



3. TAKE A MOMENT.

Notice how tennis players take a few breaths before serving. Relaxation and breathing techniques can ease the tension in your body before, during and after exposure to high-pressure situations.

4. PREVENTION IS KEY.

Even if you have the talent, knowledge and ability to deal with the high demands of work, life, or sport, sometimes the pressure can still get to you. If you have a balanced lifestyle that includes social support, a healthy diet, physical activity, and time to relax, you will be putting yourself in the best position to have the mental, emotional, and physical strength and energy to cope with stressful situations.

5. STAY IN THE PRESENT.

Don't overthink the outcome. Stay focused on the task so you can respond effectively to whatever happens in the moment. Being mindful in the moment creates what athletes call, "flow" or "being in the zone", a state of being wholly absorbed in an activity that achieves optimal performance.

6. DEVELOP A RITUAL FOR FACING PRESSURE SITUATIONS.

Tennis players often have rituals before each service, such as wiping their face, bouncing the ball a certain number of times or doing a particular movement or gesture. Nadal is well known for his precise and long-winded pre-serve routine, but the recommendation for most is to keep your ritual simple and practical. Some ideas are to take a few breaths, read an inspirational quote, listen to a particular song, or do a short mindfulness exercise.

7. WATCH AND LEARN.

How do people around you deal with pressure, expectations, public scrutiny or professional pitfalls? You can learn a great deal from others' successes and mistakes.

8. REFLECT ON YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES.

Athletes are always reviewing their past performances to ascertain what will make them more effective in their next match. Study yourself. Ask yourself what were the conditions, both internally Why are you in this situation? externally (in the environment) when you were successful and when you were not. Then work out what you would do outcome next time.

9. IMAGINE COPING WITH THE SITUATION.

One of the best ways to prepare for high-pressure situations is to visualise success. Sit or lie down with your eyes closed and go through the whole scenario in detail with you completing the task. Visualising success by going through the motions in your mind is a powerful tool and is effectively used to prepare elite athletes for their matchups.

10. PASSION AND PURPOSE

(in your mind and body) and Is this the path you want to take? Is this an expression of your values? Are you passionate about what you do? The meaning you attach to differently to improve the what you do in your life has a significant impact on how you

approach it, and ultimately can be the difference between failure and success. In Andre Agassi's autobiography Open, he is unequivocal that tennis gave him no joy for the majority of his career. It wasn't until he was able to use his tennis skills to fund his foundation for education that he felt at peace with being a professional tennis player. It was "meaning" that led Agassi on the path of great success, both personally and professionally, in the latter part of his career.

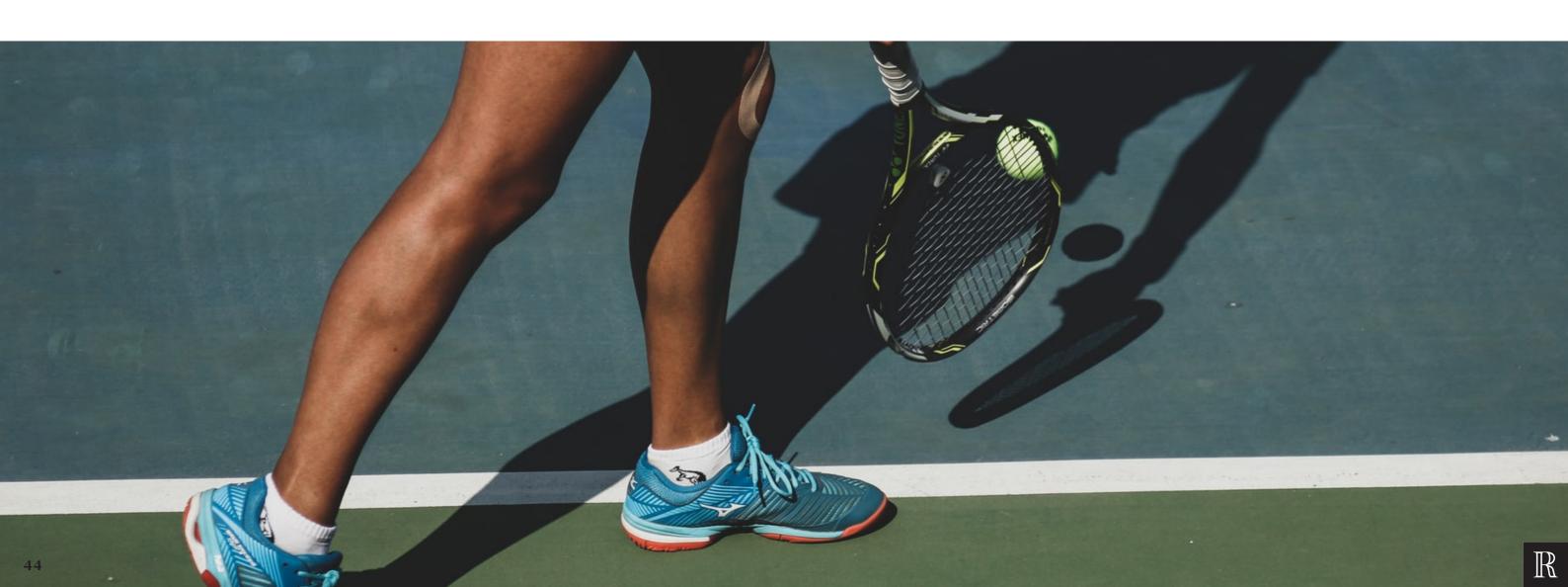
Over his career, Nick Kyrgios openly commented about his struggles with motivation as a tennis player. The public has watched him struggle with his emotions and self-doubt on the court. Why is such a talented person struggling so much in his chosen field? It may have been because he wasn't convinced it was worth it. This year, Kyrgios started the campaign to raise money for bushfire recovery, pledging \$200 per ace served during his summer of competitive tennis in Australia. His pledge spearheaded a tennis-wide Rally for Relief campaign that raised \$5 million. Something else also happened. Tennis wasn't just tennis anymore, it was now

serving a greater purpose. This purpose gave tennis more meaning and this led to a more fulfilled and motivated player, and person in Kyrgios.

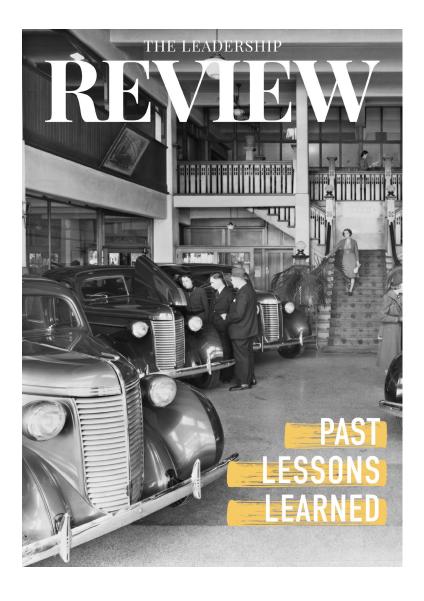
Purpose is what gets you out of bed, fosters passion, and it is what brings about joy and fulfilment. So, when you're under pressure, you know it's worth it.

You can't get rid of pressure, but you don't have to let it get to you. As leaders, it is up to you to identify what gives you a sense of purpose and to seek out opportunities to develop and practice the skills to respond to pressure situations confidently and effectively.

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