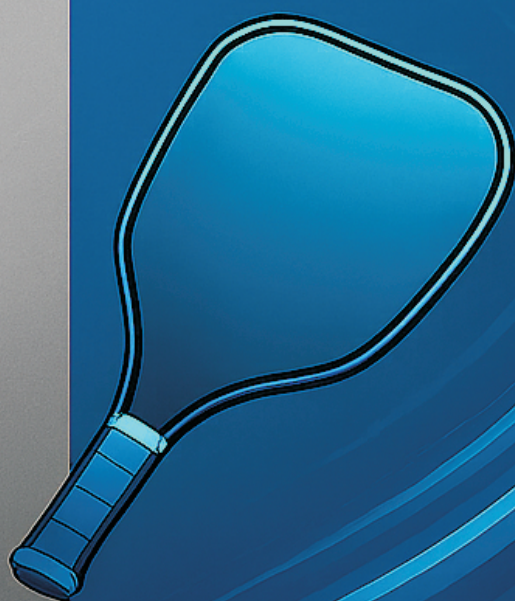


INTRODUCTION

POINT AFTER

THE POWER OF MINDSET
IN PICKLEBALL



G. TAYLOR



MIND &
MOTION

MIND & MOTION
— COACHING —

INTRODUCTION (for Book One)

This small book is the beginning of a journey.

Not the journey of technique, trophies or statistics — but the journey of how a human being learns to listen to their own mind in the space between two moments. The first volume of this trilogy opens the door to a new understanding of sport: not as performance alone, but as a mirror of our inner life.

Here, the tennis court becomes the first landscape of consciousness — the place where discipline, pressure, fear and silence first imprint themselves. This book does not analyse them yet. It simply reveals them. It lets you recognise where your own patterns may have been born, long before you ever named them.

This is the foundation.

The second book — POINT AFTER — is the main work.

There, we will step deeper.
There, the silence becomes method.
There, the mind becomes trainable.
There, the athlete becomes self-aware.

In that volume we will unfold the mental architecture behind performance, attention, emotion, breath, and flow — and how a tiny moment after each point can become the most powerful microscopic movement of a lifetime.

It is the book where the thinking revolution begins.

And the third book will open the world in practice — where the principles become application, coaching, real transformation in today's accelerating racket sports culture, including the sport that ultimately taught me freedom on a smaller court: pickleball.

But for now, we begin here.

With childhood clay courts.
With silence that once felt like fear.
With a story — before theory.
With memory — before method.

Because no transformation can be honest until the origins are first made visible.

This book is not the destination.

It is the threshold.

Welcome to the first step.

The journey starts after the point.



POINT AFTER - INTRODUCTION

Book One

A Sportman's Story About Silence, and How It Decides Everything

The dust on the clay court always rose the same way.

It didn't matter how old I was, or how many balls I had hit that day. The dust floated in the still air as if time itself paused to watch what we were doing there, in the squared-off grey reality of a late socialist Eastern European sports club.

I was only a boy, barely ten, yet I already knew the court was sacred ground. The coach's voice demanded a silence that felt like a church service.

We did not talk.

We just hit.

Again and again.

Until the racket and the arm were no longer two separate things.

"Don't look at the ball," he told me once.

"Look at the mistake."

I didn't understand then. But back then, you weren't allowed not to understand. In the 1980s, in that world, sport wasn't self-knowledge.

It was duty.

We didn't play for the joy of play, but for the system, for the club, for the coach.

Victory wasn't joy.

Victory was relief — you didn't ruin anything, and therefore you didn't need to explain yourself.

When you missed, it wasn't only the ball that went out — the air froze around you. The coach's stare was sharp enough. And the silence that followed was heavier than any shouted reprimand.

One day I missed three serves in a row.

By the fourth, my hand shook. I felt it wasn't my arm that failed — something deeper inside went rigid.

The coach walked up, bent down slightly and whispered:

"You have no right to make mistakes while others are working for you."

That sentence burned inside me for years.

He didn't shout — yet the sentence froze me in a way shouting never could.

It was not enough to correct the technique.

I had to survive the mistake emotionally — and nobody taught us how to do that.

The "point after" began exactly where fear began to speak.

In that moment of silence after an error — when no one said anything, yet everyone sensed that something bad had just happened.

The racket felt heavier, the air thicker, my thoughts so fast I could almost hear them crashing against the inside of my skull:

Why did it go wrong?

What now?

What will they think?

I did not know then that this thought — this inner accusation — would be the very thing I would have to relearn how to slow down decades later.

One summer everything changed.
 It was the first time I travelled to the West for a training camp.
 The grass looked greener. The air felt lighter. And something completely different vibrated there — an ease I had never seen before.
 Players laughed when they stepped onto the court.
 They laughed when they missed a ball.
 They laughed when the wind stole a serve.
 I couldn't understand what they were laughing at.
 Then I realised: the coach wasn't punishing them for mistakes.
 He asked questions.

“What did you feel in that movement?”
“Why do you think the ball went out?”

And inside those questions was everything I had never heard in my childhood:
 that the mistake is not an enemy.
 The mistake is information.
 In that moment the world widened for me.
 The ball was no longer punishment — it became a message.
 The court was not a prison — it became a classroom.
 And silence was not fear anymore — it was attention.

Years later, when I became a coach myself, I met my own past again.
 Standing beside the court, watching children panting in the summer air...one of them missed.
 And I felt the old reflex rising inside me like a ghost:

“You are not focused enough!”

But this time, I did not speak that sentence out loud. I took a slow breath instead.
 And I simply asked:

“What did you feel?”

She looked at me, uncertain. She shrugged.
 And in that shrug I recognised my own childhood — nobody had ever taught her that a mistake can also be felt, not only judged.
 If I silenced her now, I would continue the same legacy I suffered through.

That was the moment when “the point after” changed meaning for me.

The goal was no longer to avoid mistakes.
 The goal was to transform the reaction to them.
 The goal was not to avoid losing points — but to avoid losing consciousness.

Sport is the most honest teacher.
 It is not gentle — but it never lies.
 It shows you how you think when nobody is watching.
 What you do with failure.
 What you do with anger.
 What you do with fear.
 Science tells us that after a mistake the amygdala — the emotional centre — activates instinctively.
 Fight — Flight — Freeze.
 Most athletes freeze internally, long before they realise it themselves.
 But when you learn to recognise this moment, you take back control.

The breath is the first key.

Three slow breaths, and the nervous system shifts.

The body returns.

The mind clears.

The thought lets go.

And suddenly the present becomes available again.

This is the reset moment — when you can begin again.

And every beginning again on a court is a moment of evolution.

One afternoon, I was working with a talented boy. He was sixteen. His movements were almost flawless — but every missed shot ended with him slamming his paddle against the ground. His eyes darkened instantly, as if every mistake was a personal failure.

It wasn't the point he lost — it was his identity.

One day I asked him quietly:

“Do you think mistakes are against you, or for you?”

He didn't answer.

He just stared at me — as if it was the very first time anyone ever suggested that a mistake could actually be there for him.

From that day on, every time he missed a ball, I simply said one phrase:

“Learning point.”

Two months later, he said it himself — before I could.

“This was a learning point.”

And that was the moment I knew he had begun to think differently.

Sport teaches what school never will: how to process a mistake, fear, and pressure — without collapsing under them.

And once you learn this on the court, you understand it in life as well.

“Point after” is never about the next ball. It's about the next version of yourself.

Many years have passed since then.

Courts changed, balls became faster, rules evolved.

So did I.

But every time the silence arrives after a point — the same realization returns: this is the moment where everything is decided.

Not in the stroke.

Not in the tactic.

But in what you do with the silence.

Silence is the real coach.

In that short pause you discover how much control you have over your own mind, how quickly you can reinterpret what just happened, and how much you trust that the next point can be different.

“Sport is not about how you win against others,

but how you remain calm against yourself.”

POINT AFTER – Introduction – Book One (second part)

The light at the edge of the court is always different.

Not only because of where the sun stands — but because the perspective itself changes.

From there, you can truly see how everything moves inside the player: the muscle tension, the thoughts, the emotions, the rhythm of each breath.

A good coach doesn't watch the ball.

He watches the micro-movements no one else notices — the tiny shift of the shoulder, the slight drift in the gaze, the half-second hesitation before the serve.

Because everything is decided there, before the racket even moves.

The body always reveals what the mind tries to hide.

One afternoon, a young girl stood in front of me. She was thirteen. Soft-spoken. She barely looked up when I talked to her.

Her movements were delicate, but too rigid — as if she was apologizing with every shot she hit.

At the end of her first session, I asked her:

“Why don't you allow yourself to celebrate out loud when something goes well?”

She answered:

“Because then I'll mess up the next one.”

That was the moment I realized: fear never comes from losing — it comes from wanting to be perfect.

Mistakes hurt because the mind judges immediately.

But the body doesn't understand the concept of mistake — it only knows movement and consequence.

I taught her that the “point after” is not about the error — but about the reorganization that follows.

It's not a problem if the hand trembles.

The problem is when you don't notice it.

Because the one who notices... already has control.

On her third training session, when she missed a shot, she sighed, smiled slightly, and said:

“This was a learning point, right?”

I nodded.

“Yes. And the next one can be too — if you choose so.”

After training that afternoon the court emptied out, and only the shadow of the net stretched long across the clay.

I sat down, replaying the girl's gestures in my mind. Every detail felt familiar.

The silence I grew up with returned — but in a different tone now. It wasn't threatening anymore. It was reflective. Almost gentle.

As a child, I believed the world collapsed every time I missed a ball.

Now I knew: it wasn't the world. It was just an old thought collapsing.

Every new point is a chance to rebuild differently.

Breath is not escape. Breath is return.

Sport psychology says recovery after mistakes isn't a matter of force — but of neural adaptation.

The sympathetic system tightens.

The parasympathetic releases.

And between the two the breath is the bridge.

I didn't learn this from a book.

I learned it sweating on courts, staring into the echo of my own frustration, sitting with silences that lasted longer than any rally.

The breath became the most loyal coach I ever had. It never left. It only asked to be heard.

There was a boy once — a talented one.

He always wanted to win too quickly.

Before the first point finished, he was already mentally inside the next one.

And when he lost a rally, it was as if the entire world collapsed for him.

His parents sat in the stands — the father tense, the mother anxious.

And on the court, he wasn't returning the ball. He was returning their tension.

After losing a set one day, he stood by the net and whispered:

"I hate this feeling."

I sat down next to him and asked:

"What exactly do you hate? Losing — or what you feel while losing?"

He didn't answer. He stared ahead, and then he said quietly:

"That it always happens the same way."

That was when I understood: he wasn't afraid of the mistake. He was afraid of the pattern.

Inside every point after, the same internal sentence ran through him — You are not good enough.

And that sentence seeped into his muscles more than any technical flaw ever could.

Mental training begins here — recognising that a thought is not a fact.

It's just a signal. A sound you can observe.

And the moment you observe it — it changes.

One evening he came back for extra practice. Not to fix his technique.

But to train his mind.

We sat down, and the exercise was simple, after every lost point he had to say out loud — calmly:

"This is part of learning."

At first he repeated mechanically, uncertain.

But then at one missed shot he sighed, paused, and said — clearly, quietly, without resistance:

"This is part of learning."

And in that moment there was no anger in him — only awareness.

His muscles softened.

His eyes focused.

And the next rally passed cleanly over the net.

Not because he suddenly became technically better. But because he stopped being afraid.

Fear is the quietest opponent — but it holds the strongest roots.

This is where the line between sport and inner life disappears.

The body and the mind are not separate.

They are constantly whispering to each other.

Neuroscience calls this heart–brain coherence.

I call it the unity of soul and motion.

When this alignment happens, the athlete stops thinking — and begins being.
There is no analysis. No calculation.
Just presence.

And here is the truth almost no athlete learns young: flow is not a miracle.
It is simply what remains when tension dissolves.
And this is why — years later — a smaller court and a lighter paddle would teach me something tennis
never could.
Pickleball would show me how subtle the space between thought and instinct truly is.
But that lesson belongs to another chapter.
For now, all that mattered was this: the point after reveals who you are becoming.

POINT AFTER – Introduction – Book One

(Final Part – The Quiet Mind)

Winter crept slowly over the sports complex.

Bare trees leaned above the empty courts, and the wind tangled itself in the nets.

The clay turned cold and stiff, as if it too had grown tired by the end of the year.

I stood there, racket in hand, listening.

The familiar sounds returned — the squeak of shoes, the thud of a ball, the heartbeat echoing in my chest.

But there was another rhythm too — one I had never heard so clearly before.

The rhythm of silence.

Silence had always been there.

In my childhood it meant fear.

Discipline.

Tension.

Waiting.

Now it meant peace.

Because I had learned that silence is not emptiness. Silence is awareness.

The “point after” — in sport and in life — is the moment when silence teaches you to hear again.

Not the noise of the world, but the movement inside you.

One of my players once lost a final match and came to me afterwards, asking,

“How is it possible? I trained so hard — and I still lost.”

I didn’t answer right away. Then I said, quietly:

“Maybe you didn’t lose. Maybe you’re just learning a different way to win.”

He didn’t understand at the time.

But months later, when he stepped on court again, I saw the change. He wasn’t playing for victory anymore — he was playing for presence.

His eyes were clear.

His breath steady.

And when he missed a shot, he nodded, as if he knew exactly what had happened — and simply moved on.

That moment — not the trophies — was the real victory.

The moment an athlete finally understands himself.

The greatest win is not over others, but over your own noise.

As the years passed, I hit fewer balls — and more thoughts.

The training hall slowly gave way to a desk, the clay became paper, and the net turned into the invisible line of human attention.

I realised what sport had truly been teaching me all along — a map of consciousness.

The “point after” exists in every part of life.

When you speak and wait to see how your words land.

When you make a decision and don’t yet know if it was right.

When you let go of something, not knowing what will come next.

Every time — the same question returns:

What will you do with the next ball?

An old coach once told me,

“The true player doesn’t control the ball — he controls his attention.”

I didn’t understand back then. Now I know — that is the essence of both sport and life.

Attention is the thread that connects everything:

the movement with the intention,

the emotion with the decision,

the body with the mind.

When attention is clear, everything harmonises.

When it scatters, everything falls apart.

Most people lose balance not on the court — but in the noise of their own heads.

Yet thought is not the enemy.

It only becomes one when you stop noticing it.

Once you become aware, it changes — because consciousness itself is energy.

You can direct it, instead of being dragged by it.

That is what mental training truly is — not “positive thinking,” but conscious direction.

The ability to see what happens inside you and choose differently.

Freedom begins where reaction ends.

The game I once called tennis, later pickleball, and finally — life — has always taught me the same lesson: that every decision is born one moment after thought.

And if you can stretch that moment — just enough for a single breath of awareness — your whole reality changes direction.

That’s why I call “the point after” the smallest, most powerful human movement: the instant when the body stops but the mind continues.

Where you choose — past or present, fear or focus, judgement or understanding.

That moment is freedom.

Sport has taken much from me — but it gave me something nothing else could: a reverence for silence.

I now know that real strength isn’t in shouting, but in depth of attention.

That before every movement there is a thought — and before every thought, a feeling.

If you understand the feeling, the movement becomes precise.

And this truth lives far beyond the court.

One morning I was alone again, hitting balls against a wall.

After each strike — a short pause.

Point after.

Slowly I noticed my body moving in perfect rhythm with my breath.

The air and the motion became one.

And for those few seconds, the world disappeared.

No past. No future. Only now.

That was flow — but to me, it felt more like prayer.

The prayer of body and mind.

The only moment when everything is exactly where it belongs.

Now, after so many years — as an athlete, coach, and human being — I finally understand what every court, every session, every life situation was truly teaching:

how to return to the centre.

The centre is not a place. It is a state.
It lives in every breath, between every thought, before every choice.
Those who can return there never drift too far.
This is what I no longer call sport — but awareness.
And this is what I teach now.
The court was never the lesson. Consciousness was.

When people ask what sport means to me, I say:
“Sport was the language through which I learned to speak with myself.”
And now that I can speak — I can finally listen.

**Point After doesn't mean the end.
It means you're ready to begin a new sentence.**

Afterword

This book won't teach you how to win.
It will teach you how to notice.
And from noticing, everything real begins.
If you feel it's time to learn how to guide your thoughts, your body, and the rhythm of your emotions —
then the **“point after” won't be an ending, but a beginning.**

**See you there.
On the court.
In the silence.
After the point.**

Mind & Motion Coaching
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This is where the journey begins.

A story of discipline, silence and the fear of mistakes — and the moment in sport where everything turns inside, before the next point begins.

“Point After” is not yet explained here.

Only revealed in its origin.

In the second book, we go deeper — into the mind, the breath, the reset, the inner shift that decides the future long before the next ball is struck.

For now, this is the threshold.

Read slowly.

Notice what stirs.

Because the most important moment in sport — and in life — is not the point you win or lose.

It is what you do after the point.

POINT AFTER

THE POWER OF MINDSET
IN PICKLEBALL

PRE-ORDER
E-mail to office@abcsportclub.com

G. TAYLOR



There is a moment in every match that lasts only a breath — yet it decides everything.

Not the serve.
Not the winning shot.
Not the power.
The moment after the point.

That microscopic silence in between what already happened and what comes next.

Most athletes never learn to use this space.
They react out of habit, emotion, fear, frustration, ego.
Their past point becomes their next point — and the past becomes destiny.

But elite sport — and life — is decided in this interval of consciousness.
This is where identity is formed, where interpretation becomes reality, where meaning is created before action returns again.

This book is not about strokes, technique, or tactics.
It is about the mental architecture that shapes all of them.
It is about the mind that swings the paddle.
The perception that decides what a mistake means.
The inner language that constructs momentum or destroys it.
The psychological literacy that transforms pressure into information.

For decades I believed the outcome of a point was determined in the rally.
It took me a lifetime to understand: the outcome is determined after the rally.

In that tiny slice of silence — that invisible mental reset — the athlete either collapses into the narrative of “I failed”... or steps into a state where every point becomes a new possibility.

Pickleball revealed this with ruthless clarity.
Not because it is easier — but because it is faster.

The game forces you to think at a higher speed than your emotional reflexes want to allow.

The court is smaller, the rhythm is sharper, and the distance between points is mentally enormous — even if physically short.

Here, the next point is not the continuation of the previous one — it is a choice.

This is what this book teaches:

How to control the story you create between points.
How to become the author of your own mental state.
How to train the moment no one else sees — the silent space where identity, momentum and mastery are actually constructed.

Because champions are not defined by what they hit.
They are defined by what they do after they hit.

***Welcome to the real match.
Welcome to the space that decides everything.***

POINT AFTER.