

TRANSCRIPT

Adam Goodes

City Recital Hall, Angel Place, Sydney

Tuesday 7 April 2015

Anne Summers: Good evening, everybody. Good evening and welcome. We are in for a fascinating evening. It's not every night you can sit down with a man who has been described as one of his generation's greatest footballers and talk to him about a whole lot of topics, in addition to football, but that's what we'll be doing this evening, with Adam Goodes. I will introduce him in a moment.

First, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and pay my respects to their elders past and present. This place is, was and always will be Aboriginal land, and we thank the owners for allowing us to share it. I also want to acknowledge the significant number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are in the audience tonight, and especially one Wiradjuri woman, who I promised could be the first in the queue to ask a question this evening.

Tonight's guest, Adam Goodes, is the fifth in my series of conversations. He follows on from former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, leading environmentalist Tim Flannery, double Academy Award winner Cate Blanchett and the chief of the Australian Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison. I chose these people for my conversations, not just because they're well known – I'm not interested in celebrities - I wanted to talk to people who have something to say, something that will add to the Australian story.

After tonight, we will not only have got to know Adam Goodes a little better, but we will, I hope, have learned something about ourselves. Adam Goodes is a football legend. He has played more games for the Sydney Swans than any other player. He has won two Brownlow medals, only one of just 14 players to do so, and among many other honors, he is a member of the AFL's Indigenous Team of the Century.

Off the field, he champions people and causes that we will be talking about this evening, and in 2014, of course, he was our Australian of the Year. Please welcome, Adam Goodes.

Adam Goodes: Hi everyone, thank you.

Anne Summers: I think they like you!

Adam Goodes: I think so.

Anne Summers: It seems to be a popular choice. I chose well with you Adam.

Adam Goodes: You did. Thank you.

Anne Summers: Tonight we want to get to know Adam, the man. We want to understand the things that drive him, and we want to learn from him. Sport and particularly football, of course, is integral to who you are and who you've become over the past 17 years, Adam Goodes. Yet, you have said, "If I'm only defined by my sport, I really would have failed." Why did you say that?

Adam Goodes: It was very early in my career, I was at a Swans fan day and I'm very much a people person, I love to hear people's stories, and this fan came up to me, I think I was 19 and he gave me this little quote. I don't know why he gave it to me out of all the 40 players there. He'd always come to watch the Reserves. Got up very early to watch me in my first couple of years and he gave me this little quote and it's by Isaiah Thomas, who's a famous basketballer, NBA player and coach. He said exactly that quote. "If people only remember me as being a basketballer, then I've failed in life."

I thought that was a really forked moment in my life, where I could've just grabbed that quote and crunched it up and said, thanks mate, and thrown it into the bin, but I actually kept it. And it's just stuck with me my whole life. I'm very blessed to have this opportunity to be a professional athlete, but it's what I could do outside of it that's really going to define me as a person.

Anne Summers: Even though you said it when you were 19, now that you're 34, you still abide by that.

Adam Goodes: Yes still.

Anne Summers: It's still part of who you are.

Adam Goodes: Yeah, definitely. I think once I bought into that whole concept that football is a small part of my life, and when I'm 19, playing with Paul Kelly, Tony Lockett, Paul Roose I'm not really thinking I'm going to play for 18 years. It was a real snapshot just right at that point in my young football career, that it is something that I could really make as a life choice, football, but it's also something that could help, maybe, launch me in other areas of my life.

Anne Summers: You've been with the Swans now for 17 years. That's been most of your adult life. You said that before the Swans, you had no culture and there's a quote that says, "I had no language. I had no ceremonies so being part of the Swans is my culture." I'm just wondering if you can explain to us what culture means in this context? Are we talking about a framework for which you judge your life? Are we talking about stories? What exactly do you mean by culture?

Adam: I think, for me, when I moved to Sydney, I knew my Aboriginal name, my tribe, Adnyamathanha, but I didn't have anything to back that up. We had no stories. We had no connection to land. I had no relatives, outside of my Mum's nine brothers and sisters, that I could actually go to and find out who we are as people, and that identity struggle that I had when I moved to Sydney, away from my family, I really had to go on a search for that.

When you're on a football club, there is a culture. It's a bit of a boy's club, at times, especially when I got to the Swans. You had to earn your stripes at that football club. The elder players didn't talk to you. They didn't talk to me.

Anne Summers: Really?

Adam Goodes: They didn't talk to me until-

Anne Summers: Why wouldn't they talk to you?

Adam Goodes: I'd got to earn that position. We're talking a long time ago, here.

Anne Summers: We won't talk to you until you ...

Adam Goodes: You've got to prove yourself, you know?

Anne Summers: On the field?

Adam Goodes: On the field, at training, every session. You've got to earn the respect of those players. And for me, that was a real battle.

Anne Summers: Is that what you do now?

Adam Goodes: We do do it, but we do it to a different level, now, where we do have a culture in place. We do have a road map that we teach our young players what they need to do if they're going to be here at this football club for a long time. And us, as leaders, we take it upon ourselves to train these young kids up, pretty much to take our position. That's definitely something that didn't happen when I started.

To go back to that point, when I did have that struggle with my identity, I wanted to do something about it and going down to Eora TAFE and doing a Diploma in Aboriginal Studies, helped me on my journey to understand who I was as an

Aboriginal person. Twelve years later, to find out who I was as an Adnyamathanha person. That was really important for me, to find out who I was as an Aboriginal person first, because I was seen as an Aboriginal role model.

I actually didn't really know what it meant to be Aboriginal when I got drafted to the Swans, so this is something that I really struggled with, and I needed to get that knowledge. I needed to have conversations and to have role models, like Michael O'Loughlin, who's here tonight and other Aboriginal players on our football team that played that father figure role for me was really important, because I really didn't have those senior Aboriginal men in my life.

Anne Summers: This is obviously a theme of what we'll be talking about tonight, but if I can just ask you another question about the two cultures, now that you've gone back and found your people and you've been accepted into that traditional culture. You've been formally welcomed back, and as you've said, "I now have a sense of who I am." How do the two cultures, your traditional Aboriginal and the Swans culture, how do you see them sitting together?

Adam Goodes: Quite easily, I think. For all of Aboriginal people out there, we live our life between two different streams, whether it be a spiritual one and a western one. Here and I think for me, I actually got the confidence and the strength from my culture of the Swans to actually go on that journey, and not only go on that journey, but to become a leader and help other people go on that journey.

For me, growing up, I was very shy. I'd struggled looking people in the eyes when they were talking to me. People might find that hard to believe now, but that's exactly who I was.

Anne Summers: This is when you were 17?

Adam Goodes: Yeah, this is when I was 17 and I got drafted to the Swans. Those confidence levels weren't that high, and when I got to the Swans, it got knocked down a little bit more after meeting my team mates. That journey that I've been on since being at the Swans has all been about that confidence, understanding my position in the team, my position in the family, in the culture, and what my role is as an elder at the Swans, now, being there for so long.

It's about educating those younger players. It's about bringing them up to speed, with the language that we talk in the football rooms on game day. The ceremonies that we have at the Swans. Getting in a circle after a game when we win, singing that song. The induction that we do with our younger players when they first get to the club. All these things, initiations, these things are what culture is to me, and it's around that language, those ceremonies and the things that we practice.

Anne Summers: They're an important part of giving you, I guess, a mooring point in life, and giving you something to refer to, something to guide you as you go forward?

Adam Goodes: It definitely did, and I probably didn't realize how important the Swans culture was, until I was made captain in 2008. Myself and Jarrad McVeigh were co-captains. To be given that role and have that responsibility over the whole group, really made me understand the role that I had as a leader, and I never thought I'd ever captain a team, ever growing up.

I never captained any football team, any cricket team, mixed netball, which I loved to play as well. I never captained any of those teams. For me to get to a place like the Sydney Swans, who have a fantastic culture, great leadership, and actually have been in the leadership group for over 12 years now, has really helped develop me as a leader, but as a person today.

Anne Summers: One of the things that you learned very early on, I understand from the conversation we had few weeks ago, as a young man coming to the Swans, was a discipline that you'd never experience before and you were quite shocked by that?

Adam Goodes: That's probably why I played the first year in the Reserves, to be honest. I was only 17 when I got drafted to the Swans, and it was a big shock to me how hard you had to train. How much time and effort you had to commit to being a professional athlete and there's no way that my diet, my recovery protocols were up to speed. That's something that I had to learn. I really didn't have people teaching about my diet growing up.

My Mum learned from her sisters and brothers around about meat and three veggies is pretty good and have pasta before you send your kids to the footie on Sunday. Apart from that, about having consistent dietary needs through the week when you're training every day was pretty tough for me, and it took me a long time to understand my body and what I needed to do to refuel it.

Anne Summers: Was the food more difficult than the actual physical work?

Adam Goodes: Well, there was definitely the physical side, but the food that I was putting into reenergize myself probably wasn't great that first year, either.

Anne Summers: Okay. Well, let's move on now to the subject of your Aboriginality. We're going to spend a bit of time talking about the three areas outside football that you have said are priorities for you. One is combating racism. One is ending violence against women. Third is ensuring Constitutional recognition for Indigenous people.

If we start with racism, Aboriginality. You said that when you grew up in Wallaroo, which is a small town in Yorke Peninsula in South Australia, and that you weren't really aware of your Aboriginality, even though you had dark skin, and this was because of what happened to your mother, Lisa Sansbury. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Adam Goodes: Yeah. I think for me, I was very lucky growing up. Went to schools where I never felt like I was different. I had a mother who would never treat us any different to any other kids in the community. For me, I think the biggest thing that I've noticed, once I moved away from home, was the sacrifices that my Mum did make, to make sure that we did feel like that, and I think those sacrifices were because of what happened to her growing up.

Anne Summers: Can you tell us what happened to her?

Adam Goodes: Obviously, Mum was made a Ward of the State when she was 5 years old. She was taken away from her family.

Anne Summers: That is, in South Australia, if we can just explain that, they didn't have the Stolen Generation as such. It was done differently there; the kids were made Wards of the State isn't that right?

Adam Goodes: They were made Wards of the State and it's something that's ...

Anne Summers: It's the same thing that in almost other states is called Stolen Generation [crosstalk] ...

Adam Goodes: ... I think for me and if you ask my Mum she definitely feels like she's part of the Stolen Generation with her brothers and sisters. Unfortunately Mum was taken away so were her other nine brothers and sisters. She was put into foster care with my Aunt Joy, who was two years younger than her. They grew up going to school, private school just in Adelaide together and unfortunately none of those got to meet their mother again.

I think the thing that stayed with my Mum was that she always knew she was different, she always knew that she had white parents growing up and for her what motivated her to make sure that didn't happen to us was that she didn't want anyone to ever take her kids away from her. I know that's why she made the sacrifices that she did.

Anne Summers: Did she think that by saying, not acknowledging that you are Aboriginal that that would be a form of protection against you being taken away?

Adam Goodes: It's an interesting point because I never really thought of it like that. I always thought that because Mum was taken away at such a young age that we really didn't have that connection to our land to our people, to our community. We always lived in areas where we weren't near family. Being in Wallaroo was so far away from Adelaide where the rest of Mum's brothers and sisters actually were and it wasn't until we moved to Victoria that we actually got to meet a lot more of my aunties and uncles and get a bit of understanding of what they have been up to in the last 20 years.

Anne Summers: One of the things I find incredible is that your mother was put into foster care in 1967, which was the year of the Referendum. It's incredible to think that on the one hand that year Australia was voting for the federal government to have powers to make laws for Aboriginal people at the same time they were still taking kids away, stealing them?

Adam Goodes: It is. We are coming up to the 50th anniversary of that. Our mother is not very open about talking about those issues and I can totally understand why. The way that I deal with this, that it's just given me and my brothers a great opportunity to really give something back, to my brother and give something back to our people about doing something right. If my Mum wasn't taken away, would I be up on stage right now? Yes or no? Maybe will never know but would I have culture?

Going back to Point Pearce mission which is actually Narungga people which is part of my heritage as well. Would I have a different path in life? It's hard to know because a lot of Aboriginal families from Point Pearce actually are some of the best families for raising Aboriginal footballers in the AFL. You have the Wanganines, the Watsons, the Varcos all these players who have come to that same sport. One way I look at it: would I still be in this position today? and the other way I look at it is that, I've just got a great opportunity to really make my Mum proud and make sure that she knows that the sacrifices that she made were really worth it.

Anne Summers: Was worthwhile. One of the things that you've said is that you weren't really aware of race, you had white grandparents, that you had foster parents and that race wasn't an issue. I'm just wondering when race started to be and I think perhaps is when you moved to Victoria and went to high school.

One of the things that you said when you were at the press conference after the Collingwood incident which we will talk about in a bit, you said that back at high school when you were called all these names because of your appearance. This is the first time that you are actually confronted with people making an issue out of the fact that you look different?

Adam Goodes: It was and I think kids are kids.

Anne Summers: This is Horsham, right?

Adam Goodes: This was in Horsham. There's no doubt growing up being minorities at schools with my brothers, always going to schools with predominately other white students, it was difficult but I never thought that I was different. Kids name called, I name called that's just what we did in the playground but it didn't really affect me that much. Moved to Horsham and the one thing that really did affect me in Horsham about name calling is when I went to Horsham College which is two Horsham High Schools joined together and it's a bit of walking between the two.

I has some cousins that lived in houses, who didn't go to school, who were younger than I and every time I'd walk past and they called me, "Hey you big shot, why are

you going to school for, you are such a coconut.” I was like, I didn’t understand what it meant and I went home to Mum and said, “Mum some of them boys are calling me a coconut.” She goes, “Who?” I said, “My cousins down the road.” She goes, “Don’t worry about them.” I said, “What does it mean?” She goes, “Well it means you are brown on the outside but white on the inside.” I was like, “Okay.”

I didn’t really get it even then. I was like, “Okay cool.” I didn’t really, it was water off, it was water off a duck’s back. My dad is white, my Mum is black - it makes sense. It was, it really didn’t really hurt me and cut me to my bone and I was able to move on have fantastic friends and friends that I am still friends with today. Who, whenever someone would pick on anyone in that group, we would stick up for each other and I suppose that’s what good mates do.

Anne Summers: Yet you and those same friends, you’d all go and apply for a job at McDonalds, you would all do the test or some of the others would get the jobs and you wouldn’t.

Adam Goodes: I was ...

Anne Summers: When did it the penny drop but it wasn’t because you had failed the test?

Adam Goodes: It wasn’t probably till I moved to Sydney because all my mates, the good footballers we knock around together. I was the one doing the advanced mathematics, they were the ones doing the very low level mathematics and somehow they end up working the till at McDonalds and came out and I’m thinking ... Hang on a minute. Hey maybe my Maths isn’t great. Because the only part time job that I did get in Horsham was running boundary and doing a bit of boundary, I’m applying here and there.

It probably was until I moved out of Horsham out to Sydney then I did think it was a little bit other issues going on with that maybe, not giving me an opportunity to work there. Because there wasn’t any other Aboriginal people working in those positions or my story is too much of a risk.

Anne Summers: We’ll get back to football for a minute and talk about the so-called Collingwood incident which was, it’s incredible to think about it, was less than two years ago. I’m about to just revisit what happened that night, it was the night of the end of an Indigenous Round match. Your team was way ahead ; I think you were ahead by 47 points or something. It was 20 years since Nicky Winmer had pulled up his jersey and pointed to his skin. You had in fact met him for the first time the day before.

You said at your press conference afterwards, that it was not the first time on the footy field that you’d been referred to as a “monkey” or as an “ape” but this time you decided to do something about it. This time it stopped with you. Can you tell us what went through your head and what made you do it?

Adam Goodes: I think just to go back a little bit on that. I think two weeks before the Indigenous Round I got asked to do a replica pose of Nicky Winmer lifting the jumper at the SCG. I just thought what a fantastic tribute to give to a fantastic footballer and a fantastic person who really paved the way for us other Aboriginal players to come through the AFL. I'm on a little bit of an easier journey than what they had to go through and I was just really excited to do that and because it was such a powerful statement, it was against Collingwood at Victoria Park.

All the stars aligned and looked for me going to do that. Even leading up to that I had been doing some work for, Racism It Stops With Me and I had been an ambassador for them for a couple of years before going into that game. I think what happens on a football field for me is so instinctive. I go out there, I put myself in a frame of mind that after all the meetings and training during the week, I just got to go out there and play back myself in, that I know what I'm going to do under pressure.

There's no difference between what happened in calling out that girl at the boundary line, it was an instinctive moment, it was such a proud moment for Indigenous Round to represent my football club as an Aboriginal person. We hadn't beat Collingwood for so long and we're at the MCG. It was 47 points up and I was just like, "Are you kidding me?" The most shattering thing about it was that it was such a young girl. Like I could see her face after I turned around and I suppose that what hurt the most.

Because she had no idea what she was saying. She'd obviously heard it from other people in the crowd and she had her moment to say that when I was close to the boundary. It was shattering I think if I put that in, the same situation to my cousins calling me a coconut, the journey I've been on to getting to the MCG - learning about my culture, learning what it meant to be Aboriginal, actually knew what they were attacking me for by saying, "I was a monkey." That is very personal.

The baggage that we carry around as Aboriginal people, it's always there and it had been a long time in my days on the field and off the field that someone had actually challenged me because of my race. It actually hurt and the last thing I wanted to do was keep playing football.

Anne Summers: You walked off didn't you?

Adam Goodes: Well I didn't and my good mate and premiership teammate I was playing at a time Darren Jolly and he goes, "What's wrong?" He could just tell something was wrong and I said, "Mate, this girl over here just called me an ape at the boundary." He goes, "Which one, which ..." I said, "We've already dealt with it and as we are talking he goes, "You are alright?" I said, "Don't worry about it mate, don't worry." The runner came out and said, "Goodsie, you come off. It's time to have a rest. It's late in the game." As soon as I got off I sat down for a second and then I just walked underneath and I had enough.

Anne Summers: Yet you copped a lot of flack from fans?

Adam Goodes: Yeah. That's what happens with people putting their necks out there and believing in what they are believing and saying things and calling things that they need to call. Hopefully that's going to change in the future. More people doing it and coming out and saying it because we need to encourage these conversations. We need to encourage people putting their necks out there and saying, "This is what I believe in, this is what I think needs to change in our community."

Anne Summers: Do you think, you've said, "Racism has got no place in our industry, it's got no place in our society." I'm sure everyone in this room would agree with that, but how do you feel we're going? Do you think it's getting any better? Last year, you were the Australian of the Year and you were booed during games. What's that about?

Adam Goodes: It will be nice to know.

Anne Summers: It must have hurt?

Adam Goodes: It will be nice to put out a survey to the AFL fans and give them maybe eight options on why they were booing me, because they could probably come up with more. I think it's a snapshot of our community. That's all it is.

Anne Summers: That was the point about that girl. You were upset that it was a young girl and you didn't want her individually to suffer but that you had to call it because she represented or she was the mouthpiece for a set of attitudes that are still being spread around and young kids are being taught that still. The only way to stop it is, okay 'It stops with me' is a very powerful, way of doing it?

Adam Goodes: Exactly and that's where the conversations have to start and that's why at the media conference it was really important to say that, she made a mistake, we all make mistakes. We were at a barbeque with our friends and we tell a joke that's off that somebody needs to call you out. We make mistakes, it's about not making that same mistake over and over again to the point they were actually influencing other people's ideas and influencing young minds on what they should think about minorities in this country.

When we talk about those people that are saying those things, they are a minority in this country as well. I think we can't stand ...

Anne Summers: You hope that they are?

Adam Goodes: Pardon?

Anne Summers: You hope they are?

Adam Goodes: I do hope they are and I think that's where my hope is. Because in the last year the amount of conversations that have happened at schools, with teachers and their students, and parents and their children at home. Kids are on

the ball. The letters of support and letters of kids saying how proud they are for standing up for what you believe in. We are teaching our kids the right things and these kids are going to be the next leaders of our country and they are going to be the ones that drive these messages that hopefully I continue to keep on driving.

Anne Summers: In fact I think we have one of those kids that are with us tonight a 10-year-old boy from Canberra, Ben Curtis, who might get up and ask a question later if we are lucky. His mother told me the other day that for his project at school he was asked to pick an Australian who inspires you? And he chose you and won the Principal's Prize for that.

Adam Goodes: Wow! Interesting.

Anne Summers: He was the only person in the school who chose you.

Adam Goodes: Nice.

Anne Summers: That was ...

Adam Goodes: Smart boy.

Anne Summers: Smart boy.

Adam Goodes: He's going to go a long way.

Anne Summers: I hope he's here.

Adam Goodes: Well done Ben.

Anne Summers: I hope he's here Ben.

Adam Goodes: There he is! Well done Benny good boy.

Anne Summers: Is there still racial sledging on the field? How do you deal with that when you hear that?

Adam Goodes: There is and it's unfortunate. We only have to look back to the Indigenous Camp we had in Perth recently. We had 60 of a possible 68 of our players at the camp, which is fantastic, and it's a great opportunity as a Players Associations get us in the room and talk about the issues that are going on at club land, at venues. and Most of this on field stuff is coming from outside of the boundary. Players are very educated on what is right and what is not.

We have players who hear things in the crowd who are not Aboriginal or the ones being vilified who are actually putting their hand up and going, "That's off, mate, I know exactly who you are." They are telling security guards. We have people, like people here in the crowd telling security guards at games saying, "You can't say that." They're putting, their necks on the line as well and that's how we build

change, that's how we make sure that the environment that we are in, we can actually have a control over that.

It has to get worse to get better for me, because we are asking people to call people out. The more people call out, the more instances we are going to have of reporting of these incidences. There has been ...

Anne Summers: And pushback for doing it.

Adam Goodes: Pushback, exactly. The pushback has been pretty harsh and a lot of people have written to me about that pushback and I just write back to them saying, "It takes a lot of courage to do what you do and I thank you for doing that because ..."

Anne Summers: What things do they say in their letters?

Adam Goodes: I think the biggest thing that people say is that they were at the game and they told this person that what they said was racist and that person came back and said, "It's okay I barrack for that team, he's one of my boys I can say those sort of things." It's just quite unbelievable in itself but she had then had no leg to stand on. And we say, "Well you do, you are doing the right thing by actually questioning that person." When they get home after that game, we hope that they might actually question their own self and they get back and go, "Well maybe that was a little bit off, maybe I shouldn't be saying those things about my own players."

Anne Summers: That's interesting. Just before I move on to the next topic I just want to acknowledge a couple of people in the audience and everybody here is important but there are a couple of people that are particularly interesting that they are here. Former Queensland Premier Anna Bligh the Race Discrimination Commissioner, Tim Soutphommasane, and the President of the Human Rights Commission Professor Gillian Triggs.

As Adam has already mentioned, also on the audience is Michael O'Loughlin and I just want to talk a little bit about important he was in helping you embrace your Aboriginality. We all know how important he was as your mentor and inspiration at the Swans. You are rivals, you are cousins, you are mates but then you passed his Club record [in 2012 Goodes played his 303rd game, surpassing O'Loughlin's record for the most games played by an individual. I don't know if that caused any problems in your relationship!

Apart from what you did at the Swans the two of you, as you have already mentioned, did this course at the Eora TAFE and I think that you have said of him, "Michael has taught me how to be an Aboriginal man." I'm just wondering if you could just tell us a little bit about what that means and how he did it, and what you've taken from that and what you are going to do for young men coming on?

Adam Goodes: I think for me I was the eldest of, I am the oldest of three, I have my two brothers. I always saw myself as that figure for those boys and to come

to the Swans and not to have that responsibility of doing the right thing all the time and having someone looking over my shoulder to help discipline me. That's what Michael became in and still is. I think the biggest thing that Michael helped do for me was take me out to The Block [in Redfern], take me out to LAPA [Aboriginal community at La Perouse in Sydney] and meet the community, meet the people.

Because we were so far away from our own community and the way that the Sydney Aboriginal community embraced us, it was like We're from The Blockers, we're from, Gadigal country. That's what Aboriginal people do, we are so inclusive, we want to include people and for me that's where I really got an understanding of how Aboriginal communities work ... Looking after each other, helping each other and meeting all the other Aboriginal boys playing, rugby league, rugby union and soccer.

Through these meetings, just knowing that we are not alone, we are in a big city but we are not alone and to have Michael be there for me for over 15 years at the football club. It was just a fantastic role model but just someone who just helped me, be so discipline and structured in everything that I did because that's who he was, who set discipline, hardworking. He just always wanted to achieve and always wanted something better of himself.

Anne Summers: Isn't there a bit of a lesson in that? In making or creating opportunities for Indigenous, I'd say for girls as well as boys in schools or other places? That it's important that they be, not just that support but there will be more than just one or two people, that there needs to be enough people. Perhaps we can just talk now the Go Foundation which stands for Goodes and O'Loughlin.

The Foundation that you two established, I think we have some representatives from the Go Foundation here tonight. Can you just tell us a little a bit about your thinking in deciding in education rather than sport would be your thing? There are lots of other foundations that pursue football for example for boys. Why did you decide to do education and make it for girls *and* boys?

Adam Goodes: I think the easy reason we wanted to do boys and girls and more of a focus on the girls was because we just feel that our young Aboriginal women missing out so much in our communities. I have so many young cousins who had children when they are 15, 16 years old. I just really feel that they are missing out on the opportunity to be anything they want to be. They are going to be fantastic mothers and that's great but they can wait another eight or 10 years to do that and I think education for me has given me the confidence to be who I am.

I was the first person in our family to finish Year 12. My brother Bret was the first one to go to university and finish a degree there. We are already knocking down those barriers in our family in one generation. So it's actually about creating that generation of knowledge, and there's no doubt education is the key for our people. It's going to empower our people, it's going to give us jobs, it's going to give us the money to help educate our future children. It's going to give us opportunities to do

whatever we want to and not really be narrow- minded about this is the life you are going to live.

You are going to be on welfare, you are going to be on that and then your kids, the next generation they are going to be on that as well. It's trying to break that cycle. For Michael and I there's no doubt, we want to focus on these kids, it's purely academic. Michael was the coach of the Swans Academy; I've got my own Academy in which I have 60 indigenous boys. This is a way to really give back to the boys and girls of Sydney and the communities in Sydney that have given us so much. This is an opportunity for us to give back right now so those boys and girls in Sydney can go to some of the best schools.

Anne Summers: That's great. Last night I watched the program *Who Do You Think You Are?* that you did last year. I was very moved by it and obviously your pride in your Aboriginality got a huge boost. It was only just last year. It was last August you went back to both people in both sides the Adnyamathanha in the Flinders Ranges and the Narungga people in Yorke Peninsula. You were actually formally accepted back and there was a bit of a ceremony. I'm just wondering what it felt like to have that happen?

Adam Goodes: It's something that I'd like to go back and do without a camera and a group of people around. Because I really, I was in the moment and Uncle Richard he, he was fantastic about welcoming me back and being in this Ochre Pit which is just thousands upon thousands year old. Aboriginal people travel from the Northern tip of Australia to come to this Ochre Pit to get the Ochre.

It was just a really special moment to be accepted back in to my people and I'm a very spiritual person and through meditation and reading a lot of books. To actually reconnect back to my ancestors at that place was a really special moment and it was quite emotional. I just really wanted to share it with my Mum and my two brothers because I feel like us as family could get so much from that, then to outreach that to my other aunties and uncles and the 250 nephews and nieces. It is a special place and I and what they have done to their country up there, just through love and ceremony and language, the place has never looked any better.

Anne Summers: It looked pretty good on television I have to say. We will move on now and we'll talk about one of your other passions and causes and that is the fight against violence women. You are a White Ribbon Ambassador and I was wondering if you could just tell us the story about what motivated you to become involved with White Ribbon, about the meetings that they had with the Swans, I think it was about 10 years ago?

Adam Goodes: It was over 10 years ago. We had some people from White Ribbon come into our football club. It was around the time, unfortunately to take everyone back there, but it was about the time when there was a lot of gang rapes going on and there's a lot of footballers performing very badly with respect to women. The AFL got on the front foot and they got White Ribbon out to all the

football clubs to run a Respect and Responsibility Course and give the players an insight to what women actually think. About things we say and we do whether it would be in bars, whether it would be on the street. Whether it was about leaving our partners at home when we go to play in an interstate game.

For me this session really hit home with me. Actually I got a little bit teary and I couldn't understand why. It was just that there was a connection back to my own upbringing and what had happened there. The thing that really hit home with me was, I actually did a lot of interviews with a lot of the women who worked in the AFL, at clubs at the AFL venues and one of the questions was around, What they do on a weekend when their roommate leaves or their boyfriend goes away for the weekend?

That was just the biggest shock, to hear them saying that they were terrified that someone would break in and rape them. That they would go around and lock the front door, the back door and make sure all the windows were locked and that for me. I couldn't understand where that came from. At the end of the session they said, If there's anyone in the room wants to have a chat after this or is actually wanting to go even further and become an ambassador for White Ribbon, We are open to people to come on board and better understand what we are trying to do.

About four of us stayed back afterwards: myself, Jude Bolton, Craig Bolton and I think it was Brett Kirk. We just went out there and had conversations about what can we do? These stories aren't great we need to raise the awareness; we need to teach our players that we don't want to be any of those of people that inflict that scaredness or that emotional... I don't even know what the word is...to have people thinking that way because they are alone – that actually scared me.

I was straight up there, I wanted to be an ambassador off the bat. I just asked, made me ask a lot more questions of my girlfriends and my family members and what they've felt, how they felt and what experiences they had. Whether it be in bars, in clubs or when they'd been with partners. And it was just way too common for me. The stories that they would open up to me about, they actually quite made me sick and I felt like I needed to do something about that.

That education has really been the forefront to me about educating us young males. We are a pretty big snapshot of our community in the AFL and if we can educate us as men, hopefully we can have that influence over those people in the community. That's where it really came from and even though I was quite scared by it all, it actually hasn't gotten too better in that last 10 years.

Anne Summers: The Swans have this No Dickheads policy. This is something that you obviously talked to the young boys about. What does actually mean in practice?

Adam Goodes: It's not so much a No Dickheads policy - everyone thought that's what we had - but we have a culture and we have a set of behaviours that we

buy into. This set of behaviors, we live and die by those. You don't just pick and choose when you are going to be a Swans player, you are a Swans player 24/7 and we give people chances. Our first year players when they come to the football club this year we induct them, we show them a set of behaviors. We give them examples on what we want them to do and how to do it.

We encourage them, we support them and when they step outside those guidelines, those behaviors, we challenge them on them. Everyone gets a couple of chances in that first year, those first year kids, they get a full year when they need to soak up what that's all about. After that first year, it's really open slather to really making sure these players get what we are about, otherwise we are not going to waste your time, you are not going to waste our time and we'll pick someone up for the next draft that we can start working on. It's a cut throat business but it's who we are and it's the way we see we can actually get a benefit on the opposition by teaching and educating these boys about these sets of behaviors. This set of behaviors aren't just about making us better footballers, they are actually are about making us better people as well.

Anne Summers: That is a very interesting point because my last Conversation, which was just a few weeks ago on this same stage, was with General , the Head of the Army. One of the things we talked about was that his organization is there to, it trains people to kill, that's their business. You expect them to behave in certain ways on the field and, where it's justified, they can actually use lethal force. Then you have to also teach them that when they leave the battlefield they have to turn it off.

I'm just wondering if there's any comparable thing in sport? Sport can be pretty violent; you have something called "white line fever". So how do you get these young guys to turn it off when they leave the field and then not go home and take it out on the girlfriends? Or go to the pub and behave in ways that you are talking about?

Adam Goodes: I think that's another really positive thing about our group is that we have so many different leaders who lead in different ways. We have so many different players in our group that can see what's going on around them. Our leadership doesn't stop on the field, doesn't stop when we come off on the field. Whenever we see our players going outside that set of behaviors, we'll talk to them, we'll challenge them.

Whether it's an issue with their girlfriend, we'll go and have that conversation with them about what's going on at home, how are you feeling, do you need to talk to someone? We have the mentor program as well where all of us as leaders, we mentor two or three of the younger players, and your job is to have that relationship with them so you can have those confronting conversations.

And you have those conversations where they trust you and they can say, "Look, I'm actually got a bit of a problem at home - can you help me out with this?"

Anne Summers: So does it go beyond talking?

Adam Goodes: It always goes beyond talking, because we care for each other. It's about supporting each other, it's about actioning it and when we challenge people about our football team, it's about doing the right thing. You always relate it back to those sets of behaviors and those behaviors are what really drive us. We know what works to get us to be a successful team; we also know that it helps us be better people as well.

Anne Summers: Then what advice are you going to give young guys about how they handle situations say in the pub, where there's been a bit of few drinks, there's a bit of shoving and a bit of language, people are saying things. How do you talk them and how do you teach them how to deal with situations like that without responding with the usual biff?

Adam Goodes: These young kids these days are a lot smarter than what we give them credit for. Before they go into the pub they are already soaking up what you do, what they see in the football rooms. They understand who you are pretty much and if they say something in a bar and they think, that's not right, that doesn't go ... I will actually come up and challenge you, Doesn't this go against our set of behaviors here. When these kids actually see you do that, over and over again, they are actually going to think that that's okay.

What our system actually does is it actually keeps us performing at a certain level ourselves because if we don't, we are actually teaching these younger players a culture that we don't want to be part of.

Anne Summers: If you look around the world of sport and the world of football, there is an awful lot of bad behavior, there is an awful lot of violence. Are the Swans the angels of the AFL and everybody else is ...?

Adam Goodes: Definitely not, definitely not. We like to think that we stop it before it gets to that point. That's just what we try to teach all men and all people out there is that. Take care of your friends. Don't leave your friends wrung out in a bar when you are already going home, drag them along with you. Make sure that you check on them; make sure they get home okay. Our system is very much designed about caring for each other no matter where we are, whether it be on the field, in a bar or at training.

Anne Summers: Somebody said to me, talking about you, that as a man he is so gentle but as a player he is so brutal. I'm just wondering how, we reconcile these two Adams?

Adam Goodes: I think we could get Michael up to the microphone. I was a very gentle person but I was very gentle on the field as well my first couple of years. I got questioned by an old coach of mine that he thought my arms were painted on because I refused to make a tackle. It is something you have to learn and for me

being that gentle person, being like that, I had to understand that it was okay, once I crossed that line but I could be like that.

Then soon as I crossed that line again that I could just leave that out there and it is something that you can learn and it's something that coaches have tried to teach players in the past. It's definitely something that I have been able to do.

Anne Summers: This I find a really positive and hopeful statement because is it this that we all want, we all want for all women and men to be tough when we need to be but gentle most of the time. If we could instill that, not just as a belief, but that behavior, then we would be a very different society.

Adam Goodes: I totally agree. It's not just for the sports; it's exactly what you are talking about. We do have very much that competitive nature in our Aussie blokes; and it is all about getting one up over your mate and it's about showing how macho you are, going to the gym and pumping those weights and I really do think it is changing out there but there is a long way to go. I have got no doubt if us as footballers can lead the way and be those positive role model for people, it can help.

Anne Summers: I just want to quickly move to, you are an Ambassador for Recognize which is of course the movement that's pushing for constitutional recognition. Can you just explain why it's so important?

Adam Goodes: Sure I think Michael and I were asked to do a photo and to really get an understanding of what Recognize movement was. I have never heard of it before and as soon as I did I was talking to the guys for five minutes and I was like, "Wow, what do you want me to do?" To get that recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait people into that constitution and for me the constitution really didn't mean much up until that point in time.

I didn't really understand that, I probably understand the Ten Commandments more than I do the constitution of our country. When I learnt about what was written into our constitution and how that helps us govern our states and us federally I was really disappointed and I felt let down by that.

I thought it was a great opportunity to do something positive that we all can be a part of. I've got no doubt those people who voted in the 67 referendum, how they must have felt voting Yes to include Aboriginal people as citizens of this country as silly as it sounds.

Anne Summers: It doesn't seem to be the same momentum for Recognize as there was back in 67, because it was so much more contentious for some reason.

Adam Goodes: It is, I think where that comes from me is, the movement for the 67 referendum, that was nine years in the making and we are a couple years in at the moment with the Recognize campaign. I think the more we get out there and educate people that we are just wanting us written into our founding document that we were here before we were colonized.

That a culture is important and for it to be written into the constitution so that our children and their children can understand that Aboriginal people were here and that their culture is important and it is still living in the lands that we work on.

Anne Summers: I was going to say that not all Indigenous people agree with you and I was telling you the other day, I was at a Welcome to Country event recently where a person who was doing the welcome dismissed Recognized as white fellow tokenism. What do you say to that?

Adam Goodes: That's totally fine. Like we are not all the same, us Aboriginal people. We come from over 550 different dialects and that's okay. Those people they might have different priorities of what they really want but the movement right now is about getting constitutional recognition. That doesn't mean when we finally get that the next movement isn't about sovereignty, it isn't about treaty. But the movement right now is the Recognize movement and it really does have momentum. I think a lot of people out there are getting it. We've got to keep educating people what we are trying to do because as long as there is pushback and resistance, for me that keeps the conversation going and it helpfully educates people on what we are trying to do.

Anne Summers: I just wanted to ask you about when you were appointed Australian of the Year last year. I believe Tony Abbott the Prime Minister said to you that you now have a platform to talk about causes that mattered to you. I'm wondering had you seen the position in that way before he said that or did he give you that idea?

Adam Goodes: No not all. It probably wasn't until I sat down with former Australian of the year Steve Waugh and really had a chat with him about what he did in 2004 when he was announced Australian of the Year, for me to gain understanding of what actually I could do with that platform. I still thought it will just be a great opportunity to really pump up the causes that I was really passionate about. After chatting with him I got to really focus on those three pillars if you recall them.

I Recognize, 2 Racism It Stops With Me and 3. White Ribbon, what sort of impact I could have for those three causes. To continue those conversations throughout the year and to keep continuing those conversations on that platform on a national level was just an absolute privilege. For all the naysayers out there, over the last year there was so much more support and those people who were out there, they have been fantastic supporters. If I can go around to every one of those people, I would love to shake their hand because they really made the year that I had last year really special.

Anne Summers: I'm going to ask people who would like to ask questions to go to the microphone so I will just ask Adam on one more while you are doing that.. Obviously it was a an incredible busy time for you playing full year of football as well as doing a huge amount of travelling and going around to, obviously answering, hundreds if not thousands of invitations to go to functions and what have you.

I'm just wondering if you learned anything new, either anything good or not so good about this country in your time as Australian of the Year?

Adam Goodes: I definitely did and I think so they, when I talk about these issues, these causes that I like to support, I try to always come from a place where people can understand what the issue is and how we can move forward together. It doesn't mean that I don't have baggage either, those things don't make me angry because they do. For me, what I learnt last year is that there's so many people out in our communities who want the same things that I want.

Indigenous, non Indigenous, people from minorities, people not and that just energized me so much, to really keep on that podium, keep standing out and putting my neck out there because people need good leadership, people want people to believe in. Last year the amount of support that I got really helped me and motivated me to keep doing that and keep being involved in these causes.

Anne Summers: It must have been, given that violence against women is one of your very big causes, there must have been a certain amount of pleasure and satisfaction to see Rosie Batty take the baton from you?

Adam Goodes: It was really a special day to do that. She's a very special lady and she can, she'll do amazing things this year. It's a sad story unfortunately. It's a story that has been repeated twice a week since she has been announced Australian of The Year of partners doing this kind of violence to children and women and it's sad, it's really sad.

Hopefully that platform that Rosie has and the support that she gets from the Australia Day Council and the government we can really start to put some things in place to really help us as men stand up then stop this violence against their women.

Anne Summers: Yes okay. First question is number two microphone.

David: Hi Adam, I'm David. You seem so in control with your life, how will you know when it's time to stop playing football?

Adam Goodes: That's a very good question actually David, thank you, a very well Swans supporter. I love my job actually David being subbed off in the third quarter [in the previous game] it could be the start of the end just there my friend. Look I think, I love my job and people don't probably hear it enough but I love what I do. I'm very lucky to be a professional sportsman.

I have been doing it for nearly 18 years and I can't see myself doing anything else. It has given me a great platform and confidence to do other things that I'm passionate about. It would be a very sad day when that happens. I don't have any inside goss now David so to tell you that when that might be. My contract is up to in October mate and I'm just happy to hopefully suit up again this week against Port.

Teresa: Thank you, my name is Teresa I'm from Canberra I'm also a 30 member of the Swans and so a bit of a tragic. It's been an absolute joy over the last 17 years to watch you grow on and off the field as, into a wonderful person. For us as the Swans faithful we are going to have to be weaned off you when you leave.

Do you think when you do it, when that day comes, do you think you will stay on at the club in some capacity? Because I think we'd all love to see you as the next Sydney Swans coach?

Adam Goodes: Thank you that question. I think to really answer that question, I'm not going anywhere, Sydney is my home, the Swans have always been my club. I might be trying to play another year somewhere else; I might be trying to coach any other football team in the league. I think the partnership that I have with the Swans and the Go Foundation means that I'm not going anywhere so you can see [inaudible]

Tess: My name is Tess Corkish you might remember me from asking you a question about Julia Gillard just before she got deposed.

Anne Summers: Yes, that's right.

Tess: I've been a fan of the Swans since I was about eight when my dad took me to my first game and I picked my favorite player of who'd scored the most goals and it just happened to be you. You are my favorite player for I don't know a long time, 13 years or something like that. I'm not sure whether you know of Buddy Franklin's clothing line Nena and Pasadena? Do you? Are you familiar with it?

Anne Summers: I know of it, yes.

Tess: How do you feel about that brand and the images that it presents of women and the public profile that it has, having rape jokes on its Face Book page and things like that? How does that fit in with the Swans coach or having Buddy as part of the team, because personally as a Swans fan I find that very distressing.

Adam Goodes: That's a very good question and I can tell you that he's actually split from that clothing label. I actually asked him about it last year about how his clothing label was going and he, I think the pressure and the responsibility of being at our football club have helped with that decision. I didn't tap him on the shoulder and say, "Hi mate what are you doing?" I think Buddy made a very mature decision on his clothing brand and I could see how that could be very offensive to people. I know it's not part of who he is right now so hopefully that helps you in supporting him a little bit more.

Tess: I haven't read about that one and I think it should be more publicized because that completely changes my opinion with him, thank you.

Audience: I'd like to first of all thank you for more memorable moments on the field over the last few years that I have been watching the Swans and being a fan.

More importantly, after that Collingwood incident I would like to thank you for alerting me to this issue with the Aboriginals not being a part of the Australian constitution.

I was absolutely shocked that we have immigration and boats as a bigger issue than that so my question is, as an ordinary Australian what can we do to actually make that happen as a matter of urgency? It is ridiculous that it is happening in this century that you are not a part of the constitution.

Adam Goodes: Definitely. Well you can go to the Recognize website and you can ...

Audience: I signed up already for newsletters.

Adam Goodes: Excellent. Keep going back there and finding out if there's something happening in your community, alert people in your community that there is a Recognize event coming on. Let's get people there, let's go ask questions, let's find out what the movement is about. Question your people in the street, in your family, in your workplace: do you know what Recognize Movement is?

See what happens, it's quite an interesting question to that some quite predominantly high figures in our society who maybe still don't know what the Recognize Movement is. I take it on as part of my roles to help educate people that there's something going out there.

Audience: That's about what we can do? To discuss it?

Adam Goodes: Just discuss it because once they find out what the Recognize Movement is and what we are actually trying to do, keeping you up, keeping going back to the website and see where the movement is going because it is really growing. We are getting bigger and hopefully when we get our Referendum, just vote Yes that could be another way you could help.

Anne Summers: Yes.

Donald: My question is related to a man called Alistair Campbell who was in Australia recently/ He was the media advisor or politic advisor to former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. And he was making a comment with regards to Australian politics in particular but also I guess it applies more broadly to corporate leadership, from the leadership perspective and from a team way perspective that politics could learn a hell of a lot from sport.

Some of you are answers tonight and the behavior we've observed of you would seem to demonstrate. Do you have a comment about that and how would that actually manifest itself?

Adam Goodes: I think they would listen to us too much to be honest. I think what we do in sport is very unique to that field. I think with our leadership and our program at the Swans, I know people who are ex-Swans in this room take those same values, those same behaviors into their workplaces and be very successful in leadership roles in those areas. I've got no doubt there is a place for it. A lot of the corporate events that we do and we talk about our leadership program, they shake their head at it and they think, "Why would I teach our youngest person at our organization on what they need to do take my job?"

That just wouldn't happen in corporate Australia. For us it's very unique with our leadership program but I would love to have a set of behaviors that everyone bought into and then that could help drive us together. Because it would mean that we are on the same page and we are actually getting some stuff done.

Anna: Hi Adam, I'm currently in Year 10 and I'm doing a project and I've chosen to do it about Indigenous affairs and the game of AFL. My question to you is just how do you believe that the game of AFL affects Indigenous communities and how do you believe the Indigenous culture has affected AFL?

Adam Goodes: That's a very good question. I think for me I can only tell you the story about how football has helped me and helped change my life and the journey that I've gone on. Starting to see the other players, Indigenous players in the AFL wanting and starting to go on that journey as well, having our Indigenous camp over two months ago now in Perth and seeing these young smart Aboriginal fit men. We had some of the fittest Aboriginal people in that one room and about telling them that, "Just being a footballer it's not good enough for us anymore."

We have to be these role models; we have to be these people in our communities that people look up to. That we inspire, we motivate because we are the fittest, we are the healthiest. We are the ones that are making such a big difference in our own families. When we succeed, "We are not only helping our immediate family but we are helping so many other people in our connected family." I hope that answers your question.

Anita: Hallo there, Anita. Thank you for your time ...

Adam Goodes: Hi Anita how are you?

Anita: I'm fine thank you. Thank you for your honesty this evening and your generosity of spirit and thank you not only for being a change maker for first nation Australians but for all Australians. You mentioned family, identity and club life amongst other things. They were discussed in Micky O's memoir, Michael's in there; it talked about you too obviously. My question to you is, when will we get to read the Adam Goodes authorized biography? If it's not already in the pipeline for could Dr Anita Heiss please write it?

Adam Goodes: I'm just looking at the back there, there's Malcolm. Malcolm just stand up mate. Sorry Anita he's beat you to it, Malcolm Knox he's a ...

Anita: Well I will go write the unauthorized biography.

Adam Goodes: We've been working on my memoirs for the last three years now, in the anticipation that I might retire one day and release it then. So when that happens, sorry sister girl, it's already taken up but maybe you can do the foreward or something. That would be nice.

Anita: I 'll do a picture book.

Adam Goodes: A picture book, perfect thank you.

Petersen: Hi Adam my name is Petersen, how are you doing?

Adam Goodes: Good, how are you mate?

Petersen: I'm doing great. First I want to thank you for being so open with your responses this evening. It's been a true pleasure to hear someone talk about things other than football. Thank you very much for enlightening us all with your insights.

Adam Goodes: Thank you.

Petersen: My question to you is in regards to White Ribbon and when you became a White Ribbon Ambassador. How was it perceived when you went back to your own community and looked at the ways in which you, I guess learned about domestic violence and particularly around intimate partner violence and how it affected you and your choice when you became White Ribbon ambassador?

Adam Goodes: It's a very good question because all I wanted to do is was to save the world. I wanted to stop people hitting people. I wanted to stop being, stop people verbally abusing others and I was 19 years I didn't have those skills. White Ribbon were able to give us the skills to actually help deal with that conflict. To deal with an uncle who might be getting to that point where something bad might happen and about pulling him away and having a conversation with them one on one.

Not making them the centre of what's going on at the barbeque but pulling him away and saying, "Uncle, wait, what are you doing? Pull your head in? Don't do that, don't talk like that, don't do tat to aunty". When you start to get those skills and get the confidence to do that, there's no doubt that's where those skills kept growing from me and about dealing with conflict and about having those conversations with people. There's no doubt, me being a White Ribbon Ambassador has helped other people in my community do the same thing.

Anne Summers: One of the things that I thought was very interesting was the way you have talked about violence against women. Obviously you have witnessed violence of various kinds within your own family; your own mother has been subjected to various types of violence. One of the things that's very interesting I

think about you is you have learnt, as you talked about that first White Ribbon meeting at the Swans, you have learnt to see the world through women's eyes.

That's made you very empathetic to situations where some men wouldn't be, they would be turned off by it or they'd be repelled by it or they wouldn't know what to do or they'd feel helpless. I think the fact that you've embraced this issue and you have learnt from the experiences of your own mother and your own relatives has given you insights. Would you agree with that?

Adam Goodes: I definitely do and I think being brought up by Mum and my five aunties that would we constantly moved around to get closer to help with that. My Mum left Dad when I was six so I really don't have a lot of memories of what Dad was and what influence he had on us, if any.

Then Mum remarried and was with Warren for five years and that was very good when he didn't drink but when he drank, it was very bad. For us it was about understanding those situations when they can turn to those situations that we often see.

Anne Summers: Did you feel you had to step in and protect your mother?

Adam Goodes: I didn't know how to. I think one thing that I did do, one night would get a little bit hairy, I climbed out my window and there was a payphone down the street and I called the police and they came and they made him be quiet so I could go back to sleep so I could worry about going to school the next day.

Like that was just one thing I could do. But when you are a kid, you don't know what you can do in those situations. Unfortunately you just deal with them and it's not until you grow up and you understand what was actually happening that you go, Well how do we stop those situations actually happening?

Anne Summers: Yes.

Audience: I'm not interested in your views on the Prime Minister's statement about choices, Indigenous choices. I'm interested in you approaching that from another direction. You talked about discovering who you are as an Indigenous man. I was extremely illuminated once, hearing your conversation between two Indigenous men about the, the nature of maps or totems and all things like that.

What have you learned about yourself at least some of the things you've learned about yourself in that kind of a way and how does that locate you within your identity?

Adam Goodes: I think the biggest thing I've learned is that, I have my grandfather's spirit. My grandfather Hyrtle and obviously I never got to meet him but all the people that I met on country they just said, "You are definitely Hyrtle's grandson. Definitely we can see it, we can see his spirit in you. Great big shoulders, big jaw line, big head." He was very much a leader, a strong a leader for our people

back there and those stories, those genetic things they get passed down and they come back through and I've got no doubt that that is my grandfather coming back through me, who I didn't know about up until that point.

The biggest thing I've learnt is, that we are all connected whether we are Indigenous or not Indigenous and that in my kinship where Michael who's been a fantastic role model for me ... I'm actually younger but he's actually my nephew through that kinship system, that was really interesting for me to know. Then if I was to take my girlfriend Natalie back out to my country then she would be given a name as well. She's now part of that kinship system and everyone will understand who she is, to me but who she is to them.

That would happen to all of us in this room if we went back there to that country; that relationship would be made through that kinship system. We would understand who could marry, who can talk to each other, who can't talk to each other. It is a very simple way of communicating in those communities and that was what amazed me is how they got that right for so, such a long period of time and it still works to this day.

Geraldine: I'm a student nurse at the University of Western Sydney in Parramatta and I mentor Indigenous students who are in high school. You may know this already: the current average across Australia for Indigenous students matriculating into university is 5%. With the program I'm involved in as of 2012 we have 26% of students taking up the position at our university and that's not including students taking up offers elsewhere.

My first question would relate to the Go Foundation that you and Michael are involved in and I wanted to ask if, there's any way we could assist students in making contact - if that's even appropriate. And my students that don't have a knowledge of their country and of their people, what resources would you encourage me to refer them to?

Adam Goodes: Really good question. The first part of the question, we've partnered with IIEF with the AIM scholarship program and we help mentor with that and it's fantastic. You've got no idea of the support that you give to these young Indigenous people through those tough years of Year 10, 11, 12. It does go a long way and mentoring is the way forward. Thank you so much for giving that time and support because you would be seeing firsthand how you can actually help motivate and give these guys the skills. Thank you for doing that.

How you can help the Go Foundation? Right now where we are at, we've only got 11 kids. I think when we grow this and get it bigger and we need as much help with mentoring and support as possible. Thank you for that offer. The second part: actually getting these kids where they come from and ask those questions. It's really about asking them who in their family do they know about, culture, country. For me I didn't have anyone and it was really hard to ask those questions.

I don't know of a resource or anything right now to actually help you with that but I definitely think there would be something out there that could help in that situation.

Yolanda: My question is kind of related. You talk a lot about mentoring in the Sydney Swans and I suppose being part of an incredible football team and incredible position within that team. You are in all in a very privileged position to be able to help one another out and guide one another forwards as from very young men.

How important then do you feel it is and how do people get involved in it? I suppose other younger people who want to get involved in causes, how important mentoring is for them outside of the sport? Maybe people who don't necessarily have access to such inspiring leaders as yourself?

Adam Goodes: I think there's fantastic groups out there. AIM is one that comes off the top of my head that help mentor Indigenous boys and girls at high school, university. Getting university students to really help out with the mentoring of high school kids and giving these kids the knowledge and passing that knowledge down. There's really a great opportunity to help them out. I think mentoring is such an important way forward for all young people.

Us as parents, as leaders we need to keep challenging our kids, challenge their minds, ask a lot of questions to them about, who they want to be, what they want to do. Because without that guidance and support, we are just letting it up to them to make up their own minds - which is fine.

But they really do need that support especially our players. When I say that the Swans when they come to our football club, we don't judge them but we get a pretty good idea of who they are when they come in that front door. It's about help moulding them. It's not saying, "Change this way otherwise you are not going to be here." It's about moulding them, so working together, about trying to get in that same direction.

Sarah: Hi, I'm Sarah from Sydney, thank you so much for being such a fabulous role model on and off the field to my 10-year-old son who's also here tonight. He's recently done a project about Vincent Lingiari and the 67 Referendum. What advice can you give to him?

But most of the people don't want to come to primary schools and talk to 10 years old even though, as you say the 67 referendum was a nine year campaign and maybe he will be one of the people voting when the referendum finally comes around for Recognize. What's the message for kids of his age?

Adam Goodes: Yes I think the message is hats off to the teachers and the principals at your school. If I was a 10 year old and I got to choose a project like that, just even trying to ask those questions would have been really hard to do. You can see how far forward we are really are, with their young kids and the questions they are asking about what is the Stolen Generation and what is a referendum and why

weren't Aboriginal people part of the constitution? I think it's fantastic that these kids are asking these questions.

I think one thing every time I get an email or request; I make sure that I fill those questions out for those boys and girls. Because they need some answers and I think if we are sitting in this room and we don't have those answers then maybe we can go on that journey together with our children and understand about the Stolen Generation or understanding about the referendum or what Recognize is. It can be something that not only helps educate our kids but it actually can help educate the mums and dads as well.

Chelsea: Hi Adam, I just wanted to acknowledge you as Aboriginal men and a role model in our community. We don't often get that representation of I guess, really successful role models and stuff. I just wanted to ask a question around representation of our culture and our people.

I just wanted to ask what you think are the next positive steps towards, positive recognition of our people. I'm not trying to put the words into your mouth around constitutional recognition but more broadly how do you think we change the dialogue around Aboriginal Australian people to show how long we have been around and how successful that culture really is?

Adam Goodes: It's a really good question. I'd like to think that the work we are doing at Recognize is part of our process. I think the work the Reconciliation Australia are doing around getting corporate Australia has been really responsible with their Reconciliation Action Plans. It's a really big step forward and I think, for us as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we got to take that rope as well.

We got to start pulling it our way and say, take that responsibility there are great opportunities out there for us and we've got to start to take those opportunities. Start to climb that chain, build our own wealth and start to give back to our people and that's the way forward in my mind. That's what I am trying to do and really trying to help motivate other people to do.

Because right now for Aboriginal and for Australian people, there's some really great opportunities for us so we've got to skill our selves up. We've got to make sure that if we are going to start a small business, do the right thing and make sure that we can really get that up and running. Because if we start to create our own wealth and not be dependent on anything else, that's a massive step forward, for getting that generational wealth that we've just never really had.

Anne Summers: Thank you. Last question thank you.

Barbara: Hi Adam Goodes, it's Barbra. I'm a photographer and as you know I photographed you lots of times. My question is: I've been to Melbourne to photograph Dreamtime at the G quite a few times and loved it. One of my biggest thrills as a sports photographer was photographing The Big Three: Nicky Winmar,

Michael Long and David Wirrpanda. Seeing that we have this big sporting rivalry with Melbourne I think it's about time that Sydney had their own Dreamtime..

Adam Goodes: I totally agree it.

Barbara: Big event. It would be great.

Adam Goodes: We actually played against the Essendon for the Marn Grook Trophy and it was a brainchild of Kevin Sheedy who is just fantastic at coming up with these great ideas to celebrate people and culture and he's fantastic at doing that. I've got no doubt that what we are doing up here in Sydney now around Indigenous Round and really making it a spectacular, not a spectacular Dreamtime at the G because they can do it on a big scale with 80,000 people and to have the Michael Long Walk which is fantastic.

Either way we are trying things up here in Sydney and on Indigenous Round this year will have my Mum's design jumper at the game, which will be fantastic. I can't wait to wear that. There are things in motion to make sure that we keep making sure that Indigenous Round is a really special Round celebration of that culture up here in Sydney.

Barbara: Okay, thanks.

Adam Goodes: Thanks.

Anne Summers: Thank you very much. Before we wrap up and I formally thank Adam, I would like to thank EY, Ernest and Young, for being our major sponsor this evening and for supporting what we do, I can't tell you how much I value this support. A great many other people and organizations have been involved in making tonight happen and I want to thank them all more sincerely. These events are put on to raise funds to pay for my magazine, my digital magazine [Anne Summers Reports](#) which is free. It publishes journalism that is sane, factual and relevant. If you don't know about it, jump on Google and you'll find it.

I really want to thank Adam Goodes most sincerely. I'm very grateful to Adam for giving up his time, for being here tonight, for giving us from his heart, speaking so honestly and willingly and I certainly learned a lot, I'm taking away a lot and I hope you are as well. To thank you for your generosity Adam we are making a donation in your name to guess what? The Go Foundation.

Adam Goodes: Wow thank you.

Anne Summers: Please join me in thanking Adam very much.

Adam Goodes: Thank you, thanks a lot.

©Anne Summers Reports. Not to be reproduced without express permission.