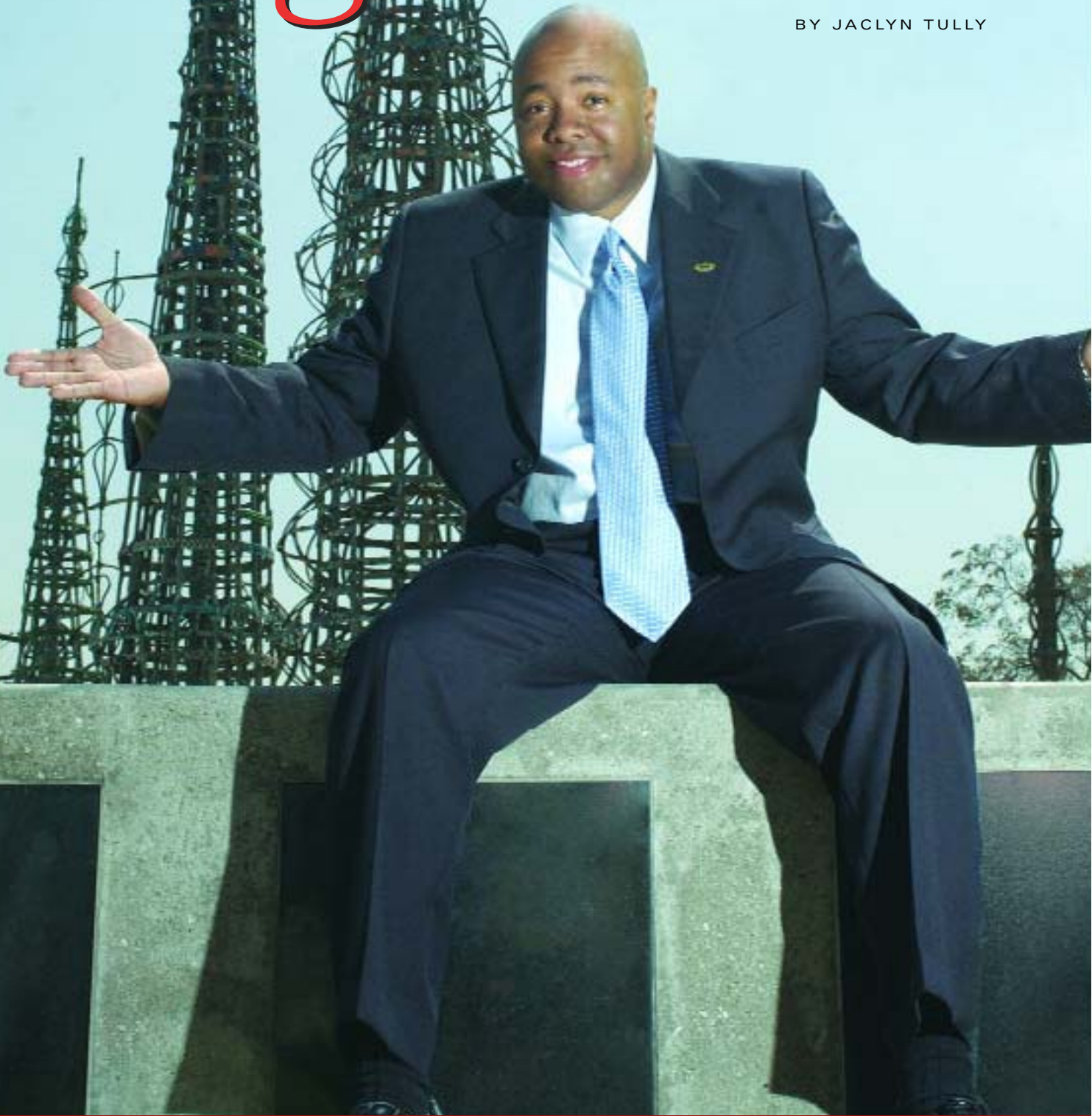


A Spirit of Significance

BY JACLYN TULLY





Using fear to encourage people to live a life of excellence may not be the most typical tactic for motivational speakers. But Tony Magee is not your typical motivational speaker. He warns that most people die surrounded by their unfulfilled hopes, unwritten books, and

unachieved accomplishments. He says, “Their talents and gifts, all of them, will be looming over them thirteen feet tall with big, large, angry eyes – like monsters – saying, ‘You were chosen to bring us to life and you didn’t, and now we must die with you.’”

Magee, professional speaker, author, founder, and CEO of PlatinumStar Performance Systems and '00 GSBM alumnus, drives his point home with the force of a hammer. But, his warm and compassionate spirit shines through in spite of his stern warning.

The author of *Can't Shove a Great Life Into a Small Dream*, Magee has dedicated his life to encouraging people to get “out of the mud and into the sunshine.” Clients such as the American Red Cross, the United Way, the Boeing Company, Chevron-Texaco, the Target Corporation, and Xerox like what he has to say and how he says it. Magee works with companies and individuals to help them bring out the humane side of business because, he says, “That is where success lies.” With his own life as an example, Magee’s rising popularity is well deserved.

As the child of an impoverished single mother living in the Nickerson Gardens Housing Projects of Watts in Los Angeles, Tony Magee didn’t think much about his future. His goal was surviving one day just to make it to the next. But surrounded by the wisdom of his grandmother and mother, he was encouraged to move up and move on from the life that he had. Messages such as “all you need is hope and a good plan” and “you might have been born into poverty, but poverty wasn’t born into you,” were seeded into his young mind.

Magee began to pay close attention to those around him, absorbing the ways of those he respected and also learning

from the mistakes of those he didn’t. While his peers were choosing negativity, Magee chose righteousness which he knew would lead to longevity. Believing that “When someone is ready to learn, teachers will appear,” Magee knows that his yearning for knowledge led to a wealth of teachers willing to help him, including preparing him to take the SAT exam.

On December 17, 1986, Magee proudly took his SAT. Tragically, the same day, Magee’s mother, Novel Jean Taplin-Magee, died unexpectedly of heart failure. While the tragedy might have broken most people, the passing of his mother charged Magee to press on and not live a small dream.

Remembering that all he needed was hope and a good plan, his inspiration became his mom and his plan was that he would utilize all the resources available to him to achieve his goals.

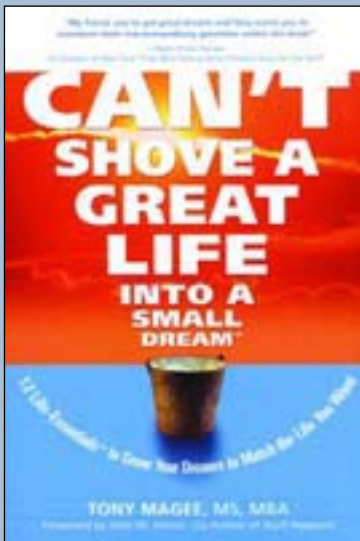
When he was accepted to California State University, Northridge, Magee felt as if he had won the lottery. He studied industrial engineering and found that he was a natural in the field. And although Magee didn’t realize it at the time, he was not the typical college student. Rather than spending his time packed with social activities, Magee’s craving for knowledge continued, “If you wanted to find me, you had to go to the library, I figured there were at least two books that would teach me whatever I wanted to know.”

Because of Magee’s considerable talent in engineering, he was able to attend Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and was the first African American to gain a M.S. in materials science and engineering. From there, he went to work for The Boeing Company, where he built main engines for space shuttles for NASA.

Accomplishing more than most people would have imagined for a child from the projects, Magee still dreamed larger dreams.

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Tony's Simple Suggestions for Stress

BREATHE. Fill your lungs, fill your belly with God's most precious gift. Breathe deeply, let go, let the breath do its work.

CELEBRATE YOUR VICTORIES.

Everyday, count your accomplishments, no matter how small. Make a list. Congratulate yourself. When you've done something noteworthy, reward yourself.

DO ONE THING AT A TIME.

The ability to multitask would seem to be the ticket to thriving in this day and age, but if it's causing you enough stress that you can't enjoy the fruits of your labor – what's the point?

LET GO OF BEING PERFECT. You don't have to do it all, know it all. Ask for help now and then.

ORGANIZE. Create a daily power hour in which you plan and strategize. You may be surprised how much stress is caused just by not having a decent blueprint for your life.

PRETEND IT'S 100 YEARS AGO. Have an evening, a week – or more if you can get away with it – with no TV, no CD, no DVD. If you're feeling really adventuresome, turn your telephone off. Just you and maybe your most relaxed buddy – if you have one – sitting, relaxing, reading.

REACH OUT MORE. Make time for your friends.

TELL THE TRUTH. There's nothing more stressful than living a lie, big or little. And whatever truth you're holding back from others, is holding you back.

TUNE INTO THE PRESENT MOMENT.

Stress often lives in the past or the future, so when you fret about yesterday or worry about tomorrow, you invite stress to do a tap dance in your cranitorium. Look around.

He choose to get his MBA from Pepperdine's Graziadio School of Business and Management. Learning some of the principles he uses in *Can't Shove a Great Life into a Small Dream*, Magee says he feels privileged to have attended Pepperdine. "Some of the greatest minds in the world teach at Pepperdine," says Magee. "It is a school that produces entrepreneurs, which to me is a school that produces thinkers, and the world needs those."

Participating in Pepperdine's Executive Education program with the acclaimed Oxford University, Magee was one of thirty people chosen to study Global Enterprise Management: Organizations, Environments, and Political Economy.

Now Magee is committed to passing on what he calls the "12 Life-Essentials" for greatness to anyone who will listen, working his way up to the final stage in life, significance. And with a nation filled with mediocrity, his goal is to urge people to find their purpose in life.

Magee's business, PlatinumStar Performance Systems, works to encourage and motivate people to unleash their full human potential, reaching and living their destiny through consultations, books, and seminars. With *Can't Shove a Great Life into a Small Dream*, Magee is currently working on a new series for his *Destiny on Demand*[™] program as well as other books. When asked about the title *Destiny on Demand*, Magee explains that most people see their destiny as some far-off, distant idea, which leads to them not taking action in the present. Magee hopes that the title will re-emphasize that immediate action is required to reach a destiny or a goal.

With the support of his wife, Aloria, and four children, Stephanie, Ahsaan, Ahmir, and Makayla, Magee is finding significance in slaying the monsters that many people would otherwise be faced with in their final moments, and bringing people into the sunshine. ❖

The Magee Family: (back) Aloria and Tony; (front) Ahsaan (5), Makayla (1), Ahmir (3), and Stephanie (11).

