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Vision Training

"Triple Vision" – consists of three visions in relation to the ball and opponent. Triple Vision trains your eyes to be in the right place in relationship to your contact point and your opponent's movement (racquet set up, turn of shoulders, balance, court position and contact point).

First Vision: Head is still at contact point. The head and eyes should NOT follow the ball off the racquet. This vision will provide good balance as one is striking the ball. The head weighs 8-12 pounds and needs to be balanced when you strike the ball for increased control.

Second Vision: After contact your eyes should go immediately to the opponent's racquet. It is during this point that you are recovering *(to appropriate recovery position)* and utilizing the split step right before or simultaneously (depending on ability level). This second vision helps with shot anticipation by analyzing your opponent's racquet face and shoulders as well as his/her balance, contact point and court position.

Third Vision: This is where the eyes are watching the ball make contact with the opponent's racquet. This is where you will observe the trajectory of the ball leaving the racquet (height, depth and placement of ball).

To acquire this vision usually takes 30 days in a row of practice to form a correct vision habit. Many people look up before impact and watch the ball leave their racquets while their feet remain still, thus losing the important clues for anticipation. Many people think that looking up at contact can help guide the ball in a certain direction, however we know that would be impossible.

It is exciting to experience the correct vision. People who have learned this have mentioned that they feel calmer while hitting and feel like they have more time to set up for the next shot.

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Things You Cannot Control

1. Winning and Losing — It doesn't matter whether it is the point, the game, or the match. You can *affect* the outcome, but you cannot *control* it.

2. How your opponent plays — This relates to how they play on a given point, in a game, or for the whole match.

3. The environment — Whether it is sunny, windy, rainy, etc. you can only control how you deal with the weather, not the environment itself.

4. Unfortunate breaks—Let cords, mis-hits, bad bounces, etc. will happen, you have to let them go.

5. Someone else's rankings — How someone else is doing in a tournament or in the rankings is not in your control.

6. What other people think — What people think about your game or results is up to them, not up to you. Your job is to do your best!

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Tennis Basics—Shot Anticipation

Opponent's Return of Serve

Attack his grip(s)

Examples: Continental grip for forehand—serve topspin
Western grip for forehand—serve flat or low balls
One-handed backhand — serve topspin
Two-handed backhand — serve slice

Groundstrokes

Shoulder and Racquet

If front shoulder is low and racquet head is high—anticipate a power drive
If front should is high and racquet head is low—anticipate a loop or lob

Weight Transfer

Weight is on front leg—anticipate a powerful drive
Weight is on back leg — anticipate a loop or lob

Racquet Face

Racquet face is almost perpendicular to the ground — anticipate a heavy topspin or drive
Racquet face is more open—anticipate a slice

Footwork

Opponent has stepped across his body, in a very closed stance—anticipate a down-the-line shot
Opponent has an open stance—Opponent can either go down-the-line or crosscourt. Look for other cues and remember tactical anticipation

Shoulder & Hips

Front shoulder and hips have really rotated—anticipate power
Upper body rotation is minimal—anticipate finesse

Contact Point

The ball is right in opponent's comfort zone (depends on grip) — anticipate power to all fields and remember tactical anticipation
The ball is below your opponent's comfort zone — anticipate a shot without much pace

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Tennis Basics—Shot Anticipation (pg 2)

Court Position

If the opponent is running at an angle away from the net, behind the baseline — anticipate a down-the-line shot with opponent's only other options down-the-middle shot or lob

If the opponent is moving at an angle toward the net, inside the baseline, and the ball is in his comfort zone — anticipate being on the defensive. What did tactical anticipation say his favorite shot is?

Playing the Net

To figure out whether your opponent is going to pass you down the line, cross-court, or lob, you should observe the position of the shoulders, how fast he is moving and in what direction.

If your approach shot or first volley is wide to your opponent's forehand, he will be running parallel to the net, with his shoulders sideways to the net. His body is set up to hit a down-the-line passing shot. He probably would hit down the line four to five times more often than cross-court.

If he's moving fast and stretching, a lob may be hit, since he would not have the power for a passing shot.

If your approach shot or first volley is hit short, your opponent will be moving forward so that his body is partially facing the net with the leading shoulder pointed crosscourt. His easier shot would be cross-court, so close in to cover that shot.

When your opponent moves back to cover your deep shot and his back is slightly to the net, you should back up to cover the lob. If he does drive from this position, it should be weak enough that you can close in for a winning volley.

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High Percentage Principles

These are principles that are important for any type of game strategy or playing style.

Keep the ball in play

We all win or lose by the amount of our unforced errors. Reduce errors, win matches. Try not to miss in the net or wide. These 2 principles will automatically improve your game.

Hit to large target areas

Keep it simple by hitting crosscourt unless opportunity knocks. The majority of shots hit in a match are hit crosscourt, middle (probably 60%-80% depended on level of player). Crosscourt gives you the longest range to hit into a court. Remember Hit "through the court" versus to the angles.

Hit higher over the net

The only enemy on a tennis court is the net! It is only a three foot adversary! Why are we held captive by a 3 foot net? Learn topspin and develop good net clearance so your length of rally increases. The use of ropes zones will help you to practice hitting higher over the net.

Learn topspin

Learning this spin will allow you to control the ball with quicker racquet head speed. Topspin is the only spin that helps gravity bring the ball down! As you get proficient with spin you can hit more angles within the court and control a faster ball coming to you.

Develop different racquet head speeds

Usually more racquet head speed equals less control whereas less speed enhances control. Though shortening backswings can control the ball, speed of racquet helps you to gain a realistic perspective on how to keep the ball in play. The average player should swing fast enough to impart topspin or under-spin but slow enough to hit balls in play during a rally. A good way to practice is to develop three different racquet head speeds (slow, medium and fast). Remember a slower speed of racquet doesn't mean stopping your swing. Finish the shot completely but with a controlled speed of racquet.

Recognize when you are offensive, neutral and defensive.

Learn how to anticipate your opponent's shots. Learn the second vision in which you begin to study the opponent's racquet and body position. Learn to analyze your opponent's balance, contact point and court position. This will help you to make the proper decision whether you are offensive, neutral or defensive.