

Building An "Elite" Staircase To Success

Contributed by George "Mr. G" Smalley
Saturday, 07 April 2007

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During his multi-disciplinary career as a performer, John has succeeded as a world-class ballroom dancer, a masters champion bodybuilder, and a winning theatrical stylist/poser. If that were not enough for any human, John is the entrepreneur behind Elite Physiques, a booming personal training business in Oceanside, NY. He is also the maestro of Posing Perfect, show training and choreography services for those athletes who seek the winning edge.

The John Maglio of 1990 was a very different person. Just sixteen years ago, John was single-mindedly pursuing a suicidal regimen. His "diet" at the time was guaranteed to win him a crepe-draped trophy for best all-around "stiff" at his neighborhood mortuary in Ozone Park, Queens. His training table then included an "all natural" menu of nicotine, alcohol and various illicit derivatives of tropical plants not sanctioned by the DEA, let alone any bodybuilding organization.

John--at the bottom of a downward spiral in 1990--had once before climbed the staircase of the champion. Always a physical contender and natural performer, the seeds of John's 1990 reversals were planted in 1973. That year--while still in high school--he would sustain a serious football knee injury. That "bad knee" would end up plaguing John's first career as a competitive ballroom-dancing champion.

From the time he was 18, John earned or added to his living by teaching style, grace and fun as a pro dance instructor and Associate of Fred Astaire Dance Studios. For a time, he had even operated his own franchise.

John's "adagio-style" dancing--with his spectacular lifts--made him a world-class performer. His skill on the dance floor had gained him runner up status in both the U.S. Ballroom Championship and Theatrical World Cup Competition. He was the "Hustle" Champion of New York City. But, with the joint and nerve damage of his knee injury, John's super-kinetic dance routines were more and more difficult to perform. The natural high of winning through applied art and physical discipline became harder and harder to reach.

"Finally", says the John Maglio of today, "I felt like I'd had a leg Knocked out from under me. I guess I started looking for other kinds of 'highs'." As he soon learned from bitter experience, if you can't build your own exhilaration, you can buy it-- at least until you're broke!

For John, "packaged" exhilaration cost a great deal. His dancer's physique ballooned. His chemical addictions ruined his finances. And, he was eventually fired from a supervisor's job at a medical fixtures and prosthesis company.

Before he went under entirely-- like a drowning man struggling for a lifeline-- John grabbed onto one thought. Joseph, his one-year-old baby boy, was going to lose the father he hardly knew. This certainty finally cut through to John Maglio's numbed heart and befuddled mind. As he now

remembers thinking over and over, "My boy needs a real live father--not one who is six feet under."

Fifteen years ago, John Maglio was ready for the toughest challenge of his life. He decided to give new meaning to an old saying: the child teaches the man. John called out to an old friend, Father Tom Morrow. Together, the two men--the priest and the once and future champion--designed a "staircase" John could use to climb out of his physical and mental hell. Friends could help him design salvation and cheer him on, but John would have to build that staircase by himself-literally from his own substance. John decided to rebuild his life by rebuilding his body.

"As a skinny kid, I dreamed of being a bodybuilder," says John. "Trying to make that kid's dream real gave me the goal I needed to discipline and rededicate my life." Not only did John resolve to mend his spirit by remaking his body, he also wanted the world to see John Maglio as a winner again. This time, he was determined to become a masters bodybuilding champ. To add to the challenge, John decided he had enough of chemicals. He would build his body using "all natural" nutrition. To support him in this disciplined process, John Maglio became close friends with two nutritionists who acted as his counselors and simpatico "training buddies". Timra Tung and Tony Torre, certified nutritionists at Apex Fitness and Nutrition Systems, "have always been there for me", John states emphatically, "I wouldn't be where I am today without them." The initial phase of John's comeback took two and a half years. For the first year, he was unemployed. But, then--seeing the economics of a hot industry first-hand--John decided to combine his lifestyle with his vocation. Then based at Gold's Gym in Howard Beach, Queens, John earned ISMA-certification as a personal trainer. John's flare for

relationship building-his personal touch with people from every walk of life added to his obvious athletic accomplishments-made him a sought-after coach.

For phase two of the Maglio "remake", John-characteristically-devised an extremely ambitious competition schedule. In 1994, he planned to compete in six consecutive "all-natural" masters bodybuilding tournaments. This meant John would have to adhere to a non-stop, maximum training effort for 18 months. So, at age 37, he competed in all six targeted shows in 1994 and won five overall "bests" in the masters division. Among these "wins" were the 1994 ANBC All Natural Bodybuilding Championship for New York City, the 1994 NPC Metropolitan All Around Championship, the 1994 ANBC New York City Best Poser award, and the ANBC USA National Championships (where he placed 6th in the masters)

In phase three of his "Journey"--with half a roomful of trophies won in 1994--John decided to become an entrepreneur. The exposure and validation presented by his championship efforts positioned John Maglio to expand his solo personal training practice into a full-fledged enterprise with his own staff of personal trainers. In July of 1994, while he was still on his winning tournament run, the new Gold's Gym franchisees in Brooklyn Heights invited him to take over their personal training business.

"I saw this as my biggest challenge yet," says John of his entrepreneurial debut. "It's one thing to manage yourself. It's another thing to manage a team of people who must deliver consistent and professional personal services one-to-one. I was excited but scared!"

John called on his 20 years of experience in the dance-instruction world-- another personal services industry in which individualized teaching, inspiring by example, and a literal personal touch are the keys to success. According to John, the Maglio Magic for profiting in the personal training business includes a focus on finding and keeping the right staff trainers. "People--my professionals--give Elite Physiques its edge in this business," John states emphatically. "More than my PTs looking the role and playing the role--they must be the role to satisfy our clients long-term."

John Maglio is not only "elite", he may be unique. No one currently in bodybuilding brings quite so much diverse experience, talent and success to the artistic and commercial side of this business. John never stopped building his "staircase" up and his championship climb doesn't seem to have any end in sight.

John was born in Brooklyn 3/19/57 he has 2 kids Joseph Dominck 18 And Sabrina 3 and he's fully involved in their lives.

John is currently training for the over-50 2007 NPC MASTERS NATIONALS, which, if he wins, will earn him the right to compete in the Pro Ranks of the IFBB.

John is the epitome of ROCKY-- on and off the posing stage.

When asked to what he attributes his latest victory at the

2006 NPC New York Metropolitan (Masters class), John responds, "That's easy. Dave Palumbo. Dave has helped me with my diet and nutrition for the last 10 years. The day he quits; I quit!"

When John finally turns Pro at the ripe old age of 50 he promises to walk on stage at the 2008 IFBB New York Pro Show and compete with pros less than half his age.

John has never turned down a challenge in his life and I look forward to the day he finally grasps that IFBB Pro card in his hand and exclaims, "I've climbed the staircase of life and now I've arrived!"