



I keep thinking about my technique. *What's really going on?*



You're not wrong to care about technique.

Technique matters.

Lessons matter.

Reps matter.

A decent backhand does not arrive by wishing on a pickleball under a full moon.

You do need instruction. You do need practice. You do need enough understanding to know how to hold the paddle, move your feet, shape a dink, hit a return, reset a ball, and keep from treating every volley like a home repair project.

“The problem is not that you are interested in technique. The problem is when technique follows you into the point like a nervous assistant with a stack of sticky notes.”

What's really going on is this:

“You are living in what if.”

WHAT-IF MECHANICS

- What if I change my grip?
- What if I move my feet differently?
- What if my paddle angle is wrong?
- What if I need a new drill?
- What if my elbow is two inches too high?
- What if I should be using more wrist?
- What if I should be using less wrist?
- What if my backswing is too big?
- What if my follow-through is wrong?
- What if I'm not bending enough?



- **What if I'm bending too much and now look like a man searching for a contact lens?**

That constant mechanical search pulls you out of the present and into the future. Instead of playing the ball that is actually coming, you are trying to supervise your swing while the point is happening.

“ That is an impossible job. ”

A pickleball point does not wait politely while you run a full internal audit of your forehand mechanics. The ball is not interested in your committee meeting. It is coming now.

And if your attention is split between the ball and five possible corrections, your body does not get a clear signal.

Self-Editing During the Shot

When instruction becomes interference



This is where a lot of players get stuck.

They have some skill.

They have taken some lessons.

They have hit hundreds or thousands of balls.

They have made progress.

But the moment play begins, they go back into self-editing mode. They are no longer hitting the shot. They are watching themselves hit the shot. They are correcting the shot while hitting the shot. They are trying to improve the shot before the shot has even finished existing.

“ That is a lot to ask of one poor little dink. ”

In Fluid Motion Factor terms, the thinking mind has stepped in and started managing the movement. The body may already own more skill than you are allowing it to use, but the conscious mind keeps entering the room with a tiny clipboard and a very large opinion.

CLIPBOARD INSTRUCTIONS

- Move your feet.
- Open the paddle.
- Close the paddle.
- Shorter backswing.
- Looser grip.



- Don't pop it up.
- Stay low.
- Brush it.
- Push it.
- Roll it.
- Don't roll it too much.

At some point, the body stops playing and starts obeying instructions. And the more instructions it receives, the less natural the movement becomes.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- The shot gets careful.
- The hand tightens.
- The timing gets late.
- The paddle face feels uncertain.
- The stroke gets guided instead of released.

And you may feel that strange frustration:

“ I know I can hit this shot. Why can't I hit it during a game? ”

That is the key clue.

“ You may not have a skill problem as much as an access problem. ”

The skill is in there.

But under play conditions, you are getting in the way of it.

What Am I Misunderstanding?

The next correction is not always the door



The misunderstanding is this:



“ You think the next technical adjustment will unlock your game. ”

Sometimes, of course, a real technical flaw needs coaching. If your grip is making a shot nearly impossible, fix the grip. If your backswing is too big at the kitchen, shorten it. If your footwork is causing you to reach for every ball, learn better positioning. Technique is real. Mechanics are real. Good coaching can save a player years of confusion.

But once you have enough basic skill, the problem often changes.

The problem is not always that you do not own the shot.

The problem is that you cannot access it freely when the ball is live, the score matters, and another human being is trying to make your life awkward.

“ Ownership means the shot exists in your system. Access means you can let it come out under pressure. ”

That distinction matters.

Ownership means the shot exists in your system. You have hit it before. You have felt it. You know what it is.

Access means you can let it come out under pressure, in motion, without your conscious mind grabbing the steering wheel.

Many players keep looking for ownership when the real issue is access.

THE SEARCH FOR MORE

- I need another lesson.
- I need another correction.
- I need another drill.
- I need a new paddle.
- I need to rebuild my forehand.
- I need to watch eleven more videos by someone standing in front of a portable net in Arizona.

Maybe one of those things will help.

But maybe you already have enough information for now.

“ Maybe what you need is not more instruction, but less interference. ”





The Trap of Mechanical Thinking

Monitoring is not performing



This is the trap of mechanical thinking. It feels responsible. It feels serious. It feels like improvement. And in the right setting, it can be improvement.

But during play, too much mechanical thinking turns the player into both performer and critic at the same time.

“ That rarely works. ”

Imagine trying to write a sentence while a little editor sits on your shoulder saying, “Wrong verb. Too many commas. Sentence rhythm uneven. Try again. No, not that. Maybe use a semicolon.” Eventually, you stop writing. You start flinching.

Pickleball can work the same way.

You stop playing.

You start monitoring.

“ And monitoring is not the same as performing. ”

The body needs a chance to use what it has learned. It needs room to organize movement below the level of constant verbal instruction. It needs to feel the ball, the paddle, the spacing, the timing, and the rhythm of the point.

When you keep searching for the next correction during the point, you are trying to fix the wheel while the car is moving.

“ That does not create freedom. It creates wobble. ”

What’s Your One Key Correction?

Access what you already own.



KEY CORRECTION

Access what you already own.

That is the correction.

Close the book on mechanics long enough to let your body play.

That does not mean stop practicing technique. It means put technique in the right place.

PUT TECHNIQUE IN THE RIGHT PLACE

- During practice, work on mechanics.
- During lessons, listen closely.
- During drills, isolate a movement.
- Between games, reflect if you need to.
- But during play, stop editing the swing mid-sentence.

Let the point be a place where your body gets to use what it has already learned.

This requires a kind of trust, but not blind trust. You are not pretending technique does not matter. You are simply recognizing that play is not the same as practice.

“Practice is where you build the bank. Play is where you spend from it.”

If you keep checking the balance during every shot, you will never hit freely.

So when the ball comes, resist the urge to correct three things at once. Give yourself one simple relationship with the ball.

- See it.
- Acknowledge it.
- Let the body respond.

If a technical cue is absolutely necessary, make it small and simple. One cue, not seven. “Soft hand.” “Early paddle.” “Easy feet.” Something the body can actually use.

The Cue

Trust the bank.

But most of the time, the better cue is even simpler:

YOUR CUE

Trust the bank.

The money is already in the bank.

The reps are in there.

The lessons are in there.

The decent shots you have already hit are in there.

The body has been making deposits all along.

“ Now let it spend. ”

That does not mean every shot will be perfect. It means you will stop blocking access to the skill you already have.

And that is often where improvement begins.

Not with another correction.

Not with another anxious search.

Not with another what-if.

But with this:

FINAL REMINDER

I have practiced.

I have learned.

***I have more in my system than I
am letting out.***

***Now I am going to give my body
permission to play.***