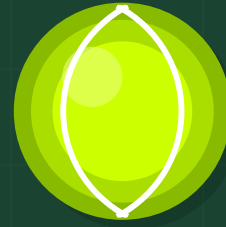


# Fine Tune Your Mind for a Winning Season

Dr. Jim Loehr's Framework for Tennis Coaches

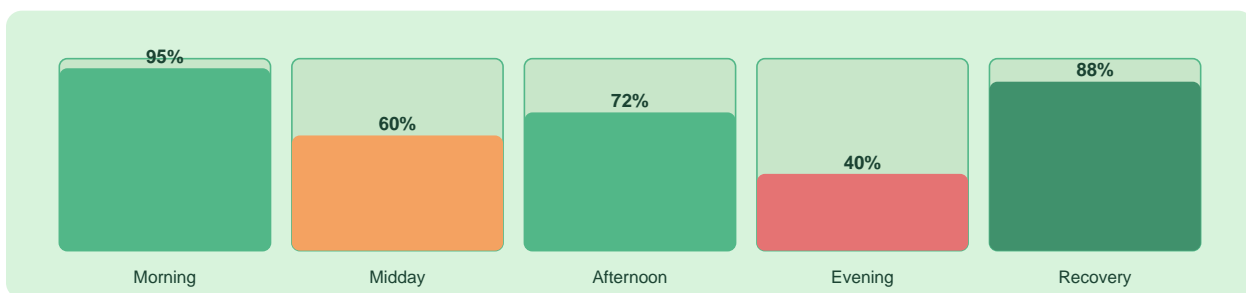
Avoiding Burnout · Building Energy · Sustaining Excellence



Based on *The Power of Full Engagement* · *Mental Toughness Training for Sports*

As a tennis coach heading into a busy summer, Dr. Jim Loehr — world-renowned performance psychologist and author of *The Power of Full Engagement* — would give you a clear, science-backed framework: **manage your energy, not just your time**. Below are six principles, drawn directly from his work, to help you stay sharp, engaged, and burnout-free all season long.

## 1 Manage Your Energy, Not Just Your Time



Loehr's most foundational insight is that managing energy — not time — is the key to enduring high performance, health, happiness, and life balance. As a coach juggling adults and juniors, you may feel like your problem is not having enough hours. Loehr would say the real issue is energy depletion without sufficient recovery.

Too much energy expenditure without sufficient recovery eventually leads to burnout and breakdown. That's the summer trap for coaches — long days on court, back-to-back lessons, tournaments, and no deliberate recovery built in.

## 2

## Create Positive Energy Rituals

**Morning Ritual**

Center · breathe · set intention

**Between Lessons**

Step off · hydrate · reset

**End of Day**

Shutdown — leave court at court

**Weekly Renewal**

Full recharge outside tennis

Loehr's most actionable concept: positive energy rituals — highly specific routines for managing energy — are the key to full engagement and sustained high performance. Rituals are different from habits because they are *intentional* and purposeful.

As a coach, before the summer even begins, design rituals for:

- **Morning prep** — A short centering routine before your first lesson (deep breathing, reviewing your purpose for the day).
- **Between sessions** — Just like Loehr's famous 'between point' ritual for players, you need a micro-recovery between back-to-back lessons. Step off the court, hydrate, take three slow breaths, and reset.
- **End of day** — A brief shutdown ritual to leave work at the court, so you don't carry it home emotionally.
- **Weekly renewal** — At least one activity that fully recharges you outside of tennis.

Loehr studied top tennis players and found they were *strategic* in how they used the 25 seconds between points for brilliant recovery. Apply that same principle across your entire coaching day.

## 3

## Train Your Inner Voice — Meet YODA

**Limiting voice:***"I'm already burned out and it's only July..."***YODA voice:***"I am building capacity. Recovery IS the plan."***Ask YODA:***"What would the coach I want to become say now?"*

Loehr teaches that you must train your inner voice to be the best coach you could ever have. This is especially important during a long season when things go wrong — a difficult student, a rainy week, or just exhaustion. The stories you tell yourself matter enormously, and the power of story shapes your destiny.

To put this into daily practice, Loehr would introduce you to **YODA — Your Own Decision Advisor**. YODA is not a character from a film; it is the wise, experienced, values-driven inner voice that you deliberately cultivate and consult throughout your coaching day. Think of YODA as the mentor living inside you — the coach you aspire to be at your very best.

## How to activate YODA:

When you feel frustration rising during a tough lesson, when a junior is being defiant, or when you're 45 minutes into a double shift in 90-degree heat, pause and ask: *"What would YODA say right now?"* The answer you give yourself from that wiser, calmer place is your YODA voice. Over time, consulting YODA becomes automatic — a mental micro-ritual that interrupts reactive thinking and replaces it with purposeful coaching.

Loehr is also a strong advocate for journaling to surface and reframe internal narratives. Writing a few lines each evening from YODA's perspective — *"Here is what I did well today as the coach I want to be, and here is how I will respond better tomorrow"* — trains the inner voice to become your greatest performance asset rather than your harshest critic.

If your inner voice says *"I'm already burned out and it's only July,"* YODA reframes it: *"I am building my capacity for this season, and I am recovering strategically."* That single shift can change your emotional and physical trajectory for the rest of the summer.

*"When you read what you have written, you should feel a sense of pride with your coaching advice. You are training your inner voice to be the best coach you could ever have!"*

— Dr. Jim Loehr

4

## The Performance Pyramid: Four Dimensions of Energy



Loehr would have you audit your energy across all four levels of his Performance Pyramid. You must sustain healthy rhythms at every level: **Physical, Emotional, Mental, and Spiritual**. Each reinforces the others.

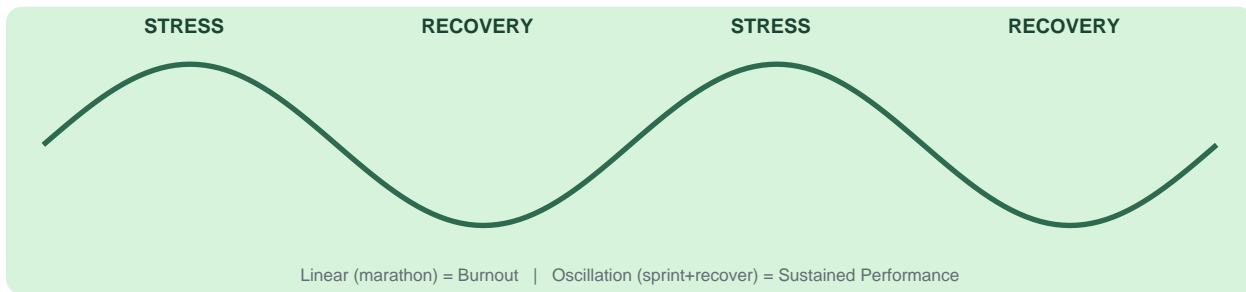
**Physical** — The foundation. Sleep, nutrition, hydration, and movement. You're on your feet in the summer heat for hours. Without physical energy, everything else collapses.

**Emotional** — Staying patient with a frustrated junior or a recreational adult who isn't improving takes emotional fuel. Emotional depth and resilience depend on active engagement with others and with your own feelings.

**Mental** — Lesson planning, adapting technique cues on the fly, reading players. This burns mental capacity that needs to be recharged.

**Spiritual** — Loehr uses this to mean *purpose and values*, not religion. Living by your core values fuels your energy. Reconnecting with *why* you coach is a genuine energy source. Most coaches are overstressed emotionally and mentally, and understressed physically and spiritually — the pyramid helps you rebalance.

## 5 Oscillation: Sprint, Don't Marathon



Loehr would strongly challenge the idea of 'grinding through' the summer. His framework shifts the view from running a marathon through life — which produces burnout — to small sprints with periods of recovery in between.

This is practical: build recovery into your daily and weekly schedule *before* the summer starts. Recovery can be a 20-minute walk after lessons, a no-phone lunch break, or blocking one morning per week with no early-morning drills. Building in recovery time is vital to having sufficient levels of energy throughout the day.

## 6 Stress Is Not the Enemy — But Recovery Must Match It



This counterintuitive Loehr principle is worth internalizing before you hit peak season: **stress is not the enemy — paradoxically, it is the key to growth**, provided it is balanced with intentional recovery.

A full, demanding summer *can* make you a better coach and a stronger person — but only if you treat recovery as seriously as you treat your court time. Plan it. Protect it. Ritualize it.

*"The Power of Full Engagement" means going into summer physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused, and spiritually aligned with why you do this. Build the recovery into the calendar now, before the season sweeps you away.*