

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

How to Find out What You are Truly Capable Of

Imagine having everything you've ever wanted within reach. In fact, everyone is already congratulating you on your achievement. You've done it. You've reached the rarified air of the truly elite. Now what?

If you're Ted Williams in 1941, you put it all on the line. That's why he is one of the greats. I'll share his story in a moment.

Your big goal

What's your biggest goal? The one overarching thing you want to achieve in life? The one thing that wakes you up in the morning and keeps you up at night?

Imagine hitting the goal. Imagine the feeling of success. Imagine the satisfaction that comes with achieving it.

Now, go find out what you are truly capable of.

Don't make this mistake

In 2000, I did just that. I hit every goal for that year. I won almost every golf tournament.

I played competitive golf in college and afterwards, played professionally. In the summer of 2000, I won almost every golf tournament I entered, most of them in landslides.

And then I made the mistake I encourage you not to make:

I got complacent. I stopped pushing. I stopped setting new goals. I gave up on my bigger dreams.

I never found out what I was truly capable of.

Protect your average?

This is not what Ted Williams did.

In 1941, Williams became the first hitter in more than a decade (and the last more than six decades later) to hit .400 in a season. That means he got a hit 40% of the time for you non-baseball fans.

With only a Sunday doubleheader left to end the season, the Yankees had clinched the American League title and Williams' average was .3996. Since averages are rounded off, his official average would be listed as .400.

After the Red Sox' game on Saturday, the world congratulated Williams on his accomplishment. Since the title was no longer up for grabs, Sunday's games were unnecessary. They did not matter in the final standings. They meant nothing to almost everyone. Except Ted Williams.

"Wait a minute," he said when they congratulated him. "The season's not over. We've got a doubleheader tomorrow."

The writers pushed back. "Oh, those games don't matter, Ted. Just sit them out. Don't you want to *protect your average?*"

Don't you want to protect your average?

Isn't that what most of us do?

Protect our average.

Protect the status quo.

Protect our achievements.

Protect what's already ours.

Protect what's just enough.

Play it safe. Live the easy life. Sit back and relax. Rest on our laurels.

Not Ted Williams.

Not a chance, he said. "You guys don't get it. Tomorrow is going to be the most exciting day of my life, a day I've been dreaming about since I was a little kid. Tomorrow is when I get to find out *if* I'm a .400 hitter."

Tomorrow is when I find out if I truly am what you already say I am.

Tomorrow is when I put it all on the line.

Tomorrow is when I risk it all.

Tomorrow is when I find out what I am truly capable of.

Going for greatness

Ted Williams did indeed play two more games. He finished the day with six hits and the season with a .406 batting average. No one since has hit .400.

Whatever fears he had that day, he overcame them.

Whatever voices told him to protect his average, he silenced them.

Whatever critics told him he was crazy to risk something he'd already achieved, he ignored them.

Ted Williams did what I am telling you to do. He did what the greats do. He focused on his dreams. Not on his fears. Not on the voices. Not on his critics.

He focused on what he really wanted. He focused on proving something to himself, not others.

He went for greatness and he achieved it.

And he found out what he was truly capable of.

He knew that his happiness would not come from being known as a .400 hitter. His happiness wouldn't even come if he truly was a .400 hitter. Happiness doesn't come from being *seen* as a success. Happiness doesn't come from actual success.

Happiness comes from knowing that you gave it everything you had. That you didn't ease up at the finish line or cautiously avoid failure. That you didn't listen to the voices of fear, doubt, or critique.

Take on your biggest challenge and do your best with it. Find out what you are truly capable of.

What's holding you back from finding out what you are truly capable of?