

# Major challenges

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Major Challenges Facing Retiring Athletes ID] s Major Challenges Facing Retiring Athletes Transition challenges faced by retiring athletes are many and far from easy. The immediate change that is accompanied by the transition comes with a lot of challenges (Grant, 2012). What happens when it is all over? No more applause, no more product endorsements. The following are some of the major challenges faced by retiring athletes: One of the most prevalent challenges is depression. Retirement has never been kind to athletes or any other sportsperson. They do not only lose the one consistent source of income they had ever known but also their identity. The roar of the crowd and the high self-image created by professional athlete become faint memories. All these among other lead anxiety stress, anger and depression. For example, “ Boo” William. Who was a very prolific football player suffered depression after retiring in 2005 (Grant, 2012). Inasmuch as William is not an athlete, this is fate of many retiring athletes. Additionally, Ian Thome, Celtic FC Manger Neil Lennon and Olympic Champion Dame Kelly are some of the few high profile athletes who confirmed having suffered depression after retirement (Grant, 2012).

Another major challenge facing retiring athletes is lost identity. Athlete’s identity is basically how the athlete identifies himself/herself with the role he/she plays and looks to others for acknowledgement of that role. The loss of applauses, brand endorsement and autography, among others, normally lead to discomfort and lack of confidence that the athlete had been exuding while on the track. This again may roll back to psychological pain and stress. For example, Bill Cole, who is one of renowned performing coach has worked with many athletes who struggle to come to terms with retirement (Grant, 2012). He notes that the most contributing factor is putting up with sense of

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loss in their live. That is losing crowd acknowledgement.

Thirdly, another major challenge is what may be may be called ‘ Tunnel vision syndrome’. Most athletes’ life is mainly narrowed down to training, competition and results. Thus thinking about other aspects of life after retiring may be a demanding task for most of them. James Cracknell, Britain’s double Olympic rowing champion, noted that most people suffer from depression after retiring from sport because they are not sure where to apply the focus (Grant, 2012).

Thus challenges facing retiring athletes creates a vicious cycles that rolls back to depression and stress. .

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#### References

Grant, J. (2012). Sport, Culture and Society. New York : Routledge.