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EDITED BY JASON FEIFER

# MALEGRAMS

EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS TO MEN



## Dwyane Wade flies again

THE MIAMI HEAT GUARD IS AN NBA CHAMP AND AN OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST. BUT THIS YEAR, HE HAD TO START OVER

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**T**HE MIAMI HEAT'S STAR GUARD is goofing around on a basketball court, and someone asks if he has a signature move. "I don't," Dwyane Wade says. "I make it up as I go." In fact, that unpredictability pretty much is his signature. His best moments typically involve dodging a gauntlet of opponents, slamming into one of them, and then contorting, spinning, and collapsing to the floor just as his tossed-up shot tumbles through the hoop.

Wade's career ride has been similarly bruising. After joining the NBA in 2003 with little hype, he led the Heat to its first championship 3 years later—and took home his very own Finals MVP trophy. He became a regular All-Star and signed high-profile sponsorships. But then the Heat grew sluggish and Wade sustained knee and shoulder injuries. He mostly watched from the bench last season as the team posted the worst record in the league.

"One of the hardest things to do, once you win, is come out and do it again," Wade says. "But it's all about growth. As you grow older, the responsibilities turn to you." And they truly have: He's healthy again, and this onetime prodigy is now the leader and veteran of a team that's being rebuilt. It's a role he's prepared for. Here are Wade's tips on recovering from even the toughest setbacks.

**REMAIN RELEVANT**

"I never wanted to be a vocal kind of leader," Wade says. "I've always said I would lead by example." But exhorting teammates from the bench when he was injured led to a change. He became an observer and a motivator. "Some guys you can talk to a certain way and some guys you can't. As a leader you have to know the difference," he says.

**FILL A NEED**

Wade's style of play may be aggressive, but he refuses to play it safe. He has a specific purpose—to penetrate and set up plays. "I wouldn't be any good to my teammates if I went out there and became what everybody else has become—just a jump shooter," he says. "That's an easy game to play. I don't

like to play easy." It's important to know what others look to you for. That doesn't mean you box yourself in, but by cultivating a strength, you'll make sure you're always someone's go-to guy.

**EMBRACE CHALLENGES**

Wade, once king of the NBA, is now back down with the league mortals. But that's not such a bad place to be, at least for now. "As champion," he says, "you're everybody's biggest game. Somebody's going to come and try to take you down every night." But when the spotlight and pressure are on someone else, you're free to rebuild and grow stronger. When it's time to make a run at the top, you'll be ready.

**PUSH YOURSELF**

For the first 5 years of his career, Wade occasionally worked with renowned trainer Tim Grover, the same trainer Michael Jordan has used. But Wade couldn't commit to a regular schedule: He had commercials to shoot and an NBA life to enjoy. The injuries refocused his priorities. He spent last summer with Grover and came out

**"I'M READY TO REBUILD NOW, WHILE I'M STILL YOUNG AND EXCITED AND HAVE SOMETHING TO PROVE."**

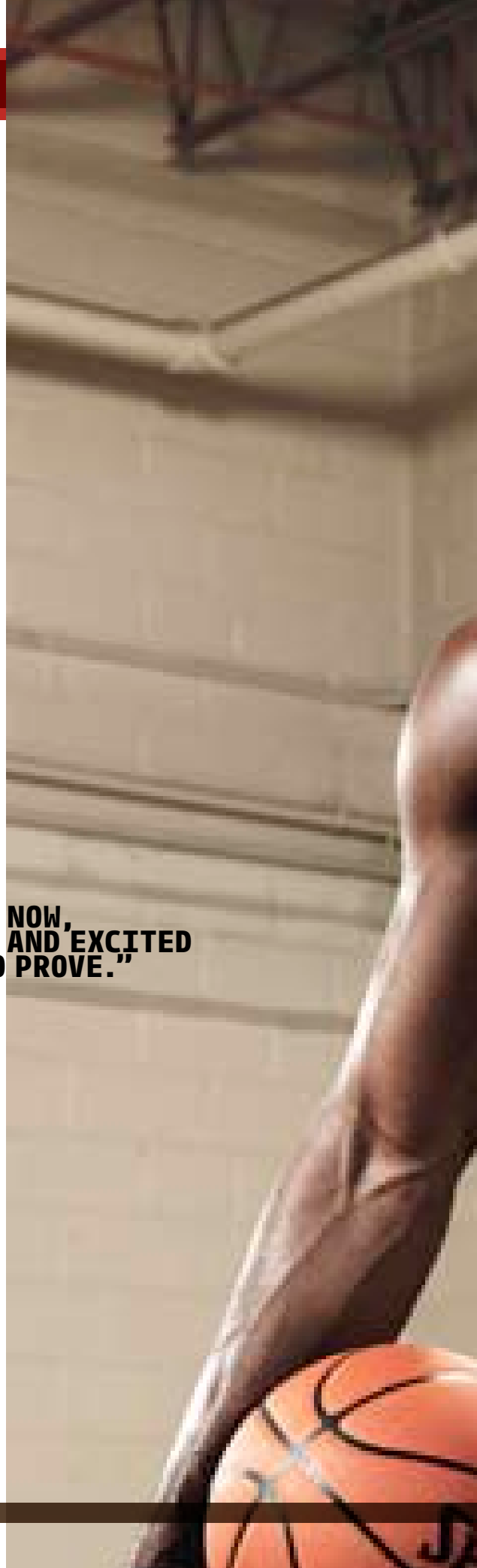
stronger than ever. "I'll tell you: Every year after this, I'm going to him continuously," Wade says. In fitness, coasting is costly.

**SEEK INSPIRATION**

During the off-season, Wade wanted to prove that he was healthy and agile. But he didn't want to start the Heat's year with that personal quest, because he knew his teammates would be looking to him for selfless leadership. That's one reason he pushed himself so hard in the Beijing Olympics. "Even if I didn't play in the Games, I would have worked out all summer and come back healthy," he says. "I knew that. But it was about more." Regardless of what game you're stepping back into, follow Wade's lead: Build yourself up beforehand, so you can start at your strongest.

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Styling: Kathy Kalarut





## RECOVER THE RIGHT WAY

Dwyane Wade's doctor and personal trainer helped him regain strength and avoid reinjury. Do the same as you rebuild by following these basic tips from Bill Hartman, P.T., C.S.C.S.

### 1 Restore

An injury often limits your range of motion, and that can lead to trouble in other areas, such as a loss of hip-joint motion that causes lower-back or knee pain, says Hartman. Restore flexibility by applying gentle manual pressure at the point where your movement becomes limited. Hold the pressure for 30 seconds while you try to move your injured joint in the direction of the limitation. Do 3 reps, 4 times a day.

### 2 Build

Regain power by challenging the muscles near your injury before you add full-body exercises that incorporate the hurt area, Hartman says. So if your knee is the problem, sit with your legs extended, tighten your thigh muscles, and then relax. This builds your quadriceps and allows you to progress to more challenging exercises, such as stepups or squats. As the pain decreases, increase the resistance, speed, and range of motion of your exercises.

### 3 Resist

Just because you're feeling better doesn't mean you're ready for the starting lineup. If basketball is your sport, build your skills—shooting, cutting, and running—before you play a game, to limit risk of reinjury. As you increase your minutes, keep a close eye out for any recurring signs of pain, swelling, redness, weakness, or instability, Hartman says.

### 4 Prevent

Once the pain is gone, head to the gym. To stay injury-free, you must train your body frequently, including the weak areas. Work out at least 2 or 3 times a week and focus on strength, power, and flexibility. Include full-body exercises like squats and deadlifts. And be patient. The long layoff will have set you back—strength gains are lost in less than a month, endurance declines after 2 weeks off, and your speed loses its zip in only 5 days, Hartman says.

JEN ATOR