

Welcome back to In Conversation. Today, we have an incredibly inspiring guest with us, a barber, teacher, and community leader who's used his craft to create a lasting impact. He's not just about shaping styles, but shaping lives. He's here to share story insights and experience with us. Welcome Serge.

Hey, how you doing? Okay. So, today's conversation is gonna be a little different. We're gonna do a haircut and we're gonna talk a little bit about your experience with the community and how you've worked to make the community better with barbering. How's that sound?

It's interesting. That's awesome. I'm ready to do it. Awesome. Let's get started.

Yeah. So I know you've done more than just cut hair. Can you tell us a little bit about some of your community efforts and some of the things you've been involved with? Absolutely. Absolutely.

So I've helped out my community by, being there for my commissioner in the city of North Miami, the city of North Miami Beach. Wow. One of my commissioners, Daniela Jean, who's running for commissioner again in North Miami Beach. She called me one day, and she wanted me to help out for an event, that was happening with giving back, giving food to those that that are in need, and they wanted to do haircuts. And she called me up specifically so that I can provide that service.

And from that, that was another connection so that I can do back to school haircuts for the city of North Miami, for commissioner Bastien. Help them out with back to school haircuts for 2023 this year in 2024. Wow. That's awesome. There's so many community connections we've had.

Mhmm. Now I know you've done a lot of things with mentoring. Mhmm. Can you talk a little bit about how teaching barbering skills have helped you to mentor different people in the community? Oh, awesome.

So being a mentor being a teacher, I should say, has put that bug in my ear and made me want to be that person that teaches the guys that are under me to, you know, do great at this, at this, I call it a sport, but do great at this career because it's such a great, great, great thing to have in front of your belt, to have something you can, something you work with with your hands. And to have that under your belt as something you can do, it's it's great for mentoring and let my my young guys know that the sky is the limit and even past that. So the mentoring aspect has really opened up many doors. It's made me feel like I have another life in this business. You know?

So, yeah, feels good. That's beautiful. Mhmm. So do you have any stories of people that you've mentored, something that had a particular impact on you? Oh, man.

So it's funny. 1 of my one of my students, Zach, he is he is a birthday twin of mine. And he has been coming to me, and he has conversations with me about all the things that's going on in his life. And I just tell him all the time, like, let's look, man. It's gonna be alright.

It's tough right now, but it's fine. And it's and he he comes back and he says, you know, sirs, what you told me yesterday was absolutely correct. And and he feels good about everything that he's learning and the things that I'm telling him, you know, with the tough times that that may be happening in his life. And I let him know, like, hey. It's only but for a short time.

And he's like, you know what? You're right, man. Because if this is getting fixed and this is getting fixed and all of this stuff, I say, yeah, man. It's it's it's a it's a short time, but you're gonna be great afterwards. So this mentoring aspect and having, you know, someone like my birthday twin, to give these nuggets to is like talking to a younger me.

You know? So it's it's beautiful. It's beautiful. That's beautiful. I know it's had an impact on you barbering, and it's really cool to hear you talk about how it had an impact on other people.

But I kinda wanna talk a little bit about how that impact impacted you. The skills that you learned as a barber, how did it change your life? Was there a personal impact that it had over you for you over the years? It has been a personal impact. You know, it I've I've had and I do have people in my family that, used to barber, family members, friends, and stuff like that.

And picking up this craft let me know that, okay, I always have something I know how to do. It inspires people to make people look good and feel good at the same time. It's it's another thing that makes me feel good in doing this. So, yeah, this is a very inspirational and and, beautiful thing that I'm doing and, you know, picking it up from a young age, from family members, and going forward with it. I can't I can't do nothing but be grateful.

How old were you when you started? You know, so I messed around with this since I was a teenager, actually. I used to cut my friend's hair and nephews and stuff like that. And then, when I went to barber school, I was teen I was 29 when I was in barber school, back in 2014. And I never stopped from then.

Never stopped. Just continued to go because I just knew. I just felt in my in my soul that this is gonna be something great, sir. So let's just keep going. That's beautiful.

Yeah. So what would you think are some life skills that you gained through barbering? The life skills that I've gained, like networking and, you know, just being around the right people and being able to ask the questions and, you know, oh, man, just just that that openness, business skills. Business skills. One of the major things that I picked up as a barber, and being in this career.

Lots of business skills, and and networking, man. Business skills and networking. That's so interesting. So networking and business skills are some of the skills that you gained. And I know networking and working in as a business yourself, it probably changes your identity, changes your self esteem.

Do you feel like it's helped to shape those aspects of who you are? Oh, big time. Big time. Not to say that I I wasn't, mindful and thought about being in business because I have. But being in, the barbering field made me, you know, step it up a bit.

You know, made me really look into being a business. When I got my barber's license in 2019 2018, I then started my LLC in 2018. And from that point, I was like, okay. Let me let's find more. Let's find more.

And then I became a member of the, a member of the Miami Dade Chamber of Commerce and, other other organizations like branches that do great work with businesses. So I just started to learn more about what it is to be in business, what what things I should have up under my belt. I then, became a member of the Better Business Bureau. And I put my business on a Better Business Bureau, a plus, accredited business on a Better Business Bureau. And, so I just continue to grow and thrive and find those, I guess, unturned over rocks, you know, and turn them over so that I could find out what's under them.

What what what do I need to learn to better myself? You know, so that's that's what it was for me. That's beautiful. Mhmm. Yeah.

I know starting a new job or starting any job, you learn things about yourself and you grow up you grow in so many different profound ways. Mhmm. I kinda wanna turn the conversation over to another profound topic. Mhmm. Something about some challenges in your life.

Yes, sir. I know we've talked a little bit about how you've experienced houselessness. Mhmm. I wanna talk a little bit about how you if you'd wanna be if you were open to talking a little bit about that period and how it was like. So not having a home at that time, it was it was tough, because when when I was, you know, homeless, I I had a I had a friend that I was staying with, and he was the one that made me homeless.

And, yeah, that's a whole deep story. But since that time, I was just like, you know, I can do better. I don't have to sit and soak in the fact that I'm homeless. Let's do better. Let's just build and let's grow.

And from that point, I just continue to continue to grow. You know? Yeah. I didn't have much. Yeah.

I didn't have a car and clothes and stuff like that. But, you know, I knew that there was gonna be a better situation, you know, despite what I was going through currently. So, I find those homeless moments. 1 some of the happiest moments. Some of the most grateful moments I've had, because, you know, I didn't have much and I just would would reflect on what I did have.

You know, and a lot of my prayers, I would pray, you know, thank god for what I have and for what I don't have. You know, and being that I didn't have a home then, I still have my life. So I was grateful. Wow. Mhmm.

What a powerful moment. Wow. So what do you think about the experience and, your outlook on life and what's important? Did it change your the way you look at barbering? Did it change the way you look at things moving forward now?

Yeah. It really did, actually. It made me look at barbering from a perspective of let me think about it from the past, from when I was a a young man, and I would see barbers, you know, come in the barbershop, and, you know, good, bad, and in between. I would remember my one of my barbers. He was very clean, guy.

He stayed in the barbershop all day continuously cutting. I would take those take those moments, and then I would take other moments, that weren't so weren't so good. And I would, you know, say to myself, okay, these are the moments that I wanna take. These are the attributes that I wanna take. These are the attributes I don't wanna take.

And it it molded me into who I am and what I want to be and the standards that I want to keep for myself and for this industry because it's such a such a such a great and historical industry. I mean, it's funny that we're talking about the industry. I mean, we're talking about the history of barbering in barber class today and how deep the industry is and how, you know, far it goes back. You know? So, with all of that, it just made me want to grow and be better every time, you know?

Wow. Barbering sounds like such a rewarding field of work. Mhmm. And it sounds like it became something like a lifeline for you. Yes.

So then what would you say are some, let's say, in terms of stability, financial security, emotional, mental health, Mhmm. How do you think barbering and the skills that you learned during barbering, whether that's, you know, actual the actual cut Mhmm. Or communicating with people, how do you think those things have sustained you and helped you to interact with other people or sustain some of your students? So the that's a great question. Having the love and the knowledge and the career and the passion for barbering, it's kept me so grounded.

It sustained me literally. By the when I was, you know, in barber school and, you know, in those homeless times, I literally didn't have a place to go. So the barbershop was that place that I would be at for 4, 6, 8 hours until I, again, didn't have another place to go to. So I, you know, I would have that shelter for that amount of time. So it was literally a refuge for me.

It was literally a safe haven for me when I didn't have a place to go. So it's it literally it's it's been a big help for me. It's been a my a pillar in my life. You know? So yeah.

Wow. Mhmm. Spoken like a real teacher. Absolutely. Absolutely.

So what would you think learning about learning the trade of barbering, what would you say what would some advice be that you would give to somebody who is going through the process? I would say if you're gonna start, make sure you finish. Stay consistent. Keep a a

high standard for yourself. Don't let the ease of this industry and what it looks like it could be easy.

Don't let that idea of ease make you complacent. Never be complacent. Don't get comfortable. You know, if you get comfortable, find a place where you can get uncomfortable so that you can get comfortable. If you understand what I'm saying.

Mhmm. Because complacency will will seep in and you'll just say to yourself, oh, well, I got this. And and you don't wanna be complacent. You wanna always challenge yourself. Challenge yourself.

Challenge yourself. You wanna learn something. Be moldable. You know, stay like a piece of, like a piece of clay. Stay moldable.

Stay malleable. You know? Those are the things I would tell, you know, my youngsters coming up in the bar again, to to be that. You know? Don't don't be the person that acts like they know everything.

You know? Even at 41 years old right now, I learned a lot from my youngsters underneath because they are they are the ones that are coming up after. They learn things that I don't I don't know yet. You know? The IRS once said it best.

You know, the when you when the young kids listen to the old heads, the old heads move faster amongst their peers. And when the, when the old heads, when the yeah. When the old heads listen to the young heads and vice versa, they move faster amongst their own peers. So that's that's what it is. I make sure I listen to them.

I take their guidance and their wisdom and all these different things and go from there because they're the future. So why not? Why not listen to them and vice versa them listen to me because, you know, I've gone through things that they probably couldn't even couldn't even imagine. So yeah, man. Wow.

You know, that's the thing I love about barbershops, the community. Mhmm. The intermingling of different generations, and the connection, especially in the black community. I find a barbershop is a safe space for you to, like, learn. Honestly, when I was growing up, I learned a lot by going to a barber shop, talking to my barber, and talking to my dad, taking me and my brother.

I wanna talk about your thoughts though when it comes to barber shops as spaces for community. So we know that they're famously seen as spaces like community hubs. Mhmm. In your experience, how does barbershop how does a barbershop foster a sense of community? Oh, man.

It's that place where, you know, when you're when you're that kid and you have, you know, you don't have a place to go to, let's say, do your homework, but you know the barbershop got WiFi because you went there this past weekend and your mom brought you there and, you know, your mom asked the barber for the Wi Fi code. And so you come back on a Wednesday and, you know, you know the barber and the barber's cool and your mom's not home yet, but you're you're able to sit in there and do your homework. It's it's that sense of community. It's that safe space. It's that place where, you know, all the guys can just go and watch the game.

You know, even if they're not getting a haircut, they can go and just watch the game and hang out with their with their with their barber, you know. And it's that sense of community. It's that place where, you know, maybe something going on that's, detrimental to life like COVID, you know. And you need that space to just, I guess, get away from the mundane, especially around those times for almost 5 years ago now, you know, to get away, you know, to speak and laugh, cry, scream, whatever, that's what the barbershop means to the community. Wow.

Yeah. It's almost like a heartbeat Mhmm. You know, of the community. Did you have a experience like that when you were growing up? You know what?



Yeah. You know, I would, I would still I still see this barbershop. It's still it's still around. It's called Black and White Barber Shop on 7th Ave at 119, and it's still available. It's still around.

And, that was the 1st barbershop I was able to go to by myself. I was maybe about 9, 10, 11 years old. My mom would give me a few dollars, and I would get on a bus. And, I would go to the barbershop, and she told me to get, you know, a one with a skin. And I got me a one with a skin, you know, on the side.

So, it was it was that place where I felt safe enough to go by myself as a little kid. You know, getting on the bus in these old Miami streets, you know. And, at the time, I lived in Liberty City, so I would catch the bus all the way up to Unincorporated Miami on 119 and, get my haircut and jump back on the bus and head back home. And I've never felt out of place. I felt like that was the place I was supposed to be.

So, yeah. Wow. I love to hear that because barbershops are such a big aspect of life when it comes to the black community, but to all communities, but in particular to the black community. Absolutely. So to shift gears a little bit, I know you're here on our, in conversation, we're having this conversation because Kate Capshaw has featured you in a work and an exhibition that's gonna be going up soon in the Perez Art Museum.

Have you had a chance to see the work? I have not. I have not, man. It's gonna be a huge surprise. Do you have any feelings coming up?

Feelings towards it, I butterflies, nervousness, happiness, just yeah. I I'm I'm still speechless. I'm still speechless. So, in awe because I've never thought that something like this would ever happen. So, yeah, all the all the great adjectives you can think of, dumbfounded, taken aback.

Like, woah. Me? Wow. So, yeah. I'm but I'm happy.

I'm happy. So as a barber, you're kind of like an artist. Yes. So with what's your in your opinion, do you feel that art or this piece would do you feel like it's gonna accurately represent your experience? I think so, because it will show the type of standard I keep for myself.

The person, the people will see me wearing my, what I call it, old school barber smock, but, you know, it's a barber smock that the guys used to wear back in the the nice, back in the 19 fifties and sixties. And, I I I put that on to ensure and make sure people knew what I do. And, I I think it's gonna be a huge impact and people will see it and they'll be like, wow. This person, they really they really take what they do serious because he looks like he cares about what he does, and and I do. I really do care about what I do.

It's it's a fun thing to do. What I'm doing right now is what I do in the barbershop all the time. Cut, crack jokes, you know, talk and, you know, have a good time, you know? So that's, that's a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful thing that I never want to, you know, I never want to miss that. I always wanna stay in that realm, this this realm, this barber realm.

So a little thing. You know, I it's great that we have this, in conversation because we can have people listen from a long distance away. They don't have to be in the museum to hear it, but unfortunately, they don't get a chance to see how you keep yourself. Like you said, you keep yourself really put together. And I wanna give a little bit of a description of what you're wearing today.

Mhmm. He's got a apron, a denim apron with buttons. Mhmm. We have a barber pull. We have a button that you got from a convention focused on products sold by black owned businesses.

Right? Yes. Yes. And a whole bunch of other things. It looks super sharp.

Nice. Thank you. Thank you. Yeah. And it's, you know, it's it's because I it's going back to that that word standard.

I want to keep a a standard of high quality. Hence, the reason my business name is exclusive Tonsorial Services. You you have to be exclusive, and I have to be that exclusive person to represent it. And, so I like to keep myself looking a certain way, a standard that I'd like to keep, for this industry and for myself. And, that's why I keep a certain look.

And it's it's now just become standard. It's normal. It's a good thing. And, you know, even on the weekends when I'm not working sometimes, you know, I I still keep a certain way of dress on, you know, almost 247 because you never know when business is gonna happen. So I like to stay business ready, you know, looking, my tools stay with me in my car so I can give a person a haircut on the side of the road if I chose to.

Wow. So, yeah. Very important to me. So what unique contributions do you feel barbers can make to a community, especially through teaching? I know you're a teaching barber Yes.

As well as a mobile barber. Yes. So the contributions we make are immense, from the convenience, the com you know, the community aspects going to give those children and, those in need haircuts who, you know, who really need it at the time that they need, that that safe space, you know, as we mentioned just a few moments before, for, you know, anybody. You know? So that that is the important and and and and resounding factor as to why I love it so.

Because barbering, it brings and gives so much to people. You know, when you look good, you feel good. I always say barbers are the reason everybody is who they are because of their barber. Yes. We wouldn't have the Boosie fade if it wasn't for a barber.

We wouldn't have so many different the burst fade, the south of France. You know, it's it's another haircut. I was in the south of France. Yeah. It's the same yeah.

That's so that was the haircut that, Usher came out with, which is also the birth fade. It's the same thing. The only reason they call it the South of France is because we got it in the South of France. And another note. So I told this to my students the other day.

The Julius Caesar is the reason why we call the Caesar Caesar the Caesar or the Caesar haircut. So going back to historical times, there was many guys warriors back in the day. They will wear their hair much like mine, long and beards and stuff like that. And those soldiers would get beheaded and speared by their beards being pulled and their hair being pulled. So Julius Caesar was like, yo, guys, we're shaving all of that.

Getting even all the way around and shaving your face so we don't have any more casualties on this battlefield. That's why we have the Caesar Cutter. Wow. Yeah. I never knew that.

That's wild. Absolutely. Absolutely. It's so funny how history shows up in the everyday. Mhmm.

Have you ever had I know you're talking about teaching kid or taking teaching people and doing community haircuts. Have you ever had a client, a kid, become a student? A kid become a student? Not yet. All the students that I've, that I've met, I've met them organically in the school and at the school.

But as far as a student or a client that became a student, not yet. But I I do see that happening sometime soon, because, honestly, you know, people like how I teach. People like, you know, my personality when it comes to, this teaching. And so I I can see that happening. I can definitely see that happening.

Okay. Real quick. I'm gonna just ask Armando, how is it? Awesome. So I know you said you're from Miami.

Right? Yes, sir. And you decided to stay in Miami. Is there any particular reason why you stayed in Miami instead of moving to a big city, another big city? You know, Miami has the cultures and the people that not too many places have.

The variety of the Caribbean culture, and the people, the food, and the the environment, the vibe. It's a lot like many other places. And I've I've lived in other places before but I've always found my way back here because of all those things. The people, the energy, you know, it's it's a beautiful place. You know?

One day, I will take my time in some place else. But right now, you know, this obligation that as a teacher and taking care of my my beautiful VIP clientele that I have, you know, keeps me here too. So but then, you know, looking at Miami as a backdrop, it's not bad of a place to be. Not that bad of a place to be. I know you're actually Franklin Sermons, the director of the museum's barber.

Right? Yes. I am. So I know Miami is a good space for you. Mhmm.

And we would definitely hate to lose you to any other cities, so we're trying to keep you here. Absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah. I love it here.

I mean, it you know, it's it's my home. It's been my home for 41 years, and I I love it. Though sometimes, you know, certain certain things and reasons make me, like, but I think back and I say, you know what? Look at this place. This is this is a beautiful place.

I I always love this place. So you do teaching and you do mobile barbershop stuff, but you also work in, space. Right? Mhmm. Where is that shop?

So my shop is on 34th, Street and North Miami Avenue. And I have a a sweet space, and it's right in the in the heart of Midtown Miami. And, I like to take care of my guys there. You know, it's a nice private situation. You know, we have drinks and, crack jokes and watch games and, you know, a a smaller barbershop, but it's more intimate and we have a good time here.

Have a good time. That's fantastic. Absolutely. So have you been to the museum before? Oh, yeah.

Of course. Of course. What am I asking? Oh, yeah. Plenty of time.

Plenty of time. And, it's such a good time every time I come, you know, whether it's a bunch of music happening, music and art, music, art, food, performances. It's always, always a good time. You know? Do you have an exhibition that you liked or, event that you liked the most?

Oh, yeah. Well, quite a few, actually. The one time when I when I saw George Clinton Oh. Here, and then my forever crush in my mind, Janelle Monae. Janelle Monae.

She had us that was a surprise surprise performance or, yeah, showing of Janelle Monae on stage with, George Clayton. So that was a very, very, cool moment while here. When Luke Skywalker not Luke well, he used to be called Luke Skywalker, but Luke, Luke Campbell, Luther Campbell from Miami. He performed here. And that was such a cool situation because I'm looking at everybody.

By not, I'm not gonna say too much, but I'm looking at everybody. And I'm like, Luke, here. Wow. That's pretty cool. That's pretty cool.

You know, playing for these folk. You know? So it's pretty cool. And I I loved it. Everybody had a good time, and, I enjoyed it.

I really, really, really, really, really enjoy it. Coming here also for the, in the month of February, you know, when it's showcasing black artists, you know. And, seeing the different black art, it's always, always, always a great, great, great time. That's so awesome. I know there's, I'm originally I'm not from Miami originally, but I know that Miami has a very strong, vibrant, and diverse black community.

Mhmm. Can you talk a little bit about your experience growing up in Miami? Oh, yeah. So going up down here in Miami as a Miami born American kid, and being around all the

different cultures down here, it it it's it's inspiring. It's really cool to see the innovation of the Cuban man, you know, selling and churros in Hialeah or, you know, going to, you know, the northern parts of Miami, and you're seeing all the Caribbean cultures up there, you know, from Trinidadians to Jamaicans to Bahamians, you know, and all of them have their own, you know, restaurant or store or something like that.

The entrepreneurship, of all these different cultures, down here is is is super, super, super inspiring, and that's why I love it. So, seeing all these people just grow and be amazing in this beautiful place, and a lot of those people are not from here, and they grow and make this place even better, because I I appreciate them being here. Their cuisine and their culture is, like, going to the the Bahamian Goombay Festival and going to Calle Ocho, and all these different situations with all these different cultures made growing up in Miami such a super, super awesome experience. Like, I I can't compare I mean, obviously, I haven't, you know, really lived in many, many other places for such a long time like Miami, but it's nothing like it. Nothing like it.

I agree with you. I used to live in New York, and moving to Miami, I realized Miami's a special space. Yes. It's like a unique environment, a unique type of person. Yes, yes, yes.

And a beautiful experience. Absolutely. So I love it. I love it. I I really, really have enjoyed doing all the things that I've done down here.

Going to the places and all the events and all the vibes and all the things. So it's it's been great, and I just continue to have that fun. You know? It's I always say it's no it's no place like Miami. You know, hell, where where no there's no place like Miami in the state of Florida.

I mean Definitely. You know, we don't even reclaim Florida. We just claim Miami. Are you one of those? I'm one of those.

Miami is Miami. Miami is not a part of Florida. Miami is its own planet. Miami orbits by itself. I love that.

Oh, man. It orbits by itself. Yep. Love it. Love it.

Love it. You know, on a random side note, I've noticed you called the haircut you're giving me now a burst fade. I didn't know the name of it. So why is it called a burst burst fade? Because the fade, it bursts out from one area, and it gives that look that look that effect of a burst.

Uh-huh. Yeah. No. I'm just going to my barber and asking for this and that. Now I'm learning something.

Absolutely. Absolutely. So as as we, spoke about it before, these haircuts a lot of times have different names, but they're the same thing. You know, South of France, 1st Fade, Faux hawk. All the same.

All the same. You know? But I I love doing it. I love being able to do it. Hell, I used to do this haircut on myself.

You can do a haircut on yourself. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yourself is the best practice. You have multiple mirrors?

Yes. Yes. You hold one and your, your back is towards the one in the bathroom or in the, in the barbershop. Yep. Just like that.

Was it hard to do that? What to learn? It was it was hard to do and learn, especially the first few times. Mhmm. Because especially when you're going towards the back part and you have to do the reverse, it's different.

It's different. You gotta be you gotta be skilled. You gotta be right. You gotta be skilled and have patience. Oh, man.



It takes a lot. But, you know, I I enjoy doing it. And then now that I'm, a barber teacher, I just have my students give me haircuts. Like, my student, Louis, gave me a haircut yesterday. Okay.

Had to get me fresh. So Appreciate you, Lou. Oh, wow. Yeah, man. Oh, I love that.

I know I tried to learn how to cut my own hair during the pandemic, But I was like, thank goodness no one could see me walk around after. So Exactly. Get better than me. Yeah. Yeah.

I told him. I've heard the stories. I've heard the stories. You guys have tried and tried and tried during that time, and, I helped a lot of them. They're like, yo, I need you to come I need you to come by.

Oh, that's great. Oh, man. Is that when you started doing your mobile barbering? Yes. Yes.

Thank God for COVID because, you know, the United States is saying that barbers and beauticians and people like that are not essential. So I said, I am. I said I'm essential. And so I'm going to make sure I bring these services to the people who need it. You know?

I know a lot of people, you know, especially at that time, you know, people aren't going many places. Kent couldn't go to many places. But some of those people, they needed they needed their haircut. So I was able to go ahead and take care of them, and, they were grateful for it. And I was grateful for it too because in those of the barbershops.

So I was, I was happy at that transition. You know, like they say, when life gives you lemon, you make lemonade, you make flop. You make all those beautiful things when you're, when you're facing, those tough times. You get your sugar, get your water, and you turn into a great thing. You know, and that's exactly what happened with me.

You know? I started into lemonade, and, I've been drinking I've been drinking that lemonade ever since. You know? It's a good time. What would you say are your top three lessons you've learned from barbering?

Well, let's say barbering. Just barbering. Okay. Top three lessons. 1, consistency.

2, never give up. 3, passion. Passion. You know? I'll say 4.

Being grateful being grateful, you know, for all the good ups and downs and all those things. I think those four things, for me sorry to add another one. No. Go for it. I think those things are the things that that keep me grounded, that keep me moving forward, that keep me reflective, you know, to reflect on where I came from and and to keep me moving forward with that consistency.

You know? So, yeah, those are the things that just made me feel like yes. Yes. Yes. And when you say passion, what do you what do you mean by passion?

So the passion is that passion is because going back to not having much. Right? And not having much and then getting to be at a place where you can have pretty much everything you want. That that's the passion. That brings out that feeling, to myself and to my students, to let them know and show them that you you have that love for something, you know, you you push it out.

You you you show that love. You you let people know, hey. This is the reason why. And you continuously pass that love and that passion of whatever it is. So, passion, love, the the ability of stability.

For this. You know, I was I was so not stable before. And with being a barber, I've become so stable. So the ability of stability. Oh, wow.

Yeah. Right? Yeah. That's the first time I ever said that. That was good.

That was good. Yeah. So yeah. I love it. I love it.

I love it. Good. Mhmm. Yeah. I like that a lot.

Did you, did you have people who or mentors that helped you, like, see something like passion or, what was the other one you said? Passion and consistency. Mhmm. Did you have mentors that helped you and how did they help you? You know, there can be people or things, really.

It's quite a few people. One of the passionate people, and I go back to my guy, Kool Aid. Nice. You know? Kool Aid, Frank, they were passionate about doing this.

Listening to the hip hop preacher, Eric. Oh my gosh. Eric Eric not Eric Dyson. Eric Thomas. Eric Thomas.

He is a motivational speaker, and I used to listen to his music his work every day going to work. Thomas. Yeah. I can. I will.

I must. That's that's Eric Thomas. I can. I will. I must.

Like, period. I love that. And he's very passionate. So if you ever feel like, I don't wanna listen to any radio, but I wanna listen to something good. Listen to Eric Thomas.

He'll get you motivated. Oh, man. He'll get you motivated. That's also where you fight? Where do I find him?

YouTube. YouTube. YouTube. Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah. YouTube. YouTube, you know, Instagram, stuff like that. But definitely YouTube so you can see long form, you know, versions of his videos and what he's talking about. Very, very, very passionate person, about where he came from and how he can mold people, help people in in his way.

So with listening to him, they're kinda helping me with my passion for this, You know? So shout out to Harry Tommies. The hip hop preacher. Mhmm. Yep.

Love this. Maybe one day I'll beat him. I mean, there we go. You're already on a piece of art Absolutely. In a museum.

Absolutely. Absolutely. That's that's not Yeah. Like, did you ever feel like you would be in this space? Outside of outside of coming here for a show?

No. Wow. At all. Because it's I I love art. As I mentioned to Franklin, I was in graphic design before.

And, to be in a place like this, it's it's a beautiful thing. But then to be in a place like this is mind blowing if you if you followed it. Mhmm. You know? Because I I I'm here, but I'm going to be here as a portrait.

Woah. That's wild. That's wild. So but I'm I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to it.

And that's funny. That reminds me of I'm like, I don't know why the Jay z verse where he's like, I'm a businessman. I'm a businessman. Yeah. Or maybe I'm not a businessman.

I'm a businessman. Yeah. And that's what it is for me. You know? When I have people come and talk to come and talk to me, I tell them, like, hey.

You're not just talking to that guy, Serge. You're talking to exclusive tonsorial services. You're talking to a business. You're not just talking to the guy that you knew from middle school to high school. You're talking to a guy that's running an a plus business on a Better Business Bureau.

It's a member of the Miami Entertainment Commerce, the biggest black networking group in Miami, and, you know, so many different things. You know? So, yeah. I'm I'm about business. You know, before the young man, you know, TI's son said he stood on business.

I stood on business way before that. Way, way, way before that. You know, by being a member of the FBLA in high school, stood on business. I was I stood on that. I made my own business cards back then.

Made you know, of course, did my own resumes and brochures and all these things because I knew that I was gonna be in business at some point. So the idea or it might even be funny to some people to say stand on business. Surge has been stand on business since, the 19 nineties. You know what I mean? Even before I had a business, I was stand on business.

You know? So that's what it is for me. I didn't know you're in graphic design. Mhmm. That's really cool.

Yeah. Do you have any artists or designers or creatives that you really like? Oh, man. A hole a hole Snips Blue. Mhmm.

In Miami? Yeah. Very Miami. You know, the guy that that has the art do what you love. His name is Sergei.

Uh-oh. Yeah. I met him. Wow. Yeah.

How was that? That was awesome. I met him at the big at the Bitcoin event. I was cutting hair at the Bitcoin event. It's another thing.

It's a nugget that I that I didn't drop earlier. I cut here at the Bitcoin event, and I saw his art. Didn't know him, didn't see him until I saw him. And we chatted up, and I was like, wow. Do what you love.

That's so awesome to to have as an art piece. And he was like, yeah, man. That's that's what I believe in and this and that. So we found out, you know, I found out his name and he found out mine. He was like, what?

That's your name? And I was like, yeah. He was like, that's your name? Like, yeah. And, the only difference between his name and my name is his name ends with a y and mine ends with an l.

We have the same initials, bro. Like s g, like Sergei, and his last name is G something. Yes. So, so A Hole, Sergei, who else, who else, who else, Atomic, you know, a lot of local artists. Freaky, man, double04, K'Nets, from, from, Daywear, Kool Aid was a Tiger, so he so yeah, I I keep my my art and my love for art local because I'm a local guy.

Yeah, man. That's beautiful. It's always good to hear people supporting local artists and supporting local spaces and keeping art alive, not just in the museum, but outside. Absolutely. Because art's for everybody.

Oh, yeah. Absolutely. I mean, even poetry, you know. I I I I speak in those places. I've been in those places.

Miss Ingram be, Will the Real One, God Rest His Soul. I've been around those spaces for quite some time. Butterfly, She's one of the one of the local, artists, poets that go around, and she spits, and she's amazing. I'm talking about she's a freestyle poet. Oh, wow.

She Like, she just makes it up on the spot? On the spot. Okay. What's going on, and she will do it, and she is so good. Oh, that's butterfly.

You oh my goodness. There's so many different artists, so many different people that, I look up to in this art space, both, you know, in a visual art space, audio art space, you know, all these different mediums. I love it. Wow. Love it.

Love it. Love it. So what would you say are some Miami things since I am technically new ish to Miami that I should definitely check out? Miami things that you should check out. Like, whether that's, like, culture things, things that you're like, yo, since you live in Miami or since you were born here, you're like, yes.

This is Miami, Miami. Well, you definitely have to go to a lot of the festivals like the Calle Ocho Festival, the Gourmet Festivals. You have to have you a, a chicken patty or beef patty with a cocoa bread with a team. You gotta have Haitian food at the end of the night when you ain't got nothing else to do. When you're done for the day, you gotta have that.

You gotta go to Lorna's. You gotta go to Red Rooster. You gotta you gotta do a lot of those places are gone, like the flea market back in the day. Uh-huh. I would say you go to the flea market.

What else? Man, there's so many different things to do. Right now, the thing to do now until April is to go down south to Nausbury Farms and get the famous famous famous, cinnamon rolls. Nausbury Farms. Nausbury Farms.

Someone told me about that. Cash only Nausbury Farms. Yeah. And those cinnamon buns are amazing. It's k n a u s s Berry Farms.

Yeah. It's and they're they're Amish. They're Amish people. Yes. And they have the best cinnamon buns and pretty much everything else.

Milkshakes. I have not gone personally, but I've eaten. You've eaten some of the stuff from there? Yes. So I'm ready to go personally so I can have that experience.

Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Oh, that's what I need to do then. Yep.

The Miami Youth Fair. Oh, my goodness. There's so many different things to do. Go to a Heat game, of course. I need to go to a heat game.

What else? Go to a Marlins game. I mean, they, you know, whatever. Go to a Dolphins game. Whatever.

Yeah. Go to a Dolphins game. Check yourself out. Everything I expected. Everything I wanted.

Yes. You know, it's so funny. Like, when you don't have a haircut Yeah. Then you get a haircut, you're like You feel so good. You feel so like a human being again.

Yeah. And I love being able to do that. I love being able to do that and give people that feeling of looking and feeling good and all those things. I love that. You know?

Again, going back to passion. Passion for this art, for this space has been in me for quite some time, and I don't see it going anywhere. Oh, wow. You know? That's beautiful.



I don't see it going anywhere. So Yeah. This opportunity is making me love it even more. Of course, the teaching is making me love it even more. And, you know, having people around me that believe in me doing this makes me love it even more.

So it's like, well, thank you, people. I appreciate y'all. I'm a keep on going. Right. Right.

That's it. That's it. Thank you. You know? Goodness.

So yeah. Yeah. I've I've been waiting on this. I've been waiting on doing a haircut here at the museum. So thank you.

There's going to be more. Oh, yeah. I know there's going to be more. There's going to be probably going to be a few more. Wow.

Good. But, you know, thank you so much for sharing your journey, your passion for the community with us today. And I just want to say, like, your story reminds us of the incredible power and resilience of barbers and the skill that is acquired through the profession. And for our listeners, if you wanna keep up with Sergei, then you can go to his his shop, which is located on what? 34th Street.

And well, the address is 321 Northeast Miami Avenue. Oh, North Miami Avenue. I'm sorry. North Miami Avenue. And there's other ways they can connect to you on social media?

Sure. They can go to my Instagram which is THE1sirjdabarber, and, you can go to sirjthebarber.com. You can hit me up on Twitter. The ones, yeah, Sirjdabarber. Just about everything on socials is Sirjdabarber.

Google Sirjdabarber. You'll find me on better Better Business Bureau, you know. Google me. I'm I'm out there. I'm on I'm in the digital world.

Thank you so much, and thank you everyone for listening. We'll see you next time on in conversation.