

HOW TO  
**STOP**  
FEELING RUSHED

**& MAKING**  
PANICKED ERRORS

*The #1 Secret to Calm & Repeatable Shots*



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# **How To STOP Feeling Rushed & Making Panicked Errors**

## ***The #1 Secret To Confidently Playing Calm & Repeatable Shots***

### **The Match That Almost Made Me Quit Competing**

Before I got into playing tournaments, I used to practice with a guy, Bill Stegge, at the Berkeley Tennis Club back in the early 1970s.

Bill was a solid “B” level player. I was at best a B- player. He and I would play sets at least once a week. Over the course of a month, I’d win around 25% of those sets.

So one day I asked Bill about playing on a weekend in a couple of weeks.

He said he couldn’t because he was entered in a ‘B’ tournament in Walnut Creek that weekend.

But he said there was still time to enter and that I should get into it because he thought playing tournaments was good for his game.

So I entered.

Showed up for my first round match that weekend, and sure enough, who’s my 1st round opponent? Yeah. Bill Stegge. Geez. Luck of a blind draw I guess.

We get assigned a court. Go through the 5 minute warmup. And start the match.

And for whatever reason, I’m so nervous it felt like I was hyperventilating.

I’m literally spraying balls all over the zip code.

His shots felt like they were eating me up. I was stuck in concrete. All I wanted to do was to immediately end points so I could breathe between points.

Panic central had set in.

But why? I mean here I am against a guy I competitively practiced with every week. No big deal.

But this tournament match became a huge deal. And I flat out panicked my way to coughing up free points to him as I went down 6-0, 6-0.

Mortifying. Embarrassing. Downright depressing.

Now what?

A realization that maybe I was doomed to be a mental midget in competition, and instead I should just stick to some feel good rhythm hitting at the Berkeley TC with a few friends?

I got in the car, looked in the rear view mirror, and asked myself to choose.

You got a clear choice Brent.

As in ... are you going to give in to never competing again because it's too painful OR are you going to figure this out?

### **The Real Reason You Feel Rushed (It's Not What You Think)**

It's the domino chain of doom.

Forced stroke technique improvisation which leads to →  
Panic which leads to →  
Rushing to get rid of the ball which leads to →  
Forcing another unforced error which leads to →  
Giving away free points to your opponents which leads to →  
*Major league frustration.*

That was exactly what happened to me in that life changing Bill Stegge tournament match.

I was all over the map with stroke technique. I was having to constantly improvise because I was locked into the domino chain of doom.

I didn't recognize it at the time.

And in fact, until I got together with legendary NorCal coach Tom Stow years later, I was definitely known as that kind of player who'd cough up lots of unforced errors in matches.

You just had to give me enough opportunities to contribute to you winning.

### **My Light-Bulb Moment on Court**

I thought when I started working with Tom that he'd retool my stroke technique.

I was wrong.

Instead, when he gave me an easy underhand fed ball, my technique was actually pretty darn good.

He'd underhand feed me balls on one bounce slightly to my right, slightly to my left, and then right at me ... and yeah, I was actually consistent with my shots.

But once he got on the other side of the net, back on his baseline, and fed me balls from there ... I was once again all over the map.

So he came back over to my side and asked me what would become a life changing moment for my tennis game.

Do golfers ever look off balance?

Do golfers crowd the ball as it's sitting there?

Do golfers stand too far away from the ball?

Do golfers set up behind the ball to where they have to awkwardly reach forward to make contact?

Do golfers set up in front of the ball to where they have to awkwardly make contact slightly behind them?

And my answer after each one of his questions was ... no, of course not.

Golfers are aligning themselves to the ball so that they can make the best possible contact using natural swing biomechanics.

And then he asked me about baseball hitters. Do they stand outside of the batter's box? Or way in front of it? Or behind it? Or stand on home plate?

And the same answer from me ... no, of course not.

The batter is trying to best align themselves to the side of the incoming pitch so that they can make the best possible contact using natural swing biomechanics.

Tom then says that all three sports (golf, baseball, and tennis) require a player to swing either a club, a bat, or a racket to make contact with a ball.

And for each sport, a player's contact point with the ball is ideally a certain distance away from their bodies.

He said tennis has a unique challenge that golfers and baseball hitters don't have. Unlike tennis, they don't have to run, sprint, move, etc. to create that ideal distance away from their body.

And then the lightbulb went off for me.

*So Mr. Stow, you're saying in tennis I have to re-create that ideal distance at contact ... with footwork.*

*And if I don't, I'll forever be improvising my strokes. And feeling rushed. And desperately trying to get points over so I don't have to feel rushed anymore.*

Uh huh.

And when you're locked into that kind of needed stroke improvisation, you become the master of the domino chain of doom.

## **The #1 Secret : Spacing Is Everything**

Literally.

It's you putting your body into an ideal geometric spatial distance relationship to the ball at contact.

Yeah. That's a mouthful. Meaning ... not too close to the ball (crowding) or too far away (reaching). But comfortably to where you never have to improvise or compromise your stroke technique.

When you consistently create what is your unique ideal spatial distance away from the path of the incoming ball ...

You give yourself an opportunity to where you can easily repeat the same good stroke technique over and over and over and over.

And that feeling of being in total control of when you're going to swing — of not having to improvise — is when you relax, pick out a smart target, take your time to allow the ball to get into your ideal contact area, and never ever feel rushed again.

That's when you become that player whose opponents fear playing.

They know you're not going to give them free points.

### **How I Fixed It for Myself (and How Fast It Happened)**

When the light bulb went off for me, and I then knew spacing was the answer to becoming that player I wanted to be, I decided right then and there I was going to think of nothing else.

And to this day, every time I go out on the tennis court, the first reminder I give myself in the warmup is to get my feet moving so that I'm focused on re-creating my own unique ideal distance away from the path of the incoming ball.

I won my first USA national Gold Ball in doubles less than a year after I got that big epiphany from Mr. Stow.

## The 5 Habits That Lock In Perfect Spacing

There are 5 simple habits to build so that you eliminate that feeling of being rushed during points.

You're going to eventually feel that time is on your side. You get to play your shots when you want to and never have to feel that mental chaos to end points.

Each habit takes some carved out time for Repetitions. This isn't brain surgery. Any player at any skill level can build the following habits.

And we're not talking about months and months to get results. If you're committed to getting the result you want, then I guarantee you can get that result in the next 30 days.

Here's how ...

### 2 Mindset Habits

- **Shot Choice.**
  - a) We're going to build your belief and confidence in totally trusting **your initial shot choice.**
  - b) As you build this habit, your confidence will grow because you'll feel you have more time to execute the shot you want on your time ... not theirs.
  - c) That's the opposite of feeling rushed.
  - d) This sounds simple. And it is when you simply discipline yourself to 100% commit to whatever instinctive shot choice comes into your mind.
  - e) In a match you might learn something about an opponent that might then make you choose a different shot choice later in the match.

- f) The Reps drill for this habit is explained below in your **Roadmap**.
- **Target.**
    - a) Whatever shot choice you choose, your target is no longer playing keep away from your opponent.
    - b) Instead, your target becomes a spot above the white line — the tape on the top of the net.
    - c) Just like when we hit against a backboard, we don't have a moving target. Instead all we're doing is hitting the ball above the white line on the wall.
    - d) We're going to transfer that mindset when you're at a backboard to when you're on the court.
    - e) The Reps drill for this habit is explained below in your **Roadmap**.

### **3 Stroke Technique Habits**

#### **1) Your Unique Spatial Distance**

- a) We start with rehearsal swings without a ball.
- b) Example: Your Forehand. You slowly go through what is your normal forehand and stop exactly at what you think is your perfect contact area.
- c) How far away from your belly button is that contact spot?
- d) If you could measure it, you'd come up with a number. Just call it 'X'.
- e) Continue with more rehearsal swings at home or on the court without a ball, and re-create your 'X'. Then take some full swings and recognize exactly when your racket passes through your 'X'.
- f) This is your own unique spacing.

g) Your next Reps session for this habit is explained below in your **Roadmap.**

## **2) Fed Head.**

- a) The Fed Head is what we see Roger Federer do. Eyes locked at what was his contact spot ... as he finishes his swing.
- b) There's zero concern to sneak a peek at his opponent before or during contact because he's not playing keep away. He's totally focused on a stationary target. A spot above the white line.
- c) This habit builds incredible confidence. So much so that you never feel a need to rush.
- d) The Reps drill for this habit is explained below in your **Roadmap.**

## **3) Timing The Exhale.**

- a) It's one thing to repeat your ideal spacing over and over. It's then another thing to deliver the racket into your ideal contact area at just the right time ... over and over.
- b) The way we do that is by exhaling (not a screaming grunt please) at the exact moment your racket passes right through the ball.
- c) You'll discover what your ideal timing is based on your balance. If you're falling slightly forward at contact or feeling you have to quickly swing because your timing is slightly too late, then you'll adjust your timing of the exhale during your practice Reps.
- d) The Reps drill for this habit is explained below in your **Roadmap.**

## **Your 30-Day "Unrushed" Roadmap**

### **1) Week #1 - Building Belief In Spacing**

- a) **10 Minutes 2x Day** —> Daily off court swing rehearsals for forehands & backhands.

Ideally do these in front of a mirror or a sliding glass door where you can see your reflection.

Get the mirror to your side where you can see exactly where your 'X' is.

- b) **3x This Week** —> Backboard or Wall hitting. Start focusing on your spot above the white line as your target.
- c) **1x This Week** —> Your Targets Are Now Stationary. No More 'Keep Away'.

Transfer your backboard / wall target hitting sessions over to the tennis court. Imagine the top of the net, the white tape, is like the backboard. Your targets are spots comfortably above the white line. Ideal with a practice session partner or a ball machine.

- If you have to play sets, for sure do this in the warmup. And try this for your target with your serve.

## 2) Week #2 - Focus On Spacing

- a) **10 Minutes 2x Day** —> Daily off court swing rehearsals for forehands & backhands. Same as week #1. Finding your 'X'.
- b) **2x This Week** —> Need a practice partner or a slow ball machine feed.

- With you at the middle of the baseline and your practice partner safely off to the side from your forehand (at the intersection of the singles sideline & the service line), your practice partner underhand feeds a one bounce ball to your forehand.

- Focus ONLY on the footwork you need to create your ideal spacing for your 'X'.

- Slowly swing to make contact. Be aware of your spatial distance away from the ball at contact.

- When you play a forehand that feels exactly as you want it to, take a mental picture of exactly where your 'X' is.

- **This is really important because you'll want to recreate**

**that spacing over and over.**

### **3) Week #3 - Habituating Your 'X'.**

- a) **10 Minutes 2x Day** —> Daily off court swing rehearsals for forehands & backhands. Same as week #1. Reinforcing your 'X'.
- b) **3x This Week** —> Backboard or Wall hitting. The Fed Head habit.
  - Focus on your spot above the white line for your target as you exaggerate the Fed Head. Eyes at your 'X' contact point as you wait to hear your shot hit the backboard / wall.
  - As you're waiting to hear your shot hit the backboard / wall, feel the height over the white line without needing to visually peek to confirm.
- c) **2x This Week** —> Need a practice partner or a ball machine feed.
  - Transfer your Fed Head wall sessions to hitting on the court. Exaggerate the Fed Head at your 'X' contact point as you sense your shot's height over the white line, the depth, the direction, the quality of the spin, etc. WITHOUT needing to visually peek to confirm.

### **4) Week #4 - Trusting Shot Choice & Timing Your Exhale**

- a) **3x This Week On Court** —> Need a practice partner.
  - 30 minutes of rally hitting points (no serving). Do not keep score.
  - Your only 3 shot choices are cross court, back up the middle, or up the line.
  - As soon as you determine if the ball is to your right, to your left, or directly at you ... immediately call out your shot choice to yourself. Doesn't have to be a loud call out, but at least lightly audible to yourself.
  - Once you've called out your shot choice, you now know the

importance of creating your ideal spacing

- With your shot choice you now know what your target is.

Above the white line.

- You can then exhale through contact as you exaggerate the Fed Head.

**b) 1x This week. Singles or Doubles Points.**

You're ready!

- You'll find some of the habits are not automatic yet. That's normal so don't stress. Keep up regular weekly practice Reps sessions. Pick out one or two of the habits for each session.

- When you commit to regularly reinforcing these habits as part of your tennis journey, you're going to explore new levels of mindset skills.

- Those days of feeling rushed and thinking you've got to end points asap will be long gone.

- Keep workin ...

## **Conclusion – Life After the Rush**

This isn't rocket science. Not even brain surgery. Any skill level player can habituate these skills and play at higher levels.

I fought doing these habits forever and lost years of being able to play at a much higher level.

As I write this, I'm currently at 21 USA national Gold Balls in singles & doubles with an ITF World Doubles title.

I'm not stopping. There's more out there to explore. And these habits are the keys for both you and me.

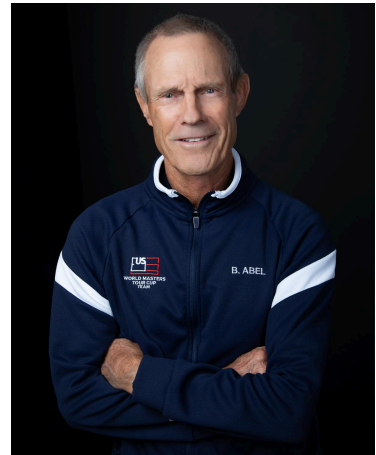
## **Next Step**

## Private Coaching Opportunity:

### Your Custom Rush-Busting Blueprint — Done In Just 60 Minutes

Imagine having a personalized game plan that zeroes in on *your* rushed triggers, spacing gaps, and chronic frustrations— that you and I can build in just one focused 60 minutes session.

In this 1-hour private recorded call with me, we'll review exactly when you feel rushed the most, customize the 5 habits from this ebook to your unique game, and craft a blueprint to stop making self-forced errors, and get you quickly playing calm and repeatable shots.



- **Why This Session?** Because the ebook gives you the foundation, but this session accelerates you consistently bringing out your best tennis throughout entire matches — not just once in a while.
- **What's Included:** 60 minutes of 1:1 customized coaching, a recorded private replay, and follow-up email support when you've got a question.
- **Exclusive Price for Ebook Readers:** Normally I charge \$197 for a 60 minute coaching session, but as an eBook buyer, yours right now for just \$97—limited spots available.
- **Ready to Bust through Rushing?** Order your coaching session here, you'll then be able to cherry pick a date & time that works well for you ... and then let's fast track you feeling calm throughout points, eliminate panic errors, and instead, get you consistently hitting repeatable shots over and over:
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