

Are you a tennis player or a basketball player? No, not literally. We all try our best to find ways to understand our relationships. Why is something working with our partner, colleague, family member, or why is it not working well at all. My answer---tennis player vs. basketball player.

I'll cut to the chase. There are some people who want to play the solo sport. They want to be in charge and answer to no one. They want to be responsible for their success or failure. They don't want to be dependent on anyone else or to negotiate the terms of when they practice, how hard they practice or how long they work out. As I see it, tennis-types are usually hard working, at least the ones that I know. They are not slouches. But they do create a challenge for the basketball players.

Basketball players love the team-aspect of sport. They love the idea of passing to the open player who scores. They often score themselves but get the same pleasure from the perfect pass. They get a thrill from the collaboration that leads to success. This type of player even gets something back from the shared disappointments of a loss. They find working with the whole team energizing and look forward to the practice that brings everyone onto the court.

Tennis player like the idea of function over process and basketball player can value the *process*, sometimes turning a blind eye to the function. We need both in a relationship but trying to navigate the rules of engagement when the two types come together can be a challenge.

Look at who you are relating to, working or playing with. Know if you are a tennis player or basketball player. Knowing this can make the difference the next time you are trying to get something accomplished.