FREE FOR COACHES AND ATHLETIC DEPARTMENTS

0:00 FINAL

THE COACH'S GUIDE TO BUILT FOR MORE

Six short team sessions on the question nobody asks: who are you when the game is gone?

YORK SIMS, JR.

START HERE

WHY THIS GUIDE EXISTS

I played junior college ball at Panola and Northern Oklahoma, one season of Division I at Central Arkansas and my senior year at Chico State. Then I flew to Turkey for a pro tryout that didn't turn into a contract. When it ended, nobody had warned me what came next. Not one coach, not one adult. They all asked about my game. None of them asked about me.

You see your players more hours a week than almost anyone in their lives. That makes you the best person to start this conversation, and this guide is built to make it easy.

> *This is not a talk about quitting. Nothing in the book or this guide asks your players to love the game less. It asks them to build something under the game, while they still love it.*

HOW IT WORKS

- **Six sessions, 20 to 30 minutes each.** One for each part of the book. Run them weekly through a season, or across a preseason.
- **Each session has the same shape:** what to read, the point in one line, a passage from the book, four questions, one thing to do, and one move for you as the coach.
- **The worksheets are at the back.** Print one per player. Players keep their own sheets. Nobody has to share what they wrote.
- **No book? You can still run it.** The passages and numbers in this guide stand on their own. The book goes deeper.

RULES FOR THE ROOM

1. Honest beats impressive. There are no right answers.
2. Pass is always allowed.
3. What gets said in the room stays in the room.
4. You go first. When a coach answers a question honestly, players follow.

WHERE TO START BY LEVEL

High school: run every session, and lean hardest on the "who am I" audit, the expiration date and getting reps at being bad at something. They cost nothing.
College: push the credential, the circle outside the sport and translating the sport into job language. Campus is the cheapest place to build all three.
Already done playing: sessions 5 and 6 first, then go back to the start.

PUT THIS ON THE WALL

THE NUMBERS NOBODY FRAMES

Read these out loud in session 2. Most players have never seen them, and most adults around them haven't either.

HIGH SCHOOL SPORT	PLAY IN THE NCAA, ANY DIVISION	PLAY DIVISION I
Football	**8 in 100**	**3 in 100**
Boys basketball	**4 in 100**	**1 in 100**
Girls basketball	**5 in 100**	**1 in 100**
Baseball	**9 in 100**	**3 in 100**

FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO THE DRAFT	ODDS
High school football player drafted by an NFL team	**About 1 in 1,000**
High school boys basketball player drafted by the NBA	**About 1 in 3,100**
High school girls basketball player drafted by the WNBA	**About 1 in 3,000**

JOBS THAT EXIST AT ANY ONE TIME	ROSTER SPOTS
NFL active rosters	**1,696**
NBA standard contracts	**450**
MLB active rosters	**780**
Kids playing high school sports right now	**Over 8.2 million**

And for the ones who make it: most pros are done before 30, with four to five decades of life still ahead. Studies of elite athletes put the adjustment to life after sport at roughly 8 to 19 months, even when it goes well.

"None of that is a reason to stop. Somebody makes it every single year, and it might be you, and you should train like it will be. But now you know what you're betting."

Built For More, chapter 15

Sources: NFHS High School Athletics Participation Survey, 2024-25. NCAA Research, "Estimated Probability of Competing in College Athletics" and "in Professional Athletics," updated March 2026. Draft odds compare 2024 and 2025 draft picks from NCAA schools to the estimated high school senior class. NCAA rates count school teams only. Roster counts from current NFL, NBA and MLB roster rules. Full sources are in the appendix of the book.

1 THE QUESTION NOBODY ASKS

Read: the introduction, chapter 1 and chapter 2 (Part one, the making of an athlete)

The point: every athletic career ends, and most athletes reach that day having only ever been asked about the sport.

"An athlete can go from age eight to age 28 answering questions every single day and never once hear the only one that is guaranteed to matter: Who are you when the game is gone?"

Introduction

TALK ABOUT IT

1. As a team, list the questions adults ask you most. How many of them are about your sport?
2. When did you first think of yourself as an athlete? Who told you that you were one?
3. Chapter 2 calls a ranking at 12 "a bet that grown adults placed on a child's body." Has anyone ever placed a bet on you? How did it feel?
4. Describe yourself in one sentence without mentioning your sport. Was that hard?

DO IT

The "who am I" audit. Each player writes "Who am I?" and lists ten answers on the worksheet in the back. Honest, not impressive. Then count how many answers route back to the sport. Eight out of ten is not a flaw. It's data. Players keep their sheets for session 6.

COACH'S MOVE

Fill out an audit yourself before the session and share your count first. If yours is mostly coaching, say so. It gives everyone permission to be honest.

2 WHERE MOST DREAMS END

Read: chapters 3, 4 and 5 (Part two, high school)

The point: for most players, the last high school game is the last game that counts, and it ends loud or silent. Almost nobody gets to choose which.

"The applause at this level is real. It's also rented, and the town holds the lease."
Chapter 3

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Read the numbers page out loud. Before you did, what did players guess the odds were? How far off were they?
2. Chapter 4 says a recruiting profile is a price, and "it has never met you." What's the difference between your price and your worth?
3. Chapter 5 says careers end loud, like an injury, or silent, like a phone that never rings. Which one scares you more?
4. Who is the friend who likes you with zero points scored?

DO IT

Say the expiration date out loud. Each player writes the season their playing career most likely ends on the worksheet, then says it to one teammate: "My career probably ends in the spring of ___." It will feel like quitting the first time. It isn't. Athletes who plan for the ending adjust far better than athletes who get ambushed by it.

COACH'S MOVE

Tell them when your own playing career ended and what the first morning after felt like. Keep it short and true.

3 STARTING OVER

Read: chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 (Part three, college)

The point: the game assigns roles and takes them back without asking. The sport will take its hours. What the other hours build is up to the player.

"You'll go from the name on the program to a number on a laundry loop, and it will feel like an insult. It isn't. It's information, delivered early."

Chapter 6

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Chapter 7 asks: would you choose your major, or your classes, if you weren't an athlete?
2. About 98 or 99 of every 100 draft-eligible college players go undrafted. Where does that number land for you?
3. Walk through your week hour by hour. How many of those hours belong to the sport?
4. Chapter 8 says you don't get a vote in the injury lottery. What would still be true about you the day after a career-ending injury?

DO IT

The Monday-after map. On the worksheet, each player writes out the Monday after their last game, hour by hour. Most of it will be empty. Then they put one real thing in one empty hour, something they could start this month.

COACH'S MOVE

Invite a former player from your program to this session. Ask them one question: what was your first year after the game like? Nobody who lived it lies about it.

4 WHERE THE AIR GETS THIN

Read: chapters 10, 11 and 12 (Part four, the pros)

The point: even the ones who make it are on a countdown clock. The bodies break, the money runs out faster than anyone expects, and the people who fall are the ones who handed their whole life to someone else.

"Making it isn't arriving, because there is no arriving. There's only playing until the game decides it's done with you, and the game always decides."

Chapter 10

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Fewer than 3,000 active roster jobs exist across the NFL, NBA and MLB combined. What changes when you know that?
2. Chapter 11: "Your knee does not know your ranking." What part of you lives somewhere an injury can't reach?
3. Chapter 12 says earning more and playing longer didn't protect pro athletes from going broke. Why would that be?
4. Do you know where your money went last month? Who makes your money decisions right now?

DO IT

Money rules before the money. Each player writes three rules for the next money that shows up: a paycheck, a birthday card, an NIL deal. How much gets saved, how much gets spent, and one thing they will say no to. Then practice saying no on a $40 decision this week, so the word exists before a big decision ever shows up.

COACH'S MOVE

Ask a parent or booster who works with money to join for ten minutes and answer questions. No pitch, just answers.

5 THE VOID

Read: chapters 13 and 14 (Part five)

The point: the end of a career is a real loss and deserves real grief. The athletes who came through it whole had three things: a plan for the end, people who knew them as more than a jersey, and a self with more than one room in it.

"So here's the question that matters more than any stat in this book: if your sport ended this Saturday, what's under construction? Not what would you do. What have you already started?"

Chapter 14

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Chapter 13 is called "Retirement Is a Kind of Death." Does that feel too strong, or about right?
2. Answer the question above. What have you already started?
3. Name someone who knows you as more than a player. When did you last spend time with them?
4. Which story from chapter 14 stuck with you? What did that person have that helped them rebuild?

DO IT

One circle that doesn't know your stats. Each player writes three names of people outside the sport on the worksheet, and makes one plan to spend time with one of them this week.

COACH'S MOVE

Say this out loud: when the game ends, it's normal for the first year to hurt. That isn't weakness. It's on schedule. Make sure players know who your school counselor is, and that they can call or text **988**, the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, any time. Getting help early is like treating an injury early.

6 THE PLAYBOOK

Read: chapters 15 and 16 and the conclusion (Part six)

The point: going all in was never the problem. Going all in on only one thing was. The players who prepare don't play worse. They land softer.

"The plan is not a betrayal of the dream. It's insurance for the dreamer."
Chapter 16

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Pull out your audit from session 1. Would you change any answers now?
2. Pick one thing the sport taught you, like showing up when it's boring, or taking coaching. How would you say that in a job interview?
3. What's one skill or certificate you could finish this off-season? A coaching cert, a first aid course, a coding class, a trade license.
4. What did you learn about yourself across these six sessions?

DO IT

Write the exit plan. One page, on the worksheet: three possible endings, the first 90 days, who you call in week one, what you already have and one honest sentence about the timeline. The plan doesn't care how the ending arrives. That's why it works.

COACH'S MOVE

Run the "who am I" audit again at the end of the season and have players compare it to their first one. The goal isn't fewer sports answers. The goal is one more answer that has nothing to do with the game.

OPTIONAL

FOR A PARENT MEETING

Twenty minutes at a preseason parent night. Parents are the other half of this conversation, and chapters 1 and 2 are written partly for them.

1. **Read the opening question out loud.** "Who are you when the game is gone?" Ask parents how many times they've asked their kid about the sport this week, and how many times they've asked about anything else.
2. **Show the numbers page.** Ask them to guess the odds before you reveal them.
3. **Share two lines from the book.**

   "A kid becomes whatever gets reflected back at him."
   Chapter 1

   "If you spend the money, spend it because your kid lights up at Tuesday practice, and for no other reason."
   Chapter 2

4. **Give them one assignment.** This week, praise their kid for something that has nothing to do with the sport, and mean it.

RESOURCES

- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.** Call or text 988, any time, free.
- **NCAA After the Game.** A network, career center and job board for former college athletes at every level, not just pros.
- **Your school counselor and athletic trainer.** Introduce them to the team by name.

COPIES FOR YOUR WHOLE TEAM

Built For More is available in paperback and PDF. Coaches and athletic departments can order 25 copies or more at a team price. Request a quote at **yorksims.com** on the Teams page, and read the introduction free while you're there.

WHO AM I?

List ten answers. Be honest, not impressive. Then circle every answer that routes back to your sport.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

ANSWERS ABOUT MY SPORT: _____ OF 10
Date:_____

END OF SEASON RECOUNT: _____ OF 10
Date:_____

ONE ANSWER I WANT ON NEXT YEAR'S LIST THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE GAME

MY EXPIRATION DATE

Session 2. Write it, then say it out loud to one teammate.

My career probably ends in the _____ of _____.

I SAID IT TO

THE MONDAY AFTER

The Monday after your last game. Fill in what you'd actually be doing. Then put one real thing in one empty hour.

7 AM

9 AM

11 AM

1 PM

3 PM

5 PM

7 PM

9 PM

THE ONE REAL THING I'LL START THIS MONTH

MY MONEY RULES

Rule 1.

Rule 2.

Rule 3.

MY CIRCLE OUTSIDE THE SPORT

1.

2.

3.

THIS WEEK I'LL SPEND TIME WITH

MY EXIT PLAN

One page, while you're still playing. You don't get to pick how it ends, so plan for all three.

BEST CASE

I retire on my terms. When, and what then?

LIKELY CASE

The last senior season, or the roster call. When, and what then?

TOMORROW CASE

An injury ends it this week. What then?

THE FIRST 90 DAYS

What I do the first Monday with no practice. Where my structure comes from. What I start, apply for or enroll in.

WHO I CALL IN WEEK ONE

Names. A mentor, a friend from my circle, a counselor.

WHAT I ALREADY HAVE

Skills, certificates, money rules, people.

ONE HONEST SENTENCE ABOUT THE TIMELINE

For example: year one will be hard, and that's normal.

From Built For More by York Sims, Jr. Free to copy for your team.