

Last month's mental game theme (#SettleIn) set the stage for creating a relaxed body and settled mind to maximize performance. Owning and consistently mastering skills to reduce tension under stress lays the foundation for the mind and body to perform in an athletic manner.

With reduced physical tension, the mind can sharpen and effectively settle into a present-minded approach. An athlete performing in the moment often describes their tennis as free, clear and nearly effortless. This feeling arises when the mind's eye is keenly focused on the shot at hand. The student-athletes at Smith Stearns are learning to become more in-tune with the trajectory of well executed shots. Being able to consistently hold onto vivid images of shot shapes and net clearance (target window), sets the stage for skills and technique trained in practice to emerge throughout the emotional experience of competition. Science continues to prove that a clear, external focus provides the body with the greatest amount of power and precision available, while using the least amount of energy in the process. For individualized, extra help on the mental game reach out to Matt Cuccaro at [matt@telos-spc.com](mailto:matt@telos-spc.com)

***Written by Matt Cuccaro, Ed.M.***

***Smith Stearns Mental Conditioning***

***Instagram/Twitter: @MentalCoachMatt***

***E-mail: [matt@telos-spc.com](mailto:matt@telos-spc.com)***