

## Creating the Optimal Performance State for Players

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For a clear vision of your game you reflect on best matches and what you were thinking, doing, and feeling. Comparing these against bad performances develops awareness of the differences in preparation and competition. Work through the details to get to the core tactics, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that occur when you are at your best (optimal performance state or OPS). Then, write about your game with details to the above components. Vision of Game should be written with “I am, I will” types of statements that create commitment to the vision. Talk to your coach about his or her perspectives on the game such as “focus on the process”, “Play one point at a time”, “hit out to big targets”, etc. and include those as well.

**STEP 1 BEST MATCH REFLECTION:** Take 5 minutes in a quiet environment void of distractions. Think about your recent best matches (you played according to your game style, and competed and executed well). Try to relive it in detail. Think about the following questions as you visualize best matches.

How was I feeling prior to the match?

What was I thinking prior to the match?

What was I doing prior to the match?

What were my goals and expectations for the match?

Overall, how did I feel during the match?

Overall, what were the thoughts that were in my head during the match?

Overall, what was I doing between points?

Overall, how was I playing the match?

In key moments of the match what was I thinking, feeling, and doing?

**STEP 2 WORST MATCH REFLECTION:** Take 5 minutes in a quiet environment void of distractions. Think about your recent worst matches (you did not play according to your game style, and did not compete or execute well). Try to relive it in detail. Think about the following questions as you visualize worst matches.

How was I feeling prior to the match?

What was I thinking prior to the match?

What was I doing prior to the match?

What were my goals and expectations for the match?

Overall, how did I feel during the match?

Overall, what were the thoughts that were in my head during the match?

Overall, what was I doing between points?

Overall, how was I playing the match?

In key moments of the match what was I thinking, feeling, and doing?

**STEP 3 COMPARISON OF BEST & WORST MATCHES:** Now read back through both the best matches and worst matches.

What things were similar?

What were the big differences?

What do you need to do based on reviewing your best and worst matches?

**STEP 4 VISION OF GAME with OPS DESCRIPTORS and the Plan for Achieving Them:** In this step pull out the most important and meaningful words from STEP 1 that describe your thinking, feeling and doing when you were at the best. This should include your vision of how you want to play tennis. List them as individual words or short phrases. These words describe your optimal performance state, how you are feeling, what you are thinking and doing when you are at your best. Use these as simple cues before and during the match to keep a task-focused, simple mindset.

**I AM:**

**STEP 5 List How You Prepare Pre-Match to be at Your OPS at the Start of a Match** (include night before and day of activities):

**I WILL:**

**SUMMARY POINTS DISCUSSED WITH PLAYER:**

- Understanding yourself and your game allows you to play to your strengths and stay focused on getting better. It is living, training and competing intentionally.
- A clear vision of yourself and game creates a home base for everything that you do. Your decisions should be based on it, and should always be working towards it.
- Develop a pre-match plan that consistently gets you close to your OPS and follow it with discipline and commitment.