

TEAM BROOKHAVEN

THE ACADEMY OF
TENNIS TRAINING





Player Training Manual

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Introduction

The following program of information has been specifically designed for Brookhaven Academy students who have college, scholarship or professional goals. It was designed for use **every day** to record your training information, to remind yourself of key skills, and to learn new information. Keep this book in your tennis bag at all times and bring it on-court every match and practice.

OUR PURPOSE IS TO TEACH EFFICIENCY AND CONTROL.

There is no absolute right or wrong way to play the game. However, according to the laws of science, there is a more EFFICIENT way to move, swing and think during a tennis match. 'Efficiency' means getting the result you want with the smallest amount of effort, expense or waste. We have compiled years of research and training innovations to make this the most valuable training book produced anywhere. As new information and ideas emerge, expect them to be provided in handouts and included in later editions of this packet.

First Steps

1 Complete your profile

Complete the Player Profile and Personal Plan section.

2 Complete the academy planner

The academy planner calendar helps you organize important aspects of your training into one place so you can effectively plan to peak for tournaments. Follow the instructions and consult with your parents and private coach.

3 Get familiar with this book

The academy player guide has been organized into 6 main sections: (1) Technical information, (2) tactical information, (3) mental/emotional information, (4) character information, (5) physical information, (6) tournament tough toolset, and (7) resources. Browse through the whole book and see what's here.

Personal Plan



Player Profile

Name _____

Age _____

Section Ranking (USTA) _____

National Ranking (USTA) _____

Years Playing Tournaments _____

Current Tournament Levels:

USTA: 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Tournaments per Year _____

ITF: J30 J60 J100 J200 J300 J500

Academy Attendance Days:

<input type="checkbox"/>	MON
--------------------------	-----

<input type="checkbox"/>	TUE
--------------------------	-----

<input type="checkbox"/>	WED
--------------------------	-----

<input type="checkbox"/>	THU
--------------------------	-----

<input type="checkbox"/>	FRI
--------------------------	-----

Private Coach _____

Rank the "Big 4" areas from MOST (1) to LEAST(4) important FOR YOU:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Fitness
--------------------------	---------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Technique
--------------------------	-----------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy
--------------------------	----------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental
--------------------------	--------

List your 3 strongest strokes

① _____

② _____

③ _____

List your 3 weakest strokes

① _____

② _____

③ _____

What's your IDEAL style of play?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Aggressive Baseline
--------------------------	---------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Counter-puncher
--------------------------	-----------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	All-court Player
--------------------------	------------------

What is your highest dream you have for your tennis?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Make my high school team
--------------------------	--------------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn a high state ranking
--------------------------	---------------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn a high national ranking
--------------------------	------------------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn a college scholarship
--------------------------	----------------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Play professional tennis
--------------------------	--------------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Earn a world ranking
--------------------------	----------------------

Developing a Successful Tennis Player

Directions: If you can answer 'Yes', put a check mark in the box.

As a player, do I have...

- ...an intense desire and motivation to work harder and smarter than competitors?
- ...a habit of listening and following directions?
- ...efficient strokes and high percentage strategies?
- ...a strong commitment to myself and my coach to always work hard and smart?
- ...ample financial resources?
- ...a strong family relationship?
- ...access to a year-round training facility?
- ...a wide range of practice partners and opponents?
- ...above-average coordination and physical skills?
- ...a habit of delaying gratification (choosing needs over wants)?

Does the academy staff...

- ...teach technical stroke efficiencies?
- ...teach effective on-court strategies and tactics?
- ...use effective teaching methods?
- ...have strong communication and organizational skills?
- ...design and use tennis-specific physical fitness training programs (intervals)?
- ...design and use tennis-specific injury avoidance programs (stretching)?
- ...design and use tennis-specific psychological skills training programs (BPR)?
- ...provide coaching at major tournaments (travel teams)?
- ...have coaches with experience competing and coaching at all competitive levels?
- ...teach the diet requirements for competitive tennis players?

As a competitive player,...

- ...have I developed efficient strokes (standing still)?
- ...have I developed a tennis-specific physical fitness base (strength & endurance)?
- ...have I developed efficient swings when on the move (move-hit-recover)?
- ...have I developed favorite 'two-shot' sequences (used in matches)?
- ...do I regularly train on-court agility (speed, quickness, reactions)?
- ...do I regularly practice psychological skills (goals, visualization, self-talk, rituals)?
- ...do I love to compete against anyone (seven-point games, sets, matches, etc.)?
- ...do I regularly train off-court by doing sprints, agility drills, and resistance work (weights)?
- ...do I have a psychological and nutritional program specifically designed for me?
- ...have I written a six- to twelve-month periodization schedule?

Qualities of World-class Players

How many of these 30 qualities do you own? Ask someone who really knows you as a tennis player to rate you on each of them (from 0 to 10). A score of 250 or more is awesome, 150 or more is OK, and less than 100 is poor. Work to improve these qualities.

Self-disciplined _____	Patient _____
Determined _____	Coachable _____
Hard-working _____	Classy (as in a 'class act') _____
Persistent (doesn't give up) _____	Optimistic (positive outlook) _____
Dedicated (committed) _____	Positive _____
Has 'heart' _____	Tenacious (fight) _____
Loves the game _____	Aggressive _____
Self-confident _____	Organized (manages time) _____
Sets high personal goals _____	Focused _____
Has 'guts' (no fear) _____	Passionate _____
Loves competition _____	Humble (doesn't brag) _____
Motivated _____	Gracious (gratitude) _____
Strong character _____	Detail-oriented (not sloppy) _____
Respects opponents _____	Improvement-oriented _____
Appreciative _____	Thankful _____
Subtotal _____	Subtotal _____
	TOTAL _____

Goal-setting Sheet

Directions: Begin with the end in mind.

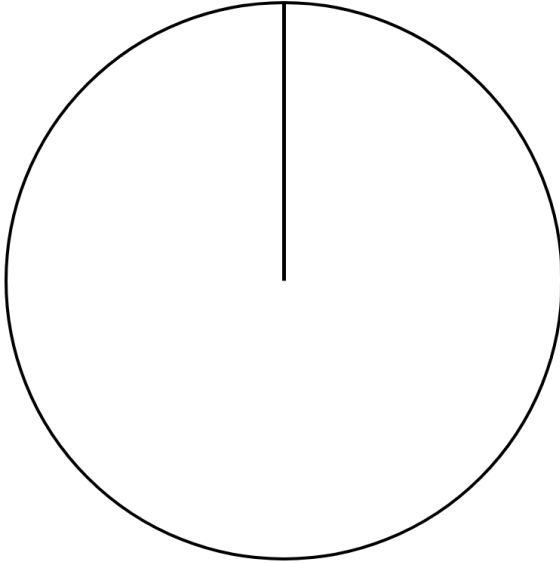
- 1 Write your highest tennis-related dream and put a box around it at the top of the table.
- 2 Draw a short arrow pointing up at the bottom of the box. Work down the page writing the most significant accomplishment you will need to achieve in order to reach the higher box.
- 3 Continue until you get to today (this lowest goal should be your next major accomplishment).
- 4 Go back up the page from the bottom writing in target dates for each goal.
- 5 Last, and most importantly, write in detail what you have to improve in your game to reach your next major goal (Big 4: movement, technique, strategy, mental). Improving Big 4 skills and knowledge is what you have complete control over and should demand most of your attention.

Dreams and Goals	Target Date	Need to Improve

Academy Pie Chart Evaluation

Date _____

The following chart is where to focus to improve the fastest:



The Big 4
T: Technical Efficiency
F: Fitness/Movement
S: Strategy/Tactics
M: Mental/Emotional

Key Big 4 Areas	Specifics	How to Improve

High Performance Program Plus



High Performance Program Plus

The following list of activities has been created as a supplement to the regular Academy program. It is for those players who have **very high goals** requiring **dedication, commitment** and **sacrifice**. In order to be exceptional (high rankings, scholarship, career in tennis, etc.), you must consistently do exceptional things. The Academy program is designed to give you much of the information and tools for **high level competition**. However, to reach your highest tennis goals, you must spend productive time inside AND outside the program following up on technical, tactical, movement and mental skills. Feel free to add to this list. Add the appropriate activities below to your monitoring chart so you'll be sure to do them each week.

Time Away from Brookhaven

Mirror shadow swings

Practice grip changes

Resistance band stretches

Light weights with high reps

Watch/chart tennis on TV

Read tennis books

Walk/jog/sprint sets

Write a tennis journal

Set/review/update tennis goals

Agility and stretching exercises

Yoga/meditation/visualization

Get inspired by inspirational videos

Time Before and After Class

30-minute warm-up/cool-down

Hit on a backboard

Use the ball machine

Help other players

Do shadow swinging

Do drop hitting

Do drills with a partner

Help a coach teach

Do bucket serves

Do agility exercises

Jump rope

Play practice sets

Daily Bag Check

Preparation is the first step on the road to success.



*One important key to success is self-confidence. An important key to self-confidence is **preparation**.* – Arthur Ashe

*I don't believe in luck, I believe in **preparation**.* – Bobby Knight

*Our confidence comes from our **preparation**.* – Ronaldinho

Your tennis bag is the first thing you should prepare. Make it a daily routine to do a bag check before you walk out the door.

Tennis Bag Checklist

- Academy Player Training Book
- Running shoes
- Extra laces
- Extra shirt and socks
- Jump rope
- Resistance band
- Towel
- Extra rackets
- Extra string
- Extra grips
- Balls in a sock (serves)
- Wrist bands
- Can of balls
- Hat/sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Energy snacks
- Yoga mat
- Foam roller
- First aid kit
- Ankle wrap

The Academy Planner

Directions: Get with your coach (or parents if you don't yet have a private coach) and fill in the Academy Planner calendar with the following information. Be sure to start with tournaments first then go down the list. We suggest you also read the Periodization section.

- 1 **Tournaments:** Include all USTA, UTR, or ITF events you plan to play.
- 2 **Academy Class Days:** Write **BH** for Brookhaven in the box to the left of the date for every day you plan to train at Brookhaven.
- 3 **Private Lessons:** Write **Private** and the time you meet with your coach for each private lesson.
- 4 **Non-academy Training Days:** When training at high school or away from the academy, write what you have planned for those days.
- 5 **Days Off:** Make sure you schedule one **Day Off** from physical activity each week. Two days a week is not bad either, depending on your intensity when you practice and the number of tournaments you're playing.
- 6 **Bucket Serving:** 30 minutes of **Serving** to targets, twice a week at least - the serve is the #1 stroke in the game and it needs extra attention.
- 7 **"Big 4" Weekly Emphasis:** Put your primary focus in the left margin: **Drill** (technique & consistency), **Fit** (movement & endurance), or **Match** (strategy & mental) based on what your needs are for the week.
- 8 **Weights or Bands:** Only include **Weights** if you have a program designed for you. If you participate in the academy fitness program, write in **Fit**. Write in **Elastics** if you're following an elastic resistance workout program.
- 9 **Monitoring Chart:** Start using the weekly monitoring chart in the section after the academy planner calendars. This chart is vital for you to complete each week if you are serious about reaching your tennis goals. It will serve as a reminder of all the training you'll be doing daily, and help you learn what works for you as you prepare for tournaments.

Example of how to complete the planner

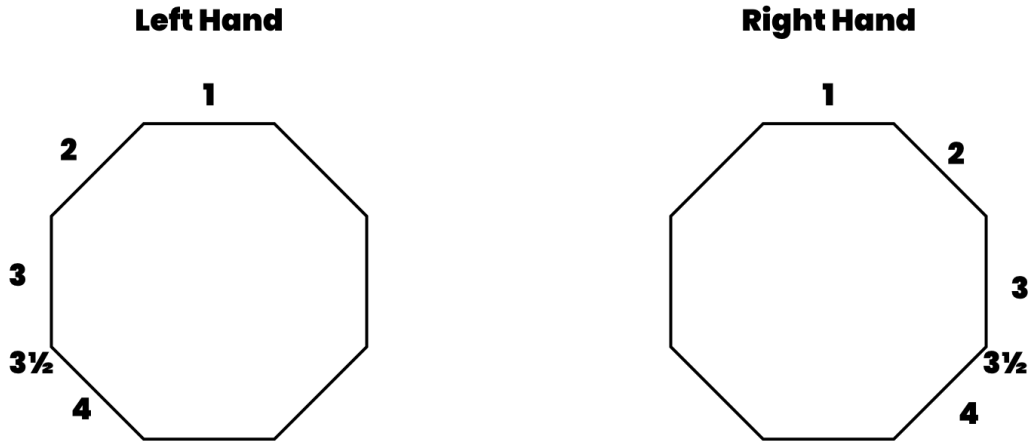
SUN		MON		TUE		WED		THU		FRI		SAT	
		Drill	BH	Fit	BH	Drill	BH	Fit	BH	Match	BH		
Day off				Yoga 12:00 Fit 10:30		Fit 10:30 Private 2:30		Yoga 12:00 Fit 10:30		Fit 10:30		Tournament USTA L3	
1		2		3		4		5		6		7	

Technical



Grips

Your grip is a major factor in the angle of your racket face at contact, so it's vital that you understand exactly how to position your hands on the racket handle.



Look at the bottom of your racket (buttcap). Notice that it has 8 sides or 'bevels.' Run your finger down the edge of your racket to where the grip starts. That top edge is number 1. If your right hand is on the racket, number 2 is the next bevel to the right, number 3 is to the right of 2, and number 4 is to the right of 3. If your left hand is on the grip (you're left-handed or you have a two-handed stroke), number 2 is the next bevel to the left of 1, number 3 is to the left of 2, and number 4 is to the left of 3.

To find your grip, put one dot on top of the base knuckle of your first finger, and another dot in the middle of the top of your hand. Simply place these two parts of your hand on top of the number from the chart above (for example, put both dots on a 3 for a forehand). Be sure that both dots are aligned such that they run parallel to the bevel edges.

(Note: The actual 'reference points' on your hand are the base knuckle of your first finger and 'heel' of the palm of your hand. For simplicity sake, we put the dots on top of the hand so you can see them and align them easier.)

Here are what grips we recommend for each stroke:

Stroke	Ideal Grip
Forehand Groundstroke	#3 or 3½
Backhand Groundstroke	#1
Forehand Volley	#3
Backhand Volley	#1
Serve	#2
Overhead	#2

Grip Naming Notes	
#1	Eastern Backhand
#2	Continental
#3	Eastern Forehand
#3½	Semi-Western
#4	Western
#5	Extreme Western (Hawaiian)

Forehand Groundstroke



1

Ready position, racket at 45 degree angle

2

Turn and pivot, non-dominant hand on the throat of the racket

3

Keep racket head high and racket face slightly closed or on edge, and non-dominant hand parallel to baseline



4

Drop racket head and hitting hand below the ball and begin uncoiling rotation

5

Swing inside out, low to high to contact ball with racket face vertical at contact point slightly in front of body

6

Follow through forward and upward to finish the stroke

7

Two-handed Backhand Groundstroke



Split step from the ready position

Rotate shoulders with body in unit turn while changing to backhand grip

Keep racket high and racket face slightly closed



Drop racket head and hitting hand below the ball

Swing inside out, low to high to contact ball with racket face vertical at contact point slightly in front of body

Follow through forward and upward to finish with racket head high

Forehand Volley



1

Split step on opponent's shot to change direction as needed

2

Organize the feet and hands with the racket at about a 45 degree angle

3

Turn and pivot, keeping the racket head up, with shoulders turning to move racket



4

Create a "wall" with the racket face/strings, with non-dominant hand in front and elbows raised

5

Step with movement forward, elbows still in a slightly bent position, body at approximately 45 degree angle

6

Continue the swing path forward through the shot, keeping the racket head up

One-hand Backhand Volley



1 Ready position with racket at 45 degree angle, racket head up, elbows slightly bent

2 Unit turn while changing grip and straightening arm, non-dominant hand on racket throat

3 Synchronize forward step and forward swing, keeping the racket face in a "walled" position, keeping racket head at eye-level

4 Play the volley from the shoulder, continuing the momentum of the body through the volley with good body balance

Two-hand Backhand Volley



1 Ready position with racket at 45 degree angle, racket head up, elbows slightly bent

2 Unit turn while changing grip and straightening dominant arm, keeping racket head up at eye-level

3 Synchronize forward step and forward swing, keeping the racket face in a "walled" position

4 Play the volley from the shoulders and legs, continuing momentum of the body forward through contact

Serve



1

Hold the racket with a continental grip, placing the racket throat on top of the tossing wrist, legs angled at 45 degrees

2

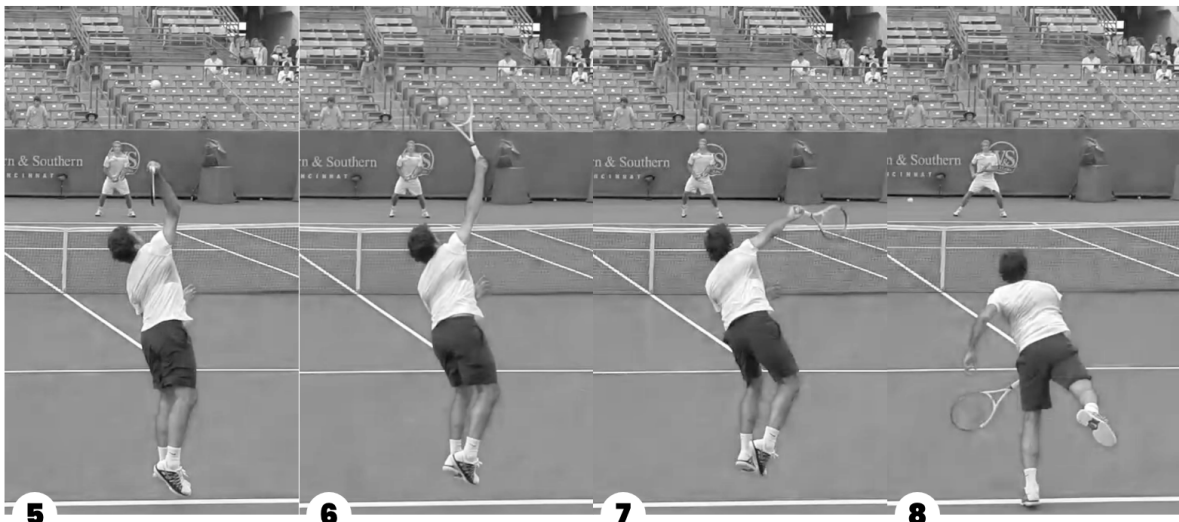
Start the toss, releasing the ball around shoulder height, load weight down on legs, take racket back with palm down; rotate body to close it off from net

3

Toss ball in front of and to the right (or left for lefties) of your body with peak of ball arc at racket contact point

4

Lead with shoulder than elbow, sweeping racket between elbow and head as it drops behind you



5

Swing racket head up and on edge towards contact point, uncoiling your loaded legs and body to achieve a power line at point of contact

6

Arm pronates and ball contacts string bed, ideally with contact made at the peak of the tossing arc

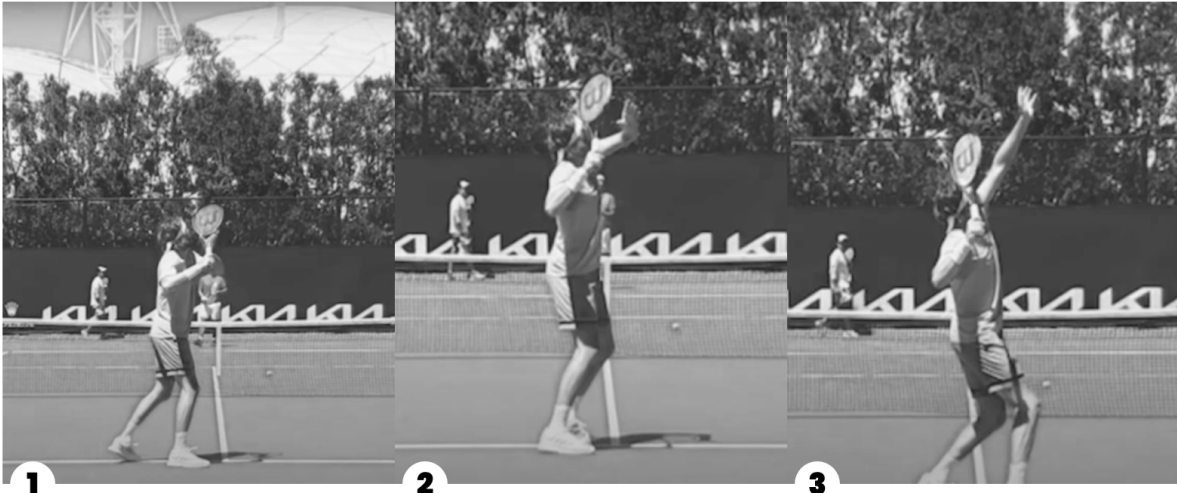
7

Maintain power X with tossing arm across body as hitting arm moves through contact and body rotates to face path of the served ball

8

Land on front leg inside the baseline to begin recovery or forward momentum on a serve and volley

Overhead



1
Step back and rotate to closed body position, set racket in "quarter back" position, non-dominant hand up and on racket throat, changing to continental grip

2
From "salute" position, release non-dominant hand from racket throat to begin overhead swing, keeping elbows up

3
Non-dominant hand goes up to initiate "throwing motion"



4
Drop racket behind back keeping racket head on edge, pulling non-dominant hand down towards chest while accelerating dominant hand

5
Swing up to contact ball slightly forward and to the right of your body (left for lefties) as non-dominant hand is pulled in, keeping body at 45 degree angle to the net

6
Pronate arm and maintain "power X" with non-dominant hand as racket head decelerates after hitting ball

7
Recover from the swing as racket decelerates and body follows ball trajectory, landing on forward foot

Underspin Backhand



1 From ready position, split step and begin unit turn and change grip to the right side (left for lefties) of #1

2 As body rotates, slightly straighten out hitting arm and keep non-dominant arm on the throat of the racket

3 Keep racket head high and laid back with hitting arm elbow raised, shifting feet to begin stepping in on the shot



4 Swing path of the racket slightly down, with racket face nearly vertical at point of contact, moving in downward "bow-shaped" path

5 Continue path of the racket forward and begin upward motion on the opposite side of the "bow-shaped" path, with racket head finishing on the same side of the body as the contact point

Mental/Emotional

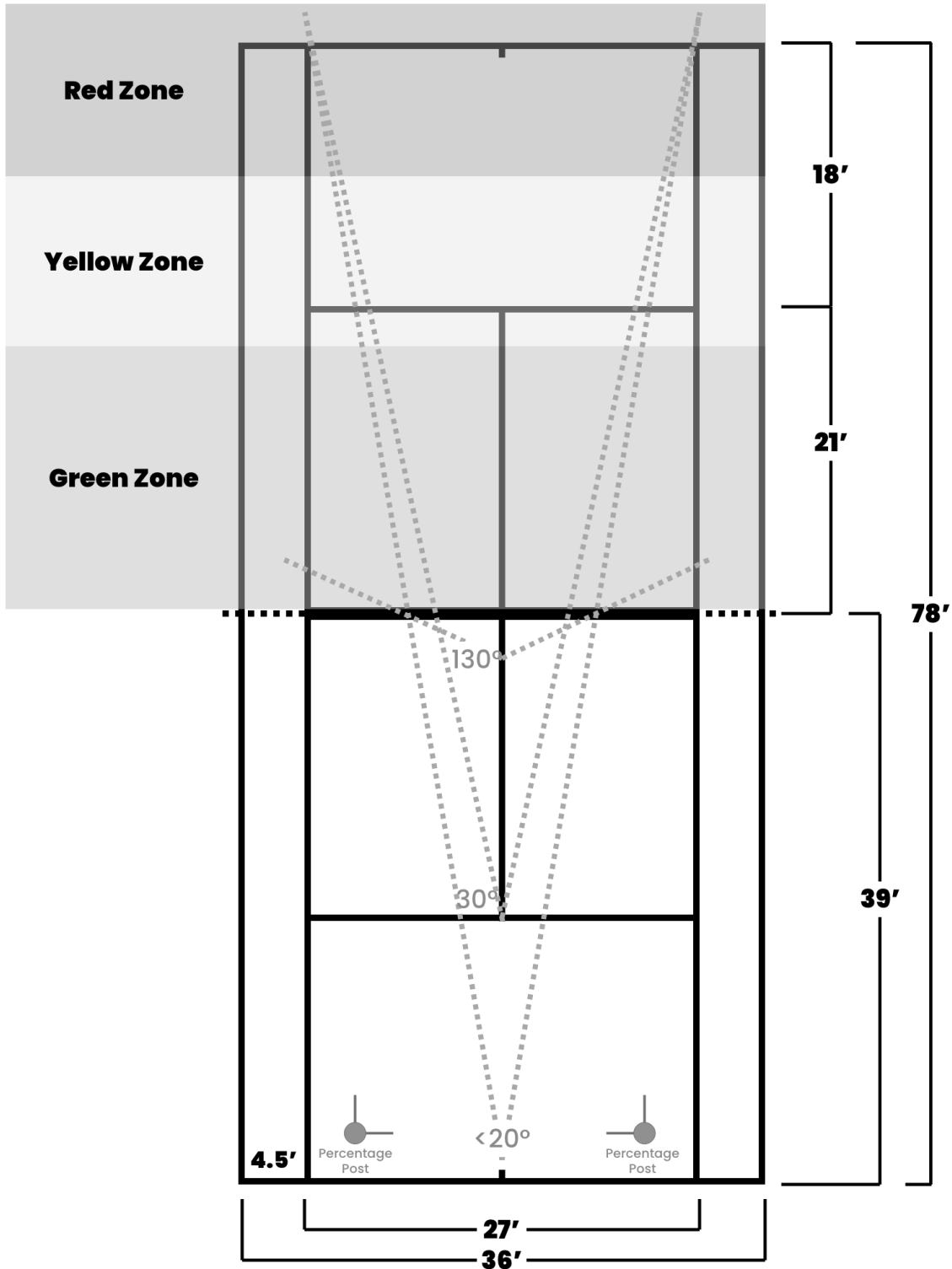


Tactical



Court Zones and Dimensions

The backcourt is the red zone. When you're in the red zone, you're waiting patiently trying to build a point. Mostly neutral and defensive tennis is played from the red zone. The midcourt is the yellow zone. In the yellow zone you're proceeding cautiously, setting yourself up for a point-ending situation up at the net. The yellow zone is for transitioning to offense. The forecourt is the green zone. Green means GO! The green zone is for attacking.



Concepts for Singles Success

- 1 **Red/Yellow/Green Zones:** Baseline area is red; inside baseline to service line is yellow; inside service line to Good Volley Position (GVP) is green
- 2 **Defensive/Neutral/Offensive (DNO):** The positions inside each of the 3 zones relating to the height and depth of the ball
- 3 **Percentage Lanes:** Target 3 feet inside the singles lines for a higher margin of error
- 4 **2-Bounce Volleys (Angling):** By the second bounce, the ball is outside the doubles line
- 5 **2-Bounce Groundstrokes (Centering):** By the second bounce, the ball is inside the doubles line
- 6 **Approach Range (Attacking Short Balls):** Approaching so that you can get to GVP by the time the opponent hits the passing shot
- 7 **Good Volley Position (GVP):** The closing position where you can effectively cover passing shots and hit 2-bounce volleys

Four Common Applications of Concepts in Matches

- 1 Rally cross court and deep to percentage posts when in the red zone
- 2 Attach short/high balls when in the yellow and green zones
- 3 Hit to your opponent's obvious weakness
- 4 "Spoil"—Do when your opponent dislikes, for example, hit high and heavy to their backhand, change spin or pace, hit short then lob, etc.

Strategy	Partner Practice Drill
Hit crosscourt when defensive (when you're outside the baseline or on the run), then attack when offensive	Hit cross court — one person intentionally hits short — other person attacks
Recover fast after hitting from outside the singles line (use cross-over step, then square up with a split step)	Feed corner to corner — 10 challenging balls in a row — high INTENSITY
Move inside the baseline after hitting deep (expect the next shot to be high or short)	Play points standing inside the baseline. Make a rule that you can't step outside the singles playing area.
Move inside the baseline after making your opponent hit a low volley (expect the returning ball to be high or short)	Hit grounds to a volleyer who hits a low or stretched volley short — ANTICIPATE short ones
After a dropshot move toward the net (expect a returning dropshot)	Rally — hit a drop shot — expect another one
Take high balls out of the air (approach volleys)	Rally — one person hits high — other person volleys

Situational Training for Competition

Red Zone

Consistency-Percentage Play

- Point play only after serve, return, and 4 rally shots are hit
- Match play, but if ball lands inside the service line the point ends
- Match play, but player loses game when hit into net or wide
- Rally inside percentage lanes
- Rally over a rope for consistent height/depth

Offensive Play

- Point play with only top spin allowed
- Point play where player loses the point if they step outside the court
- Point play where only forehands are allowed
- Point play, but only winners are counted for the point

Yellow Zone

- Play second serves with returner attacking on the return
- Play points where ball can't bounce on your side (no bounce singles)
- Pattern play (serve, return, hit short, approach, pass, volley past service line, lob) and then play out the point
- Ghost doubles

Green Zone

- Match play, but winning volleys/overheads are game-winners
- Drill specific kinds of volleys/placements
- Match play where all serves must be serve and volley
- Up-back points — baseline person begins each point by feeding to opponent who starts on the service line

Serves and Returns

- Serve an entire match
- Return an entire match
- Play a match with volleyball scoring
- One-serve-only match
- Play a match where returns must be topspin
- Match play with first serve serve and volley; second serve return and volley

Match Tough Practice Ideas

When Preparing to Practice

Come early, ready to work (just like for a tournament)

- Have rackets already strung and gripped
- Have water and a towel
- Have a change of clothes
- Have your training book and journal
- Have some energy food/drinks and first aid kit
- Have whatever you need to maximize your performance on court

When Drilling

Set mini goals for yourself and practice partner

- Time Goal — Example: Hit cross-court forehands for 10 minutes
- Volume Goal — Example: hit 25 cross court forehands in a row
- Percentage Goal — Example: Hit 9/10 forehands cross court past service line
- Total Goal — Example Hit 500 forehands in 30 minutes
- Target Goal — Example: Hit all forehands cross court past service line
- Result Goal — Example: Win 2 out of 3 games against Mr./Ms. Nobody

When Playing Practice Matches

Practice with consequences so that you can set them aside in tournaments

Tournaments have one thing that most practice situations don't have: **CONSEQUENCES**. To excel in tournaments, you must be able to put consequences aside and perform. The only way to do that is to practice performing with consequences present. Create a meaningful consequence for the outcome of your practice matches. Be creative. Here are some ideas.

- Loser caddies for the winner: Carry bags for a day
- Loser treats the winner: Buy a drink, buy a snack, buy lunch
- Winner avoids something unpleasant: Picking up balls, stringing a racket

Why Learn Mental Skills?

All consistently good players have mental toughness. What varies is how they get it. So what is mental toughness, and how do players get it?

Mental toughness is a group of mental SKILLS that allow you to:

- Control thoughts and emotions
- Control behavior after success and failure
- Increase performance by reducing “pressure”

You can improve mental skills by:

- Observing the behaviors of model successful players
- Listening to how others deal with success and failure (stories)
- Talking with or listening to people trained in sports psychology
- Trial and error (least effective)

Some potential problems with not being taught mental toughness include:

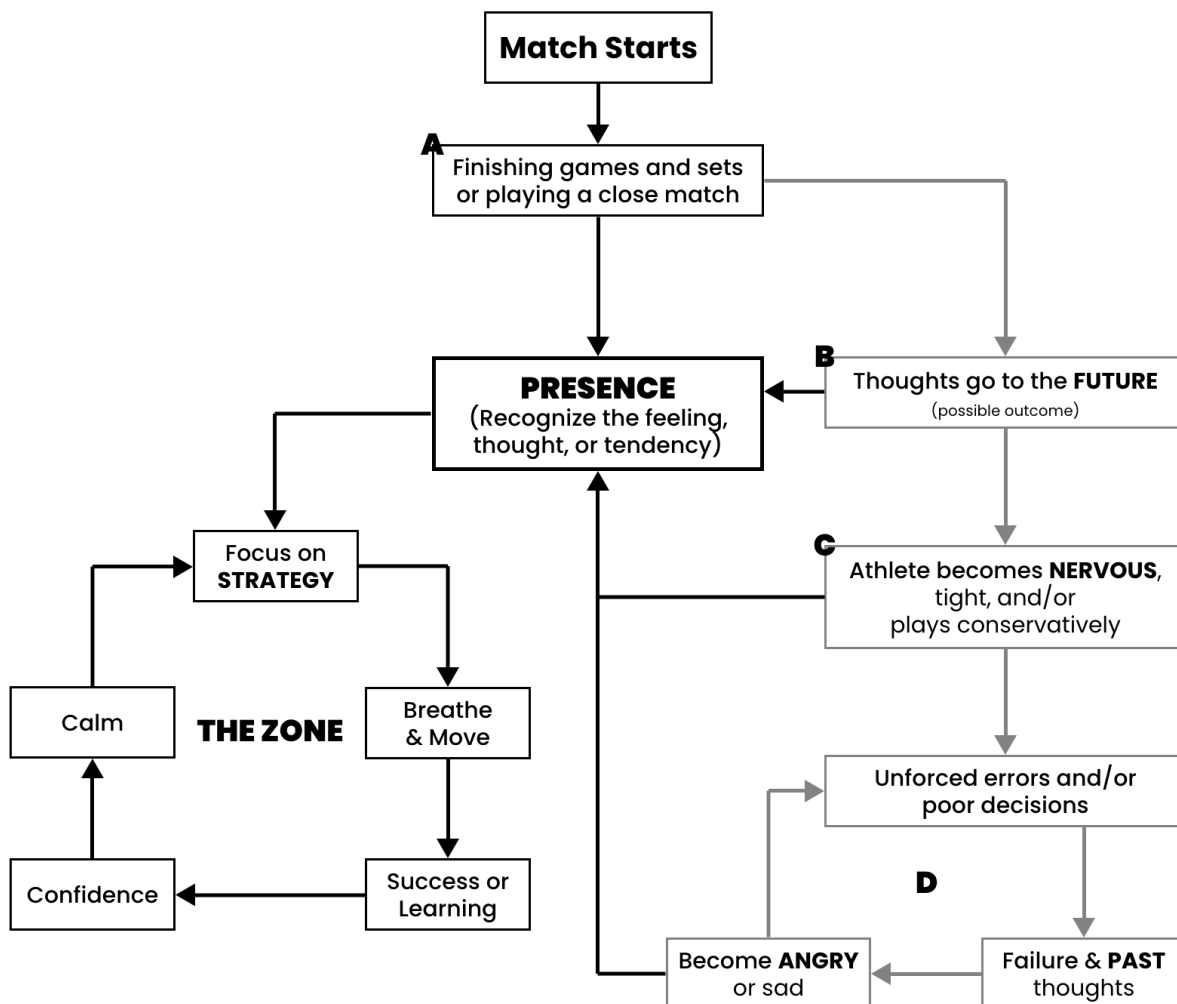
- Knowing what to do and think, but not why
- No on-court guidance about developing mental toughness
- Misinformation that isn't supported by research and facts
- Longer time required to develop mental toughness

Mental skills and mental toughness will help me:

- Play more consistently within matches, tournaments, and the year
- Learn and improve faster
- Reduce frustration and anger
- Enjoy playing and competing
- Take pressure away during big points (pressure is self-induced)
- Get in the zone more and for longer periods of time

The Academy Emotion Wheel

The following diagram shows the process by which positive and negative emotions can affect performance and lead to success or failure. Emotions tend to emerge in competition when the score gets close or when a player is trying to finish a game, set, or match (**A**). The tendency is for the player to think about the future and possible outcome (**B**). If that happens, the player will likely become nervous, tight, and play conservatively (**C**). This type of play typically leads to unforced errors, poor decisions, and thoughts about the past or failure. The tendency is then to get angry or sad, and the failure wheel begins to spin faster and faster (**D**). At any of these stages, the solution is the same: Re-focus on the **PRESENT** and recognize the feeling, thought, or tendency. From there, a player can calmly focus on strategy and performance instead of on outcome and other uncontrollable factors, and the success wheel begins to spin (**THE ZONE**).



Rituals

“ Establish rituals between and before points to appropriately balance relaxation, focus, and intensity.

– Dr. Jim Loehr

Importance: Rituals are a part of our lives. They free us up to think about more important tasks. Each of us have hundreds of rituals we use each day without even knowing it. From your morning preparation ritual, to tying your shoelaces, to writing, to driving a car—they're all habits that we had to think about at first but are now automatic. Accomplished tennis players depend on rituals as well. Every stroke and movement on court are rituals. Usually, the more consistent the ritual, the better the player. One of the most important mental habits is the Between Point Ritual (BPR). It's an ideal way to spend your time so you're as ready as you can be to start the next point. Players with strong mental skills use the BPR, described in the next section.

How to practice: Here's the **BPR** that most experienced players with strong mental skills use. As soon as the point ends, the player does the following:

- ➊ Turn away from the opponent and switch racket to non-dominant hand, holding the racket by the throat so the racket head is up
- ➋ Control the eyes by first keeping them on the ground, then on the strings, then looking for balls
- ➌ Breathe and relax muscles by lowering shoulders (but not slumping) and shaking out arms and legs
- ➍ Visualize plan for starting the next point

It's easy to remember this sequence with a rhyme: “**Switch the racket, control the eyes, breathe/relax, and visualize.**” Just like any habit, you'll have to think about it in the beginning every time you play for at least 4 weeks, and then it will become an unconscious ritual.

If fully completed, it will (1) increase concentration, (2) improve consistency, (3) increase enjoyment, (4) increase rate of learning and improvement, (5) decrease pressure, (6) decrease choking, and (7) decrease unforced errors.

Pros who do it well: Serena Williams, Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer, Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi. Some pros do it only when they're playing well, and lose it when they're not (when it's most important) which can lead them to performance slumps that can last days and even weeks. A consistent ritual between points allows you to perform more consistently during points.

Between Point Ritual (BPR)

Directions: As soon as the point ends, whether you lost it or won it, do the following:

What to do: Turn—switch racket hands—control eyes—breathe/relax

What to think: Visualize last shot going in—positive words—next point

The Physical Part of the Ritual

Turn away: As soon as the point ends, turn and walk away making sure to keep your posture (back, shoulders, head, etc.) positive. This positivity is the most important part. If you won the point, it gives you a confidence boost. If you lost a point, it keeps the negatives away.

Switch racket hands: Switch the racket to your non-dominant hand, holding it by the throat so the racket head stays up. This lets your dominant hand relax, which can make a difference in big matches. It also prevents you from making negative motions with your dominant arm/racket. Since the racket head is up, it portrays a positive look to your opponent.

Control your eyes: Keep your eyes on your strings, the ball, the ground, or your opponent. Your thoughts follow your eyes. If you're looking at the match next to you or who's watching the match, you're not focusing on your match and unforced errors will occur.

Breathe/Relax: Unforced errors often occur because your muscles are too tight. Fatigue and many injuries can also happen because of muscle tightness. Taking deep breaths and relaxing major muscle groups can prevent these problems.

The Mental Part of the Ritual

Visualize last: As soon as the point ends, picture any errors going for winners. If you hit a good shot, visualize it going in again. Each time you visualize a shot, you're strengthening the pathways between your brain and muscles.

Positive words: Direct your thoughts to constructive words: Focus, strings, calm, relax, positive, flow, present, fight, etc. You can pretend you're talking to your doubles partner: Good effort, keep working hard, next point, one at a time, high percentage shots, stay tough, keep fighting back, etc.

Visualize next: Picture in your mind what you want to do for the first shot of the next point. You might visualize where you'll serve or what strategy you're going to use.

Note: Master the physical part of the ritual first, then add visualizing, then positive words.

Stay in the Present

If there is only one mental skill you learn, we hope it's this one. Understand the relationship between where your thoughts go (past, present, or future), what emotion is often created by those thoughts (anger, clear focus, or nervousness), and what the result of those emotions usually is on performance (irrational errors/decisions, calm focus, or choking). In order to be **in the zone**, refocus your thoughts so they are in the **PRESENT** where you can focus on strategy.

Past	Present	Future
Anger Irrational	Clear Focus Calm ZONE	Nervousness Choke

How to do it:

- 1** Say "STOP" to yourself every time you realize your thoughts are not in the present
- 2** Use the gap between thoughts to think of positive words to replace the past, future, or self-destructive thoughts
- 3** Stay calm and focused to avoid anger and frustration which will lead you to irrational thoughts.

Thought-stopping Sequence

Everyone thinks negative thoughts sometimes. When you learn to recognize negative thoughts, stop them, and replace them with positive thoughts, you will perform more consistently. Use the following sequence to stop negative or self-destructive thoughts:

- 1 **RECOGNIZE** the negative thought
- 2 Say **"STOP"**
- 3 **REPLACE** with a positive word
- 4 Think **STRATEGY** for the next point

The following is a list of negatives said after mistakes so you can recognize what you shouldn't be saying, a list of positives for after mistakes, and a list of possible words to use to replace negative thoughts.

Negatives after a mistake (AVOID THESE)

- I suck!
- No way!
- Ahhhhhhhh!
- Choker!
- [4-letter-word]!
- Loser!
- That was weak!
- Come on!
- I quit!
- I'm so bad!
- You idiot!
- I hate tennis!
- How could I miss?
- Why me?
- What was that?!
- [any sarcasm]

Positives after a mistake (THE IMPORTANT LIST)

- Next point
- Take your time
- Keep fighting
- Stay calm
- High percentage
- One at a time
- Stay tough
- Good effort
- [any cue words to help you focus]

Other helpful words

- Relax
- Present
- Focus
- Quick
- Compete
- Strings
- Positive
- Breathe

Control the Eyes

“ Focus your eyes on either your racket or the ground to keep your attention focused between points.

– Dr. Jim Loehr

Importance: If you're like most people, your thoughts follow your eyes. When you let yourself watch the point on the court beside you, your thoughts will likely go there too. Every second you spend watching the other point is time **NOT** spent thinking about your match. Great players spend their "between-point time" wisely, visualizing on strategies they want to use and making sure they remain "present".

Alternatives: There aren't many techniques more effective than keeping your eyes on your strings or the ground. Some players pick something like a flag on top of the stadium or a sign on the back fence and focus their eyes on that, but most go through the sequence described below.

How to practice: People with strong mental skills use the following sequence:

- ➊ Focus eyes initially on ground while turning away from the point, switching racket to non-dominant hand
- ➋ Look at strings and adjust them
- ➌ Get balls ready for the next point
- ➍ Focus on opponent

Mentally tough players have done it so consistently in practice and matches that it has become an important habit allowing them to remain focused on visualizing their strategy. Making this a habit will definitely pay off for you in future tournaments.

Cognitive Relaxation Sequence

Directions: The Cognitive Relaxation Sequence is designed to help you relax your muscles so you'll be able to find the right muscle tension during competition. This should be practiced 3 to 4 times per week for several weeks before control is mastered. Once you have control, practice once or twice a month to maintain it.

For best results, read the following script out loud and record it. Play it back to yourself when practicing relaxation. Build this relaxation into your on-court Between Point Ritual by getting calm and relaxed before you start the next point.

Find a comfortable position where you'll be able to relax ALL your muscles and close your eyes. Try to get as relaxed as you can for today. If you're not completely relaxed, that's OK for now. Finish up whatever is on your mind and then focus on the feeling of the air going in and out of your nose.

Now, imagine a strong, warm beam of light shining on your forehead and sending penetrating waves of warm relaxation into your scalp - smoothing out all the wrinkles. This beam of light might feel like the sun shining down on you, but narrow like a flashlight beam. These waves are slowly spreading out over your eyelids and penetrating into your eyes - making your eyes feel soft and warm.

You are feeling more and more relaxed as the waves spread further down your face to your nose and cheeks. The warm waves of relaxation moving further down to your mouth and jaw. Your lips may part slightly as the rest of the muscles in your face become completely relaxed, not a wrinkle to be found.

These warm penetrating waves now move down your neck and into your shoulders and upper back. Feel the warm relaxation loosening any tight areas and you notice how much better you are beginning to feel. These waves that are coming from the warm beam of light still shining on your forehead are now penetrating deep into your biceps and triceps, and now into your forearm, massaging, soothing and relaxing.

As the warm waves now move over your wrists and into your hands, you might feel a tingling in your fingers, relaxing you further and further, deeper and deeper. With each exhale you become more relaxed. These waves of relaxation now move out over your chest and back and down through your stomach and waste - a warm penetrating wavy calm.

These waves now move through your hips and lower back and into your butt and upper legs. Feel your thigh muscles just shut off as your legs begin to feel heavy. These warm penetrating waves of relaxation now approach your knees and then into your shins and calves. Your legs may feel like they're melting into the floor/carpet/bed as your relaxation becomes deeper and deeper. Finally the waves reach your ankles, feet and toes. You feel peaceful and relaxed from head to toe; you are secure and happy that you feel as good as you do.

Now, as I count backward from 5 to 1, you will begin to energize. When I reach "1" you'll feel relaxed and refreshed. 5-4-3-2-1. When you feel like it, just open your eyes. Feel energized and confident that relaxation practice like this will make you a better athlete by allowing you to control excess muscle tension. To relax on-court, just breathe deeply and think of the beam of light sending waves of relaxation into any tight muscles.

Visual Imagery

What is imagery (or visualization)?

Imagery is a picture in your mind; the picture is like a movie and your mind is like a screen. You have control of what you want to put on that screen. It should be practiced along with physical practice to be a complete player. Imagery will help your physical skills.

Why do we do it?

Imagery helps us learn and practice skills and shot sequences, control nervousness by building confidence through experience, and remember skills and sequences during our down time, such as when we are traveling in a car or have down time because of injury.

How do we do it?

It's easier to do when we're calm. To help control muscle tension on court, it's good to practice a relaxation sequence that teaches your body to relax whenever you exhale. Listen to a recording of yourself or someone else describing a scene. Next, practice visualizing images you choose without listening to someone read it.

1 Relaxation

Close your eyes and get comfortable in a quiet place. Tense and relax muscles starting with your forehead and ending with your toes. Breathe slowly and deeply between contractions. Exhale while relaxing the muscle.

2 Guided Imagery

Listen to the following passage: *"Imagine you stand up, walk out of the room, and go outside. Try to see the colors and details of things you pass on your way out. As you're waiting to cross the road, a red car loses control and comes right toward you. You jump to get out of the way. While you're in the air, the car passes right under. After you land, you look behind to see the car crash straight into a street light. The driver frantically gets out and takes cover behind a large tree just before the car explodes."*

Even though you've probably never seen this happen, most people are able to imagine it as if they were standing right there. Consider more details: What kind of car was it? Did you feel any emotions? Did you land on your feet? What was the weather like? Did the street light fall over after the crash? Was the driver a man or a woman? What were they wearing?

Visualization Practice Sheet

Directions: Visualize yourself practicing the following shot sequences. Try to control the details of your visualization (colors, clarity, realism). Focus on your favorite sequences, or create your own that are ideal for your game.

- 1 **Serve wide** – return short crosscourt – **approach down the line** – pass down the line – **volley winner crosscourt** (x3)
- 2 **Serve middle line** – return to you – **volley deep down the line** – pass crosscourt – **volley winner down the line** (x3)
- 3 **Serve body** – short underpin return crosscourt – **half volley down the line** – high deep lob – **overhead winner crosscourt** (x3)
- 4 Opponent serves wide – **return crosscourt** – approach shot down the line – **passing shot winner down the line** (x3)
- 5 Opponent serves body – **return deep down the line** – short high crosscourt – **midcourt cutaway winner** (x3)
- 6 Opponent serves middle – **return crosscourt deep** – shot deep down the line – **slice deep crosscourt** – midcourt down the line – **crosscourt winner** (x3)

You also need to visualize losing points so you can practice a **POSITIVE RESPONSE** and then visualize a good **Between Point Ritual**.

- 7 Opponent serves wide – **return shot crosscourt** – approach down the line – **pass down the line** – volley winner crosscourt (x3)
- 8 Opponent serves middle – **return middle** – volley deep down the line – **pass crosscourt** – volley winner down the line (x3)
- 9 Opponent serves body – **short underpin return crosscourt** – half volley down the line – **high deep lob** – overhead winner crosscourt (x3)

Self-guided Imagery Topics

Directions: Use these 4 topics to improve your ability to control your thoughts and images. Visualization, like any skill, must be practiced.

Objects: Used to increase control over images

Look at the object, then close your eyes and try to see the image clearly

- 1 Your tennis racket
- 2 A tennis ball
- 3 A toothpaste container
- 4 Your car
- 5 Any object that seems interesting to you

Trips: Used to improve ability to see details

Imagine going somewhere and look around at what is there

- 1 Walk from your bedroom to your kitchen
- 2 Walk from the courtside cafe to court 10
- 3 Drive from your house to Brookhaven
- 4 Run one lap around the track (and consider timing)
- 5 Choose a place to go starting from your bedroom

Locations: Used to relax or motivate

Imagine yourself being somewhere and make your senses experience it

- 1 Lying on a warm sandy beach with a cool ocean breeze
- 2 Sitting in the middle of an open field full of flowers
- 3 Sitting in a hot tub outside with snow falling around you
- 4 Hiking through a valley surrounded by enormous mountains
- 5 Any other place that would relax you

Performance: Used to increase success during competition

Imagine a situation in a match that you want to improve and then make it go well for you (if it starts to go bad, say STOP, rewind, and play it until you see yourself do it properly)

- 1 Hitting an ace at a crucial time in a match
- 2 Bending your knees and hitting a low volley back deep in the corner
- 3 Placing a running forehand passing shot right down the line
- 4 Playing an entire point "perfectly"
- 5 Staying calm and keeping the "fighter image" after losing an important point
- 6 Maintaining concentration after an unforced error by using the BPR
- 7 Any other tennis match or practice situation, putting several points and games together as you gain more control of the visualization skill

Roadmap to Success

Requirements

- 1 Know where you are now (video analysis, coach assessment, rankings)
- 2 Know what you want to accomplish and by when (reverse goal setting)
- 3 Know how to get there (coaching, reading, asking questions)

Process

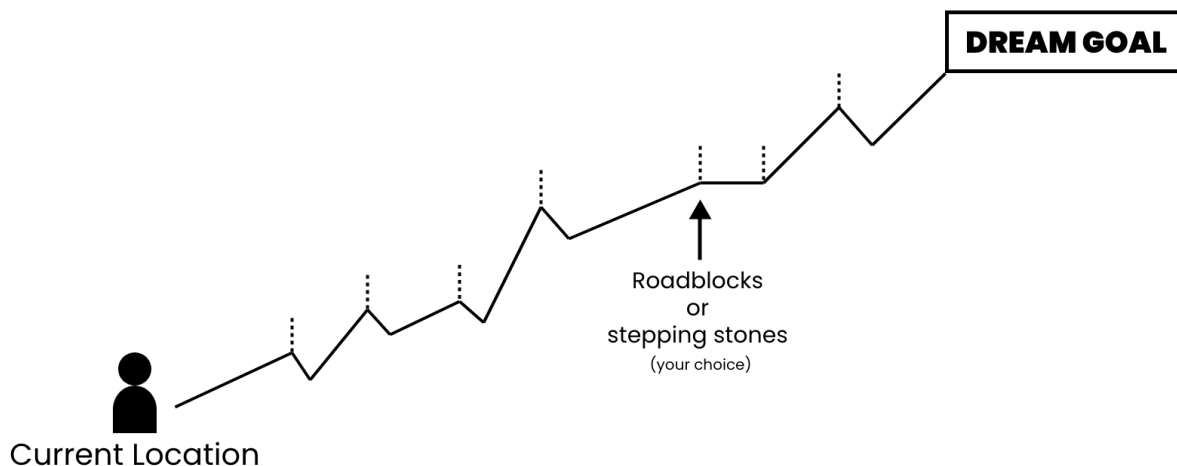
- 1 Learn what successful people do (**ASK** questions)
- 2 Assume the mindset of a successful person (**BECOME** committed)
- 3 Do what a successful person does (take consistent **ACTION**)
- 4 Keep going with the end in mind (Be **PERSISTENT**)

Tools to help climb the mountain

- 1 Efficient **TECHNIQUE**
- 2 Very high level of **FITNESS** and **MOVEMENT**
- 3 Recognition of effective **STRATEGIES**
- 4 The ability to apply **MENTAL SKILLS**

Specific mental skills

- 1 **MOTIVATION**: goal-setting, visualizing, committing
- 2 **PROBLEM SOLVING**: self-talk, optimism, reducing stress
- 3 **PREPARATION**: organization, monitoring charts
- 4 **ZONING**: rituals, "present" focus, confidence



Zoning

What is zoning?

When athletes are “in the zone,” they report feeling unbelievably confident about their ability to perform well. Even after mistakes, athletes feel as though they can bounce back with a high level of performance. Tennis players report feeling excited, like a child before opening presents. They can hardly wait to play the next point to see what terrific combination of shots they’ll put together next. Players who are zoning often find themselves smiling after points regardless of the outcome because they are enjoying themselves so much. To describe how they feel, these players use words like “effortless”, “invincible”, “unstoppable”, “powerful”, “competent”, “energized”, and “dominant”. The following is a quote taken from a player just after winning a tournament in Houston:

“ *I wish I could control what just happened. I had confidence that I’ve never felt before – I really believed I could do ANYTHING! This is what it’s all about – this is why I play tennis – not just to win tournaments – but to feel the way I did out there today. If I could feel that way more often, I’d be the best in the world.*

– Pete Sampras, before he turned pro

Increase the Chances of Zoning

Pre-match

- 1 Learn and practice efficient technique:** Efficient swings have less tendency to break down during competition
- 2 Be in terrific physical shape:** Zoning stops when players get tired (physically and mentally)
- 3 Understand and practice high percentage strategies:** If you hit balls to the wrong tactical spots, your opponent will take advantage of it
- 3 Prepare properly:** Make sure you’ve taken care of your rackets, sleep, diet, practice, mental skills, and pre-match warm-up

During Match

- 1 Stay in the present:** You can’t zone if angry or nervous—to zone, you must be calm and focused
- 2 Keep thoughts positive:** The zone is lost with negativity—confidence is the key
- 3 Use your BPR:** Optimally manage your time with your practiced BPR
- 4 “Flash” visualize on strokes:** As you hit the ball, imagine what the ball looks like going where you want it

Physical



Tennis-specific Fitness Program

Your Academy coach is able to design a fitness program for your needs. With the exception of 'free weights,' you do not need a personal trainer to design this program. Make sure that each of the following components are built into your program.

Component	Frequency	Reminders
Flexibility	2X per day	Dynamic stretches before playing, static stretches after playing
Agility	15-30 mins 4-6 days per week	Simulate match conditions: Short sprints changing directions for 15s, followed by 20s rest, high reps
Reactions	Daily	Drills to enhance reaction time: Returning hard serves, reflexing volleys, 2-on-1 rallying
Healthy Diet	5X per day	5 small meals a day: low salt, low fat, low sugar—high fluid intake
Endurance	2X per week	Multiple 100s, 200s, & 400s with 1-3m rest between sprints, timed mile twice a week
Strength	Every other day	Elastic resistance bands and light weights—high reps
Speed	Every other day	Learn to run efficiently, with 90 degree angle at elbows and knees

See sections on stretching, movement efficiency, and nutrition for more information to apply to your tennis-specific fitness program.

Warm-up, Flexibility, and Recovery

Sports scientists and medical professionals now recommend a dynamic warm-up immediately before match play, practice sessions, and training. Specifically, athletes should do light running (5 minutes) to break a light sweat, followed by a dynamic stretch routine. Static stretching should take place after the activity to help speed recovery, reduce soreness, and increase muscle length.

Recommended Steps

Step / Purpose	Exercise Examples
General warm-up (5 mins) to increase core and muscle temp	Light running, jump rope, jumping jacks
Dynamic stretching sequence, progressively increasing range of motion and speed	<i>See Dynamic Stretching Sequence on next page</i>
Tennis practice, competition, or physical training session	
General cool-down (10 mins) to slowly decrease heart rate and support recovery	Light jogging, light cycling
Static stretching-based flexibility program focused on areas of the body that are tight or were used extensively during tennis play	<i>See Tennis-specific Stretching section</i>

Notes on Post-play Static Stretching

- 1 Do static stretches immediately after exercise as cool-down
- 2 Slow, smooth movements with coordinated deep breathing: Inhale deeply, exhale as you stretch to just short of pain, then ease back slightly; hold for 15-30 seconds as you breathe normally; repeat 2-3 times
- 3 Shouldn't feel pain; stay within your limits; don't lock joints; don't bounce
- 4 Stretch tighter side first; stretch larger muscle groups first
- 5 Repeat the same routine each day
- 6 If you have areas of extreme tightness, ask a physical therapist or trainer to check your range of motion to gauge your improvement and guide your flexibility training program.

Dynamic Stretching Sequence

After a general warm-up resulting in a light sweat, do the following sequence of dynamic stretches with progressively increasing intensity.

Sequence	Instructions
1	Jog back and forth across the court while making progressively larger arm circles.
2	Cross the court by performing the knee-to-chest tuck with one leg and rising up on the toes with the other leg. Alternate legs as you proceed across the court.
3	Perform the figure-4 tuck.
4	Perform the side lunge across the court. As you move across the court, step farther to stretch the muscles on the inside of your upper thigh.
5	Perform the Frankenstein walk.
6	Perform the high-step trunk rotation. Increase the amount of trunk rotation and the height of your knee as you cross the court.
7	Perform the front lunge. Be sure to keep your torso upright as you move forward, and don't let the knee extend past the toes.
8	Perform the torso rotation, progressing to torso rotation into lunge.
9	Perform the backward lunge with trunk rotation. Reach with your arm to your opposite leg (example: right leg back, rotate to the left, and reach with your left hand to your right ankle).
10	Perform the butt-kick warm-up.
11	Perform arm hugs.

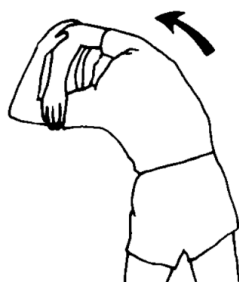
Additional dynamic stretches include: Carioca (shoulders square, rotate from hips down), side shuffle (push off inside leg, swing arms across body), three-way jumping jacks, inverted hamstring (flat back, hips square), walking Spiderman with rotation (eyes follow hand), leg swings, inchworms (hips up, knees straight), A-skips (aggressive march with rhythm).

Tennis-specific Static Stretching

Stretching is a key part of preventing injuries and improving recovery after strenuous exercise. For tennis players, the vital areas to stretch are the shoulders, wrists and legs. The following illustrations show precisely what stretches to do after all workouts and matches.



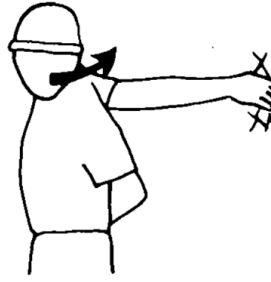
1) Triceps



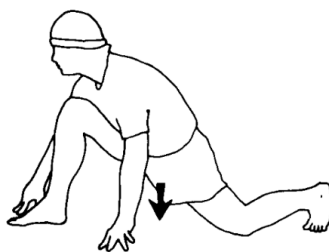
2) Triceps & Shoulder



3) Wrists & Shoulders



4) Shoulder



5) Groin, Hip Flexor & Quadriceps



6) Calf



7) Groin & Back



8) Hamstring & Back



9) Gluteus & Back



10) Quadriceps



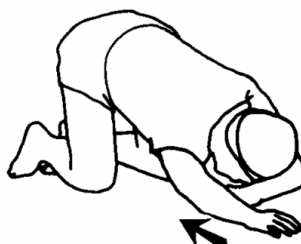
11) Gluteus, Side & Back



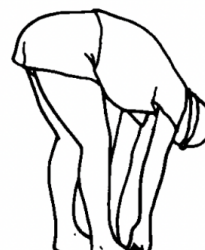
12) Quadriceps



13) Wrists



14) Shoulder & Side



15) Hamstring & Back

Movement Efficiency Training

The following sequence of movements is ordered from when the ball is struck by the opponent to when you will set up for a groundstroke or a volley:

- 1 Split-step with feet just wider than shoulder width apart and knees bent
- 2 Initial step is with the foot closest to the direction you will be moving
- 3 Run naturally toward the predicted contact point
- 4 Take stutter steps to slow down (assuming the ball does not need to be hit on the run)

Groundstroke Footwork

The following sequence of movements is ordered from when the ball is struck by the opponent to when you have completed recovering after the return:

- 5 Transfer weight from back foot to front foot **PRIOR TO THE HIT** (or outside to inside if stroke is hit open stance); if no transfer is possible, finish forehand swing on same side of body in order to create racket speed without wrist use
- 6 Recover with only one step to regain balance; push off outside foot (open stance strokes do not require any additional steps to regain balance)
- 7 Recover with shoulders still square to the net using crossover steps (unless you are positioned well off the court, in which case you'll run first and then square your shoulders)
- 8 Recover to the position that best allows you to get to the next ball (not always back to the middle, but rather favoring the spot of the most likely return)
- 9 Keep feet moving between strokes if you are not recovering or moving anywhere (bounce or dance)

Approach Volley Footwork

The following sequence of movements is for when the ball is struck by the opponent to when you have completed recovering after the second volley:

- 5 Turn shoulders and then **AS YOU SWING** step with the foot closest to the ball
- 6 Move toward a location that best permits you to defend your court against the passingshot
- 7 Take stutter steps to slow down as your opponent is preparing to hit the pass
- 8 Recover to the position that best allows you to get to the next ball (not always back to the middle, but rather favoring the spot of the most likely return)
- 9 Move forward or on a diagonal toward the ball
- 10 Hit the volley as you are moving forward
- 11 Repeat steps 6-10 until point is finished

Energy and Endurance

There are two general methods by which the body attempts to obtain energy: aerobically (light but prolonged workout where the heart rate stays around 60% of maximum - jogging) and anaerobically (high intensity but short duration workout where the heart rate gets up to 80-100% of max - sprints). Maximum heart rate is calculated by subtracting your age from 220. So, the maximum heart rate of a 20 year old is around 200 beats per minute.

Aerobic respiration (the release of energy from nutrients in the presence of oxygen) involves the breakdown of "adenosine triphosphate" or ATP (ATP = Phosphate + ADP + ENERGY). Since there is only enough ATP in the muscles for a short period of constant use, the ADP must be turned back into ATP. To do this, there must be a supply of "creatine phosphate" or CP (the body produces it's own creatine). CP remains present when there is an ample supply of capillaries to supply oxygen (fit muscles have many capillaries). The more fit you are, the more oxygen there will be available and the faster ADP will be turned back into ATP, prolonging your ability to work aerobically. Marathon runners are a good example.

In "anaerobic respiration" (the release of energy without the presence of oxygen), glycogen in the muscles (a form of sugar or glucose) is broken down to produce pyruvic acid (Glucose = Pyruvic Acid + 2 ATP + ENERGY). If oxygen is not present the pyruvic acid turns into lactic acid. Lactic acid builds up when sufficient oxygen is not available for the liver to turn lactic acid back to glucose. This happens when the heart rate is very high, or the person is not fit (few capillaries around the muscles). The result is muscle fatigue, which is actually a pH imbalance (too acidic) making the muscle fiber unresponsive to stimulation (burning, weakness and cramping).

In Other Words...

Fit tennis players rarely experience muscle fatigue for two main reasons:

1) A strenuous rally rarely lasts longer than 20 seconds which means the body isn't producing large amounts of lactic acid. The liver is therefore supplied with adequate oxygen to keep turning lactic acid back to glucose and you don't become fatigued.

2) The average rally lasts less than 10 seconds. The creatine phosphate (CP) deposits (that turn ADP back to energy rich ATP) last about 20 seconds for a fit player. The regeneration of CP takes about 20 seconds and the average break between points is 20 seconds. Therefore, lactic acid will generally not be produced during rallies between two fit players (Loehr, 1990, The Loehr Sport Science Report, 1).

The key to tennis endurance, then, seems to be to ensure that the player is aerobically AND anaerobically fit, takes 15-20 seconds between points and has adequate amounts of muscle glycogen present (proper tennis specific training and proper amounts of rest and recovery).

The Right Foods

Breakfast

This is the most important meal of the day. In the morning, the body is in a state of 'hypoglycemia' (low blood sugar). Competing on an empty stomach can cause fatigue, dizziness, headaches, excess nervousness, irritability and injury. The following foods would be acceptable for a breakfast prior to a demanding workout or competition:

Fruit & Fruit Juice	Apple sauce	Low fat yogurt	Cottage cheese
Whole wheat bread	Oatmeal w/ skim milk	Protein shake	Low fat eggs
Bran cereal w/ skim milk	Fruit smoothie	Pancakes w/ jam/yogurt	

AVOID: Caffeine, carbonated drinks, bacon, sausage, butter, cream cheese, whole milk, sweets, salt

Lunch

If you plan to play soon after lunch, refrain from foods containing a lot of fat. Don't over eat at this meal. Try to replenish the water you lost during morning workout. The following foods are recommended for lunch:

Fruit & Fruit Juice	Brown rice	Healthy cold cut sandwich
Whole wheat bread	Pizza w/o oil/meat	Raw/steamed vegetables
Peanut butter & Jelly	Pasta w/ red sauce	

AVOID: Excess sugar and salt, fried foods, caffeine, carbonated drinks, salad dressing, fatty foods

Dinner

The foods that are consumed during dinner will be used as your body attempts to repair your tired muscles and body. Therefore, the quality of the food you eat is very important. If you plan to workout or play hard again tomorrow, your dinner should be mostly complex carbohydrates and protein. Low fat meats can be eaten in small amounts (more if you plan to rest for several days). The following foods are suggested for the evening before a strenuous workout or competition:

Pasta (red sauce)	Salad (fat free dressing)	Turkey/grilled chicken	Fish
Raw/steamed vegetables			

AVOID: Red meat (steak, hamburger, roast beef, lamb, etc.), salty foods, fried foods, rich foods that are heavy in sugar and fats

Snacks

Fresh fruit	Sugar free dried fruit	Nuts and seeds	Whole grain bread
Low-fat yogurt	Granola	Sports bars/drinks	Protein shake

A Champion's Diet

Good nutrition

Foods provide us with a variety of nutrients essential for building and repairing body tissue and for providing the energy needed for efficient functioning. For best performance, an athlete's diet must contain all the nutrients necessary for general well-being and also those that will help them cope with extra stresses of training. These essential nutrients include protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins, minerals, and water.

Protein

Protein is needed to build, repair, and regulate the function of the body's tissues, and is essential to a tennis player's diet. Protein is found in meat, fish, poultry, cheese, eggs, milk, nuts and bread. Protein should make up between **30-40%** of the athlete's diet. Greater quantities will deprive exercising muscles of vital water and may inhibit the elimination of waste products produced by the muscles. Protein in each meal will allow blood sugar levels to stay level throughout the day.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the major sources of energy for the body during practice and matches, as tennis players use muscle glycogen, glucose and fat for fuel. Carbohydrates are much more efficient in utilizing oxygen than fats or protein. Foods that contain a large proportion of carbohydrates include breads, cereals, pastas, rice, fruits, potatoes and vegetables. These foods should make up about **40-50%** of an athlete's diet and should be increased during successive days of strenuous training or playing.

Fat

Fat is a secondary source of energy, should make up less than **20%** of a player's diet, and should be reduced before strenuous training and playing. When muscle glycogen levels get low, fat in the body tissues serve as a reserve fuel supply. Fats are found in butter, oils, meat, milk, chocolate, and ice cream. The fats that are best for the athlete are called "polyunsaturated", which can actually reduce the amount of saturated fats in the body. Too much fat during a meal slows the emptying of the stomach, slows digestion and prevents much of the blood from going to the muscles. The maximal oxygen carrying capacity of the blood is also reduced which decreases peak performance.

Vitamins

Vitamins are needed for the growth of tissues and during injury repair. They do not supply energy themselves but help release energy from the food we eat. Because the water-soluble vitamins (B complex and C) cannot be stored, they must be included in one's daily food intake. The fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E & K) are stored in the liver and fat tissues. Additional vitamins DO NOT improve athletic performance. See the Vitamin Table on the next page.

Minerals

Minerals such as calcium, potassium, iron, and iodine are essential in the proper functioning of nerves and muscles and are a major component of bone, muscle and skin. Ample supplies exist in a balanced diet. For women, iron sources are deep green vegetables, raisins, red meat, and enriched breads and cereals. Because of the excessive demands on the athlete's body, all athletes should supplement with a gelcap multivitamin (a gelcap form improves digestion).

Water

Water provides the important function of transporting nutrients and hormones through the body. Water also regulates body temperature. There is no substitute for water before, during and after matches. Dehydration makes you feel tired, sleepy, cold (goose bumps) or dizzy.

A Champion's Diet Management

Pre-match Nutrition

The best prematch meal is high in "unrefined complex carbohydrates", has some protein, is low in fat, and includes plenty of liquids. Prematch meals should be eaten 2-3 hours before the match. A carbohydrate and protein snack is recommended between lunch and dinner (every 3 hours). This snack might include: steamed vegetables, potatoes, bread, cereals (whole grain), spaghetti, pasta or noodles, fresh fruit, salads, pizza (no oil or meat), brown rice and plenty of water. Sugar in candy form produces a short energy burst followed by an extended period of tiredness. Candy and canned fruit juices are SIMPLE sugars. COMPLEX sugars from fresh fruit is best.

Mid-match Nutrition

Athletes should drink about one cup of water every 15 minutes (x2 if very hot and humid). Sports drinks like Gatorade might be diluted during competition unless the athlete is used to drinking it. Pure, cold water in small amounts and often is still the best.

Post-match Nutrition

Rest for a while after matches so the stomach will have time to prepare for food intake (1/2 hour). The food should be primarily carbohydrate and protein and very little fat. Replacement of liquids should occur, but not too much at one time. The body can lose as much as 5% of it's weight from water loss during the match. Drink 2 cups beyond your thirst requirements and the water should be COLD to increase absorption from the stomach to the blood.

Weight Management Tips

Eat until you feel satisfied, not full. Eat slowly and chew well (after 20 minutes you will feel full regardless of the amount you've eaten). Keep a diet diary of what you eat (set daily and weekly goals). Drink a glass of water before meals. Eat vegetables and fruits as snacks. Count calories to manage your burned versus intake.

The Importance of Sleep

The tissue building and repair processes, so vital to competitive athletes, occur mostly during sleep and rest. Optimal sleep amounts depend on the individual athlete and their age. Whatever the amount, it should be consistent from night to night. The body can catch up on lost sleep in one night by simply sleeping deeper.

Vitamin Summary

A balanced diet provides us with daily essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals. It consists of foods from the main food groups of fruits and vegetables, dairy products, whole grain breads and cereals, and proteins. Because of the high demands on athletes bodies, it is strongly recommended that all competitive players over the age of 12 SUPPLEMENT with a multivitamin. Research now clearly shows that strenuous activity increases the need for vitamins and minerals.

The following table explains what each vitamin does and in what foods it is contained. A deficiency in any one of these vitamins can mean trouble on the court.

Vitamin A: Promotes good vision and healthy skin

Sources: Liver, eggs, milk, butter, cheese, yogurt, carrots and other yellow vegetables, green leafy vegetables

Vitamin B: Promotes healthy skin, especially around the mouth, nose and eyes, and a well functioning nervous system

Sources: Milk, whole grain cereals and breads, meat, poultry, fish, vegetables (beans and peas)

Vitamin C: Promotes the healing of wounds and strong teeth and bones

Sources: Citrus fruits and juices, tomatoes, bean sprouts, green leafy vegetables, strawberries, cantaloupe

Vitamin D: Promotes strong teeth, bones, tendons and ligaments

Sources: Milk, eggs, meat, cheese, butter, the sun (produced in the body), fish-liver oils, canned tuna, sardines

Vitamin E: Assists vitamins A and C, certain fats, and the red blood cells in performing their specified roles in the body

Sources: Whole grains and cereals, vegetable oils, eggs, liver, fruit, vegetables, seeds, nuts, navy beans

Vitamin K: Necessary for proper wound healing (blood clotting)

Sources: Green plants such as spinach, cabbage, and kale

Injuries: A Tennis Players' Worst Nightmare

At least 30 million children participate in team and/or competitive sports in the U.S. For these young athletes, sports injuries exceed infectious diseases! As for tennis, statistics show that all players, whether playing for fun or professionally, will eventually sustain an injury requiring time away from the game. Health care experts agree that the severity of these injuries, as well as the required rehabilitation time, can be greatly diminished if athletes and their coaches have knowledge of basic injury prevention and care.

There are primarily two types of sports injuries:

- 1** Acute trauma, usually due to a single blow or a twisting of a body part, which results in a sprain/strain injury
- 2** Overuse, due to repetitive training and microtrauma of a body part, potentially producing chronic inflammation, disuse, stress fracture, degeneration or tearing

One might think the two most common injuries to a tennis player would be to the shoulder (rotator cuff syndrome), and to the elbow (lateral epicondylitis, better known as tennis elbow). These two areas of complaint are common, but injuries to the lower extremities and lumbar spine are actually more common. At the USTA National Boys Tennis Championships during 1986–1988 and 1990–1992, researchers found that 304 athletes sustained new or recurrent injuries during those years that required evaluation by a health care team. The analysis showed more injuries to the lower extremity (hip, knee and ankle) than to the upper extremity (shoulder, wrist and hand). Strains (injury to the muscle and/or tendon) and sprains (injury to the ligament) were the most common injuries at 71%.

Low back pain is very common with tennis players due to repetition of hyperflexion, hyperextension and rotational forces of the lumbar spine. Other disorders of the low back such as spondylosis, disc injury, degenerative changes, hyperlordosis and scoliosis may predispose the athlete—young or old—to increased injuries and/or may be caused by the athletic sport.

Sprain/strain injuries to the knee are extremely common for the tennis player. In children, not only are there injuries to the bone, cartilage, and ligament (as with adults), but potentially to the growth plate which can be very serious. Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tears are becoming increasingly frequent in children.

To decrease the lower extremity injuries, particularly knee injuries, emphasis must be placed on proper biomechanics of the entire body during training

and competition, as well as the posture and biomechanics of the spine and lower extremities which may be the culprit of the injuries. Also, proper pedal support such as proper shoes and possibly custom made orthotics or shoe inserts to decrease excessive pronation and or postural abnormalities may be needed. And with all injuries, proper flexibility, endurance and strength through exercise is mandatory to prevent injuries.

Tennis requires the shoulder to rely on force contribution from the lower body. Evaluation of elite athletes demonstrated the shoulder contributed little to total energy (13%) and contributed only 21% of total force. Over 50% of the total kinetic energy and total force are generated by the leg/hip/trunk contribution. The shoulder must be stable enough to pass forces distally.

During a serve, a lot of pressure is exerted in the rotator cuff musculature (four muscles make up the "rotator cuff" with the muscles inserting at a tendinous insertion on the upper shoulder and the bicep muscle). Other muscles involved with the shoulder for tennis players involve the subscapularis, pectoralis major, latissimus dorsi and serratus anterior. Injury to the shoulder occurs due to the combination of the repetitive nature of the act with the overhead positioning of the arm during the serve. Underlying capsular laxity with younger players and acromial or subacromial degenerative changes with the older players adversely effects the outcome and may cause more injury.

A few points to decrease injuries were described by Thomas Sorza, D.C., D.A.C.B.S.P., Shoulder Rehabilitation, part III, and it states tennis players should avoid:

- 1** Playing on wet surfaces
- 2** Failing to use an efficient kinetic chain with the body to produce power
- 3** Leading with the elbow on a one-handed backhand
- 4** Using the wrist prior to ball contact to make up for poorly timed or executed strokes

Treatment for the shoulder should focus on the stabilizers, rotator cuff and biceps, subscapularis and serratus anterior.

Regarding "tennis elbow" injuries, they occur when smaller less powerful forearm muscles are being asked to perform more than they can due to improper use of the shoulder biomechanics and muscles. Improper technique is the leader for injuring the extensor carpi radialis muscle and extensor muscles surrounding the elbow and forearm. Also, bony misalignments may need to be addressed as another culprit of elbow injury.

Regarding treatment and prevention, stretching and strengthening are vitally

important. Specific rehabilitative exercises must be a part of a conservative treatment plan. If the injury is new, the adage is **PRICE** which stands for **Protect, Rest, Ice, Compress and Elevate**. In most cases, you cannot go wrong with applying ice to a new injury. Following 48-72 hours, moist heat may most likely be applied if necessary. If there are ever any questions, always consult your doctor or health care practitioner skilled in treating sports injuries. Prompt evaluation and treatment is essential for normal recovery. Soft tissue injuries need to be treated promptly and aggressively to prevent further scarring and dysfunction.

Avoid expediency when recovering from an injury. It is very easy to allow outside influences from a coach, fellow players, parents, or yourself to interrupt treatment and/or the healing process. Many times there is an "unwillingness to believe the player is really hurt" or there is a fear of "being weak around teammates." Healing takes time, and if you don't allow it to take it's normal course, and do the right things for yourself during that time, that "little" injury may turn out to be a life long problem.

Periodization



Periodization for Tennis Players

“ *[Periodization] is a long-term training plan designed to systematically control volume, intensity and frequency of training and competition to optimize the chances that peak performance will occur at the most desired times. Through periodization, the risk of overuse, injuries, staleness, burnout, chronic fatigue and poor performance is substantially reduced.*

– Dr. Jim Loehr

The body will adapt well to a training overload if there is a proper progression. If training loads are increased too much too soon, the body cannot adapt and grow stronger. Instead, the body will weaken and break down. As Sleamaker (1989) notes in his book about training intensity, several factors must be considered in formulating the correct progression. An athlete must consider:

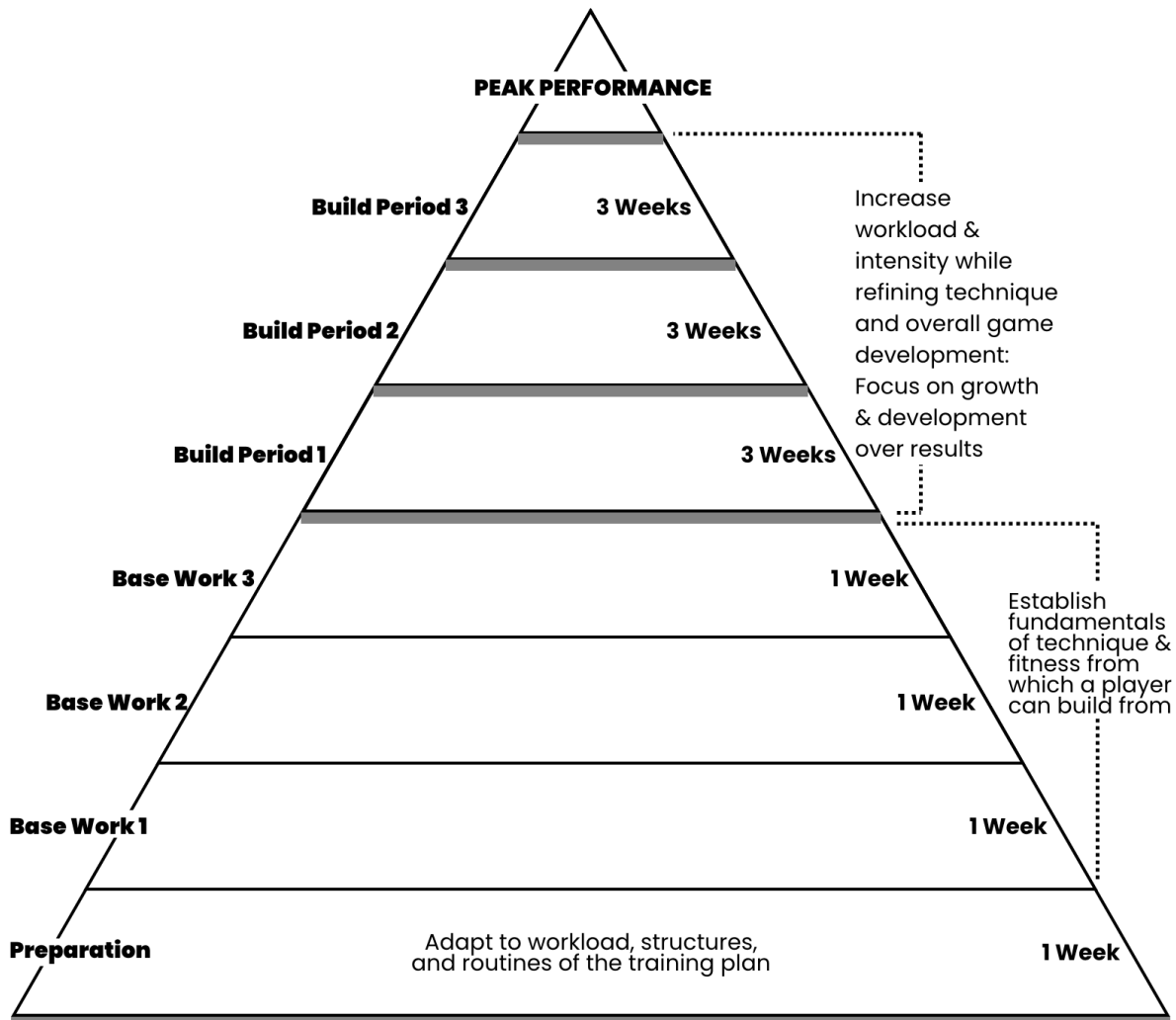
- 1 the weekly pattern of training and the number of sessions per week
- 2 the stage of the competitive season (off-season, light in-season, medium in-season, peak season)
- 3 the amount of low vs. high intensity training
- 4 the specifics of the particular training cycle

A periodization pattern for a given training cycle should allow a staircase progression that overloads the body for the first three weeks, followed by a week of decreased volume and intensity.

NOTE: At the beginning of this guide, there are blank calendar pages. If you have not yet completed 6 months of these calendars, be sure to follow the directions and get them done. Once you have all your tournaments written in, try to develop a ‘stair-step’ approach for every 4 weeks of training. Week one would be physically easiest, week two more difficult, week three might involve additional sessions of tough fitness, and week 4 would return to a difficulty level close to week 2. Play tournaments as you go through, trying to ‘peak’ around the months where the most important competitions are held. Get help from your coach for training ideas.

Principles of Periodization

There are multiple phases of progression in a periodization training plan. Each block builds on the previous work to establish a series of short-term progress that paves the way to a long-term “peak” goal. Plans should include:



Transition Periods: Taken approximately every fourth week, workload decreases by 50% for “active rest” which allows athlete to rest and recover; this period helps rejuvenate a player and creates “good” anxiety that drives them back onto the practice court with renewed energy and determination.

In each phase, players should focus on primary and secondary areas of development. For example:

Primary	Secondary
Technique / Consistency	Core fitness / Footwork
Control	Core strength
Power	Speed / Agility

[Source: Peak Tennis Training; Rodel, M. (2018)]

Sample Periodization Plan

The following sample plan is an example of a player with high-level competitive goals for international play, college play, and beyond.

Week	Period	On-court Hours	Off-court Hours	Total Hours	Primary Focus	Secondary Focus
<i>Prep</i>	<i>Preparation</i>	12	4	16	<i>Preparation</i>	
1	Base 1	14	4	18	Technique	Base Fitness
2	Base 2	16	5	21	Technique	Base Fitness
3	Base 3	18	6	24	Technique	Base Fitness
4	<i>Active Rest</i>	12	4	16	<i>Recovery</i>	<i>Transition</i>
5	Build 1A	20	4	24	Consistency	Footwork
6	Build 1B	20	5	25	Control	Balance
7	Build 1C	20	6	26	Power	Acceleration
8	<i>Active Rest</i>	12	4	16	<i>Recovery</i>	<i>Transition</i>
9	Build 2A	20	6	26	Consistency	Footwork
10	Build 2B	20	7	27	Control	Balance
11	Build 2C	20	8	28	Power	Acceleration
12	<i>Active Rest</i>	12	4	16	<i>Recovery</i>	<i>Transition</i>
13	Build 3A	22	8	30	Consistency	Footwork
14	Build 3B	22	9	31	Control	Balance
15	Build 3C	22	10	32	Power	Acceleration
16	<i>Active Rest</i>	12	4	16	<i>Recovery</i>	<i>Transition</i>
17	Peak Prep 1	20	4	24	Match Play	Pattern Play
18	Peak Prep 2	20	4	24	Match Play	Strategies
19	Peak Prep 3	20	4	24	Match Play	Execution
20	<i>Active Rest</i>	12	4	16	<i>Recovery</i>	<i>Transition</i>
21	Peak 1	12	4	16	Tournament	Basics
22	Peak 2	12	4	16	Tournament	Basics
23	Peak 3	12	4	16	Tournament	Basics
24	<i>Transition</i>	10	4	14	<i>Transition</i>	

You should create a similar six month plan for yourself in relation to your own tournament schedule and personal development needs. This schedule should be reflected on your calendar in the Academy Planner section at the beginning of this training guide.

Athletic Burnout

Physical Signs

Feelings of exhaustion, a lingering cold, frequent gastrointestinal problems (stomach aches), frequent headaches, sleeplessness, shortness of breath and strange weight loss are examples.

Behavioral Signs

Quick temper, instantaneous frustration, feeling overburdened (first thought of the day is “Oh, no!”), inability to hold feelings in, yelling and screaming, feelings of helplessness, loss of caring for others, greater risk taking behavior and consistently decreased performances are examples.

Tennis-related Signs

Reduced feel for the ball (strokes feel dead), never happy with performance, start to expect bad performance, slower reactions, increased unforced errors over many matches, difficulty focusing (poor concentration/eye control), treat coach and teammates like strangers and general impatience are examples.

Ideal Candidate for Burnout

A dedicated, overachiever with an external locus of control (does things for other people or for extrinsic rewards) or a person with extreme role conflict or role ambiguity (doesn't understand herself or how she fits into a variety of situations).

[Fender (1989), Athlete burnout, *The Sport Psychologist*, 3 (1), pp. 63-71]

Burnout Avoidance

- 1 Become more aware of the symptoms and underlying causes of each
- 2 Cross training (using other related sports to help accomplish fitness goals)
- 3 Day(s) off (proper Periodization Training should include days off - see Periodization section)
- 4 Change of scenery (different courts, inside vs. outside, spring trip)
- 5 Support from others (friends, relationship, family, coach, sport psychologist)
- 6 Work with a sport psychologist
- 7 Tournament scheduling (quality not quantity)
- 8 Practice scheduling (quality not quantity)
- 9 Proper goal setting (focus only on things you control)

Tournament Tough Toolset



Pre-tournament Rituals

Night Before the Match

- 1 Double-check your match start time
- 2 Plan out your wake-up time and meals (eat at least 2 hours before match)
- 3 Organize a warm-up for 30 minutes to 1 hour before your match
- 4 Drink 2-4 glasses of water (more for hot and humid conditions)
- 5 Eat complex carb/protein dinner (pasta, rice, potatoes, beans, bread, white meat, etc.)
- 6 Check racquets to make sure strings and grips are OK
- 7 Prepare mentally:
 - Visualize your favorite shot sequences (5-10 minutes)
 - Review your physical and mental Between Point Ritual (2 minutes)
 - Review your list of cue words to use during the match (memorize)
 - Review remedies for problem situations [next page] (2 minutes)
- 8 Get the same amount of sleep you've been getting for the past week

Day of the Match

- 1 Eat a healthy complex carbohydrate breakfast
- 2 Make sure you have plenty of time for travel and warm-up
- 3 Drink 1-2 glasses of water before going on court
- 4 Prepare mentally (see above)
- 5 Remember not to judge things that happen to you
- 6 Reduce nervousness:
 - Remind yourself that you've practiced and prepared well
 - Visualize yourself playing well
 - Focus only on things that you can control (preparation, attitude, effort)
 - Get to the site early (acclimate yourself)
- 7 Get a warm-up before your match
- 8 After the match, rate your preparation, mental, and physical effort
- 9 Make a short list of areas on which you'll work to prepare for the next tournament after this one is over

Pre-match Problem Solver

Remember: There are no right or wrong answers—only answers that will remind you how to stay calm, focused, and playing the best you can in that moment. The more negative emotion you feel (anger, nervousness), the harder it will be to problem solve and visualize. Find your best strategy for solving problems before your next match and take it on court with you to help you problem solve on change-overs.

Problem Situation	Your Best Response
Early in the match, your opponent makes a bad call on game point	Question it calmly—focus back on strategy
Later in the match, your opponent makes another bad call at an important moment	Question it—consider line judge—do it calmly
You play a good point, but your opponent hits an unbelievable winner	“Good shot” or clap your strings—next point
You start to feel tired in the third set	Get fired up—get adrenaline pumping
You’re having difficulty concentrating and are making too many unforced errors	Control eyes—“present” focus on strategy—play high percentage
You notice you’re getting angry after most errors you make	Get back in present focus—breathe—show no emotion (act)
At 4-3 you break serve to go up 5-3; you think, “6-3 is a pretty good score.”	Get back in present focus—think about strategy
The score is 5-4 and you you’re very nervous about holding serve to win the set	Get back in present focus—breathe—think about strategy
You play a good point but miss an easy sitter that costs you the first set	Laugh it off—stay confident—next point

Match Warm-up Reminder Sheet

Before Hitting the First Ball

- 1 Increase heart rate:** Use a jump rope or light running to get your heart rate up before dynamic stretches
- 2 Stretch major muscles:** Use the same sequences of dynamic stretches each time you stretch; try starting with major leg muscles and work up
- 3 Drink more water:** Especially on hot days, hydrate with plenty of water **BEFORE** the match

During the Warm-up

- 1 Control your eyes:** Discipline your eyes from the start so you can stay focused on how your opponent is playing, looking for weaknesses
- 2 Stimulate your feet:** Get your feet moving right away so you won't have a tendency to be lazy once the match starts
- 3 Use stroke cue words:** If you have key words to remind you of important things to do, use them now ("bend", "turn fast", "move to the ball", etc.)
- 4 Stay in the present:** Stay in the present to avoid anger or nervousness; remind yourself in warm-up so you won't forget once the match starts
- 5 Hit ALL strokes:** Take returns! This stroke is important to warm up, too; take serves on both sides; start with easy slice serves to warm up shoulder

After the Warm-up

- 1 Drink more water:** Start the first game feeling good; make it a habit to re-hydrate every time you're at the bench
- 2 Take your sweats off:** Unless it's really cold, you should be warm enough and will move better with your sweats off
- 3 Start visualizing:** Begin thinking about how you want to play the first point and what you want to try to do in the first game (strategy)
- 4 Remember your ritual:** Remind yourself to use your Between Point Ritual and cue words

Tournament Reports & Evaluations

See the Reports & Evals section for the following tournament reports and match evaluation sheets:

Scouting Reports

Scouting reports are used to assess potential opponents you might play. You should take the opportunity to watch your next opponent in a tournament and take note of their strengths and weaknesses to plan your approach to playing them. There should be very little “down time” in a tournament, even during your recovery, if you use the time wisely to observe the competition.

CompuTennis Scoresheets

CompuTennis Scoresheets can be used to chart your matches. If you are able to have someone charting for you live during your match, give them your training guide to document points. If no one is available to live chart your match and you are able to record a video of it, you should re-watch the match at home and chart points yourself.

Post-match Self-evaluations

Whether it's a practice match or tournament play, you should often complete a self-evaluation to track your own match play performance over time. Most of the self-evaluation is about how effectively you apply strategic and mental tactics which will have an impact on your overall performance. Be honest in your self-evaluation so that you can continuously learn and grow from all of your match play experiences.

Academy Tournament Evaluations

Use the Academy Tournament Evaluation to assess your overall performance over the course of an entire tournament. Periodically review your performance evaluations across tournaments/time to identify personal progress and opportunities for improvement.

Academy Mountain Grids

Similar to the CompuTennis scoresheets, you should have someone chart your emotional performance during points or match play. The focus of the academy mountain grid is on your reactions to points that you've lost. You can review how you progress in emotional control over time by seeing how often you can “build the mountain”.

Character



If Life is a Game, These are the Rules

Rule #1: You will receive a body. Chances are it won't be the body you have ordered from the factory if you'd been given the opportunity. But as you grow older, you'll realize it's not only adequate for the job, it's phenomenal!

Rule #2: You will be presented with lessons. And more times than not, these lessons will be an opportunity for you to decide whether to be a victim or victorious.

Rule #3: There are no mistakes, only lessons.

Rule #4: Lessons are repeated until they're learned. What does it mean to "learn" a lesson? Embrace and internalize the lesson—actually accept it. And don't be surprised if that lesson comes back in different circumstances. It may be asking, "Recognize me?"

Rule #5: Learning does not end—for any of us. No matter how rich, thin, or pretty someone may look to you, rest assured that they're learning lessons, too. That's the way of the world.

Rule #6: "There" is no better than "here." Don't fall into the trap of "when I, then I." This rule is about being here with your circumstances, being happy, choosing to grow and not waiting until you get somewhere else before you enjoy your life.

Rule #7: Others are only mirrors of you. Watch your judgments of people and things. Chances are your judgments say more about you than what you're saying about someone else. Rather than judge, look below to the emotions that are fueling your desire to judge.

Rule #8: What you make of life is up to you. It's your choice, all the way.

Rule #9: All the answers lie inside you, and you can hear them if you can find a still space inside yourself to listen. The noise of the world will drown out your intuition if you let it.

Rule #10: You have forgotten all of this at birth. Remembering and forgetting is the dance of consciousness. But guess what: If you listen to your intuition and pay attention to the lessons, you will remember these rules and be empowered to create your perfect life.

You Have Two Choices

The following is a story with an important 'life lesson' to be learned. As always, 'life lessons' are extremely valuable when applied to tennis.

Jerry was the kind of guy some people loved to hate. He was always in a good mood and always had something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!" He was a unique manager because he had several waiters who had followed him around from restaurant to restaurant. The reason the waiters followed Jerry was because of his attitude. He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Jerry was there telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Jerry and asked him, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?" Jerry replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, Jerry, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood.' I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it. I choose to learn from it.

Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life." "Yeah, right, it's not that easy," I protested. "Yes it is," Jerry said. "Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations.

You choose how people will affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live life." I reflected on what Jerry said.

Soon thereafter, I left the restaurant industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but often thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it. Several years later, I heard that Jerry did something you are never supposed to do in a restaurant business: he left the back door open one morning and was held up at gunpoint by three armed robbers. While trying to open the safe, his hand, shaking from nervousness, slipped off the combination. The robbers panicked and shot him. Luckily, Jerry was found relatively quickly and rushed to the local trauma center. After 18 hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Jerry was released from the hospital with fragments of the bullets still in his body.

I saw Jerry about six months after the accident. When I asked him how he was, he replied, "If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?"

I declined to see his wounds, but did ask him what had gone through his mind as the robbery took place.

"The first thing that went through my mind was that I should have locked the back door," Jerry replied. "Then, as I lay on the floor, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live, or I could choose to die. I chose to live.

"Weren't you scared? Did you lose consciousness?" I asked. Jerry continued, "The paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the emergency room and I saw the expressions on the faces of the doctors and nurses, I got really scared... In their eyes, I read, 'He's a dead man.' I knew I needed to take action." "What did you do?" I asked. "Well, there was a big, burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Jerry. "She asked if I was allergic to anything. 'Yes,' I replied.

The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled, 'Bullets!' Over their laughter, I told them, 'I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead.'

Jerry lived thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully. So remember, change your attitude to change your life.

Think of how the above story applies to tennis. Tennis is a game where each player loses a lot of points every match. After each point, both players have the choice how they're going to respond. As Jerry said, you can choose to complain or you can look at the positive side of things. You have two choices.

What Did You Learn Today?

I've learned that you cannot make someone love you. All you can do is be someone who can be loved. The rest is up to them.

I've learned that no matter how much I care, some people just don't care back.

I've learned that it takes years to build up trust, and only seconds to destroy it.

I've learned that it's not what you have in your life but who you have in your life that counts.

I've learned that you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes. After that, you'd better know something.

I've learned that you shouldn't compare yourself to the best others can do.

I've learned that you can do something in an instant that will give you heartache for life.

I've learned that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.

I've learned that you can keep going long after you can't.

I've learned that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I've learned that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I've learned that heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

I've learned that money is a lousy way of keeping score.

I've learned that sometimes the people you expect to kick you when you're down will be the ones to help you get back up.

I've learned that sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel.

I've learned that you should never tell a child their dreams are unlikely or outlandish. Few things are more humiliating, and what a tragedy it would be if they believed it.

I've learned that no matter how good a friend is, they're going to hurt you every once in a while and you must forgive them for that.

I've learned that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others. Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.

I've learned that no matter how bad your heart is broken the world doesn't stop for your grief.

I've learned that our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

I've learned that just because two people argue, it doesn't mean they don't love each other. And just because they don't argue, it doesn't mean they do.

I've learned that we don't have to change friends if we understand that friends change.

I've learned that two people can look at the exact same thing and see something totally different.

I've learned that even when you think you have no more to give, when a friend cries out to you, you will find the strength to help.

I've learned that credentials on the wall do not make you a decent human being.

I've learned that it's hard to determine where to draw the line between being nice and not hurting people's feelings and standing up for what you believe.

I've learned that maturity has more to do with what types of experiences you've had and what you've learned from them and less to do with how many birthdays you've celebrated.

Shake It Off and Step Up

A parable is told of a farmer who owned an old mule. The mule fell into the farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule 'braying' -or-whatever mules do when they fall into wells. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he called his neighbors together and told them what had happened ...and enlisted them to help haul dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

Initially, the old mule was hysterical! But as the farmer and his neighbors continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back ... a thought struck him. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back, he should shake it off and step up! This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!" He repeated to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows, or how distressing the situation seemed the old mule fought "panic" and just kept right on shaking it off and stepping up!

THAT'S LIFE! If we face our problems, respond to them positively, and refuse to give in to panic, bitterness, or self-pity, the adversities that come along to bury us usually have within them the potential to benefit and bless us.

Do It Anyway...

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build it anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous; Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough; Give the world the best you've got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; It never was between you and them anyway.

Struggles with Difficulties

In the midst of your struggle with difficulties, remember this story.

A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day, a small opening appeared. He sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then, it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther. So the man decided to help the butterfly, he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If we were allowed to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been. And we could never fly. So have a nice day and struggle a little. You might find something can be gained from it!

Important Things Life Teaches You

Most Important Question: During my second month of nursing school, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions, until I read the last one: "What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?" Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50s, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade. "Absolutely," said the professor. "In your careers you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say 'Hello'." "I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

Pickup in the Rain: One night, at 11:30 PM, an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her—generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab. She seemed to be in a big hurry! She wrote down his address, thanked him and drove away. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read: "Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others." Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole

Always Remember Those Who Serve: In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. "How much is an ice cream sundae?" "Fifty cents," replied the waitress. The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied a number of coins in it. "How much is a dish of plain ice cream?" he inquired. Some people were now waiting for a table and the waitress was a bit impatient. "Thirty-five cents," she said brusquely. The little boy again counted the coins. "I'll have the plain ice cream," he said. The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and departed. When the waitress came back, she began wiping down the table and then swallowed hard at what she saw. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies - her tip.

The Obstacle in Our Path: In ancient times, a king had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the king for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the big stone out of the way. Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. On approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. As the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the king indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many others never understand. Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve one's condition.

Giving Blood: Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at Stanford Hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year-old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness. The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, "Yes, I'll do it if it will save Liz." As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?" Being young, the boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood.

ALL Your Strength

One day a small boy was trying to lift a heavy stone, but he couldn't budge it. His father, passing by, stopped to watch his efforts. Finally, he said to his son:

"Are you using all your strength?"

"Yes, I am," the boy cried, exasperated.

"No," the father said calmly, "you're not. You haven't asked me to help you."

Mental effort is just as important as physical effort.

I Want to Know by Oriah Mountain Dreamer (a Native American Elder)

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking the fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon. I want to know if you have touched the center of your sorrow, if you have been opened up by life's betrayals or have become shriveled and closed from fear of further pain.

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, if you can dance with wildness and let ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you are telling me is true. I want to know if you can betray another to be true to yourself; if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul. I want to know if you can be faithful and therefore be trustworthy. I want to know if you can see beauty even when it's not a pretty day.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver light of a full moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after a night of grief and despair, weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn't matter who you are, or how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away. I want to know if you can be alone with yourself, and if you truly like the company you keep in the empty moments.

The Value of Time

A man came home from work late again, tired and irritated, to find his five-year-old son waiting for him at the door.

"Daddy, may I ask you a question?"

"Yeah, sure. What is it?" replied the man.

"Daddy, how much money do you make an hour?"

"That's none of your business! What makes you ask such a thing?" the man said angrily.

"I just want to know. Please tell me, how much do you make an hour?" pleaded the little boy.

"If you must know, I make \$20 an hour."

"Oh," the little boy replied, head bowed. Looking up, he said: "Daddy, may I borrow \$10 please?"

The father was furious. "If the only reason you wanted to know how much money I make is just so you can borrow some to buy a silly toy or some other

nonsense, then you march yourself straight to your room and go to bed. Think about why you're being so selfish. I work long, hard hours everyday and don't have time for such childish games."

The little boy quietly went to his room and shut the door. The man sat down and started to get even madder about the little boy's questioning. How dare he ask such questions only to get some money! After an hour or so, the man had calmed down, and started to think he may have been a little hard on his son. Maybe there was something he really needed to buy with that \$10, and he really didn't ask for money very often.

The man went to the door of the little boy's room and opened the door. "Are you asleep son?" he asked. "No, daddy, I'm awake," replied the boy. "I've been thinking, maybe I was too hard on you earlier," said the man. "It's been a long day and I took my anger out on you. Here's that \$10 you asked for."

The little boy sat straight up, beaming. "Oh, thank you, daddy!" he yelled. Then, reaching under his pillow, he pulled out some more crumpled up bills. The man, seeing that the boy already had money, started to get angry again. The little boy slowly counted out his money, then looked up at the man. "Why did you want more money if you already had some?" the father grumbled. "Because I didn't have enough, but now I do," the little boy replied. "Daddy, I have \$20 now. Can I buy an hour of your time?"

Time is the most valuable thing we have. Everyone has the same amount of it, just some value it more than others. Spend your time wisely.

A Commencement Speech

I have no specialized field of interest or expertise, which puts me at a disadvantage talking to you today. I'm a novelist. My work is human nature. Real life is all I know. Don't ever confuse the two, your life and your work. The second is only part of the first. Don't ever forget what a friend once wrote Senator Paul Tsongas when the senator decided not to run for re-election because he had been diagnosed with cancer: "No man ever said on his deathbed I wish I had spent more time at the office."

Don't ever forget the words my father sent me on a postcard last year: "If you win the rat race, you're still a rat." Or what John Lennon wrote before he was gunned down in the driveway of the Dakota: "Life is what happens while you are busy making other plans." You will walk out of here this afternoon with only one thing that no one else has. There will be hundreds of people out there with your same degree; there will be thousands of people doing what you want to

do for a living. But you will be the only person alive who has sole custody of your life. Your particular life. Your entire life. Not just your life at a desk, or your life on a bus, or in a car, or at the computer. Not just the life of your mind, but the life of your heart. Not just your bank account but your soul. People don't talk about the soul very much anymore. It's so much easier to write a resume than to craft a spirit. But a resume is a cold comfort on a winter night, or when you're sad, or broke, or lonely, or when you've gotten back the test results and they're not so good.

Here is my resume: I am a good mother to three children. I have tried never to let my profession stand in the way of being a good parent. I no longer consider myself the center of the universe. I show up. I listen. I try to laugh. I am a good friend to my husband. I have tried to make marriage vows mean what they say. I am a good friend to my friends, and they to me. Without them, there would be nothing to say to you today, because I would be a cardboard cutout. But I call them on the phone, and I meet them for lunch. I would be rotten, or at best mediocre at my job, if those other things were not true. You cannot be really first rate at your work if your work is all you are. So here's what I wanted to tell you today: Get a life...a real life, not manic pursuit of the next promotion, the bigger paycheck, the larger house. Do you think you'd care so very much about those things if you blew an aneurysm one afternoon, or found a lump in your breast?

Get a life in which you notice the smell of salt water pushing itself on breeze over Seaside Heights, a life in which you stop and watch how a red-tailed hawk circles over the water or the way a baby scowls with concentration when she tries to pick up a Cheerio with her thumb and first finger. Get a life in which you are not alone. Find people you love, and who love you. And remember that love is not leisure, it is work. Pick up the phone. Send an e-mail. Write a letter. Get a life in which you are generous. And realize that life is the best thing ever, and that you have no business taking it for granted. Care so deeply about its goodness that you want to spread it around. Take money you would have spent on beers and give it to charity. Work in a soup kitchen. Be a big brother or sister. All of you want to do well. But if you do not do good too, then doing well will never be enough. It is so easy to waste our lives, our days, our hours, our minutes. It is so easy to take for granted the color of our kids' eyes, the way the melody in a symphony rises and falls and disappears and rises again. It is so easy to exist instead of to live.

I learned to live many years ago. Something really, really bad happened to me, something that changed my life in ways that, if I had my druthers, it would never have been changed at all. And what I learned from it is what, today, seems to be the hardest lesson of all. I learned to love the journey, not the destination. I learned that it is not a dress rehearsal, and that today is the only

guarantee you get. I learned to look at all the good in the world and try to give some of it back because I believed in it completely and utterly. And I tried to do that, in part, by telling others what I had learned. By telling them this: Consider the lilies of the field. Look at the fuzz on a baby's ear. Read in the backyard with the sun on your face.

Learn to be happy. And think of life as a terminal illness, because if you do, you will live it with joy and passion, as it ought to be lived.

A True Success Story

The power of visualization and positive energy

In the 10 Meter Diving Competition, the lone American, Laura Wilkinson (a TEXAS girl!), was not faring all that well. Her 2nd dive out of 5 had her placed #8, behind a pair of consistent, mechanical Chinese competitors and a pair of equally tough Canadian competitors.

Her 3rd dive took her to #5, and the commentators made note that she would at least have a very slim chance at winning the Bronze Medal—VERY slim. They went on to talk about the fact that Laura Wilkinson even being in Sydney was a miracle. Earlier in the year, Laura Wilkinson broke 3 tiny bones in her foot, making practice absolutely impossible for 6 months. At 22 years of age, her goal, her dream, her entire focus had been on qualifying for the 2000 Olympics. It looked as though that dream had been dashed.

However, rather than give up, instead of physically practicing her dives, Laura spent countless hours, days and months VISUALIZING her dives. She watched herself on the platform, setting herself, pushing off and diving through the air, completing a series of mid-air, grueling acrobatics and, finally, gliding, seemingly effortlessly, into the water. She practiced day after day in her mind, all while keeping a positive attitude. And, she saw the job through. In her mind, she would visualize herself winning the Gold—on the platform, medal around her neck, the American Flag being raised to the strains of the Star Spangled Banner, tears flowing, bright smile covering wet cheeks.

Dive #3 — AWESOME! Beautiful, as close to perfect as possible without nailing it! WOW! But, it would never be enough to unseat those ahead of her, especially the Chinese who had been trained since early childhood in all the arts that comprise the dive. They were machines, never flinching, always consistent. Laura Wilkinson, after all, had only taken up diving 6 years before. Her positive attitude and infectious smile were what the commentators continued to talk about as, one after another, the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 competitors took their turns completing beautiful, methodical dives. There was no way on earth that Laura Wilkinson had any chance of accomplishing

her goal—taking home that Gold Medal. But, oh what a great job she had done hanging in there! And through it all, every time the camera caught her, there she was, smiling brightly, holding on to that positive attitude.

Dive #4 — AWESOME! Another beautiful, near-perfect dive. WOW! But, it would take serious mistakes on the parts of every single one of the 4 competitors placed above her to enable her to have any real hope of winning the gold—and at least 3 of the 4 didn't make mistakes. Then the most incredible thing happened—one after another, each of the top 4 fell, each fall caused by miscalculations that seemed impossible just moments before.

Before the 5th and final dive, Laura Wilkinson was in the #1 position—but could she hold it? There she was, smiling brightly, eyes shining, at the top of the platform. Beaming over to her parents, letting them know through her eyes and her smile, heart-to-heart, how much she loved them. Instead of showing the enormous pressure any other person would have felt under the circumstances, she stood glowing. As she took in every cheer, every flash, her eyes shone, her smile beamed, her heart was full. She stood there for a few moments, basking in the warmth.

Then, she moved to her position on the platform, set her body, her eyes, her mind, and dove for the last time in this event. Another near-perfect dive. Again, her competition could not withstand the pressure. Again, one after another, they failed to be able to catch her.

Her dream had been realized. Laura Wilkinson had won the Gold.

The Paradox of Our Time by George Carlin

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers; wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less; we buy more but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time; we have more degrees, but less sense; more knowledge, but less judgment; more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness. We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living, but not a life, we've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things, but not better things. We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul. We've

conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less. These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; big men and small character; steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throw-away morality, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stockroom! A time when technology can bring this letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete. Remember, spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever. Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side. Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent. Remember, to say "I Love you" to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you. Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again. Give time to love, give time to speak, give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind. Work like you don't need the money. Love like you've never been hurt. And dance, yes dance like no one is watching.

Quotes from John Wooden

John Wooden is widely accepted as one of the greatest coaches of all time. He coached the UCLA men's basketball team to a record number of national championships. He stressed hard work and teamwork. His practices were always challenging and even though his players were not the best athletes, most of them went on to play at the professional level. Coach Wooden has often said that his greatest accomplishment was his players—they developed into phenomenal people.

“ *Fear no opponent. Respect every opponent*

“ *Remember, it's the perfection of the smallest details that makes big things happen.*

“ *Keep in mind that hustle makes up for many a mistake.*

“ *Be more interested in your character than your reputation.*

“ *Be quick, but don't hurry.*

“ *Understand that the harder you work, the more luck you will have.*

“ *Know that valid self-analysis is crucial for improvement.*

“ *Remember that there is no substitute for hard work and careful planning. Failing to prepare is preparing to fail.*

Resources



Additional Books & Information Sources

There's a lot of information available on the internet for dedicated tennis players who are looking to improve their game. However, it's sometimes hard to discern the quality of information, so we urge caution in consuming content so you aren't mistakenly applying bad tips to your tennis skill set. Here's a solid list of content that will serve your tennis game right.

Technique

Tennis 2000 by Vic Braden and Bill Bruns (available on Internet Archive)

Greatbase Tennis curriculum compiled by Steve Smith - greatbasetennis.org

- Building Blocks course (beginner - 1 hour of content)
- Tennis Intelligence Applied (all levels - 25 hours of content)

Physical

Complete Conditioning for Tennis by Kovacs, Roetert, and Ellenbecker

Tennis Anatomy by Roetert and Kovacs

Mental/Emotional

The Mental Game by Jim Loehr

If I'm the Better Player, Why Can't I Win? by Allen Fox

The Inner Game of Tennis by Timothy Gallwey

Mental Tennis by Braden and Wool

The New Toughness Training by Jim Loehr

Locker Room Power by David Sammel

Tournament Tough by Carlos Goffi

Inner Tennis by Timothy Gallwey

Must-reads for Parents

Parent-Player Tennis Training Program by Jim Loehr and E.J. Kahn III

Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell

The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle

Biography/Quotes

The Master by Christopher Clarey about Roger Federer

Rafa by Rafael Nadal and John Carlin

Wooden by John Wooden with Steve Jamison

Game, Set and Match by Mark Hodgkinson

