One primary question to reflect upon, are you fully prepared for each match and each point?

Optimal preparation leads to full focus in the moment, on your plan with commitment and positive energy. Ready!

This principle of optimal readiness applies to pre-match as well as before each point. Below I have listed a series of questions to help you review your between points routine.

**BETWEEN POINTS ROUTINE CHECK-UP**

**Overall:**

1. Are you taking enough time between points that you feel ready to play the next point?
2. What percentage of all the points you play do you feel fully ready - focused in the moment, on your plan with commitment, and positive energy?

A more detailed analysis of the 4 stages between points:

**Response Stage**

1. Are you responding in a positive or neutral manner after nearly all of your points? (Neutral is normal body language and no emotionally reactive response)
2. Do you walk away from your mistakes without reacting?
3. Do you go to your strings after the point ends?

**Recovery Stage**

1. Are you taking deep breaths that slow your heart rate and your breathing?
2. Are you able to think clearly about the last point or in general what is happening in the match (awareness) without putting yourself down (non-judgmental mindset)?

**Refocus Stage**

1. Do you have a place behind the baseline where you take deep breaths and focus on the next point (towel, at the fence, etc)?
2. Are you visualizing or at least using a confident inner voice to plan your next point (serve + 1 or 2, return + 1, etc)?

3. Do you feel committed to your plan for the next point as you walk to the line?

**Ready Stage**

1. Do you take a deep, centering breath to prepare for the point?
2. Is your focus on the ball and your opponent (the external)?
3. Do you have good rhythm as you step to the line and prepare to serve or return?
4. Are you “locked-in” meaning you are thinking of nothing else but this moment, this point?

**MOVING FORWARD**

Please take a moment to write down your between points routine (the one you do consistently) and commit to it for at least 3 months. Use it in practice sets so it is ready for the performance.

If answering these questions brought up some “no’s” or things that aren't going well you need to tune-up your between points routine.

1. Put some thought on what would improve your focus in the present, commitment to your plan, and positive energy. Make 1-2 adjustments that help you be more prepared for each point. Talk with your coach about what he or she sees as well. Our mental performance team will be happy to assist you with this as well. We can do an analysis of how you are preparing, and if possible observe you in practice and matches and give you feedback.

2. Do the mental push-ups! Practice your routine as you play points in training. Practice as you will play! (this is important because your routines are a way of being in the present not a series of tricks)

3. Visualize your routine and/or watch video when you were performing your routine well. You get extra reps with your routine if you do this.

4. Make this a priority. If you do this well in the match you will give yourself a better chance of success.