

Brent Abel's WebTennis.com
Winning Habits Get Built Here
Let's See Which Ones ... Actually Work

Mental Mastery Happens At The Handshake

In this year's doubles final last March in Houston at the National Indoors, the biggest opponent I had wasn't either of those two across the net ... *it was me.*

Because I cared way too much about winning, I was in death grip mode, and I was far and away winning the unforced errors stat.

My level of play for 2 and ½ sets was embarrassing.

Fortunately, my partner Paul Wulf was playing well and keeping the scoreboard close enough to where ... if I'd just settle down, stop caring too much about winning, well, maybe we'd have a chance.

And in the 3rd set when I'm serving at 2-4, Love-30, I had a reality check moment between points.

It was one of those ... *"Ah screw it, it's not going to be your day, so let's just right now serve to the body."*

And everything flipped mentally right then and there.

We held my serve. Broke them. We held Paul's serve. And broke em for the match.

On the flight back from Houston to Palm Springs that evening, I thought long and hard about how we can think ourselves into becoming the toughest opponent out there.

Let's be honest. At times we care too much about winning and take our matches waaaay too **personally**.

The Reality Diagnosis

Many of us unconsciously tie performance to social status.

A loss is going to feel like “I’m less than.” This creates tension during the match, makes us play tight, and lingering disappointment afterward.

The Powerful Flip

You can change this. Stop beating yourself first. Stop making yourself the toughest opponent out there.

Instead, compete your butt off without stressing about the end result.

Fed won something like 53% of all of the points he played over his career.

So when you accept the reality you're going to lose some points, some games, some sets, and some matches ... yes, when you fully accept that reality, you find a calm confident clarity in your really tough close matches.

This isn't easy, but when you can take your ego out of it, when you can reset between points, and when you can consistently make calm smart shot choices, you play a cleaner brand of tennis that puts steady pressure on your real opponents over there.

In Houston, the moment I said screw it and stopped caring so much ... everything shifted.

True Mental Mastery Happens at the Handshake

Let's think about this ...

Mental mastery isn't never losing — no matter how pro-level mentally tough we become ... we won't always get the win, and we can always lose a tough close match once in a while.

That's reality if you're a serious competitor. Not a sandbagger, but instead, that type of player who puts themselves out there in the arena.

True mental mastery is walking to the net after a tough loss (or a gutted out win) with genuine camaraderie for you and your opponent.

It's a firm handshake, eye contact, and mutual respect. You've competed your butt off. So has he.

There's no puffed up ego on a win. No status threat or personal defeat on a loss.

Not all, but lots of the pros do this naturally.

They know the win or the loss doesn't define them. When you release attachment, the result is only on the scoreboard.

The bonus for nailing this handshake mindset?

A clear mind. You immediately know exactly what to focus on in the next few practice sessions ... instead of ego puffing or bashing.

Your Future Self on the Court

Imagine a tight third-set tiebreak.

You both obviously want to win ... badly, but you now know that keeping any ego status out of this next point is the key to you bringing out your very best tennis.

You stay calm and execute your shot choices based on a tactical focus.

After the last point of the match, you walk to the net with a genuine smile, and shake hands with real camaraderie where there's mutual respect for what you and your opponent(s) has just gone through.

You leave the result exactly where it belongs.

Win or lose, there's no emotional sting — just clarity and forward momentum.

You recover faster both physically & mentally, learn what to now work on, and show up with more calm confidence for your next match.

Ready to make this mental mastery flip?

Here's how ...

Let's build an egoless calm clarity into your shot choices.

If you're still feeling *RUSHED* during points, especially when you're looking for a wide open court offensive opportunity ...

And/or if that panicked feeling during any part of the point is happening to you too often where you want to get the point over right NOW ... then I want to help you fix that.

Just \$7 gets you the download link to my quick-read 14 page PDF that describes how to build a confident calmness during the point so that you make smart choices ... And STOP making self imposed unforced errors.

This is simple. It'll work for you. Let's get started [here](#).

Brent

