

The Transition Mindset: How Retiring from the NFL at the Peak of My Career Changed My Life

Andre Hal

Amplify Publishing (Aug 2, 2022)

Hardcover \$28.00 (216pp)

978-1-64543-652-2

The Transition Mindset is a powerful sports memoir about evolving beyond the game to find one's higher purpose.

National Football League star Andre Hal's inspiring memoir *The Transition Mindset* focuses on a career decision that forever changed his life.

Hal, who played in three bowl games while at Vanderbilt University, later became a safety for the Houston Texans. He was living his longtime dream in the NFL when he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma. He battled the disease, went into remission, and returned to the field before his life took another unexpected turn. His father died, causing Hal to reevaluate his life and love of football. He notes that such decisions have become more common in the wake of mounting scientific revelations about brain trauma and the other physical tolls that football takes on the body.

Split into phases, the book is methodical in recalling Hal's high school playing days, his big multiyear multimillion-dollar professional contract, and his pursuit of an MBA. But Hal begins his memoir at the peak of its drama: with his retirement. From this piquing opening, the book rewinds to show how he reached that point, following along with the steps of his thought process and showing how his priorities evolved over time. His cancer diagnosis and treatment are interspersed among other concerns, with the juxtapositions helping to show how central Hal's health struggles were to his personal growth. With sharp focus and an inspirational tone, the book also covers how Hal started anew, giving up fame and fortune to reinvent himself as a successful real estate entrepreneur.

The prose is pithy and concrete, vivifying Hal's time on the field, in the locker room, and in doctor's offices. It captures dramatic moments in a memorable way, including how Hal felt free while surveying his stadium from the parking lot after announcing his retirement. It skews aphoristic at times, as when it distills Hal's personal experiences into broader lessons for others. Still, its insights are compelling, including the observation that "it's hard to convince people of something, especially when they've already convinced themselves of something else."

The narrative builds to a reflection on what's next for Hal, while also musing on how more athletes need to prepare for what's next in life as "everybody eventually walks away from the game" and "time, as they say, is undefeated." It broadens its scope beyond Hal's personal story to address widespread issues facing the league, contextualizing the memoir and elevating its import. The book ends on a rousing, uplifting inspirational note, as well.

The Transition Mindset is a powerful sports memoir about evolving beyond the game to find one's higher purpose.

JOSEPH S. PETE (July 13, 2022)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book and paid a small fee to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. Foreword Reviews and Clarion Reviews make no guarantee that the publisher will receive a positive review. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.