

# EXPANDING YOUR HORIZONS



**NZRP** **PA** BY THE PLAYERS  
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# Expanding your Horizons

Expanding your horizons and navigating change are both constant parts of growing as a person. The reality is life is full of changes. If you think of yourself as a sailboat or vaka, the key to expanding your horizons and successfully navigating those changes is to adjust your sails to take advantage of the wind. You might have to alter your course in order to get to where you want to go. Your route might not always be the most direct one, but if you keep moving forward you will continue to make progress. Sometimes you will hit rough waters and there will be storms, and at other times the journey will be a wonderful, smooth adventure. There will always be highs and lows but learning the strategies of how to navigate your way through those changes will help you to sail.

*"Mistakes are the portals of discovery" - James Joyce*

# Self-identity

**Self-identity comes when you recognise yourself as being unique in the way you look at yourself and your relationship to the world. It is your story.**

As you navigate through life it is really important that you learn about yourself, establish your own identity and understand who you are, where you come from, what your values are and what interests and motivates you.

Think of your self-identity as the rudder on your ship. It guides you, helps you reach your full potential and gives you a strong foundation to live from. It is a self-assessment that comprises of your past self, current self and future self.

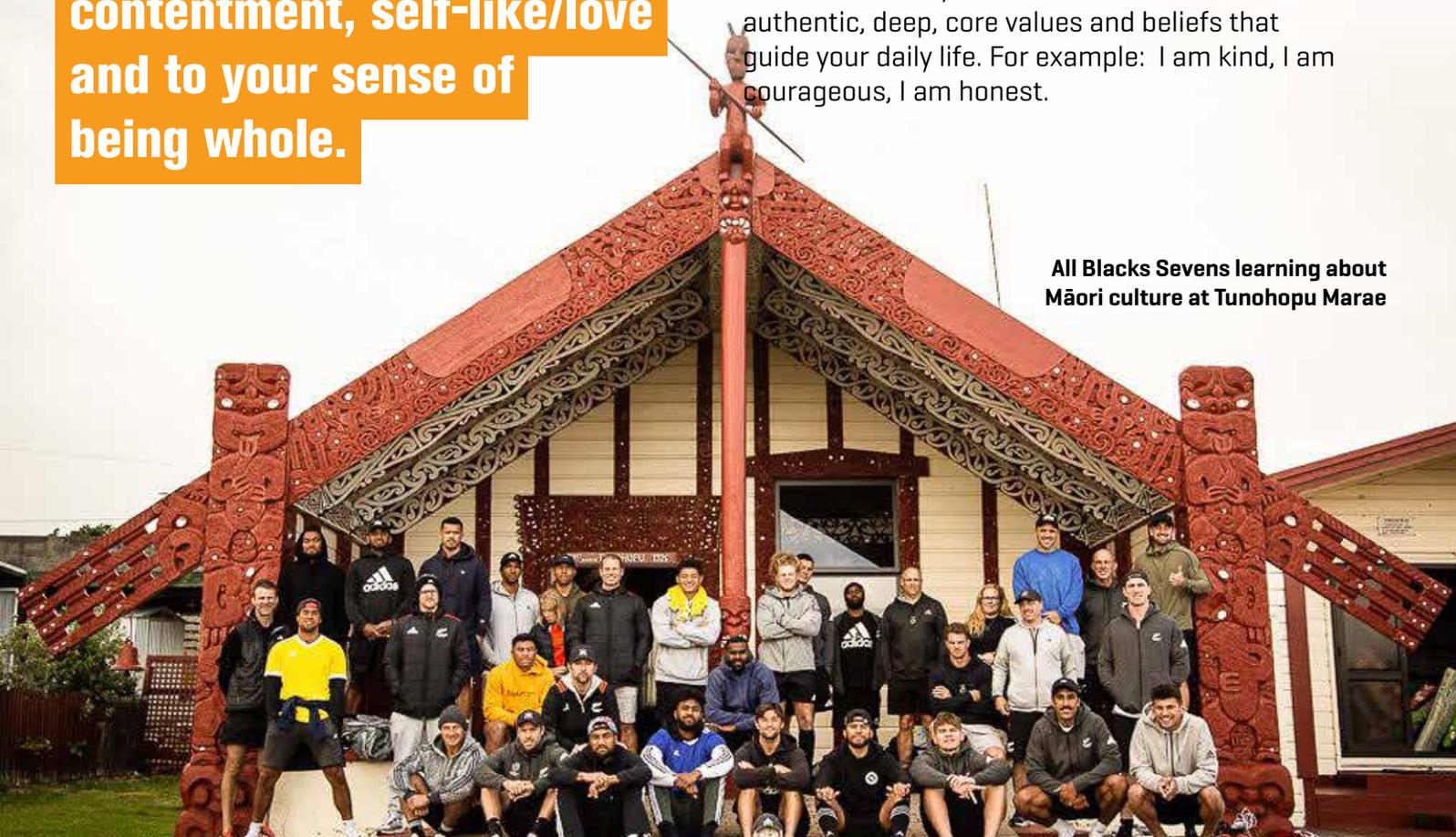
**Having a strong sense of self, of who you are, can help you with decision-making and can also contribute to your mental wellbeing, confidence, contentment, self-like/love and to your sense of being whole.**

As people get older, they generally learn to not sweat the small stuff and become more comfortable in their own skin. This can be seen as becoming more self-assured, but really it's about having an increased sense of self-identity and more experiences and wisdom to draw from, which helps shape them as a person. It is common for aspiring athletes – especially in their teenage years – to focus on developing their sport. This can result in them being closed off to developing other areas of interest, which can result in them thinking that their identity is based on their sport when sport is simply something they do.

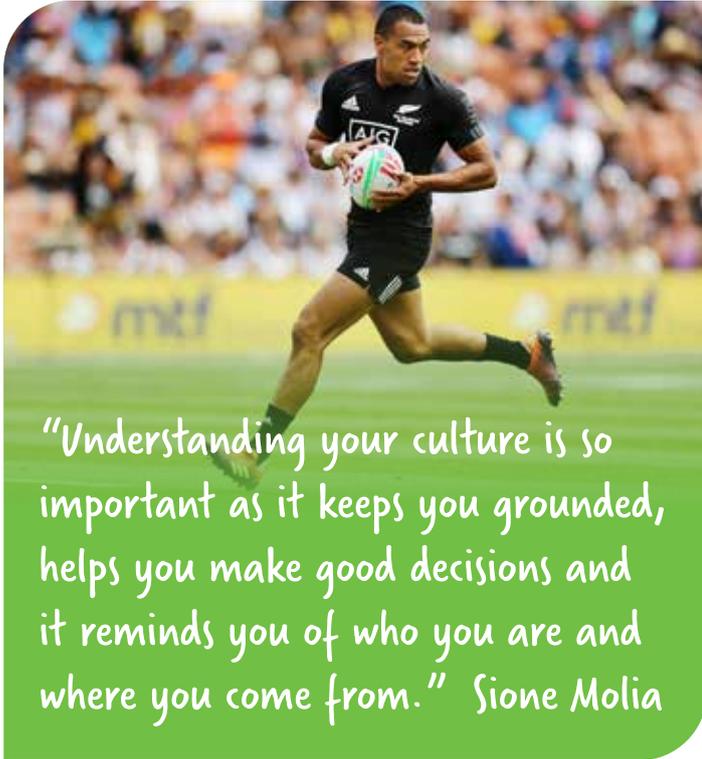
**Rugby is something I do, it is not who I am**

If your identity is not wrapped around being a rugby player, you will cope better when the rugby-playing part is removed from the equation of your life. Instead, your identity could be something like this: I am a sister/brother, daughter/son, husband/wife and friend. My nationality is Maori/Samoan/Tongan/Fijian/Pakeha. I am a student/worker who enjoys cooking, travelling and playing rugby. Your self-identity is a reflection of the true, authentic, deep, core values and beliefs that guide your daily life. For example: I am kind, I am courageous, I am honest.

**All Blacks Sevens learning about Māori culture at Tunohopu Marae**



# Self-identity



*“Understanding your culture is so important as it keeps you grounded, helps you make good decisions and it reminds you of who you are and where you come from.” Sione Molia*

Don't forget you have also gained so many transferable skills from rugby that help make up who you are: I am a leader, I am a problem solver, I am committed, I am hard working, I am passionate and I am fit and healthy. **(See Career & Education section for a large list of transferable skills)**

It is very easy in rugby and through social media bombardment to assume how you think your identity should be portrayed: I am tough, I should not show any emotions, I have a glamorous lifestyle, I am living the dream and everything is going well. The reality is by shedding the 'fake' identity of how you 'think' you should present yourself to the world and replacing it with who you really are and through the discovery of your true self is where great satisfaction comes from. There is a variety of pressures - society, social media, external or internal pressure - you put on yourself that could make you think that you should be perceived in a certain way, however it is important that you **own your truth and accept others for who they are.**

An important part of self-identity is not telling others who and how they should be. You should be comfortable in your own skin and also let them be who they are. Could you imagine how boring the world would be if we were all the same? Having individual identity is interesting, thought provoking and provides different perspectives on life. **This does not mean you can ignore laws and rules that society are governed by - they are designed to keep people safe.**

Think of it in a food context - a healthy diet is made up of many different types of food. Likewise, a family, team, community, region or country is made up of many different types of people who all offer different skills, perspectives and attributes thus providing valued variety.

On occasions in your life your identity might be challenged. This could be in a working environment, by coaches, bosses or fellow employees but by standing strong and being true to yourself and your own identity is empowering.

The way you talk to yourself can affect your self-identity. Do you say things like, "I am not good at taking tests?" Saying things like this about yourself can limit your belief in yourself. If we talk more positively to ourselves, we tend to have a stronger self-identity.

Finally, self-identity is something that continues to develop throughout your life. No one else has the same unique combinations that make up your self-identity, which helps you to live in harmony with who you are.

## Culture

**Personal culture plays an important part in who you are. Understanding your heritage, history, language and how your people got to where they are today can give you a greater sense of identity and can be very rewarding.**

There are many wonderful, rich aspects of culture. However, it is also important to acknowledge that there are also certain pressures that can come with your culture, which are ingrained and placed upon you as you grow up.



**Grace, Anna, Amelie (in front), Milla, Elise in their puletasi's and Kevin Senio in their traditional wear after church (Lotu) in Samoa (Village-Falelatai)**

# Self-identity

Learning to navigate yourself and your family through these can be challenging as you might have to walk in two worlds – the rugby world and your own cultural world – while you are playing. For example, it might not be your cultural norm to ask questions and have courageous conversations with people who you perceive to be in positions of seniority such as a rugby coach or boss. However, if this is done diplomatically it can have positive outcomes. Finding the balance between your historical culture and your modern culture can become even more challenging when you have your own children. Embracing the richness of your culture can be very

fulfilling for you and your kids while at the same time giving you all a strong sense of identity.

When they go on international duty, many players report that they learn a lot about their culture, which helps them to understand their sense of self, their history and ancestry. You don't have to wait to make a team to learn about your heritage. Start today – ask your family or use your Personal Development Programme to enrol in courses or undertake some online study.

There are plenty of options available to learn languages and immerse yourself in your culture or learn more about others.

## BE YOU - BECAUSE EVERYONE ELSE IS TAKEN

**Part of the material that is supplied free for the Papa Reo NZ Certificate in Te Reo run by Te Wananga O Aotearoa for their study at home learning. This course is the first steps in learning te reo Maori with Papa Re. For more info visit [www.twoa.ac.nz/Nga-Akoranga-Our-Programmes/study-from-home/NZ-Certificate-in-Te-Reo](http://www.twoa.ac.nz/Nga-Akoranga-Our-Programmes/study-from-home/NZ-Certificate-in-Te-Reo)**



**Books supplied for the NZ Certificate in Te Reo run by Te Wananga O Aotearoa -First steps in learning te reo Maori with Papa Reo. This is a study from home course.**

# What does success look like for you?

This might sound like a question with an obvious answer. If you are still playing or have just finished playing professional rugby, your answer might be 'winning'. However, if you pause and fast forward to you lying on your death bed and reflecting on your life, ask yourself what the most important things to you have been and how you measure your success. Is your answer still the same?

In order to find an authentic answer to this question, you need to work out what success looks and feels like for you. This is a very personal question, but if you understand what success is to you and how you measure it, you will be able to work out what you need to do to achieve it.

If you are planning a car trip to a new place, you might put your destination into Google maps and follow that plan to get to where you're going. Your success journey is similar. Decide what success looks like to you and work out which roads you are going to travel to help you get there. Sometimes you might have to take a detour because of things that block the road, but if you keep heading in the direction you need to go then you'll reach your goal eventually.



Lying on their death bed, people seldom look back and wish they had more money in the bank. Instead, they think about their relationships, spending time with people and being happy. While we all appreciate you need money to live and provide for those around you, success is measured in much more than just financial terms.



In her book, *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying*, palliative care nurse Bronnie Ware lists the main regrets as:

- I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.
- I wish I hadn't worked so hard.
- I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.
- I wish I had stayed in touch with my friends.
- I wish that I had let myself be happier.

It is important to understand what a successful life looks like for you, so you can plan your journey towards achieving success in a way that reflects your interpretation of it.

You are responsible for your own destiny, so you choose how you deal with what comes across your path and you get to create the life you want. Drive yourself along the path that leads you to your own vision of success.

## What is success for you?

Having a close family? Is it being the best partner, parent, daughter, son or sibling you can be? Is it having a life full of meaning? Is it loving others? Is it living with courage? Is it being authentic? Is it being honest? Is it being able to provide for your family? Is it being a good member of society? Is it helping others?	Is it making strong friendships? Is it removing bad influences from your life? Is it achieving goals? Is it being happy within yourself? Is it owning your own house? Is it being able to travel? Is it learning new skills? Is it being able to cope with whatever life throws at you?
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# Replace fear of failure with hunger for growth

**Failure – live with it and learn from it.**  
You don't win every game in your rugby career and real life is no different.

**An important part of life is accepting and understanding that you will experience failure and that not everything will go according to plan, but it is what you learn on the journey that is the most valuable. Failure is where transformation happens.**

Some of the world's most successful people have experienced epic failures on their path to incredible success. These include Apple's Steve Jobs, basketballer Michael Jordan, novelists Stephen King and JK Rowling, physicist Albert Einstein, Olympic gold medallists shot-putter Dame Valerie Adams and rower Mahe Drysdale, and the most capped All Black, Richie McCaw.



Each time you encounter a problem in life and you deal with it, you will learn processing strategies. The next time you face a similar issue, you will have developed a layer of problem-solving muscles to help you deal with it. The process is much like doing weight repetitions in the gym – your body learns what to do and the muscles grow. To see this in action, think back to the things that worried you when you were 15. Looking back, you can probably see that they weren't that big a deal even though they seemed like they were at the time. Very seldom does anyone ever only experience success in life. Things not going according to your expectations and plans is just a normal part of life, but it is how you deal with those situations that is the key to your success. It is how you unpack and

dissect those situations and the learnings you take from them that will help you grow and develop as a person.

Just because you failed at something does not mean you are a failure. It means you are learning and growing. Some people won't try to do things because they don't want to fail. Doing this also means they won't succeed. Humans would have never sailed across the ocean or climbed Mount Everest or made it to the moon if no one ever dared to dream, try, make mistakes and learn along the way.

**As we get older, we are taught to fear failure and limit our belief in what we are capable of. However, failure is where most GROWTH and LEARNING occur.**

If you went into a class of five-year-olds and asked who was good at drawing, singing or playing sports, most kids would put their hands up. However, if you asked a room full of adults the same questions, you would not get the same enthusiastic confidence and not many hands would go up. This is because throughout life, those adults have developed limiting beliefs that tell them they are not good at things so they will shy away from trying them.

Be like a kid and don't worry about not being good at something in order to give it a go. Get out of your comfort zone. Live with courage and embrace any opportunities that come your way, which you feel will benefit you – even if you're scared of failing. When things are not going right, remember that it will not last forever either, so change the word failure into growth.

**F First**  
**A Attempt**  
**I In**  
**L Learning**

*"Many of life's failures are people who did not realise how close they were to success when they gave up." Thomas Edison, inventor.*

*"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new." Albert Einstein, Nobel Prize-winning theoretical physicist*

# Building your team

It is important to surround yourself with good people and, just like in your rugby team, you need to build yourself a team that you can trust and depend on to help you through your journey. Having a good network outside of rugby is valuable as they will be able to offer different perspectives on life and help you during and beyond your playing days.

## Who is in your circle?



Other people you might have in your circles are your Personal Development Manager (PDM), NZRPA, doctor, insurance broker, financial adviser and banker.

When it comes to financial advice, make sure you get independent advice from a person authorised by law to give it. The Financial Markets Authority (FMA) provide useful material to assist you in finding a financial advisor. [www.fma.govt.nz/investors/getting-financial-advice/](http://www.fma.govt.nz/investors/getting-financial-advice/)

See the Finance & Business section of EXPAND for more information

Before choosing a financial adviser, do your homework on the person. Check their references, search for information about them on the internet and talk to people who already work with them.

### Accredited Agents

The New Zealand Rugby Players' Association recommend players use an NZRPA Accredited Agent. These agents have been approved by the NZRPA and New Zealand Rugby through the Agent Charter. They have shown they have the knowledge and skillset to support players by using the best practice in their rugby careers.

It is important to consider whether the person handling your contract has a comprehensive knowledge of how the rugby system in New Zealand works, including player contracting, world rugby eligibility and international release provisions, taxation obligations, payment structures and incentives, misconduct provisions, the player savings scheme and the Collective Employment Agreement.

### What is the NZRPA Agent Charter?

The New Zealand Rugby Players' Association Agent Charter is a document that sets out certain standards of industry knowledge, integrity, competence and professionalism, which those agents accredited by the NZRPA (called NZRPA Accredited Agents) agree to work by. The purpose of the charter is to ensure advice and support are given in a way that the NZRPA believes protects the interests of players and is fair and reasonable to those wishing to provide such services to players. You can find a copy of the NZRPA Agent Charter and a list of accredited agents at [www.nzrpa.co.nz/ourpeople](http://www.nzrpa.co.nz/ourpeople).

Personal Development Managers and Accredited Agents working together for the benefit of players

# Building your team



*"The eagle does not escape the storm. The eagle simply uses the storm to lift it higher."*  
Jack White

## Mentors

A mentor is usually an experienced person who is prepared to assist you grow and develop your life skills. They should be someone who is trustworthy, has a good reputation and is successful. When choosing a mentor, make sure they are genuine and have no hidden agendas. Ask people you trust for recommendations.

## Lawyers and accountants

Lawyers and accountants are very important to your rugby career and beyond as they provide legal and financial support when you're making some big life decisions, eg contracts, property purchases, investments etc.

All lawyers and accountants do not do all things. It's similar to the medical system in that when you're sick, you'll go to your general practitioner (GP) first, and they might send you to see a specialist, who has more expertise in the particular field you need. Your legal and financial needs work the same way.

A general accountant will send you to a specialist for certain things, so before agreeing to work with them, it is useful to find out who they have working in their accountancy firm and what specialist services the company can offer. For example, if you are going overseas to play, you will need an accountant with extensive experience or knowledge of the tax consequences of earning foreign income while continuing to be a New Zealand resident for tax purposes.

The same goes for lawyers. You might need someone who specialises in commercial law when you are setting up a business, but if you're buying a house, you'll need a property lawyer, or if you're dealing with a relationship break-up, you might need a family law specialist

As professional players, you have been paid for your services therefore you will need to expect to pay for the professional services of others including

lawyers and accountants. These are experts in their field. While their fees might seem costly, a good lawyer and accountant should save you money by preventing poor decision making.

People usually find good legal and accounting firms through word of mouth, so ask some trusted friends or business colleagues or contact the **NZRPA** for recommendations.

Once you have a shortlist, ask the lawyer or accountant you are considering working with to provide references from clients. It's also important to make sure they are fully qualified. Make sure your accountant is a chartered accountant and has a practising licence and a certificate of public practice. In the case of a lawyer, they must hold a New Zealand Law Society practising certificate.

### Finding a lawyer:

[www.lawsociety.org.nz](http://www.lawsociety.org.nz)  
[www.familylaw.org.nz](http://www.familylaw.org.nz)  
[www.propertylawyers.org.nz](http://www.propertylawyers.org.nz)

### Finding a chartered accountant:

[www.charteredaccountantsanz.com](http://www.charteredaccountantsanz.com)

## Changing people in your team

It is important you have a solid team that offers a variety of skills and people that you can learn from. If you have people in your circles that you feel are not adding value to your life or do not have the level of expertise you need, consider replacing them. Many rugby players have been burned by being too trusting **[see 'Players in business' articles on the info centre of NZRPA website]** so make sure those in your team add value to your life and are people you can count on. Ultimately, the decision about who you work with lies with you – do your homework and research them but don't be afraid to change to someone else if you're not happy with the service you're receiving.

# Developing good decision-making processes

In life, you will constantly have to make decisions. Some will be bigger than others and, in certain stages of your life, they'll affect more than just you. As a result, it is important that you develop robust decision-making processes. The key to this is being honest with yourself.

**It's best not to make major life decisions during times of distress – avoid making big decisions until you have recovered.**

## 5 steps to good decision-making

- Step 1** Identify your goal or what you are trying to achieve.
- Step 2** Gather information to help you weigh up your options. (List the pros and cons – see below)
- Step 3** Consider the possible outcomes or consequences on you and those around you.
- Step 4** Make your decision.
- Step 5** Evaluate your decision.

**List pros and cons:** List the positives and the negatives about the decision then weigh each one of them. Be honest. You might have fewer pros but they might be more important to you or your situation.

**Who do you trust?** Talk to people you trust but remember that you have to be comfortable with and live with any decision you make.

**What is your why?** Work out what is motivating you to make the decision.

**Take your time:** If you have the luxury of time, take the time to carefully consider each scenario and outcome and the impact they will have.

**When will I have to do this process again?** Will I have to repeat this process each contract, each season, each year or as the need arises?

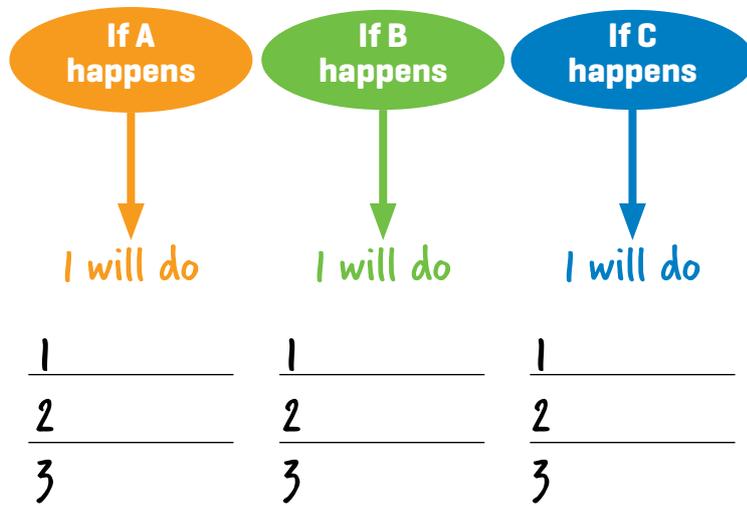
## Planning

Having plans and strategies in life can enhance your ability to achieve your goals. Just as having a game plan on the field is important, having one off the field is important too. Having multiple plans for different outcomes can reduce your stress. It can also help you to cope better, be more adaptable and less surprised by the situations that occur.

Just like a team might plan what to do if they lose three players in one position during a match – they will know who to play in that position and the more preparation, research and planning they can do the better the outcome. The same can be said for your life post-sport. It has been proven that if you plan and research and tap into the help available through your personal development programme, your next career will be a less daunting and more positive experience.

You can employ a useful strategy in life by having a plan A, B and C.

## Strategy plan for different situations



Young players learning about good decision making processes

# How stress affects your decision-making

Through adversity comes the opportunity for growth, learning & developing resilience



Planning weddings can be very stressful

Major life-changing events can cause great stress. The majority of these can happen unexpectedly, which can make them even more traumatic. Everyone experiences these big life-changing events at some point, so it is vital that you are aware that these events will have a great impact your life. It is important that you take time to navigate through these and put strategies in place to assist and support you through these changes.

Being in a state of heightened emotions can affect your decision-making process and impact your ability to think rationally, so be aware of making major decisions when you are in the thick of any of these big life events. Sometimes you will be forced to make decisions during these periods, so it is crucial that you understand your vulnerability while in this state.

## Research has proven the following situations to be the most stressful:

Death of a loved one	Major illness or injury
Divorce/separation	Job loss
Getting married	Retirement
Moving house/city/country	Imprisonment

There are plenty of other life stresses including being off contract, changing careers, financial challenges, birth of children [due to the change in lifestyle and sleep deprivation], emotional problems and family issues, so it's important to make sure you have the right support so you have the tools you need to work your way through these issues.

## Simple strategies

- Acknowledge the stress and know what is specifically causing it
- Talk to a trusted person, PDM, agent or mentor
- Seek professional help from a trained counsellor or psychologist. This can be done through Instep's employee assistance programme on **0800 284 678** or [www.insteplimited.com](http://www.insteplimited.com), or by texting or phoning **1737** or contact **0800 PLAYER** to be put in touch with a professional or by talking to your Personal Development Manager or doctor.
- Exercise, sleep, eat healthy, connect with people and help others
- Simplify your life – try not to overcommit to things while you are working through challenging changes
- Have realistic expectations as these all take time to navigate through.

For more strategies visit the Health & Wellbeing section of EXPAND Magazine

# Basic strategies to help you cope with major life events

**Death of a loved one** – Take some time out if possible and allow yourself to grieve properly. Coping with death is a very personal journey so don't try to do too much initially. Rely on others for support. Don't be afraid to ask for help. You may want to share your grief with others or honour your loved one's memory by volunteering for causes they believed in or by helping others. If it is the death of a partner, it can help to leave a radio on talkback so there is a background noise in the house so you don't feel so alone. Put pillows down their side of the bed when you go to sleep so it doesn't feel so empty. The year of 'firsts' is often described as the hardest – the first Christmas, birthday, anniversary of their passing – so make sure you have loved ones around you on those occasions. The old saying 'time is the biggest healer' is often true.

**Job loss** – Having no playing contract or a restructure at work can see you out of paid employment quite suddenly. Use your network. Let people know you are looking for a job in advance if you think changing jobs might be on the cards. Try not to take your stress out on your partner and kids. Financial pressures will make this situation more stressful, so it is important that you save money while you are working so you can cope financially if you find yourself in this position. Ensure you can cover your mortgage. Mortgage protection is useful in this situation. **[Check out the Careers section of EXPAND for more ideas].**

**Retirement/transition** – After years of working – and perhaps defining yourself by your work – it can be a hard transition to a new career as you try to discover who you are. This is why it is critical that your job does not define you – it is simply something that you do. Keep busy, plan for your retirement/transition, ensure each day has structure and set new goals to keep you fulfilled. Part of your structure might include going to the gym and connecting with others. Now is the time to do all of the things that you have never had time to do!

**Divorce/separation** – This can be nearly as painful as death. Seek emotional support from your family and friends. If there are children involved, make sure they are well looked after financially and emotionally. Try to have a working relationship with your ex for the children's sake and to reduce stress. Get a good lawyer and good emotional support. There are emotional, practical and legal considerations as well as living arrangements, financial matters and custody details to work through. The more organised you are and the better you communicate, the less stressful the outcome will be.

**Moving house/city/country** – Finding the right place to live, packing, unpacking, getting schools sorted and learning your local network and structure can all be quite stressful. Do your research first, do plenty of planning, use a reputable moving company and draw on those around you for help. Getting involved in your new community will help you make new connections more quickly.

**Getting married** – Planning a wedding can be very stressful as there are usually a lot of people involved and many different moving parts. Be clear and open in your communication with family members and stay connected to your partner. Once you get married, make sure you have time for yourself and maintain your bonds with friends and family while still learning new things together. Good communication is the key to a successful marriage, especially as having children can change the dynamics of the relationship.

**Major illness or injury** – Find new ways to occupy your time and attention. Make sure you have people around you who will give you good emotional support. Have a good rehab plan if rehabilitation is possible.

**Imprisonment** – Obey the law to avoid going to prison, but if for some reason you do end up there use the time to upskill and retrain, learn new hobbies and work on your fitness.

For a list of helpful websites and numbers see the Health & Wellbeing section of EXPAND Magazine

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