

# BEYOND THE PLAYING DAYS WORKBOOK

**NZRP**A BY THE PLAYERS  
NEW ZEALAND RUGBY PLAYERS ASSOCIATION FOR THE **GAME.**

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# When is it time to stop playing professionally?

## When is it time to stop playing professionally?

There comes a point in every professional rugby player's career when it is time to stop playing professionally. How do you know when that time is?

**What are the three main ways a professional rugby career may end?** *[Hint: check out page 82 of EXPAND or page 1 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**What will you experience a variety of?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do some sportspeople describe the feelings as?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Those who have planned for their retirement and have been working on other meaningful interests, hobbies, work or other types of fulfilment while they have been playing find their transition is what?**

\_\_\_\_\_

## Forced retirement due to injury

Having a career-ending injury can be very challenging to deal with.

**Why can seeking an additional medical opinion be useful?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What is the question you will find yourself facing after the initial shock of receiving a career-ending injury?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# When is it time to stop playing professionally?



**What does research show about players who are well prepared for life after rugby?**

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**What is it natural to feel about not finishing your rugby career on your own terms?**

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**Who can help you seek some professional guidance?** \_\_\_\_\_

Under special circumstances, some professional players whose rugby careers are cut short by a career-ending injury while playing may be eligible for an insurance payout or to apply to the Benevolent and Welfare Fund for support.

**Where can you find out more information on the Benevolent and Welfare Fund and insurance policies?**

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## Deselection

**What question should you ask if your services are no longer required by one team?**

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**Who can help you search for other opportunities?** \_\_\_\_\_

There might come a time when playing opportunities are not available and you find yourself outside the professional environment due to deselection. This can present some real challenges on many levels.

**Deselection can be hard to process. What is the key when plans get disrupted?**

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# When is it time to stop playing professionally?

## Retirement by choice

When deciding to finish playing on your own terms, don't be afraid to ask yourself some hard questions.

**Answer these questions in the space below:**

- Am I still playing rugby because I don't feel I have other options?
- Am I being honest with myself about my rugby form and future?
- Have I gone as far in the game as I realistically think possible?
- Have I achieved my goals?
- What is my enjoyment level?
- What is my financial situation?
- What is my family situation?
- Has my body had enough?
- Has my mind had enough?
- How would I feel if I were to retire tomorrow?
- Am I ready for retirement?
  - If yes, how and why?
  - If no, what am I going to do about it?

## Preparation is key

**In all three of these professional career-ending situations, research shows what?**

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PREPARATION

# The pieces of the puzzle

## The pieces of the puzzle

There are many different things you need to think about, deal with and plan when you move out of the professional game. It can be both challenging and exciting as you enter a new phase of your life.

**Complete the sentences:** *[Hint: check out page 22 of EXPAND or page 5 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

**The most successful transitions come from being \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, so here are some pieces of the puzzle of life after rugby for you to start thinking about.**

**Just like a \_\_\_\_\_, post-playing life is not one big piece, but it is made up of many pieces that you can \_\_\_\_\_ on long before you hang up your professional boots.**

**Thinking about your retirement from professional rugby, answer the questions below:**

**1. Where am I going to live?**

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**2. Do I still want to be involved in rugby or do I need a complete break from the game for now?**

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**3. Do I have enough savings to buy me time to study or decide what I want to do?**

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**4. What am I passionate about and what interests me for the next step?**

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**5. Do I have a fitness plan in place that is interesting, enjoyable and sustainable? What does it look like? What will I do to keep fit?**

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**6. Have I connected with people within my network who might be able to help me? \_\_\_\_\_**

**7. What is the current state of my mental wellbeing? Do I need some help in this area? If yes, where should I go to get help?**

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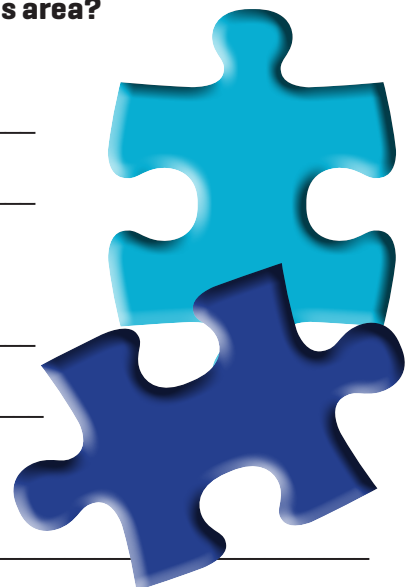
**8. What are the work and education needs of my partner and kids?**

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**9. Do I have short-term and long-term goals? \_\_\_\_\_**

**10. Have I come to terms with my retirement from professional rugby?**

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# The pieces of the puzzle



**11. Have I got my CV and LinkedIn profile up to date?** \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Who are my valuable connections in rugby and how am I able to leverage them?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**13. Have I researched study or retraining options for when I stop playing professionally?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**14. Have I had a good medical exam and registered with a local general practitioner so I can keep an eye on my health?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**15. Do I know the transferable skills that I have gained from rugby, which I can use in my next career?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**16. Am I able to work on a dual career or study while I am still playing?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**17. Have I done a living budget to cope with the change in my income?** *[Think about what you might earn your first year out of rugby and what your living costs will be.]*

\_\_\_\_\_

**18. Once I am no longer playing rugby, who am I?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**19. What will my diet look like when I am not playing?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**20. Having been in a team environment for so long, where will I get my social connections from now?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**21. Have I spoken to other players who have transitioned out of the game to see how they coped?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**22. What are my values, interests and motivators?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**23. What are my financial goals?**

\_\_\_\_\_

# The pieces of the puzzle

24. What do I do for fun?

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25. Do I have access to a good lawyer, accountant and investment adviser?

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26. Do I have strategies for coping with stress? (List those strategies)

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27. What are some things I have always wanted to do that I haven't been able to while I've been playing rugby?

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28. Where should you go for support, advice and assistance about your transition into your next career?

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As you move forward into the next phase of your life, it is important to ask yourself these questions:

Where am I?

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Where do I want to be?

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How will I get there?

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Who do I need to help me?

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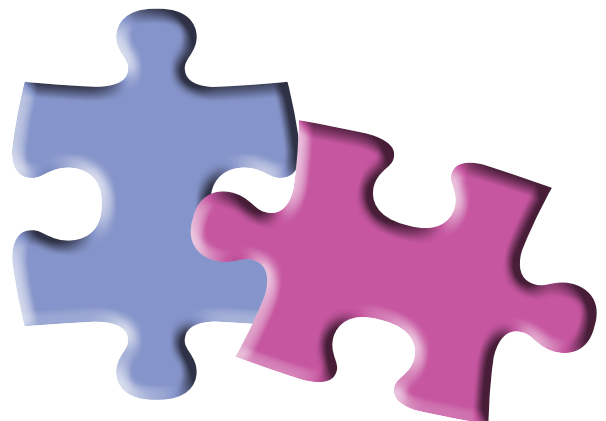
## The NZRPA Rugby Club

**What is the NZRPA Rugby Club?** *[Hint: check out page 29 of EXPAND or page 12 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

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How do you get hold of the NZRPA Rugby Club team?

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# What to expect - the reality of retiring from professional rugby

## What to expect – the reality of retiring from professional rugby

All people experience changes in life but one change that is unique to just a small group of people is that of leaving a professional sporting career.

**Complete this sentence:** *[Hint: check out page 30 of EXPAND or page 13 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

**Even though changing careers can be daunting, with the right \_\_\_\_\_, it can also present some very exciting opportunities if it is approached with the \_\_\_\_\_.**

**List eight strategies you can implement to help you plan for the next phase of your life while increasing your chance of making it a success, then write one tip for dealing with each strategy:** *[Hint: check out page 31 of EXPAND or page 14 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

Tip: \_\_\_\_\_

You have to drive your future, so open your mind to growth and live with courage!





# Positive planning



## Positive planning

To make the move from your sporting career to your next career a positive experience, you need to expand your horizons and grow your mindset.

It might not all be smooth sailing, but research has proven that you can improve your chances of a better experience if you understand what it takes to be a capable, motivated and driven member of society. To achieve that, a person needs to meet three key needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness. This is called **motivation theory** or **self-determination theory**.

Research has recognised that, in order to have a successful transition from one career to another, a person needs to deliver in all three areas of motivation theory or self-determination theory.

**List the three key needs and describe what they are then give a positive example of each.** *[Hint: check out page 32 of EXPAND or page 15 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

Positive example: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

Positive example: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

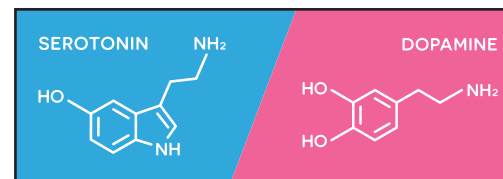
Positive example: \_\_\_\_\_

# The science behind understanding how your body and brain work

## Understanding how your body and brain works

There are four neurochemicals that are responsible for your happiness.

**What are those four neurochemicals?** *[Hint: check out page 34 of EXPAND or page 17 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*



**D** \_\_\_\_\_ **S** \_\_\_\_\_ **O** \_\_\_\_\_ **E** \_\_\_\_\_

Once you stop playing professional sport, it is important to work out how to replicate the production of these neurochemicals in a healthy.

**Complete this sentence:** There are many \_\_\_\_\_ ways to encourage these chemicals to flow, which in turn can have a \_\_\_\_\_ impact on your mental wellbeing, \_\_\_\_\_ and productivity.

**Describe what each chemical is and a healthy way to produce it:**

**Dopamine:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthy way to produce dopamine:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Serotonin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthy way to produce serotonin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Oxytocin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthy way to produce oxytocin:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Endorphins:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Healthy way to produce endorphins:** \_\_\_\_\_

The table below shows the change of sources for some of the chemicals released by the body during and after a sporting career. It also shows the differences between positive career change and challenging change.

**Circle the chemicals you have felt during your sporting career:**

<b>AREA</b>	<b>DURING SPORT</b>	<b>POSITIVE CHANGE</b>	<b>CHALLENGING CHANGE</b>
<b>Dopamine</b>	<b>Winning</b>	<b>New career success</b>	<b>Gambling, drugs, alcohol</b>
<b>Serotonin</b>	<b>Athlete status</b>	<b>New life status</b>	<b>Nothing</b>
<b>Oxytocin</b>	<b>Support team</b>	<b>New career, projects</b>	<b>Little or nothing</b>
<b>Endorphins</b>	<b>raining</b>	<b>New active goals</b>	<b>Inactive</b>
<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>Personal goals</b>	<b>New career goals</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Competence</b>	<b>World class</b>	<b>Use other skills</b>	<b>Little or nothing</b>
<b>Relatedness</b>	<b>Support team</b>	<b>New career, projects</b>	<b>Little or nothing</b>

# What you need to navigate your way through the next phase of your career

## What you need to navigate your way through the next phase of your career

There are five different elements you need to navigate your way through the next phase of your career.

Write down what they are and what they mean: *[Hint: check out page 37 of EXPAND or page 20 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the sentence: Working on developing a \_\_\_\_\_ is an essential part of any transitioning programme for athletes.





# What does being 'life ready' look like and how do you get there?

## What does being life ready look like and how do you get there?

**What does it mean to be life ready?** *[Hint: check out page 38 of EXPAND or page 21 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

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## Life skills

**What is a life skill?**

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**What are the five key skills that the World Health Organisation suggest that a high-functioning, well-balanced and content human should possess?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Working to develop these skills is recommended for athletes in order for them to be life ready as they move into a new career.

**Complete this sentence: The great that news is that you may have developed many of these already during your \_\_\_\_\_.**





# What does being 'life ready' look like and how do you get there?

## Understanding the sense of loss

It is natural for an athlete to feel a sense of loss when their professional sporting career comes to an end.

**What are the areas of loss that have been identified for athletes when their sporting career comes to an end?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

The sense of loss for the athlete can result in them taking out their feelings on those around them.

**Who are some people you can talk to who can help you process your feelings?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Ensuring your family appreciate that you are going through a period of significant change will help create what from them?** \_\_\_\_\_

You may experience different mood swings and highs and lows as you try to adjust to your new life.

**Having a good balance prior to retiring can reduce the sense of loss. What should that balance contain?**

- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |

If you can, try to focus on being grateful for the special and unique experiences you had because of your sporting career. This can help reframe your feelings. This is known as **gratitude**.

**What are five things you are grateful for from your sporting career?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Behavioural change



## Behavioural change

A positive transition from a career in sport to one outside sport is important for a sportsperson's long-term wellbeing.

Research and investment have been dedicated to understanding what is needed in order to achieve positive change.

**What are the three elements that are widely accepted as being required to achieve behavioural change and what do they mean?** *[Hint: check out page 39 of EXPAND or page 22 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**In your own words, write the four points that summarise the transition into the next phase of your career:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Alumni

**Which Super Rugby Clubs have alumni?** *[Hint: check out page 40 of EXPAND or page 23 of the individual Beyond the Playing Days section]*

\_\_\_\_\_

**What do the alumni do?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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