Okay. How many followers do you have at this point?

[00:22:55] **RS:** 135,000.

[00:22:57] **LW:** No. No. No. No. Back then? Back then? On that night when you met Roslyn?

[00:23:02] **RS:** Probably like 10,000 or 11,000. Just from college, like when I was on the stage, I would tell people, "Pull out your phone. Follow me now." [inaudible 00:23:12]. If I got a microphone in my hand, I was taking advantage of every opportunity. Yeah.

[00:23:17] **LW:** 10,000 is pretty good, you know? For not being instantly recognizable.

[00:23:22] **RS:** Right?

[00:23:23] **LW:** What happened? What was she wearing? What made you pay attention to her?

[00:23:27] **RS:** Because the first thing she said to me is, "Where are you going with them stupid ass sunglasses?" That was the first thing that I heard Roslyn Royal Singleton say, "Where are you going with them stupid ass sunglasses?" I tipped them down, and I said, "I'll be back for you in 35 seconds."

I was going down the escalator to go to the bathroom to get that whole plan. I go back up to the escalator. I'm following her. She walks to the dance floor. I'm right behind her. I'm trying – "Do you want to dance?" And she says, "No. I don't dance with strangers." And she walks up.

I'm now being – I'm just – I'm hurt, right? Me and my boys said, "Man, I'm going to do my own thing." I'm on the dancefloor with my boys. About two hours later, she comes and taps me on my shoulder. And she puts her phone in my face and said, "Hey, give me your number. I'm getting ready to leave." And what do you say that other than, "Here you go." I gave him a number.

She leaves. Me and my boys leave. We end up at the same late-night spot. As I'm walking through the door, her food is sitting on their table with her friends. I walk over, and I ask if I could bless the food before the table. And the very next day, we went on the first date, and we were together for four – well, six beautiful years. Married for four.

[00:24:40] LW: Was she your type when you first met her? Everybody guy has a type. Yeah?

[00:24:44] RS: Mm-hmm. She has short hair. She was tatted up. She cussed like a sailor. She was wrong. She was six years older than me. She was nowhere near my type, man. I like the long hair, voluptuous – like you know what I'm saying? She wasn't anything like that, man. But she was the type for my heart. She was what I needed for my life.

[00:25:08] LW: What did you like about her initially? The fact that she gave you her number, and she was just kind of assertive, and she knew what she wanted?

[00:25:14] RS: Yes. She was assertive. At that point, she was 35. I was 28. And I'd always wanted a cougar. You know what I'm saying? I wanted to see what was going on. She was established. She had her stuff together. And our conversations were like we would just talk, man. We would just have fun. Made me work for it a little bit. We like the same type of music. And she had a smile and a spirit that you just couldn't not want to be around. You know what I'm saying? It was magnetic [inaudible 00:25:44].

[00:25:44] LW: How long before you sang for her? Because I know you singing guys, that's like one of your hooks. That's how you get them in.

[00:25:53] RS: I'm pulling that out the bag immediately, sir. I'm pulling that out the bag.

[00:25:57] LW: Hey, I wrote this song for you, babe. It's the same song. But it's different name in it.

[00:26:03] RS: Oh, yeah. I know what my bullets are, sir. I know exactly how to do that. Yeah, I pulled it out immediately. And she loved it initially. But as I said earlier, I sing all the time, everywhere, non-stop. She got tired of it very quickly. Because I just couldn't help it.

[00:26:23] LW: All right. Couple things. Were you even in a space – because you're in your late 20s. Were you even thinking about getting married right before you met her?

[00:26:30] RS: No.

[00:26:31] LW: And she revealed some information to you at that first date that it's not normal first date conversation. Talk about that and how it made you feel.

[00:26:39] RS: No. No. Yeah. We were just talking. Just enjoying dinner and going over the "What's your favorite color? What would you like?" and all that. And she says, "Yeah, I'm 35. Are from Lugoff-Elgin, South Carolina, in the country. I'm a Navy veteran. A ride a motorcycle. I had brain surgery back in 2013. I got tattoos all over myself. And I'm hungry."

[00:27:05] RS: I said, "What?" I mean, look [inaudible 00:27:10]. All right. I said, "You good now?" "Yeah, I'm cool." Literally, that conversation right there was it about brain cancer or cancer, anything until she had to do her yearly scans to make sure she was good.

But again, she had that same resolve, that same confidence when she had to do a checkup, "Oh, yeah, I just got to go to the doctor and get a scan so they can tell me that I'm all right." That was the fate she had, dog.

[00:27:38] LW: What was it? Give us the montage between that date and you guys getting married. How long was that period of time? And how did you know that she was the one? What was the indication that "Okay, it's time for me to propose."

[00:27:52] RS: Oh, I got my knee dirty six months in, man. We didn't waste any time, bro. After that first date, it timed up to where my lease was up with my roommate. Probably like a month after we had talked, I moved into a place. A month few days later, I'm in her apartment. We lived in. We're shacking out as the old folks say down [inaudible 00:28:15], "We shacking up."

We're talking every day. We're doing everything together. She's cooking for me. I'm cooking for her. She's meeting my family. We met November 5th. He was home with me for Thanksgiving that same month.

[00:28:29] LW: It sounds like you're the type of dude that has options, right? And I'm sure some women may be listening to this going, "How did she get you on your knees within six months? What was she doing that your other options were not doing?"

[00:28:45] RS: I didn't pay attention to the other – the other options didn't matter.

[00:28:48] LW: But what was it about her? Was she real?

[00:28:50] RS: It was everything. It was everything, bro. She was gutter. She kept me straight. You know what I'm saying? We would have real conversation. We would talk. She would listen to me. She made me smile. She made me feel like a man. She told me she was proud of me. She would support me.

[00:29:08] LW: See, that's key. That's key. I don't think people realize. That doesn't happen a lot with significant others telling your partner, "I'm proud of you. I love the way you lead. You're my hero." Even just basic stuff like that, I think people take it for granted that, "Oh, he doesn't need to hear that. He already knows." No. We love to hear that stuff. It goes so far.

[00:29:30] RS: That's foundational, bro. That's foundational.

[00:29:32] LW: And also, the fact that she's been through some life-threatening stuff probably puts her in a space where she's more present, she's more grateful, she's more compassionate and all those things. She's not getting caught up in BS.

[00:29:43] RS: Yeah. I mean, we had our normal relationship problems. I tell people all the time. I don't know if I can cuss on here. But it's going to get shitty. If you're in a relationship at any point kind, it's going to get shitty. You just got to figure out if you can get through those times. And she was a person I could get through those times with. You know what I'm saying?

I loved her, bro. I loved her spirit, her soul, her energy, everything about her. She was lively. She had a personality. She kept me guessing. She would keep me straight. Like, "No. We went here to eat the other day. What else you got?" She kept me on my toes. And not only that, she'd take me on dates. You know what I'm saying? She would make sure [inaudible 00:30:22]. She'll pay the bill sometime.

[00:30:24] LW: Did you ever imagine that the brain cancer may come back one day and you'd have to deal with that before you got on your knees?

[00:30:30] RS: No. Mm-mm. Didn't have time to spend on that. Because it hurt her confidence, the way that she carried it. If the person who has brain cancer ain't stressed and I ain't worried –

[00:30:44] LW: Right. What are you stressing about? Yeah.

[00:30:47] RS: Yeah. No. I mean, that's real stuff, though.

[00:30:51] LW: Yeah.

[00:30:51] RS: It's real stuff, man.

[00:30:53] LW: What changed once you got married? Anything?

[00:30:56] RS: We had to learn how to communicate with each other, man. We were both passionate. We were both stubborn. I went the college route. Doing the military route. He had older parents. I had younger parents. It was just putting the two different lives together and just having to work through – I was at a young stage that didn't know how to communicate my feelings. I didn't know how to listen and give feedback as opposed to just be straight

confrontational. We had to figure all that out in marriage. And you're there, bro. There ain't no leaving. There ain't no – no. This is what you chose to do.

Even if you try to get a divorce in South Carolina, you got to be separated for a year. Listen. We did the research. I'm telling y'all, it's going to get shitty. But you got to figure out if you can get through those moments.

[00:31:45] LW: And she was tired of you singing at that point.

[00:31:47] RS: Absolutely, sir. She didn't want to hear another song out of me.

[00:31:51] LW: What would she do if you started singing? She'd leave the room? Or –

[00:31:54] RS: No. She would tell me to shut up. Shut the f up, really. I told you, she was a sailor.

[00:31:59] LW: How did that make you feel?

[00:32:02] RS: I would laugh, and I would keep on singing. I would shut up eventually. You got to stay happy. You got to keep the home peaceful, man. You got to keep in peaceful, bro.

[00:32:24] LW: All right. October, November, those months sort of keep repeating themselves in the trajectory of your relationship with Ros. Let's talk about that. She got a check-up.

[00:32:39] RS: October 2019, she went to just a routine checkup, and a portion of the tumor had grown back. And it was at a place to where they could still do surgery. She had already had her first surgery in 2013. And she finds this out on her own at a doc. Because I'm selling cars. I'm at the dealership. She calls me. She says, "Doctor said they see something on my scan. But I'm all right. You stay at work. And when you get home, we'll talk about it, and I'll be okay. And see you later." All right. Get that phone call, go home. And then we're in the doctor's office, and we're trying to figure out, "What's going on? What can we do? What's the remedy? What's the plan?" That's it. Straight into action mode.

[00:33:24] LW: How did that hit you when you got that call? Did you think, "Oh, this is probably going to pass? Or is this is about to get real?"

[00:33:31] RS: I was thinking, how can I be of assistance? In what way can I serve? In what way can I be a help? What way can I improve or do anything that's going to assist you? That was my only thought. I don't know what another thought feels like. What can I do to be here in your corner? Because we're married. Not only we're married. I love you. And I'm here to do whatever I can do. Whatever you need me to do. That's my only thought.

[00:33:59] LW: And you got the inspiration to start recording some of your interactions with Ros.

[00:34:05] RS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That was later on last year. After brain surgery number four, the disease has progressed from stage three to stage four. Glioblastoma multiforme was the type of cancer she had. And after that fourth surgery, the doctor told me – he pulled me to the side and said, "She has 15 months to live." And you don't know what to do when you hear that news. Ain't too much you can do when you hear that news.

Yeah, I knew – at least, I knew what was said to me. But then I go in the room with superwoman and she looks and talks and feels like she's going to live forever. You know what I'm saying? She's trying to balance that. Now I got this number or what the doctor said in my mind. Again, I go back to Superwoman. She's smiling, laughing, exuberant. Let's just enjoy life. Forget all that. Let me love on you. Let's smile. Let's find some joy.

[00:35:02] LW: Is that when you started back singing to her? Or had you already started back singing?

[00:35:05] RS: No. I never stopped. I never stopped. Every chance I got. Whether it was directly to her. Whether I was doing a show when she was in the crowd. Whether I was doing the show and she wasn't there. I dedicate a song to her. When we're driving to church, I'm singing to her. When we're driving to the restaurant on a date, I'm singing to her. I never stopped. That was my love language, man. That's really the way I express myself.

[00:35:29] LW: How do you come to terms with that 15-month prognosis with your wife?

[00:35:35] RS: You can't. There's no way. There's no way. And to be honest, we all have a prognosis. We all have a point that we're going to get up out of here. How do you come to terms of that? We're not going to make it out of this thing alive. We all have a date that we're going to get up out of here. So now, what do we do with that information? Do we worry about stuff that's going to stress us out? Do we worry about the trivial small things? I mean, we're humans. So we care about it at some point. But we got to be grateful. Like we got to smile and wake up with vigor, and enthusiasm and energy. Because we all got to get up out of here.

That changed my perspective, man. When death came to my doorstep, it changed my perspective, bro. It is real. No matter your race, your creed, your personality, how much money you got, where you live at, your family, you are going to die. With that information, what are you going to do with the rest of your life? What are you going to do with your time here? What that girl did was smile in the face of brain cancer. Four surgeries. She smiled. She brought joy. She inspired others.

[00:36:42] LW: How did she adopt that level of optimism and positivity? Was that something that she had before she met you? Or what you had rubbed off on her?

[00:36:51] RS: She got that from her mom. And I thought I had a whole lot of positivity for me [inaudible 00:36:55].

[00:36:55] LW: Because she didn't have a strong relationship with her mom, though.

[00:36:58] RS: No. Not her birth mom. Her grandmother who raised – like her mom, who raised her. [inaudible 00:37:04] Royal. She would always tell stories about her. I didn't get to meet her. Her mom died in 2012. But she said she got all of her strength from her mom. She saw her mom do triple bypass surgery. And the doctors giving her a 10% chance of living. And her dad saying, "No. Let's keep her here." And she bouncing back from that. And said she's never seen her mom complain and all that. That strength, I believe, she got it from her mom and God. Because that girl was Superwoman, bro. She was Superwoman.

[00:37:37] LW: Hmm. What was the conversation around being public about it and letting our friends and family know that it's back and we have to deal with that again? Because, again, people could be very negative when it comes to those kinds of things. And you guys are very positive. How did you cope with that?

[00:37:53] RS: In October, when we had gotten the news, we had told just like close family. But I had been documenting the doctor's appointments and all that. And then, she had surgery on January 7th. On January 6th, she said, "Let's make a video and tell the people what's going on." I was like, "All right." It was her idea. We make a video before. We put it on our social media. And I'm talking about hundreds and hundreds of people came. Just sent messages of, "What's going on?"

And I couldn't keep up with everybody individually. I couldn't text this update, that update, that – I was like, "No. I'm going to put everything here on the page. This is what's happening. If you want to update, come to my page or her page." And that's where our community grew. That's where people poured love into us, and shared our story, and commented hearts, and donated and sent stuff to the hospital. It was insane, man. We really unlocked a super positive part of social media, man. I'm so grateful for it, bro. We really got the best part of it.

[00:38:58] LW: How many videos did you post before you got the invitation from the Ellen Show?

[00:39:03] RS: That was just one. That was after her surgery. She had surgery on the 7th. Her birthday was on the 16th. What I wanted to do I put this video together already, and I just wanted some popular pages to share and give my wife a birthday shout-out, right?

I'm sending this video off to Black Love, to Married Couples. And then I send it to a girl who writes stories for Shade Room. I have done research. Under Shade Room, they put who wrote the article. And then you can go to their individual page. I sent that girl a DM and a video. She falls in love with it. She's like, "Well, tell me more." And then they put together this whole 10-slide thing of an interview I did with her.

The next day, a local news channel saw that because millions of people saw it on the Shade Room. We do an interview on the local news. And about a week later, the lady named Stephanie called me from the Ellen Show.

[00:39:57] LW: What they do with the Ellen show is they scour the media looking for local news stories like yours?

[00:40:01] RS: I imagine. I imagine. But it's like when I say local, like after we did that interview, that interview was KTLA. People called me from Nebraska who saw it, Florida. Because it went like to National NBC News. Like once the story gets –

[00:40:18] LW: Went on syndication. Yeah.

[00:40:20] RS: Yeah. Yeah. Everybody can get into it. It was everywhere. I don't know how much they had to scour. But people saw it, man. It blew up from there, man.

[00:40:31] LW: What did that feel like for both you and Ros to have her story become so popular?

[00:40:37] RS: Right. It wasn't really a spotlight person in the beginning stages. I had to warm her up to that. When I met her, she had maybe 2,000 followers. Wasn't really on social media like that. I come in 10k. I'm a big, bad man. You know what I'm saying? I had to bring her into this world. And she liked it. She didn't like the weirdness of it. Because people – you know, people get weird.

[00:40:58] LW: Yeah. They think they know you intimately. It's like, "No. [inaudible 00:41:01]."

[00:41:02] RS: Yeah. Yeah. I was in the face – I was a PR for our relationship for a long time. I would release the statements. I would write the captions. I would take pictures. She was just the beauty and the brains.

[00:41:17] LW: Was this full-time for you at this point? Or are you still working at the car dealership?

[00:41:22] RS: I was at a car dealership. She met me. She met me when I was doing mortgages. And then I got into the car business. And that's a whole thing. Because you go from 40-hour a week to 80-hour a week. And I'm not at home all the time. That was a whole other story. I'm a working man. I'm still hustling. I'm still singing. I got my band. I'm doing gigs all over the place. Wedding singing. I'm hustling. She's working. Yeah, man. We're just trying to make it happen.

[00:41:49] LW: Is it expensive going through her treatment and all that? Or did her insurance cover it?

[00:41:54] RS: Thank God she's a veteran. And the VA covered a very heavy load. The surgeries was like \$5,000 just to get two pictures from the scan. Chemo pills worth \$8,000. One surgery, \$175 000. This device she had to wear on her head, called Novacure that shot radio waves to the tumor site that was \$20,000 a month to rent.

[00:42:24] LW: Wow. She didn't have that VA –

[00:42:26] RS: Shout-out to the United States Armed Forces. Now, they're the most fun to work with. But they're going to get you back. They're going to get you done.

[00:42:37] LW: But there's also some speculation that she could have been exposed to some sort of chemicals or whatever when she was doing that tour in Iraq, right? Which could have contributed to this.

[00:42:46] RS: Burn pits, that's what she told me about. An ironic part of it is Beau Biden, Joe Biden's son, also died from glioblastoma multiforme. And he was also stationed in Iraq during the same time Ros was there. Yeah, she told me about those burn pits and all that. And she fought the VA and put tooth to get disability. They never gave her her full 100% disability. I had to take over that and working with lawyers to still try to get that straight. But yeah, man.

[00:43:22] LW: Okay. You're working 80 hours. You get this call from Stephanie saying we want you guys to fly to Los Angeles. How does it work? They send you tickets. They put you in a hotel. How's the Ellen Show experience work?

[00:43:35] RS: Once you say yeah, then they set up a Zoom call. You talk to the producer. And then they're getting the whole background story from their side. She takes that back to the executive producers. Now the executive producer, she gets on a phone call with you. And then they're asking me questions like, "Ray, what do you do for work? What do you like? What do you like about the Ellen Show? Has anybody been on the show that you would love to meet?" All this stuff, right?

We do these Zoom calls. They buy the flights. Put us in first class. We get there. They got to do with the suit with our name on [inaudible 00:44:07]. Yeah, man. We go to the Black Suburban. They put us up in the hotel right by the studio. That was right when COVID had just started. Nobody knew what was happening. Everything was a little weird, man. Everything was a little weird. But it was first-class to its finest.

[00:44:27] LW: What about wardrobe? Because you guys look clean on there. Did you have to go shop for your own clothes? Or do they have a stylist giving you clothes?

[00:44:33] RS: Right. Ros, she did her thing. I actually had another suit packed to wear. But we went to the mall the day before. And I found that khaki suit in Zara. And I was like, "Yep, that's it."

[00:44:46] LW: This is it.

[00:44:47] RS: That's fresh off the rack, bro. That ain't tailored. That's nothing. That's off the rack. That's been one of my most famous suits, man.

[00:44:57] LW: She has a pink, too, right?

[00:44:58] RS: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Now that girl was a fashionista.

[00:45:02] LW: Three weeks out of surgery.

[00:45:04] RS: Three weeks, man. I told you, she was Superwoman, bro. She was Superwoman. We would talk. We would joke. I said, "You're Wolverine." At the end towards it, and I was like, "Yeah, you turned into Logan now." We would laugh.

[00:45:21] LW: Do you meet Ellen before you go out in front of the audience briefly?

[00:45:25] RS: No. No. All you got is the stage time with her. We ended up doing two segments. And what's supposed to happen is you get on the stage. And when it goes to commercial, there's a producer that's supposed to come talk to Ellen to make sure she's straight. And the producer is supposed to come talk to us. When it went to commercial break, Ellen leaned in and we just had a conversation. You could tell that she would really – she had read the story. Knew about it. Asked Ros how she was doing when treatment started. Ray, how you doing?

And then there was a microphone on the table, bro. I was supposed to sing on that episode. But nobody knew. Right before we came back for the second, someone took the microphone away. And on the live version of the episode, not on YouTube, because they chop it up and edit it. On the live version of that episode, Ellen was like, "Oh, that's what that microphone was for. Ray, you were supposed to sing." I was like, "Yeah! Come on, man." I was supposed to sing on Ellen, dog.

[00:46:28] LW: What song were you going to sing? Had you written one? Or you're going to do the same one from the video you guys did?

[00:46:33] RS: I was going to do – I was already rehearsing the song that I didn't know that I was going to think for America's Got Talent because that wasn't a thing yet. That was going to be the song; I Am Yours.

[00:46:45] LW: And you wrote that song.

[00:46:46] RS: No. That's by Andy Grammer.

[00:46:47] LW: Okay.

[00:46:49] RS: Yeah, Andy Grammer. His version is a lot faster. I turn it into a ballad.

[00:46:54] LW: Okay. All right. You're on the Ellen Show. You do that. What happens next? Does your social media blow up? Do you get calls some other people? [inaudible 00:47:02]?

[00:47:04] RS: After Allen, we're supposed to go on Good Morning America. America's Got Talent had just hit. It was March 15th, we're driving to dinner with all these news reports are coming out. What's this new disease? Everybody's sick. We're driving to dinner. I get a call from California. Yeah, I know you're supposed to be coming out here for America's Got Talent. But we're shutting down production.

The world stops. That's what happens. The world shuts down. And then everybody goes into this thing right here. What grows out of that is we have this massive following on social media. We're just posting videos and just being bored at home. We start this YouTube video. Just trying to make episodes and stuff. And then we started going live and just telling people what we were doing throughout the day. And that's how Mental Health Mondays was born. She would turn her phone on and just get on and talk to people. Say hello. Tell people about what's going on in her life. Treatments. How is chemo going? How radiation. And during COVID, when she would have these doctor's appointments, I couldn't go into the doctor with her. I would have to be outside. And while I'm outside in my car, going live.

I got 40 people in there praying and crying with me and just talking and just – they bought us a blender. The doctor said Ros had to change her diet for the medicine that she was taking. It's like one of the things we need was a blender. Somebody wrote in the comments, "Let's put our money together and buy them a blender." By the end of the live, they sent us \$125 on cash out. Yeah, it is no way to explain that time, bro. It was unbelievable. I got a booklet, a folder here with nothing but fan mail, man. Like just fan mail. Pictures. Saw you on Ellen. Tommy John, this is a famous clothing brand. They sent us stuff for our wedding. They sent me underwear and socks. This is crazy. This is fan mail, man.

Also, look, that's my logo. Qool Car. This is my car sales. Look, I would have this on my desk when people would be sitting waiting. Because you're waiting in the car dealership all day long. Just sitting down. I had this on my desk. Printed out pictures of me and customers with my shirt on. Other customers with my shirt on. I was a businessman, bro. I was putting it together. Yeah, man. I'm a hustler, dog.

[00:49:38] LW: Did you guys need an agent at that time to field some of these offers and stuff?

[00:49:44] RS: Nope. It was me. When I tell you I was PR, I did it all. She focused on getting healthy. I handled all the other stuff.

[00:49:53] LW: Okay. So then, talk about America's Got Talent. When did you eventually get on there?

[00:49:58] RS: America's Got Talent came back around in 2021. I think it was by email. A lady named Courtney, she reached out to me. She says, "I know you're supposed to do this last year or two years ago whenever it happened. But we want to see if you would accept an invitation to come back." Hell, yeah, I accepted an invitation to come back."

And we go out to L.A. That was a whole experience as well, man. They were really dope. The experience was dope. They break it up into two days in this big convention, big wait room. Again, COVID – we still don't know what's happening with COVID. We got everybody separated. It was a wild time, man. It was a wild time. But it was really, really dope.

When I get on stage to audition, because it's COVID, there's nobody in the crowd. But what they did was they put mannequins and dummies in the crowd. Put clothes on them. Put hats. And they brought the house lights down so you can only see the silhouette. And then they also had a guy on the back on the soundboard making applause, booing, and all that. It felt like people were there.

And then when the episode aired, and I saw all these people in the stand, I'm like, "Where did people come from?" They CGI those people on season 16, y'all. If y'all don't know. That crowded CGI.

[00:51:16] LW: I was wondering about that. Because I saw the video and I saw the crowd. And I was like, "There's a lot of people in that room."

[00:51:21] RS: No. None of those people were there. It was like maybe four people in the crowd, the producers. And walk out – and like you walk out on stage, and it's Simon. You see, Simon. Sofia flying in. Howie. Heide. They're all right there. When we ended up, we had a sit-down interview with Terry Crews. We did some extra behind-the-scenes stuff. They had built up our story. I was the last person on the episode. They put us in commercials. We apparently had the most coverage, outside media coverage. There was an article and billboard written about me. Entertainment news. All types of stuff, man. It was a wild ride, bro.

There's no way to put all of that into words. It's a blurb. It really is. Because now you've got all this good stuff happening. You got your news, your TV, all this. But we're taking chemo. We're doing radiation. We're still dealing with fighting brain cancer. It is immediately from here to there.

[00:52:26] LW: She was in remission during that performance. She had been in remission, right?

[00:52:31] RS: Correct. Correct. Correct. But we still have to take medicine. We still have to do checkups. We still had to go get blood work because it was brain cancer. It's an aggressive form of cancer. You have to stay on that shit, especially after it came back. It wasn't all good. You know what I'm saying? It was still a fight.

[00:53:04] LW: What's interesting is you're now being nationally recognized for your voice, right? And the thing that would annoy her back when you guys were both more or less anonymous. Now she's there. She's like getting all emotional. She's crying. Everyone's emotional as you're out there singing and serenading the song that you were supposed to sing on The Ellen Show. You got four yeses from all of the judges. What happens next?

[00:53:31] RS: That year, the Olympics were also on NBC. And when they usually have a judge cuts round, they had to go straight into the live shows because air time. In the deliberations, for whatever reason, they chose for me not to go forward. And what's crazy about that is the day

before that, that's when tumor came back, or at least a portion of it. That's when we had to go back to the doctor, and she got sick again.

It ended up working out probably perfectly because I wouldn't have been able to travel back and forth to shows and be with her at doctor's appointments and do what I needed to do for her. We got what we needed from that. We got the opportunities, and the doors opened, and experience, and people still talk about it. People still haven't seen it. I'm still getting messages from all over the world, Britain, the UK, Canada, South Africa, Ghana. Say, "I saw you on America's Got Talent." It's crazy. It's crazy.

And that's that's. The goal. That's the vision. That's the mission. How many people can you impact positively? How many people, when they think about you, have a good feeling? How many people have their spirits lifted when they see your picture? That's the goal. It's not having a career or selling multi-platinum albums and doing all that. No. I want to impact people. I want people to be better as a result of meeting me. Because I can't take no Grammy's with me. I can't take no Oscars with me. I can't take none of this with me. How do I make people feel while I'm here?

[00:55:03] LW: You're also being kind of – I don't know if this is tongue-in-cheek. But being seen as America's husband.

[00:55:09] RS: Yeah. Yeah.

[00:55:11] LW: Which is interesting, essentially.

[00:55:14] RS: Yeah.

[00:55:15] LW: It's an interesting identification.

[00:55:16] RS: I didn't understand why – when we initially went viral, like why we were making news? Because the way they would frame the story is husband serenade's wife for brain surgery. Husband takes care of wife during medical. Aren't I supposed to do that? If I can sing and my wife needs me, what I'm supposed to do? Why is this news?

And then I started getting messages from young men who said, "Man, the way you stick by your wife, we don't see examples like that. Men that I know, they'll run out." I start getting messages from women. Or when I went through my battle, my husband of 16 years left me. I wish I had the support that you gave your wife.

And I'm like, "Oh." So people don't see the example of what I'm doing. And that's when things completely change for me, man. The fact that I got the opportunity to set an example for love is one hell of a responsibility and one of a role. And I'm so glad that it was me that was chosen to do that. Because like that impact is crazy, man.

I'm talking about messages, messages. My husband left me. Everybody walked out on me. Your support. You inspire us and make me believe in love again. I went back to Christ after seeing how much you loved God, how much you and your wife love God. I gave my life – that's insane, man.

[00:56:44] LW: Did you ever have down days and getting that level of attention and support helped to lift you up so that you can continue showing up in that positive way?

[00:56:53] RS: Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Absolutely. Because it's validation. You want to work harder if your boss tells you, "Hey, man. You're doing a great job. Everybody likes you." We're human. At least that's what I feed off, of my light being used to light up someone else. And people noticing if I'm down, or if I seem down, they'll pour loving to me. These people I've never seen never met before. Just really showing love.

This is from our clothing line. They would buy shirts from us. They would send us donations. They would send us groceries. How do you not show up for those people? And again, the things that I found joy in brought other people joy. That makes it all easy. That makes it all make sense.

[00:57:38] LW: What were some of the things you were doing in the background to keep you present and keep you available? Were you doing any meditation? Obviously, you were praying. Were you working out?

[00:57:50] RS: Praying. I wasn't working out as heavy as I am now. But I was active. But music, man. I attribute it all to whether I'm listening to music, whether I'm creating music, whether I'm playing, or singing, performing. Music is truly, truly therapy. If I'm listening – if I'm at a live band, I'll close my eyes, and I don't care about nobody else in the room. I'm listening. I'm feeling myself off of that. Music, man. It is vital. It is vital to my existence here. I would be dead without it. No doubt.

[00:58:23] LW: Let's talk about her transitioning.

[00:58:26] RS: Yeah.

[00:58:27] LW: What was that process like for you? It was rough, man. At the beginning of October last year, she drove herself to her MRI. By the end of October, she could barely walk, barely talk. It happened extraordinarily fast. She didn't want to be in a hospital. She didn't want to have no tubes and nothing hanging from her. She would say she wasn't in pain. And from my research, glioblastoma, GBM, is the short-term for it; patients are – they don't complain of pain. However was set up, she didn't feel pain.

And she was home. We were surrounded by love. I got to love on her and take care of her in some very, very vulnerable moments. You don't imagine that you're 30, 33, 32, having to give your wife a bath. Like having to pick her up and walking her down the stairs. And she maybe 100 pounds, and you got to feed her and put medicine down her mouth. And you don't think you're going to have to do that. But you do it. There's no second thought. There wasn't a second thought for me because that's what she needed in that moment.

I was able to provide her a comfortable environment. I was able to love on her. And she went to sleep. She went to sleep, bro, probably like two or three days before she transitioned. Like her spirit had already left, she wasn't talking anymore. She was just breathing.

I knew it was coming. And I thank God that he gave me the strength to block out the noise and all the other stuff and just focus on just loving her, man. And we woke up from a nap. I went to the kitchen to try to make some food. I got my eye on her. I walk around the corner. I don't see

your chest moving anymore. As I get to her, I see a tear coming from her eye. And after that she was gone.

I hugged her. I told her I love her. And I told her I was mad at her for sneaking out on me, "Ooh, you sneaky motherfucker." I said, "You sneaky – ooh". But knowing the information that we know, knowing we all got to get up out of here, right? She didn't burn up in no building. She didn't get shot up. She didn't get stabbed up. She didn't fall from some crazy thing. She went to sleep at home. Sign me up for that way every time.

And if we believe, if we're religious, if anybody's listening to this religious, that we believe what we believe about heaven. What they told me was there's no sickness. There's no dying. There's no – every day is Sunday. There's laughter, and clouds, and all this good stuff. The streets are paved with gold. If she's not here anymore, that means she's there. And there, she doesn't have to take chemo. There she don't have to take 20 pills. There, she's not going to do doctor's appointments. She can chill. And guess what? I can too. I can rejoice in the fact that she's in paradise. That I did what I could do. I controlled what I could. And I took care of her. I was at peace, man.

[01:01:37] LW: What do you feel like your mission is now?

[01:01:40] RS: To continue to inspire others, man. To truly appreciate. Enjoy life. Be grateful. Not spend time and focus on the trivial things that's stressing you out. Treat yourself. I want to inspire people just to really understand, yo, I'm not here for long. And with that information, I want to do what's going to make me happy while I'm here. I want to do what's going to just going to light me up while I'm here. And I hope the things that light you up can possibly light somebody else up.

I hope the things that make you happy can possibly make somebody else happy. And guess what? You don't really need to do much to do that. Smile at somebody. Tell somebody you love them. Love all your neighbor. Love each other. If you love each other, you're not going to treat them bad. If you love your neighbor, you're not going to lie on them. If you love somebody else, you're not going to cheat them out of something. You're not going to do bad business deals. You're not going to be conniving because you love somebody. You love somebody; you want the

best for them. I love my wife. I love her so much that I'm glad she got the promotion to heaven. Because here on Earth, she had to go through hell.

[01:02:50] LW: If somebody else is going through a similar experience, do you have any advice for them?

[01:02:56] RS: Don't miss the miracle. That's my advice. Oftentimes, we ask God for a miracle without seeing the miracle of right now, the day. The miracle was after one surgery, she was still here. The next miracle is after two surgeries, she was still here. That other miracle, after three surgery, she was still here. There are documented people who don't make it through one brain – brain surgery is the most dangerous type of surgery there is. She made it through four of them. Don't miss the miracle of trying to say, "Hey, God, just protect her and keep her." No. He did that. He did that the first time. The miracle is us waking up. And somebody was going to go to sleep tonight and not wake up tomorrow. That is a fact. Don't miss the miracle in waking up. That's the whole thing. That's the whole game. Because now it's all opportunity. Now it's free game. Now you get to be who you want to be. Now you get to go chase that dream. Now you get to go write that book, write that song. Because the miracle was, this morning, you opened your eyes. You breathed. You may have a little ailment. Your back might hurt a little bit. There's something going on, but you're here. [inaudible 01:04:10].

[01:04:12] LW: What can we expect out of you next?

[01:04:15] RS: A lot. I'm continuing to hustle. I am in the process of writing more music. Not only that. Yesterday, I started the thought process of starting this foundation for my wife. It's going to be named Roslyn's Roses. And it's going to be a 501c3 to inspire and highlight individuals who show faith, and inspiration, and courage and fight. And I'm already thinking about merch, and fundraisers, and visiting hospitals, and giving out roses and patches. All types of stuff, man. Roslyn's Roses Foundation is going to be happening. I just want to continue to be a light, man. Just continue to do what I do and continue to impact people.

[01:05:03] LW: I love it. Well, you've been using your voice to spread light and love for as long as you can remember. And you're still doing that. And I just want to acknowledge your power of your presence.

[01:05:15] RS: Thank you, brother.

[01:05:15] LW: And it's an honor that we got a chance to meet. I don't think it was by accident. And I hope that we get a chance to collaborate on other projects in the future and get to spend more time together. Are you going to be in Charlotte now indefinitely? Are you thinking about any moves?

[01:05:31] RS: I was going to go out West, but the cost of living is just ridiculous. It's ridiculous, man. I can shine from wherever I'm at if I need to go out here and work. You know what I'm saying? And that's what this last three or four years had taught me. I don't necessarily have to be in the craziness to shine, to show my life. Opportunities are going to come. The right opportunities are going to come. I like it here. My sister's newly pregnant. I'm getting ready to be an uncle again. My family's right two and a half hours down the road. All my friends are here. I may set down some roots here in Charlotte for a little bit, man. But I'm always open. I am open-minded. Any opportunity that makes sense and looks good, I'm with it. Yeah, man.

[01:06:19] LW: And you're still going live. You're still posting. I watch you singing in church on last Sunday.

[01:06:23] RS: Yeah, man. I appreciate you stopping through.

[01:06:25] LW: I love all the stuff you post, man. Everybody needs to follow you on the socials. And hopefully, we'll get a chance to see each other in person again soon.

[01:06:32] RS: Man, listen, I appreciate your time. I appreciate the opportunity. I actually did some research and saw some other episodes. I love what you're doing, man. Continue to do what you're doing. Again, thank you for this invite. And I look forward to what we can do in the future.

[01:06:47] LW: Thanks, brother.

[OUTRO]

[01:06:48] LW: Thank you so much for listening to my interview with Ray Singleton. For more inspiration, make sure to follow Ray on the socials at Willie_Qool. That's Q-O-O-L. And, of course, I'll drop links to everything that Ray and I discussed in the show notes on my website, which is lightwatkins.com/show.

And if this is your first time listening to the Light Watkins show, we've got an incredible archive of interviews with many other luminaries who share how they found their path and their purpose. People such as Ava DuVernay, Ed Mylett, Marcus Samuelson, Zachary Levi, and many others.

You can even search these interviews by subject matter if you only want to hear stories about people who've taken leaps with faith or stories like race, about people who've navigated health challenges, or people who've overcome financial struggles. You can get a list of all of that at lightwatkins.com/show.

You can also watch these interviews on my YouTube channel if you want to put a face to a story. Just search Light Watkins podcast on YouTube and you'll see an entire playlist. And if you didn't already know, I post the raw, unedited version of every podcast inside of my Happiness Insider's online community.

If you're the type that likes to hear all the mistakes and the false starts in the chit-chat in the beginning and the end of each episode, you can listen to that by joining my online community at thehappinessinsiders.com. And you'll also get access to the 108-day challenges, the 30-day challenges and other master classes for becoming the best version of you.

And then finally, to help me bring you the best guests possible, it will go a long way if you can take just 10 seconds to rate the podcast. Just glance down at your screen, click on the name of the podcast, scroll down past the seven or eight previous episodes. You'll see a space with five blank stars. If you like this podcast, if you like what we're doing, tap the star all the way on your right and you've left the five-star rating. And if you feel inspired to go the extra mile, leave a review with one line about what you like about the podcast or which podcast you think a new listener should start with. Could be the episode that had the biggest impact on you personally.

Thank you in advance for that. And I look forward to hopefully seeing you back here next week with another story about someone just like me and you taking a leap of faith in the direction of their purpose. And until then, keep trusting your intuition, keep following your heart and keep taking those leaps of faith. And if no one's told you recently that they believe in you, I believe in you.

Thank you so much. And have a great day.

[END]