



THE PROCESS OF TENNIS PERFORMANCE

*You don't win by focusing on
winning. You win by doing all
the little things well.*

-Brian Lomax

Let's explore the details (aka, the little things) that lead to incremental improvement and eventually big results.

Technical Aspects

- Forehand
 - Grips
 - Eastern
 - Continental
 - Semi-Western
 - Western
 - Hold it loosely for power and spin
 - Spin
 - Topspin
 - High & Heavy
 - Moderate - drive
 - Slice
 - Flat - drive
 - Placement, etc.
 - Drop shot
 - Lob
 - Cross-court
 - Short angle cross-court
 - Down the line
 - Inside-out
 - Inside-in
 - Depth
 - Approach shots
 - Power / Pace
 - Racquet head speed
 - Loose grip
 - Loose muscles
 - Fluid motion - smooth
 - Stance
 - Open
 - Semi-open
 - Closed
 - Mechanics
 - Take back

The basic difference between an ordinary man and a warrior is that a warrior takes everything as a challenge while an ordinary man takes everything as a blessing or a curse.

-Carlos Castaneda

- Forward swing
- Follow through
- Contact point
- One Handed Backhand
 - Grip
 - Eastern backhand
 - Extreme Eastern Backhand
 - Continental
 - Hold it loosely for power and spin
 - Spin
 - Topspin
 - High & Heavy
 - Moderate - drive
 - Slice
 - Flat - drive
 - Placement, etc.
 - Drop shot
 - Lob
 - Cross-court
 - Short angle cross-court
 - Down the line
 - Depth
 - Targets
 - Height / Margin
 - Spot in the court
 - Slice
 - Drive
 - Power / Pace
 - Racquet head speed
 - Loose grip
 - Loose muscles
 - Fluid motion - smooth
 - Stance
 - Semi-open
 - Closed
 - Mechanics
 - Take back
 - Forward swing
 - Follow through
 - Hold for a beat after shot
 - Contact point
 - Front shoulder down
 - Head down and eyes on contact point

*The process is about finishing.
 Finishing games. Finishing
 workouts. Finishing film sessions.
 Finishing drives. Finishing reps.
 Finishing plays. Finishing blocks.
 Finishing the smallest task you
 have right in front of you and
 finishing it well.*
 -Ryan Holiday

- Two Handed Backhand
 - Grip
 - Dominant Hand
 - Continental
 - Eastern Forehand
 - Eastern Backhand
 - Supporting Hand
 - Eastern Forehand
 - Spin
 - Topspin
 - High & Heavy
 - Moderate - drive
 - Slice
 - 2 hands
 - 1 hand
 - Flat - drive
 - Placement, etc.
 - Drop shot
 - Lob
 - Cross-court
 - Short angle cross-court
 - Down the line
 - Depth
 - Approach shots
 - Drive
 - Targets
 - Height / Margin
 - Spot in the court
 - Power / Pace
 - Racquet head speed
 - Loose grip
 - Loose muscles
 - Fluid motion - smooth
 - Stance
 - Open
 - Semi-open
 - Closed
 - Mechanics
 - Take back
 - Forward swing
 - Follow through
 - Contact point
- Volleys
 - Grip
 - Continental
 - Types of volleys, etc.
 - Transition volley
 - Attacking volley
 - Swinging volley
 - Drop volley

*What such a man needs is not
courage, but nerve control, cool
headedness. This he can get only
by practice.*
-Theodore Roosevelt

- Lob volley
- Cross-court
- Down the line
- Short angle
- Mechanics
 - Racquet head to wrist alignment
 - Short take back
 - Footwork
- Power / Pace
 - Racquet head speed
- Overheads
 - Grip = Continental
 - Footwork
 - Planted and balanced
 - Jump up
 - Jump back
 - Hitting it off the bounce
 - Contact point
 - Mechanics
- Serve
 - Grip
 - Continental
 - Exaggerated Continental / Eastern Backhand
 - Hold it loosely for power and spin
 - Types of Serves
 - Flat
 - Slice
 - Kick
 - Topspin
 - Use a variety of spins to disrupt rhythm
 - Power
 - Change speeds to disrupt rhythm
 - Placement
 - Out wide
 - Body
 - T
 - Change locations
 - Mechanics
 - Toss
 - Stance
 - Swing
 - Land and Recover
 - Explode
 - Extend
 - Loose arm and smooth relaxed motion
 - Serve ritual
 - Bounce ball at least 2 times
 - Shake out arm

*Genius is the ability to put
into effect what is in your
mind. There's no other
definition of it.*

-F. Scott Fitzgerald

- Visualize serve going to your spot
- Return of Serve
 - Return ritual
 - Bounce up and down
 - Vision
 - Soft focus
 - Hard focus
 - Footwork
 - Move toward the ball
 - Split step
 - Visualize the target

Footwork / Balance

- Stances
 - Open
 - Semi-open
 - Closed
- Movement / Speed
 - Shuffle
 - Cross-over
 - Carioca
 - Sprinting - first step
 - Split step
 - Balancing steps
 - Sliding
 - Bouncing up and down
- Balance
 - Stability
 - Weight transfer
 - Loading
 - Solid base
 - Spacing between you and the ball

Physical Energy

- Sleep
 - 8 to 10 hours
 - Regular bed times
 - Naps
- Nutrition / Hydration
 - Regular meals
 - Portions sizes
 - Timing of meals
 - Knowing what to eat
 - Sports Nutritionist
 - Whole foods
 - Knowing what gives you the best energy
 - Supplements

I came to a fundamental insight that would guide my future work: Our potential is one thing. What we do with it is quite another.

-Angela Duckworth

- Sports Drinks
- Water
- Powders
- Juices
- Salt tablets
- Match Day Nutrition
 - Pre-match
 - Eat 2.5 to 3 hours prior
 - Snack 15 to 30 minutes prior
 - During the match
 - Clif bars
 - Electrolyte chews
 - Bananas / Cut fruit
 - Post-match
 - Protein
 - Cut fruit
- Strength & Conditioning
 - Strength
 - Core
 - Upper body
 - Lower body
 - Speed & Agility
 - Explosive first step
 - Balance
 - Joint mobility
 - Range of motion
 - Shoulder mobility
 - Scapular strength
- Long term
 - Periodization
 - Schedule allows for training weeks, competition weeks and rest/recovery weeks

Vision

- Recognition & Anticipation
- Visual acuity
- See the spin of the ball
 - Off the opponent's racquet
 - After the bounce to your strings
- Sunglasses
- Keeping the head down during your swing till contact
 - Hold the follow through

Mental Skills

- Focus
 - On the court
 - In the moment
 - Decision making

To be gritty is to keep putting one foot in front of the other. To be gritty is to hold fast to an interesting and purposeful goal. To be gritty is to invest, day after week after year, in challenging practice. To be gritty is to fall down seven times and rise eight.

-Angela Duckworth

- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Process Oriented Thinking
 - Process Goals
 - "Get From" Goals - what will I get from practice today
 - Process creates results
 - Focus on the process to create a great performance
- Breathing
 - Rhythmic breathing
 - Improves the mind-body connection
 - Breath awareness
 - Choose to control your breathing
 - Meditation
 - Train breathing
 - Focus on breathing
 - Slow your mind down
- Positive Presence
 - Be big
 - Walk big with energy
 - Bounce up and down
 - Speak with confidence
 - Change your body chemistry to enhance performance
 - Assertive
 - Confident
 - Comfortable
 - Higher Risk Tolerance
- Self-Talk
 - Encouraging
 - Motivating
 - Excited to compete
 - Supportive
 - Rational
 - Productive
 - Always looking forward and about taking action
- In Between Point Routine
 - 4 stages
 - Positive Physical Response
 - Relaxation / Recovery
 - Preparation / Plan
 - Ritual
 - Reset Button
 - Physical routine
- Mindset Planning
 - Ideal Result
 - Positive Attitude
 - A phrase that helps you remember the Mindset Plan
 - Positive Emotions
 - Confident
 - Calm
 - Ideal Focus
 - Choice
 - Control

*Weak is he who permits his
thoughts to control his
actions; strong is he who
forces his actions to control his
thoughts.*
-Og Mandino

- Focus on the basics
 - Breathing
 - Positive Presence
 - Etc.
- IFTTT (IF THIS happens, THEN I do THAT)

Emotional Skills

- Confidence
 - Presence
 - Be big
 - Walk big
 - Visualize yourself as big
 - Speak with confidence
 - Confidence is a choice
 - Know your strengths
 - Reflect on progress
 - Am I improving?
 - Preparation = Confidence
 - Am I prepared to play today?
 - Be prepared so you can answer YES to this question
- Calm
 - Breathe
 - You've been here before
 - Shake out your arms and legs
 - Release muscle tension
 - Progressive relaxation
 - Tense muscles and then relax them
- Fighting Spirit / Intensity
 - Bounce up and down
 - Thigh tap
 - Unshakeable desire to achieve the mission
 - Be excited to compete
 - Embrace the Challenge!
 - Use your self-talk to look forward in the match
- Positivity
 - See the positive / opportunity in everything
 - Choose to be excited
 - There is always a way forward
- Self-Belief
 - Commitment to your goals
 - Commitment to becoming your best

Motivation

- WHY
 - Long term
 - About the player I want to become
 - Intrinsic
 - Mastering the sport
 - The relationships I have made and will make

*As long as there is breath in me,
that long will I persist. For now
I know one of the greatest
principles of success; if I persist
long enough I will win. I will
persist. I will win.*
-Og Mandino

- Passion for the sport
- Competition helps me progress toward mastery
- Today
 - I'm excited to be here; this is fun!
 - I will get better today
 - I want today's reward
 - Extrinsic
- Approach Motivation
 - Move in the direction of what I want
 - Go for the win rather than avoid losing
- Goals
 - Result Goals
 - Vision: Who do I need to be to reach this goal?
 - Physical / Tennis
 - Mental
 - Emotional
 - Motivation / Character
 - Time frame for when I want to be there
 - Process Goals
 - The items I need to work on to become the player I need to be
 - Actions / Routine
 - How I achieve my process and result goals
 - What I do every day and every week
 - Accountability
 - Track your routines
 - Weekly Reflections
 - Make adjustments to stay on track
 - What are you learning?

Character

- Respect
 - Opponents
 - Regardless of how good the opponent is, always give your best effort
 - Treat the opponent as you wish to be treated
 - If your opponent cheats, do not cheat back. Instead, show him/her how she ought to have behaved in this situation.
 - Your opponent is not your enemy; you need him/her to create a great tennis match so learn to appreciate them
 - Pre-match
 - Say something nice about your opponent and/or his/her game
 - Express confidence in your game and how you are playing
 - Realize that the score starts from zero and that you must play your best and give your best effort today
 - Post-match
 - Shake hands firmly and look him/her in the eye
 - Say "thank you" or "good match"
 - Do not make excuses for why you didn't play well or why you lost
 - Excuses are a sign of mental weakness

The way you carry yourself is a source of personal power – the kind of power that is the key to presence. It's the key that allows you to unlock yourself– your abilities, your creativity, your courage, and even your generosity. It doesn't give you skills or talents you don't have; it helps you to share the ones you do have. It doesn't make you smarter or better informed; it makes you more resilient and open. It doesn't change who you are; it allows you to be who you are.

-Amy Cuddy

- Give your opponent credit for the win
- If you won, praise your opponent for a good battle/effort; being humble is an important part of being great
- Coaches
 - Give your best effort always
 - Listen and be attentive; look them in the eye
 - If your coach asks you to try something, try it wholeheartedly
 - Be a student! Don't think you know more than your coach. You must trust him/her.
 - Accept feedback
 - Act on it
 - Be on time
 - Focus on achieving the goal of the lesson/clinic
 - Be engaged and present
 - Ask questions that show you want to learn more and improve
 - Keep promises; do what you say you're going to do
 - Say "thank you" at the end of the lesson/clinic/tournament
 - Keep the facility clean
 - Pick up empty water bottles
 - Throw trash away
 - Pick up balls quickly
 - Do not expect others to pick up after you
- Parents / Family
 - Give your best effort always
 - Be grateful for the opportunity that they are giving you and for their support
 - Do all the above and make them proud
- Fairness
- Leadership
- Focus
- Love of Learning
- Persistence
- Resilience
- Intensity

Philosophy / Perspective

- The Point of Competition
 - Improvement
 - A lifelong process
 - Love of Learning
- Warrior's Mindset
 - Embrace challenges (not a blessing or a curse)
- Challenges make us better
 - Approach challenges with excitement
 - Challenges take our skills to a new level even if we fail at first
 - Book: The Obstacle is the Way
- Be excited to compete and get better

The moment you achieve one goal you've set for yourself, then it's time to establish a new target. Quit thinking in terms of either / or and start thinking in terms of all and everything.

-Grant Cardone

- Excitement to compete or deal with stress leads to better performances
- Fear of challenges/stress leads to tentative performances
- Ego is the Enemy (book by Ryan Holiday)
 - Focus on iterative development
 - Develop your love of learning
 - Did I do something to improve today?
 - Repeat daily - "sweep the floor"
 - Open to coaching
 - Experience failure as part of the process, not as "being a failure"
 - To be truly great, you must be humble - "The Fighter's Mind"
- The Four Agreements
 - Be impeccable with your word
 - Don't make assumptions
 - Don't take anything personally
 - Always give your best effort

Preparation

- Physical Energy
 - Sleep
 - Nutrition
 - Hydration
 - Recovery
 - General Health
 - Dynamic warm-up
 - Stretch
 - Practice
- Focus
 - Process & Performance goals
 - Meditation
 - Rhythmic breathing
 - Visualization
- Motivation & Intensity
 - Why you compete
 - Music to create energy
 - Watch your sport - inspiration
 - Visualize breaking your opponent
- Confidence & Positivity
 - Confident Body Language - Positive Presence
 - Choose to be confident
 - Review your strengths and identity
 - Visualize this
 - Review Mindset Plan
 - Smile
 - Express gratitude

Recovery

- Nutrition
 - Protein within 30 minutes
- Hydration
 - Continue to drink water / sports drink
- Stretching
- Performance Evaluation
 - Write in your journal
 - What went well
 - What didn't go well
 - What adjustments can I make next time?
 - What did I learn and how can I apply in the future?

*I suggest you become obsessed
about the things you want;
otherwise, you are going to spend
a lifetime being obsessed with
making up excuses as to why you
didn't get the life you wanted.*

-Grant Cardone

Tennis IQ

- The 4 Levels of Tennis IQ
 - L1 - You and the ball
 - L2 - Your side of the court
 - L3 - Your opponent's side of the court
 - L4 – Break the opponent mentally
- Strengths & Identity
 - Identity = the purpose / benefit of your strengths
- Tactics
- Break the opponent mentally
 - Make the opponent uncomfortable
 - Your Identity is your principal weapon in doing this
 - Maintain a strong & confident image throughout – intimidating
 - Be unbreakable

Practice

- Best effort
- Deliberate Practice
 - Write your process goals
 - What will I "get from" practice today?
 - Did I do something today to get better?
 - Evaluate your process goals after practice
 - Focus on learning
 - Get out of your comfort zone and improve
 - This is the place to make mistakes, not be perfect
 - Be like a scientist
 - Learn from mistakes and try again
 - Training Journal
 - Record your thoughts
 - Practice competing
 - Practice matches
 - Use some tournaments as training

Equipment

- Racquets
 - Should fit your game style
 - Stiff vs flexible
 - Head size
 - 95
 - 98
 - 100
 - 110
 - Length
 - Standard - 27 in
 - Extended
 - Power and Control
 - Weight
 - Swing speed
- Strings
 - Polyester
 - Multifilament
 - Gut
 - Hybrids
 - Power and Control
 - Tension
- Shoes
 - For specific surfaces
 - Hard courts
 - Clay courts
 - Grass courts
 - Stability
 - Width
- Clothes
 - Material
 - Comfort and fit
- Tennis Bag
 - Fit all your racquets
- Other Gear
 - Exercise bands
 - Wrist bands
 - Overgrips
 - Dry grip powder / gel
 - Vibration dampener
 - Racquet sensors
 - Wearable sensors
 - Towels
 - Compression sleeves
 - Braces
 - Ankle
 - Wrist
 - Back
 - Elbow
 - Hat
 - Headbands

- Sunglasses
- Lead tape for racquets
- Stringing machine