# GET READY. GO. GET IT BACK. GROW.

*A new cycle for performance, resilience, and sustainable success*

**By Dr. Adrienne Leslie-Toogood & Dallas Ludwick**

## HIGH PERFORMANCE AS A CYCLE

For people who are ambitious - whether in sport, business, or life - it's familiar to push hard: preparing, performing, pushing again. But if all you ever do is get ready and go, performance decline and eventual burnout is inevitable.

The real key to sustainable success isn't just about preparing and performing. It's about completing the full cycle - which means deliberately building in recovery and reflection, the two phases that are most often missing. That's why we created a new model - one that values all four stages of high performance equally. We wanted something easy to anchor to, so we can keep ourselves aligned when things get tough:

**GET READY.**
**GO.**
**GET IT BACK.**
**GROW.**

When you live this cycle deliberately, you set yourself up not only for moments of brilliance, but for a lifestyle of resilience and continuous evolution.

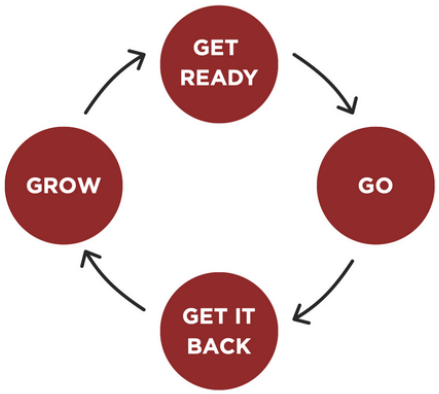


*Figure 1. Model developed by Dr Adrienne Leslie-Toogood and Dallas Ludwick. © 2025 Toogood & Ludwick.*

### Get Ready

Getting ready is about showing up with awareness.

It means knowing your default patterns - like rushing, overcontrolling, holding back, giving away control, or shutting down under pressure.

It means noticing the distractions that can pull you off course in a big moment - perseverating on mistakes, obsessing about what others might be thinking, fixating on an outcome instead of the process, watching peers instead of focusing on yourself, or letting nerves immobilize you.

It means being prepared with tools and strategies for the things that have a history of throwing you off your game. And it means deliberately deciding how you want to enter the moment.

Our brains crave predictability - when we visualize and anticipate challenges, we're less thrown off when they show up. So ask yourself:

- What might throw me off today?
- What will I say or do when that happens?
- How do I want to show up regardless of factors outside of my control?

Preparation doesn't guarantee a specific outcome - but it shapes the way you step in. The more you anticipate challenges and picture yourself managing them, the more capable and in control you'll feel when they arrive.

Getting ready starts with an honest appraisal of where you are right now, clarity on how you want to show up, and the steps required to close that gap. You can't prepare for who you wish you were - only for who you are today.

### Go

This is the action phase - the moment you step in and give it everything.

Too often, we show up attached to a specific result, already trying to control the ending. High performance means showing up with your best effort and letting the outcome unfold.

GO means writing the story as it unfolds, without protecting yourself or holding back. It means giving it a true shot, knowing that you'll only regret the chances you didn't take.

Like an athlete on the starting line: give it a go. Find out what you're capable of right now.

### Get It Back

No – you're not the one person alive who doesn't need recovery. We all do.

This phase is about permission - permission to feel what you feel, to rest, and to recover. It's about owning the struggle or embracing the high. It's about acceptance, rather than wishing things were different or minimizing what happened. Most of all, it's about honestly giving yourself what you need to refuel.

Whether it was a single intense moment or a long sustained push, it comes down to being real with yourself about what restoration requires.

This step looks different for everyone. What matters is making space to refill your tank and return to yourself before moving forward.

In the rush toward what's next, it's tempting to skip this stage. But getting it back is what makes it possible to go all-in again and again. When you know recovery is part of the cycle, you can GO fully, because no matter the outcome, you know you can get it back.

### Grow

How you evolve depends on what you do with the experience once it's over.

This phase is about choosing what to take forward:

- What worked?
- What did you learn?
- What requires deeper digging?

Action gives you experiences. Growth comes from choosing what to do with them. The performers who constantly evolve are the ones who take each win or setback and deliberately turn it into fuel for what's next.

Growth can't be bought or borrowed. It's earned, cycle by cycle. And with each turn of the cycle, you raise the ceiling on what you're capable of.

## LIVING THE CYCLE

The power of this model is that it operates on two levels:

- Micro cycles: the everyday practice - preparing for a meeting, showing up for a difficult conversation, taking time after to reset, and carrying the lessons forward.
- Macro cycles: the larger arcs - major projects, personal transitions or seasons of life - where you intentionally create space to move through each stage and allow long-term evolution.

We can't always predict how life's bigger moments will unfold. But what we *can* do is keep living, learning, and growing - even while the outcome is still uncertain.

## THE TAKEAWAY

Hard things aren't obstacles - they're invitations. Each one is a chance to step in, to push our limits, and to evolve.

**Get ready. Go. Get it back. Grow.**
This is how high performance is sustained.

When you live the cycle, you don't just perform better.
You live bolder.

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**Dr. Adrienne Leslie-Toogood** is a licensed psychologist and performance consultant with over 30 years of experience helping people thrive under pressure - from Olympic athletes to emergency responders to CEOS. She is the founder of Toogood Consulting and specializes in building human-first, high-performance cultures.

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