

Cheating and How to Deal With It

- [00:00](#) J: Welcome to compete like a champion podcast. You're here with Dr. Larry Lauer, mental skill specialist and coach Johnny Parkes with USTA player development. Today we're going to talk, talk about a very interesting topic, very pertinent topic in our sport, cheating and how to deal with it.
- [00:21](#) L: Cheating. Everybody's favorite topic and you go into the tournaments everybody's talking about the cheaters and.
- [00:26](#) J: I lost because this person cheated me on that point and parents are all up in arms because this kid cheated my kid out of that match? It's rife.
- [00:37](#) L: It's rife, is it? Yeah. That's a good one.
- [00:39](#) J: Rife.
- [00:40](#) L: Tennis is rife with cheating.
- [00:41](#) J: Yeah, it's very rife. It's all out there. I mean you hear it a lot. We go around the country. You hear a lot, especially when you go to the tournaments, you know, I think on one end parents that are very well meaning are trying to find, you know, soften the blow for their kids sometimes. And if there's one, two bad line calls, it's, you know, it sometimes comes down to the line calls when one or two line calls is not going to really be the result of the match. But there's high emotions involved. Right?
- [01:05](#) L: Sure. Absolutely.
- [01:06](#) J: Parents watching, there's high emotions so your eyes can deceive you a little bit. Right. And then potentially, you know what other kids have said, what other parents have said, prior reputations of the kids that they're playing. And so all this just kind of all spindles outta control to this [inaudible] where um, a lot of the time it becomes about the cheating as opposed to just being able to deal with cheating and be resilient from it and have the bigger picture in mind.
- [01:28](#) L: Do we even know if cheating is worse than it used to be or the same or less? Or do we know? I mean we fell in my opinion, just the events that I've been to this year, Easter Bowl, clays, nationals, I mean I've seen some really good respectable behavior out there and good respectable line calls. i mean, yeah it's going to happen. I think kids make mistakes. There's not many out there that I think are intentionally going out to just completely cheat and hook or maybe there's some that feel a lot of pressure and they feel that they have to call their lines really close, cause they don't want to give anything away. So there's a pressure element as well sometimes. But I mean just in my opinion, I mean I'm not around the every tournament so I can't speak. I just speak from what I've

seen and over the past few years actually see it's been pretty decent on the whole.

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J: I have a feeling on this. I don't know if it's fact, but it's not fact. It's an opinion. It's not as bad as we think it is. But we think it's really bad, so we talk about it a lot. Yeah. But all that has to happen is once and for you and it's really bad, right? Because all you need to do is get cheated out of one point and it's terrible. You know, person's cheating. And I think what you find is in fact that, I just don't think people are very good at calling lines.

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J: Yeah. I mean that can be very real, right?

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L: Like just being able to see this ball. So the harder that people hit it, the closer to the lines they hit it. Very challenging. Like the, the stat I like to give the, the players we start talking about this topic is if now I know that a, the replay system in professional tennis, there's strategy to that, slowing things down. There's, you know, I'm just going to try it because I can, even with all that, you know, the pros are still under 30% and how many they are able to overturn on, on calls. Right. So it's not like and you would think that the pros would have some of the best vision, right? Because, well, they got to that point, and yet they're still only getting those reviews right less than 30% of the time.

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J: Right. I think that's a good thing about the system. Then it shows you actually how much, you know our eyes either deceive us a little bit, our thoughts take over rather than just really trusting our eyes more I guess. But that is the, that's actually a benefit of having those hawk-eye systems is being able to show that everyone is human and everyone makes mistakes. And you know, everyone's eyes are a little bit different. So it's, you know, it's out there, it happens. And if you then drum it down to the junior level, it's going to happen a little bit more because then not as, you know, they don't have as much data processing through their minds and their eyes at the pro level as they, from the juniors to the pro level. So at juniors it's going to happen a little bit more because they're still working on all those skills about reading the ball. Sure. And processing and all that. So, of course, I mean kids are gonna make mistakes cause.

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L: I think that's where we gotta start, right? Don't assume that it actually was cheating and, actually, if you think about where you're standing on the other side of the court and you're trying to make a judgment about a call on the other side, you could be seeing it wrong. Now there's a field part to this. When you hit a certain ball, you have a tendency, better players know if the balls going in for the most part or not. But there's some margin of error there. And then the other part of that is having the realization that everybody's gonna miss some. It's just too hard to get every one of these right. So it doesn't mean that someone's intentionally cheating. But what happens, I don't know what you see, but, so there's one kind of line call that's controversial. And then if we as adults have taught our children that it's eye for an eye. So they cheat you, you cheat them back, that'll send a message. Well then it's just like an arms race. Well now you've taken something that was unintentional, was just a mistake or actually

the ball was actually, it was correctly called, but because you're on the other side of the net and you see it differently with your heart, you think it's in, you think they're cheating. Now you've taken something that was a non issue because we, a lot of people tell players to cheat them back, make a call on them. Then it becomes obvious that cheating is starting to occur. But there was no cheating before we taught the kids to cheat.

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J: Well, and then it will spirals out of control and then it just becomes this whole match that's all about just getting one up as opposed to what can win you the match, which is actually the way that you play. So you know, it's pretty interesting. When I was, when I was a junior, we didn't have the amount of referees that are I see at a lot of the, the tournaments here in the States. And we used to have one tournament director. They used to sit in the office, dish out all the matches, and then they go to their court and play their match, you know? And so when we'd have a dispute, we just, we, you know, you ended up just getting so tired disputing things. You ended up just playing two on everything. Oh, you're not sure. Well, I already saw that ball in, you're not sure. Let's just play two on it. Okay, let's replay it. And that's how we just got in the motion and then, yeah, there were times where you really got into it with a kid that you thought you, you know, was maybe cheating you quite badly and you just got so fed up with the back and forwards. You just end up playing two, so on and everything. And so then you get tired of doing that. So then everyone just ends up working themselves out and going, actually this isn't worth doing. Let's just play. Yeah. You know? But now it's like, Oh, just go get the referee. I'm going to go get the referee. And so the referees, poor referees have to run back and forwards every two minutes from one court to another and then back to that court again. And then, then they got to go check on other matches. Oh, wait. They get called back to that same match again. Oh you gotta be thinking it's pretty rough on the referees as well.

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L: It is rough, you know, and it's frustrating for them because they go into this situation and it's he said, he said or she said, she said, they have no idea. So then they got to go back through history of what, what happened and or if it's a spot on a on a call and they're brought in, I mean really they're handcuffed anyway with a lack of information.

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J: Well then more often than not, the referee has to take them back to the point that they can both agree. So often it goes back to like 15-all or at the beginning of the game as opposed to that 30-40 or 30 it goes back to the beginning. So how many times are you going to keep going through that before you just figure out and going back to your stat, about 30% of the time you're wrong. Well that means just 70% of the time are right.

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L: That was 30% they actually correctly got the review overturned. So if a player asked for a replay, a review, excuse me, and they were questioning the call, they only got it right. And this was about, I think it was like 27% of the time that they actually overturned the call that was actually made. Yeah. So we're not very good at that. But I think that, you know, as we kind of talk this out, that we

come to this realization that, you know, as you were saying that if we just have a little bit more tolerance, to be honest, a lot of these things would work themselves out. And let the players do, let's just work it out. But it's very quickly that the adults get involved because they assume something, oh that kid's a cheater. Now, there's people listening out there and know what they're saying, that there are cheaters out there that do it on purpose to win. I, I agree with you. There's always gonna be some cheaters. We, we can't avoid that and there's reasons for that, which I can talk about. But everyone also has cheated at some point. Anybody listening to his podcast and we've all snuck a peak at somebody else's test. We've all cut a corner on something. It's like, well, you know that ball was, I think it was maybe was in, but I really need this point, so it was out. I mean come on, like we, we try to teach everybody to do the right thing and we all try to model that as well. But I don't think anybody can stand there and say, I haven't done a little tiny cheat at some point in my life.

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J: It's like when you do little team races, right during court sprints, but you're doing them in team races. How many, you know, you've got to get to the line and back. Foot's got to touch the line and come back. How many are going to cut that foot, just a little bit shorter, that line. And then you see those eye photos on Instagram or something where they say the difference, the marginal gains, this is the difference between those that are champions and those that are, you know, good players. The margin is like an inch, right? Because their foot did not hit the line so they were an inch short. Or then you can be an inch short in a match, meaning well you lost 49% of the points. You're an inch short right there, you know? So you know it all carries over. But I think what the point is there is it's more than mindset of being able to have the satisfaction and knowledge of knowing that you went the full way in everything that you did and you did it in the right way. So win or lose, you did it in the right way. You didn't lose by cheating, which probably feels terrible and you didn't win by cutting short a little bit. So yes, it's more about the mindset of doing things in the right way. And the overall, you know, opportunity to learn and, and the growth from that, you know, down the road.

[09:42](#)

L: Uh, and I would like to put this out there at this kind of idea to everybody that's listening that, even if we lose in the short term because we don't cheat somebody back, so maybe someone is cheating us. In the longterm, you gain more in terms of respect, your character, how you feel about yourself, how you're seen. And if you learn to deal with that in a way where you start committing to your own game, where it motivates you, then these things actually turn into a positive for you. And I know that can be hard for some people to believe possibly, but it's not about that win today or that call, it's about the long term. Something that we preach all the time on this podcast. It's about that longterm perspective. You need to have it and you need to teach it to the kids so that they can then have that mindset of, you know, what the most important thing out here is I do things in a way that I'm proud of, that I feel good about myself, the way I, I compete, how hard I try, and certainly what kind of sportsmanship I show on court. So if we do those things, I believe those things end up leading to the best people. You know, that maybe they're going to

end up being great tennis players. Maybe they end up great in some other way, but their experience develop their character. We've seen too much in this win at all costs society. People who in business and on wall street, in politics, you name it, who will win it all costs. So guess what? Cheat to win. You got to cheat you if you're not cheating, you're not trying. We've all heard that quote. And to me that that is just very disappointing. And a lot of people worked that back to, to sport and say, well what did they learn at a young age that Hey, cheating helps you. Cheating is something you should do. Someone, you feel someone's cheating you. And we start creating this win at all costs mentality. And this is where the cheating comes from. It comes from not just from the kids too feeling they need to win, but the pressure they feel to meet expectations, the pressures put on them by other people, and certainly the pressure they put on themselves, their emotional situation as well, what they're experiencing emotionally and with their anxiety and this need to win or to avoid losing, but at the end of the day, if we're all on the same page that it's about, about the kids and their longterm development and the people that we're developing because of tennis, then the answer's simple, right? Do the right thing, call it the way you see it. If you're unsure, then just make the right call.

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J: Well, that's why going back to strengthening your character is probably the best marginal gain or maybe it's big gain that you can get out of a match and it works on both sides, right? That first side we just talked about, where it's you're the one that feels like they're getting cheated, but you're able to deal with that in the right way, in a respectful way to yourself and even to your opponent that may, you think may be cheating you. But if you come out of that on the other end, in a good situation, you've dealt with it, you have not kicked up too much of a fuss and you've been able to let your tennis do the talking, then boom, that's the biggest gain that you're going to get out of that is a strengthening of your character. Absolutely. But on the flip side, like you know, you might feel those pressures that you just talked about. Maybe we dive a little bit deeper into that in a minute, but let's say you're feeling those pressures and you make a tight line call. We all do those where we're ready, we're playing tight up onto the baseline and that ball comes in really quick and it lands right by our feet. We don't get out of the way of the ball, could be on the line, may not be, you knows, we just, we don't even see it clearly. We call it out and then you know, the kids that already think that was in and like the strengthening of the character could be for that person that called the line call and goes, you know what, it wasn't a hundred percent sure, might've made a mistake, your point, move on. That also can be a biggest gain in strengthening of character. Being able to admit to the mistake, being able to give something away but then getting straight back and refocusing on the next point and giving it the full effort and max going into that, that's also a massive gain on the strengthening of their character. So it can work on both sides and sometimes we're afraid, I think that we have made a mistake and that we don't want to admit that mistake. And I think that's something that we all would end up regretting down the road, whether it's after the match or whether it's, you know, whenever that, if it ever got addressed. I think we'd all sit there and probably feel a little bit guilty that

we would, we didn't, we didn't admit the mistake, but it's okay to admit mistakes because these things happen and happen a lot.

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L: Yeah, I think they do. And that's a very good point, Johnny and look, at the end of the day, again, if we're developing good people from tennis, we've done our job. If we're not, we're developing good tennis players who lack the, the character to do the right thing. And then they go into the work world and they do that there as well, then then shame on us. And I think that's something that everybody needs to think about, whatever applies to their children, the kids that they're coaching or the kids in their program.

[14:11](#)

J: So let's take a deeper dive into why it occurs. We talked a little bit about, okay, there's pressures and, but give us, give us some insights from your perspective.

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L: Well, first is thinking about levels of morality. If you go back to this philosopher Kohlberg, but this first level is just, you know, when we're young, we're the center of the universe and our needs trump everything. So we are going to get what we need. We're self centered. That's how we are as little human beings. So, uh, when we're young, it's all about my needs and we all see that with children and we're, we're understanding of that because they haven't learned to think about other people at that point in time. And this part of parenting and, and coaching is teaching them that others people's needs matter as well as not just about you. You're actually not the center of the universe. I think there's some adults who walk around think they're at the center of the universe as well. And I'm here to tell you that you're not, trust me. Last time I checked it wasn't you. It's actually the sun.

[15:06](#)

J: Or daughter.

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L: The sun as in the star in the sky, like burning bright. So, you know, it's, it's taken that mentality and, and realizing that, okay, people are gonna make mistakes and it's part of it, but where does that come from? When we start applying pressure to get a result, we know that people are going to cheat more often. Okay, so that's one thing. We talked about growth mindset a few episodes ago as well. And what do we talk about in terms of cheating? That if you, if you have an innate mindset, a fixed mindset, you're more likely to cheat because you are, you're not feeling that, okay, my efforts are going to change anything and how I feel about myself is determined by being better than somebody else that is going to increase the chances of cheating, right? So these are the things that we must as as coaches, as parents work with the kids on, and really the way we respond to things in real time that okay, if, if they are cheating, for example, not letting that continue to happen, right? We have to stop that. We can't let the kids that we're in charge of cheat and we have to explain why. And if so, you believe someone else's cheating and you have no direct control over the situation, then it's all about how you talk to your children or the kids you're coaching and how to deal with it. As we've been talking about, and we'll get deeper into that, but again it, it's as we, as we apply pressures to

children who don't have the emotional capacity to cope with all the pressure the cracks are going to show people are going to cheat, people are gonna, as we know, inherently make mistakes and then it's going to be perceived as cheating because everybody talks about cheating all the time, so obviously they must be cheating this, this thing could get cleared up a lot if everybody was just understanding of the fact that, you know what, it's not about winning and losing at the, at the younger levels for sure. Even the pro levels, we still talk about process. You're going to lose so many matches a year, it's just the way it is. How are we doing things? It's about how we do things and the younger you go, it's more about fun, developing yourself and doing things with character and that's what we need to focus on. And if we do that and we take responsibility for the ones that we can and really teach them, then I think we have a shot. But we cannot be applying the pressure that you need to win this because that person has a lower UTR. Who cares? Who gives a crap and be honest UTR, you know what UTR rankings are? They're just a reflection of the past. They mean nothing. They mean nothing. That's just a reflection of the past, if you want to look at it that way. So who cares about this ranking? Just go out and play somebody, compete and see what you can do. We get too hung up on all this noise and we forget about doing the right thing and that is developing the kids so that they can be the best person they can be. And if you do that, you also give them the best shot to be the best tennis player and the best athlete they can be. Plain and simple.

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J: That's a drop the mic right there.

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L: Sorry, I got, I got a little riled up because again, you know, you get all these different things coming in. At the end of the day, tennis is mano a mano. Step up to the line, see if you can do it. That's what makes it great and all this other stuff comes in, it's unnecessary. And look, I'm not gonna stand here and say that I never questioned the line call or didn't get upset at something that didn't go my way. Of course I did and I did that too much when I was young. But I've had to learn from that and I'm not going to, at least the people I'm responsible for, I'm not going to continue to push ideas like eye for an eye, cheat them back because they cheated you. No, this is about doing the right thing. What are we teaching our children to do? Stop the eye for an eye, cheat them because they cheated you. It's not good. We already went through it. It creates pressure. It takes the focus off of what really is the beauty of the game and it makes it something else that's, that's nobody feels good about when the match is over and while it's going on and it leads to fights. It leads to parents getting in arguments and fighting. It leads to a lot of bad stuff. Let's cut it out. Let's not do it. Let's not assume people are cheating. If you think that they're cheating, if they really are cheating, then beat him with your game. Plain and simple, and you know what? And then if you need to call an official, it's getting that bad. So be it. But what we're looking for are people to do the right thing and then when things are not going your way to be resilient and be tough enough to deal with it because guess what? Life is also going to throw things at you that is unfair or unreasonable and you've got to find a way to deal with it. Not everything needs to be lined up perfectly for you. It's okay. Trust me. Sorry, Johnny.

[19:18](#)

J: No, these are great points. I'm just thinking back to some previous discussions we've had and getting into personalities a little bit here. Do you think that, perfect, and we talked about growth mindset versus fixed, right? But what about those perfectionists, do you think perfectionist and more likely to feel that pressure of, of maybe, you know, sometimes making the wrong line calls or doing, you know, cheating themselves a little bit because they have to be perceived as being higher on the pedestal, right? So they put themselves up on a pedestal of being this perfectionist. Do you think that is a big, big effect on perfectionists, the way that they go about that or.

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L: I don't think it is. I think that the perfectionists often are so busy putting themselves down for not meeting their standard that any opportunity they can to criticize themselves, they're going to find it. So I they, they may feel that pressure and, and some of them may cheat more because of the need to fulfill, you know, their expectations. But the ones to me that are more likely to cheat are the ones who are getting reinforced for the wrong things, who have to win, have to avoid losing, who are very ego centric. It's about me. It's about my needs. I, I determine how I feel about myself by winning and losing in this sport. Those are the ones you got to look out for, and I'm not saying that in a negative way. I mean people cheat because they're fulfilling an urge usually. If it's actual cheating. We've already talked about how many times it's not even cheating. It's not intentional, just can't see the ball that well, but if it's actual cheating, then the conversation we need to have is where is that coming from? Why is this occurring, right, and too often we just say, well, cheating, suspend them, done. The kid, all they learned is they were punished, so they just need to cheat better and get away with it better. We actually have to get in there and talk to these kids, what are, what are you experiencing? What is creating this? Where is that coming? What are the pressures now? Again, some people might be listening and saying, Larry you're being naive. There are some kids out there that are just bad seeds and they're going to cheat no matter what you do. Maybe you're right, but I think that percent is so small and maybe this is my bias. I believe in human nature that people are inherently good and then the world has its effect on them. That's my belief.

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J: No, I mean I 100% believe that as well. I mean, you have to take that I guess, approach of teaching and you know, what the skill is we're trying to help them learn like through this process, because at the end of the day, winning and losing as an outcome, the outcome has happened from a process that's gone in place. So the process that's gone in place is, you don't spend your whole day in practice learning how to cheat, right, you learn how to play the game. You learn the skills, you learn how to transition to the net. You learn how to serve, return, do all these things. You learn athletic skills. You learn mental skills, you do all these, this is all big part of the process that then can have an effect then on that outcome. All right, so that's an, you know, so that outcome is, is a, is a sum of all the body of work that's gone into that point and you might just have those days obviously that you've come out on the losing end. That happens. They're either mismatch in level, you've had a bit of a rough day, whatever it may be, but winning and losing is not going to be because of the process of cheating. It's

going to be the process of developing as a tennis player. So we have to remember that that, those outcomes at the end of the day and not being driven from a bad line call here or there.

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L: No. Let me take a shot too at, you know, changing the score because this, this has become this diabolical thing too, right, that, ah, they're changing the score. First of all, I clearly remember a situation at Wimbledon where Venus Williams forgot the score late in the match, an important point. So we know that players sometimes forget the score. So let's, that's item number one right, off the top that someone just plain and simple forgot the score happens all the time of practice, by the way, we see it all the time. So we tell them, Hey, call out the score so that we have clarity before each point. All right, so anyway, whether or not players are going to do that, they, that seems not to be cool. So whatever, whatever. But if there, if there's a, you think someone's changing the score on purpose, right? First of all, they may have forgotten second if they, they truly are. And here, here is the message for everyone, okay? People cheat because they're feeling some urge, some pressure, and they must feel that they cannot beat you straight up. Okay? So here's the empowering part. They can't beat you straight up. So then they, they go to these other methods. If you truly believe that they're cheating, that has to empower you to become more determined to play your game. Because clearly, you know, if you're cheating me, you don't think you can beat me straight up with our games. So guess what I'm going to do? I'm going to give you even more of my game with more determination, with more physicality, with more focus, because you know that you can't handle that. And that's the message that needs to be there. We need to empower the kids to make the right decisions, but they obviously, they want to play well and they want to win. And I get that even though I talk about all the time that we've got to make process more important than winning. And we do, they still want to win and they, that's fine and that's great and they should, but it's how we go about it. And if we can empower these kids to focus on how they're going about things that, Hey, you know what? If that person's really cheating, that means they don't think they can keep up, keep up with you by the way things are going. So really give them more of your game. This is a way to reframe cheating, reframe it into a positive action, into something that gets them focus back into present and them playing tennis. So to me, of all the things I've tried with, with tennis players, when it comes onto to this topic, that's the one we've been most successful with. Because what you're doing is you're changing the way you're looking at, at what's happening to you. And now instead of falling into the trap of getting overly emotional and maybe cheating back or getting really frustrated, which is, you know, helping the other person realize that, you know what, I'm going to give you more on my game now because clearly you don't want to, you don't want me playing my game.

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J: Yeah. And that's, that's actually, you can take that with you and actually be somewhat, you know, really happy inside that someone's had to kind of resort to that in order to do it. But switch gears to the parents a little bit here because again, I think at the end of the day that there's emotions high, well-intentioned parents that I think they're going to protect mode right. So they, they, they fail

and you know, the kids kind of start getting into it on the core. Parents on the outside of the court obviously are gonna to feel the same way that their child does. They may start saying things out loud, you know, I mean, hopefully it doesn't happen a lot, but parents start getting into it with each other. You know, you can't call my son and my son or daughter a cheat, you know, blah blah blah. Uh, and I think, you know, they feel like they want to help. But I guess my message would always be, well, are you really helping them? You know, they may be looking over for you like help, but what can you do on the outside of the court and at the end of the day, if you're going to help them, the best way to help them is to give them strategies to deal with it as opposed to if you're showing that emotion on the side of the court, then of course they're going to show that emotion on the court. And then all we're going to be teaching them is, Oh, when things don't go your way, then you've got to find someone else that can either help you or you've got to complain about it until you either get your way, which doesn't happen a lot. So you've got to take that approach that it's the hardest thing to do. I know, you probably or you want to interject. You want to feel that you're helping your, your, your son or daughter out in, in those situations. But actually the best form of help is to sit back, breathe, breathing and believe. Take a, you could even, you can even show your child right at the side of the court. You're taking a deep breath. Show the kid how to deal with that. Show the kid how to manage it, like take a deep breath, you know, process. But it's the hardest thing to do is to sit back and do nothing. I get it, but at the end of that day, we're teaching them that in order to deal with things, yes you have to approach them yourselves, but you, this is where you're being tested how to be busy, how to be resilient, how to be tough.

[26:52](#)

L: Yeah. But you're actually doing something because you're controlling your responses.

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J: You're showing them you're leading by example and how they should control their responses. You know, which I'll always come back to this, the best form of leadership is to lead by example. You show the right thing. People want to do that. You know, people want to follow like they like seeing people do the right thing and they, they want to feel like they can do it too.

[27:12](#)

L: So well, you know, when, when the, the player thinks that they're being cheated, that there's this immediate emotional reaction that is impossible to stop this anger, this frustration that wells up inside of you. And then often we look to coaches and parents to see, well do they think that I'm being cheated, that I'm being wronged. And when we respond from the sideline in a similar way, that's like taking, you know, gasoline throwing on the fire. So now my anger and frustration maybe was a 4 on a 10 scale. Let's just double that to an eight. Now I'm livid, right? And now this is where decision making gets very, very murky, gets very influenced by urges and needs, Instead of rationally thinking about, Hey, what's, what's, what's really the thing that I should be doing right now that's just focusing on my tennis but that that's now out the window. So you know, kids are going to get angry, they're going to get frustrated, get upset in tennis. And that's normal. And that makes it part of the

great experience that it is. But when we put gasoline on the fire by reacting, it's now much harder for them to cope with all that emotion cause not only dealing with their own feelings, now they're dealing with your, their perception of how you feel they've been offended, been wronged. And now so that goes into the system. And in many ways it's just too much for them to, to take. Again, we're talking about youth and adolescents who are not fully emotionally developed and don't have the capacity to cope generally with all those things. So we, on the sidelines, must do our job. And that is to reflect composure, confidence, you know, the right actions. You know, taking that deep breath, encouraging them to move on. I remember a situation where we're in baseball and I was the assistant coach and my son's pitching and he threw, I don't know how many strikes that were called balls. I mean it was just, it was bad. Just put it out there. It was bad. So he had a rough inning, I think he gave up like four runs. He comes in, he's leading off, he goes to bat and immediately the balls outside strike and, and um, I just feel like my anger raising and he looks over at me and I'm just like, Hey, you just got to hit, you gotta do your job in there. Don't let the empire decide. Right. You just be aggressive, gets another bad call. Strikes out. I feel myself walking out of the dugout, livid, and walking towards the umpire about to say something and I stopped myself. I did my breathing and I turn around and went back and told my son, Hey, we're better than this. We're gonna. We're going to find a way to compete here and get the job done.

[29:35](#)

J: Way to be a model parent, now, Larry.

[29:37](#)

L: Well I was really on the edge, man. I was on the edge. But you know, look, I have all this training and I'm not, I'm not here to say that I'm better than anybody else, but I have this training, so I'm aware of it, and yet it's still very hard in that situation for me to, to deal with it.

[29:52](#)

J: I think that's a huge key is the awareness of it first, you know, to have awareness, then you could take yourself to a better place with it. So I think it starts there. I'll give an, uh, the, uh, one example here of him from college, I was playing a, it was a full tournament, was playing a guy and he had a bit of a reputation for being a joker. I think he, he, I don't think he was inherently a bad person. Like, you know, I think he was a good person, but he, I think he actually just cheated because he just found it funny. And so I'm, I was playing him and, and you know, this, you know, first couple of games, just some bad line calls going on and I'm like, just kinda confused. So we get to about, I'm about three zero up dealing with this and he completely switches the score, game score. He's like, no, it's 2-1 me.

[30:35](#)

L: Oh wow. I'm like, that's gutsy.

[30:37](#)

J: I said, anyway. So we managed to figure it out and then in that 3-0 game, I then get to, I don't know, 40-30 or something and he flip flops the score 30-40. And so I'm like, okay, I'm not dealing with this. Referee comes on over and the referee goes, okay, what's the score? Right? And this kid goes, no, no, it's 30-40, because if you remember, I hit that forehand return, it went boom. And he was,

he was, he was from another country. It went boom. Uh, it cleared the line and, dust flew up everywhere. Like, you know, kind of like, I was thinking about this isn't grass like McEnroe back in the day, the chalk flew up everywhere. This guy was like, no, it felt good, so it was in, it felt good so it was in.

[31:13](#)

L: That's what he said?

[31:14](#)

J: I'm like, Oh my God. So I just start, I, I start losing it. So ended up losing the set, cause this guy is just completely messing with me. Actually, the very next point after the referee had left, I hit a serve in the middle of the box, like middle of the box. It's like two, three feet away from the service line, two feet, you know, four feet away from either sideline or whatever. And uh, and the guy just like picks it up with his hand, just stops at the service coming in. He just stopped it with his hand. They went, no, it was out on a second serve. And then he's just laughing at me cause I'm getting so wound up, he's just laughing at me. So I end up losing the set and then ended up coming out of the second set and I think I went like 5-2 up and then the match got called because we ended up winning and it was first team to four, you know, stops the match. And then at the end I was just, I just had steam coming out my ears and there was a good lesson for me cause I was emotionally absolutely exhausted, absolutely exhausted. Like dealing with this in my mind, trying to do it in the right way. And after the match, I mean I, you know, I probably didn't deal with it the best way, but after the match, I just, I just went livid. My teammates, if a, if any of them listen to this, which they probably don't, but, uh, all my, all my former coaches, they'll, they'll remember this situation well that happened out in Corpus Christi and they'll probably start laughing, but it was absolutely distraught and I actually just sat down and put my heads and I was like, I just felt like I needed to cry. I was like, just so done with, I'm like, this isn't why I play sport. I don't, we shouldn't have to deal with things like this. But at the end of the day we deal with it and we have to figure out how, how to get past those in the best situations. And you know, that was just probably the most, the worst situation I've ever been in. And it happened when I was 20 I think, or 19 years old. Yeah. So, but anyways, so, okay, [inaudible], we've both given an example there. So dealing with cheating and give us three top tips out there as we start wrapping this, this week's episode up. Give us three top tips of dealing with cheating in the, in the best way.

[32:55](#)

L: Okay. Number one, don't assume that the person's cheating, right? They may not be able to see that call. They're doing the best they can. You know yourself that sometimes you have to make a call and you're a little bit unsure, but you just do it with confidence, right? So, and that's okay. So that's number one. Don't assume that you're being wronged. Now, number two, if you truly are being cheated, really try to reframe that as the person can't, they know that they can't beat you straight up, so they have to go to these other means. So empower yourself to be more determined to play your game and more determined to, to compete every point. I know it's difficult, I know it's hard, but it's the right thing to do. And I think you, you really gotta get into your routine. So when, when someone is actually cheating or you feel that they're cheating,

accepting it, you know, saying, look, it is what it is. I can't control them. Refocusing on your breath. And then again, really committing to the actions that you want to take that are going to help you to play your game. So look, we know it's not easy, it's not fun. And we've expressed a couple examples of that and know that the challenge is, you know, for the adults and coaches, how can we create that awareness in our, our players that you know, what the right thing to do is the right thing to do. Make the call with confidence. Don't assume that the other person's cheating if something's actually going on, try to resolve it in a professional way. Try to do things in a way that you feel proud of when you come off the court in certainly as adults, we got to make sure we're modeling those behaviors.

[34:19](#)

J: Love it. Awesome stuff.

[34:21](#)

L: That got us fired up today. Huh? I like it.

[34:23](#)

J: I mean not that's the most, you've been fired up for a while, Larry.

[34:25](#)

L: Oh, well just you give me the topics.

[34:27](#)

L: You're in the thick of it though at the minute with youth baseball and this youth epidemic of, of, of sort of behaviors going around with everything. It's, it's a little out of control at the minute, but you know, hopefully we will keep tackling it one piece at a time in whatever sport we're doing, but especially in tennis as that soft spot. But awesome, well, thanks very much Dr. Larry.

[34:45](#)

L: Thank you JP for listening.

[34:46](#)

J: Absolutely, listening, learning.

[34:49](#)

L: Listening to my pain.

[34:50](#)

J: And learning, love it. Well that, that that wraps it up for this week's episode of compete like a champion. For more information, you can always go to our website playerdevelopment.usta.com. As always, there's, there's a fantastic resources on there. Please go check it out. Um, until next week, Dr. Larry and I will speak to you later.