

Cautious Optimism

The thing that I remember most about my father is his laughter. He often found humour in situations and would chuckle as he told you his observation. When things happen and seem almost vexing, in my mind I hear my father's laugh. It is almost as if he is sitting across from me resting a book in his lap, pausing with a big grin on his face as he seeks eye contact, before revealing his insight.

Back when CoVid first hit, many small companies shuttered their businesses. My barber was one of them. Four months later when the businesses were allowed to reopen, he chose not to. By then my hair had grown longer than it had been in years and I decided to keep it. The longer it grew the more I decided I would use it as a way of drawing attention to myself as a Realtor in Ghana (as if the skin colour was not enough).

While it was growing, I found a barber in Port Angeles who had hair about the same length and he recommended I get the split ends trimmed every so often in order to have it be healthy. So every couple months I would pop into his salon and get a trim. And the other day I decided it had been a while and I should get the ends trimmed.

Back when I was on the island nation, St. Lucia, I decided to go to a local barber and get a trim. I asked him to take off a half inch. That is how much he left. Armed with this education, I insisted that I find a barber with experience with white people's hair. "De Address Salon" was recommended. When I walked into the salon, the



barber was cutting a white man's hair with a fashionable but very trimmed cut. He asked me what I wanted. I pulled the ends of my hair and showed him I wanted about one-and-a-half inches cut off. And I said I wanted some care questions answered. He said he could do that. He couldn't.

He also left my hair with so many odd cuts that I needed to get a second haircut. I specifically asked to find someone who knew how to taper and trim the fly-away tufts that were sticking out all over. I was referred to a different barber by a friend of mine. This barber swore he knew what he was doing. I think he became a barber after taking a "Meat Cutting by Mail" education



course. I ended up with a haircut that looks like it was done by a small animal with no opposable thumbs, and a rash from his use of unsterilized equipment.

As I was contemplating the end results (so far) the other day, my father's image came to mind as he laughed and said, "If I were you, I'd quit while I still had hair left."

As we were leaving the last barber he mentioned, "If you really wanted a good haircut, you should have gone to "Nate's." A few months from now I will consider that. In the meantime, I will learn to live with what is left.