

The Other Way
“El Otro Camino”

Jose Imaz

1. Introduction. The Other Way

My intention with this book is to share an idea, which I have named "the other way". This view of "The Other Way" aims to show life inside and outside of the court in a different way than usual. Helping free us from so much stress, anguish, anxiety, pressure and other negative feelings caused by fear.

I will try to explain why these fears are produced and from where they are born.

Once you see why and where these negative thoughts and feelings come from, I will discuss alternatives and solutions to finally take "The Other Way" and to help you feel good that we produce this change both in our personal lives and on the tennis court.

With all these ideas and thoughts I will be showing you how they affect all the areas within tennis: coaches, players, parents, social environment (friends, press, etc).

2. A small point.

Although it may appear as if these ideas are aimed at professional tennis players, anyone can appreciate these ideas, from beginners, through club players and all the way up to professionals. In all cases "The Other Way" transmits to each level contributing and helping them equally.

3. Points to work in a player.

The work done with a player can be divided into:

Technical and tactical work / physical work / mental work.

We all agree that when you have a certain level (specifically when you're a professional) the most important point where it will make the most difference is mental, noting that this area is 60% or 70% of a tennis players most important attribute.

We can see that in the daily work of a tennis player (measured as putting in 5 hours per day of training), 3 to 3.5 hours are designed to work on the court with your technique and tactics and then between 1 to 1.5 hours of physical training. Then at most in a few specific cases and usually out of 'desperation' a player has resorted to psychological help that still at most would be 1 to 2 hours a week.

So from this we come to a conclusion:

Importance of physical fitness and tactical work in a player (between 30% and 40%).

Mental-emotional importance in a tennis player (60% or 70%).

So for 5 hours of training we're getting at best 10% of the players schedule focusing on the most important aspect of the game.

How can this make sense?

This work I share with you is aimed at the broad field of improvement.

We reached the point where the work begins: "The Other Way".

If you feel like it we can "dive" through a series of ideas and proposals to give you more information and for you to use it to work in this field, especially with such a huge margin to improve.

4. The equation

The following, I call a metaphorical equation:

a) When I take to the court to play a game my main goal is to win. This gives me a possible fear of losing, which in turn translates into feelings and emotions of anxiety, stress, nervousness, stomach ache and in this state of malaise my game, whatever it is, will suffer a worsening of my normal level consequently ... I will win or Lose ??

I want to win with fear, nervousness, anxiety, discomfort and playing worse than my potential level = ??

b) When I go to the court being good with myself, without demands, with loving and respecting myself, this will translate into a peaceful state of mind and my game will be at the level of which I can play, because things are done better when one is calm, therefore ... I will win or Lose ??

I love me, I respect myself, I become quiet and play at my optimal level = ??

We know that things are done better when our mind is quiet. However, in the "Equation a)" We are uneasy however not in the "Equation b)" where we are good with ourselves. It is logical therefore that our chances of winning are more likely with "equation b)" and not in the "equation a)." However, I think without exception (some more so than others) train and play as a rule by "equation a)."

Then ...

You will say, "Well that's all very good and very nice. But how can I be so relaxed??!!!"
Then, let me continue, where we will find what it is we all seek. You will see !!!!

5. The reason for the fears and how they affect us.

Firstly, we try to know why those fears are born and how they affect us and then tackle them occurringly. It's like the electrician before starting to cut wires he must first know what causes the failure.

So:

Perhaps some of you will be thinking, what the hell are you telling me this for? But give me a chance and you will see that the end engages fully with tennis and perhaps you will learn something that may help us.

We continue...

The human being is what we see, the physical body and that which we do not see, the inner the body. Where some call it energy, others the emotional system, another the soul, but it is clear that something is there. If you look at a body alive and another dead, they have both the same organs (talking about normal circumstances), ie, lungs, heart, liver, blood ... However, one moves and lives and the other does not. This is where we are shown that there is something within us.

Well, to keep alive the outer body (the physical and material body) we need food and water and the more healthy we are, the better. However, the inner body also needs food simply just another type of food.

This energy or emotion, or whatever that is within our physical body, needs the food of love and kindness.

If we imagine a person who despises themselves, someone who doesn't respect themselves, that criticises themselves, that really hate themselves... their physical condition will come to destruction, either through suicide or psychosomatic illnesses. This of course is in very extreme circumstances but the same would happen in the end if you did not eat or drink anything, you would also die.

So if you see the importance of feeding that inner or emotional self to feel good about yourself, then take care in the way that you feed yourself.

As children we have learnt to receive love, approval, respect ... by doing things that people around us wanted us to do.

For example, as children we had to get good grades for approval and affection. As we were growing if we did things that people would like us to do we would also receive approval. Then started tennis; if we won, we learnt that we would be respected, accepted and have a 'happier' environment. All this affection, respect, love ... is all needed by our inner being.

But...

For all of this we must pay a high "toll". That "toll" is to live for others and not for ourself.

Some examples. To be loved by my friends I do everything for them even if I don't want to because finally I receive the "charity" love because they say "you're a great person, you're amazing." But perhaps by doing so that has made me not able to go to the movies with my girlfriend and do the things that I wanted to do. And in the end I didn't really do those things for my friends, I did it because of my shortcomings that needed to be fed, because I needed their praise so desperately.

If I don't do everything that you ask of me I won't receive approval or respect, the affection that I need to live (and in the best case, when I get it, not live, just simply 'survive').

Then faced with something I have to do well (like a test, a tennis match, a business operation ...) the fear to receive that "food" is enormous up to unbearable extremes.

However, we are lucky because there is "The Other Way" to receive this food so necessary to our emotional state without having to pay the "toll" to others.

But how??

6. How to get rid of fears.

I would like to share this story that was told to me:

In a place in South Africa there was a powerful merchant, who controlled the water needed for all the town, because the only existing water well was on his property. This gave him absolute power over the whole village. Everything he said had to be abided to without objection, or else he would threaten with the punishment of not giving water.

This situation made all the people live in a continuous state of dependence and fear of him. It also made them live in a continuous state of insecurity, they did not know if they would get water for the day, because if he felt like it he could let them all die by dehydration.

It was like this for many years until a young man full of confidence, courage and faith thought that that well could not be the only one there was and that there would be others and that he would find enough for him and the rest of the people so that they would never need to live in fear from the powerful merchant again.

And so it happened. This young man full of courage and faith found a well, even bigger than the existing one that catered to the entire village.

Since then no one in the village had to do things against their will. They were free, they no longer had to do as the wealthy merchant ordered, because most importantly they had their own water.

If you think about it, this is what happens to us in our lives on an interior level. We depend on other people (in the story, the merchant) for approval, acceptance, affection, love ... doing many things to get it, not knowing that we have a source of our own to use whenever we needed (the new well in the story). That is the very source of loving ourselves as we are, not for what we have.

Whereupon by getting my own "well" of love, affection and respect ... I release myself from my fears, for fear will not take place because you do not depend on others to continue giving you their love, affection, understanding, because all that you now have is of your own.

Now we can understand why when as players we are told "don't be nervous, be calm, relaxed" but the nerves are just going to get worse and therefore we play worse. And being a coach we note and appreciate that fears remain exactly the same intensity, and so therefore the player feels useless, because he is not able to do what they coach is telling them. And it's just for everything we said before: we depend on the victory to be accepted and then to feel good.

7. We all have them and let them trespass inadvertently (players, coaches, parents).

We address this issue not only as the player, but equally the coach and parents suffer. Let's see why:

The coach tells the player to be relaxed, but in turn he is also nervous because his personal victory is to be a great coach for an association or club to accept him as a valid coach, where he also plays his "personal" match to be praised and admired not as a player, but as coach. Whereupon he has the same problem as the player.

Finally the parents (most often the father than the mother) are in the same situation, they would love to have a great figure as a child, because then people would see him being the father of a star and he personally would feel like he is on another level and is in a way better, instead of being equally admired and respected as a father with a son with an "average" and standard profession.

Therefore, we see that everyone looks for the same thing and that they all have the same problem, they need achievements, "medals", status, fame ... to feel accepted and admired.

8. How to get our own well of love.

Having now seen where the fears come from and realise that the solution is within us and not outside, we have to know how to fill the well with that same affection, tolerance, acceptance and love for myself and to not have to look outside for it.

If you allow me I will focus on a simple idea that might help us:

"If I don't have fruit in the fridge and I want fruit, I have to go to a grocery store to get it and conversely, if I have fruit in the fridge I will not have the need to go shopping."

That brings me to a very simple conclusion, what I have, I do not need, and what I don't have, I need to stock up.

What is it we said that we don't have? What is it that causes us fear?

Love, affection, respect, tolerance

If you allow me, I will share with you something personal, but without going into great detail, to personify myself.

In advance I say that I am still in shortage, but about after 10 years my shortage is shrinking and if I look back on how I felt and how I see it now, I realise that my fears, anxieties, tensions ... are considerably more moderate and I see life differently, and I would like to share with you the way in various ways (books, specialist courses, simple people on the street and experiences) things that have helped me so much.

They are very simple exercises, without any difficulty, but they need to be done continually. Just in the same way our living body needs to continue to be fed in order for it to work.

9. Exercises.

The Magic List

This exercise is to take a pen and paper, along with a close friend (it can also be done alone, but it will help to do it with a close friend to have by your side) and describe only the positive things in your exterior and interior body.

An example would be:

- I like my sensitivity
- I am a good person
- I like my nose
- I am ready
- I like my hands

- I'm sympathetic
- I like my hair colour
- Be heard
- I like my skin colour
- I like talking
- I like the texture of my skin
- I like talking
- I like my height
- I'm a hustler
- I like my eyebrows
- I'm a good friend

This could be an example of the list. It is important that you write at least ten features that you like, no matter if they're similar to others. The more the merrier! Anything goes, even the smallest detail. It doesn't have to be amazingly well done, just if you like something put it in your magic list. **Write out the list from scratch every day and if you do it twice, the better!** And every time you can, add something and after a few days do not be surprised that you have many more than 10! You will see !!!

Something to think about;

Have you ever stopped to think about how many times a day you despise yourself, you insult yourself!? How many times a day do we fail to show respect and love for ourself?

!

For example, I forget the keys and say "Jose!!! how stupid and forgetful am I!" or stumble over a stone and say "How clumsy of me," or miss an easy shot playing tennis and I say "I'm so bad, I'm the worst!"

And countless little things that continues to drip every day without realising it, like a drop of water eroding a rock. We are human and as such, we are wonderfully imperfect people.

So we must be careful that when we make a mistake to simply correct it, for example if I've dropped a glass, instead of "I'm so stupid and clumsy" it's simply "Oops, it fell.. Well nothing happens, I'll just pick it up and that's it".

This exercise can be done anywhere and at any time. In the end we shall achieve that positive thought automatically with an understanding and tolerance and not a "punishment" through insult or disrespect. **Try it !!!**

Visualize

Find yourself a quiet place (like just before getting out of bed in the morning is an ideal time) and with closed eyes talk to yourself with love, with understanding, with sweetness. Possibly, almost certainly especially if you are a man, you will find this ridiculous, but I can assure you that if you do it every day, you'll appreciate it in no time at all.

An example would be:

I close my eyes and imagine talking to myself, "Hello Jose, wanted to wish you a good day and remember that I love you, I love you just as you are, not for what you can have or get, but your person, I love being with you, it is wonderful to feel your sensitivity and kindness, I invite you today to lend a little more attention to the air you breathe or the sun that warms you, or the wind that cools you ... I like to be with you, enjoying your company. "

This would be a good example and you can accentuate it even more as you do it day by day.

Perhaps this exercise can not be done for very long at the beginning but as you grow you can work up towards doing it for 3 to 5 minutes 2 to 3 times a day..

Magical Island

Next you can try to visualise yourself on a magical island. Somewhere peaceful in nature. Visualise yourself positively, but watch out!! I'm not talking about external things, successfully winning tennis matches or with many material things, NO! That does not mean visualising! Try to see yourself feeling in a state of peace, tranquility and calm. Try to do this for at least 5 minutes and working up for as long as you can, enjoying each moment!!

Giving Thanks

Understanding this exercise subliminally:

Someone who asks for something is because "they don't have" (the quotation marks are because in most cases we have more than enough) and if you do not have something you do not feel happy or fulfilled ...

Those who give thanks are those who have, so that we feel better, happier, full ...

If we observe ourselves we have what we have however we are always asking for more, therefore making us feel empty, sad, unhappy ...

If we change our attitude from dissatisfied and demanding things to a thankful attitude, our attitude towards life will change radically, making us feel happy, joyful and thankful.

So an exercise that will help us greatly is the following:

Say thank you as many times as you can per day.

Some will say, if I have nothing why should I bother doing it?!

Are you sure? Do you know that the water you drink is given to you by the life each day?

Be thankful, you know that what you've eaten makes each and every one of your muscles function and nourishes your internal organs in order for them to function!

I will be thankful, because I know that the air that we breath, even without thinking, has the oxygen which gives our body it's physical life!

I will be thankful, I know that the sun or the rain gives us food and water that we need to live!

I will be thankful, I know that we have the senses (hearing, touch, taste, smell, sight) that help us live a life full of "seasoning" to enjoy and savour it more! I will be thankful.

And so there are many more things to feel grateful and happy for within our lives and by doing so consequently being much happier.

If we practice gratitude every day, the change will be amazing and everything I do will be full of this joy.

With all these exercises I recommend, if I may, to start with the first one on the list. Aim to do 30 days straight, without failing no more than two days. If you fail, you may not receive the same benefits. Would you stop eating for one or two days? Well this is just for your inner self. Feed him !!! It gives you the benefit in the same way eating food each day strengthens your physical body!

But rather than believing me, try it for yourself! You will see!!

These exercises are the beginning to break through the negative inertia that we have for ourselves. The change is remarkable and very noticeable, although I must say, that this is just the start but it's very promising.

Amor Y Paz

Jose Imaz