

## The Peale, Baltimore

*Out of the Blocks* Storytelling Series

Recorded by Aaron Henkin; Photographs and Music by Wendel Patrick

Produced for the Out of the Blocks website, created by the Peale, <https://ootb.thepeale.org/>



Keith Person ([00:00](#)):

Being a barber, one of the most important things you have to learn is to be able to listen. My name is Keith Person. I am 50 years old, and I am the owner of Hair Personalities Barbershop here in the Cherry Hill community. I was born and raised in this community, schooled here and after high school, I went into the service. When I came out of the service, I interviewed with a guy named Mr. Heavy, who owned a barbershop at that time. About four years, I worked with Mr. Heavy.

Keith Person ([00:51](#)):

Unfortunately, in about the fifth year I got introduced to drugs. It took me down some dark roads. And because of my struggle, I seek to do better in my life. And it pushed me to pull myself out of the situation I was in. And that's when I came to know that there truly was a God. People who I used to maybe do things that were displeasing with, some of the same people are now coming into my shop here, Personalities. And they know my story. So when they see the change, they know that it's nothing fake about it.

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Mike Brown ([01:38](#)):

My name's Mike Brown. I've been here for two years, but I'm a master barber women hair to. Where I come from, I come from here, right? I used to use drugs. That was my life. I wake up and use drugs. You know, I used to love it. You know what I'm saying? And I went to jail, came home and just decided a different way of life. It's not all to it. So a lot of guys watch me, they watched me, a lot of young guys. So they knew my past life and they like, "wow, if you change, wow." All of us had this basically the same walk, you know? And it's better to be an open book.

Dana Smith ([02:25](#)):

So you can kind of say, what you want to say, what's on your mind in a barbershop, it's all taken with a grain of salt. So even with insults, when some times people get into it over the chess game and screaming, yelling, cussing, and flossing, it's not personal.

Dana Smith ([02:39](#)):

It's not, it's not personal. My name's Dana Smith. I started getting my hair cut in this shop when I was eight. So I've been in Cherry Hill my whole life. Coming to barbershop, you want to get a good haircut, get some fresh vibes and feel good about yourself, walking out the door. So hopefully you take that throughout the rest of your day. Fridays is my day before I go into work. I'm self employed. So I come in on Friday mornings, get a haircut, talk to the fellows. I've been here since, "what time I got here? I got here by eight o'clock?" So I don't know what time it is now, but one of the joys of being self-employed though, my clock starts when I started.

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