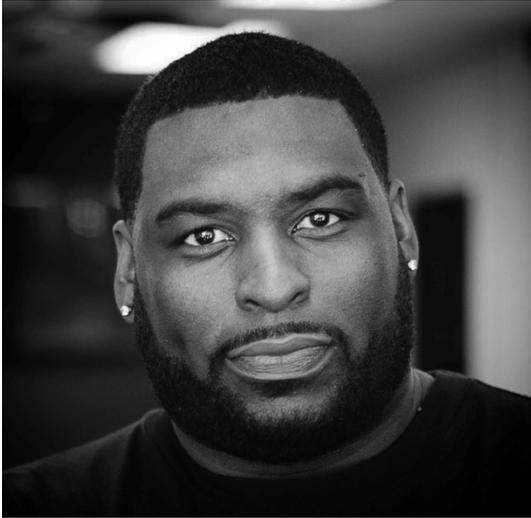


**MASTERS Audio Club, August 2017**  
**John Mosley**  
**Barbering and Men's Grooming Expert**



**John Mosley**, who calls himself and his line of apparel and accessories the “Popular Nobody,” is one of the most sought-after barbers in the industry. His wide-ranging celebrity clientele includes Kendrick Lamar, Larenz Tate, Eminem, and world-class athletes, and his work has appeared on the covers of *Rolling Stone* and *Billboard* magazines.

Interviewed by **Winn Claybaugh**, this superstar in the world of barbering, men's grooming, and celebrity styling has a lot to say about humility, sacrifice, branding, integrity, and how to remain grounded while your star is rising.

Winn: Hi everybody, Winn Claybaugh here. Welcome to a wonderful issue of MASTERS. I'm sitting here with a man that I've known for many, many years. I actually knew your mom first. Are you second generation or third generation? I mean, how far up the—

John: I'm actually—

Winn: —tree does it go?

John: Well, actually now it's like fourth. I'm—

Winn: Fourth generation.

John: Yeah.

Winn: In the beauty industry?

John: Yeah. Yes, sir.

Winn: Wow.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: Congratulations.

John: Thank you.

Winn: I love your mom. What an amazing woman she is.

John: Yeah, she—you know, it's funny 'cause she always speaks very highly of you—

Winn: Huh.

John: —and, you know, she's just excited that, you know, her offspring has come to the company—

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: —that, you know, that she loves and, you know, the people that she, you know, looks up to as well, and being able to just be a part of it and she's watching that all happen and, you know, transpire through me is, you know, it's a great feeling to go home and be able to talk to my mom at night about it.

Winn: Well, I'm sitting here with John Mosley, probably one of the most sought after—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —famous, busy barbers in the beauty industry today. And just to give our listeners some information on who you are or the people that you have worked with: I mean, you were on Eminem and Rhianna's Monster Tour, right?

John: Yes, sir.

Winn: Oh my gosh. Which was featured on Netflix. Some of your other clients include Larenz Tate, oh my gosh, Kendrick Lamar, ScHoolboy Q. I mean, it's NBA players, Major League Baseball players, and I know that you're not one that drops names but—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —I'm going to ask you to step out of your comfort zone today. And I always tell our listeners the reason why I want the people that I feature on these interviews to drop names and to share their successes and their victories is because the people who are listening to this are listening to this because they want to feel inspired, they want to aspire. And if they don't know what you've accomplished, then they don't have anything to shoot for, too. So, there's nothing special about you or special about me, different than anybody else. I heard it once said that "You're the light of the world and so is everybody else."

John: Mm-hm.

Winn: And so when we come from that place, all we're doing is sharing information so that we can motivate each other to reach further. So again, John, thank you so much for being a part of this and I truly, truly appreciate you as a person 'cause I get to see you up close.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: I get to hear about your successes. By the way, congratulations 'cause I know in this FUNraising campaign that we recently had, you raised over \$50,000 for a variety of charities and causes, so—

John: Yes, sir.

Winn: —that's got to feel good.

John: It definitely felt good. Like I normally don't celebrate my accomplishments because I—one of my biggest things is, you know, I feel like, you know, our story is already written. We're just here reading it to the world and so I don't normally celebrate a lot of things because of that fact, you know? And I actually took to Instagram that night and made a post and, you know, took a moment to, you know, pat myself on the back because you look at the way the world is right now and not too many people give back to help others. And, you know, a lot of my clients behind the chair and a lot of my celebrity clients, I didn't even tell them what I was doing.

Winn: Hm.

John: You know, so a lot of people just knew I was gone a lot. I was on the road. And I thought that night was the moment for me to tell the world like, "Hey, in my absence from behind the chair and from photo shoots and stuff like this, I wasn't doing it to be selfish. I was actually doing it to give \$54,000 back—"

Winn: Hm.

John: "—to somebody else and help other people." When, you know, when you look at it now, everybody just, you know, flaunts all the stuff that they have but never flaunt the fact that you've got to give back, too. And I think that was, you know, the moment I took to share that and, you know, at the end of it I said, "That moment's over, now onto \$100,000 for next year."

Winn: There you go.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: *[laughs]* And you just put it on tape.

John: Yeah, I went live with it.

Winn: So yeah, so you're committed now.

John: I'm always committed. A hundred thousand dollars.

Winn: Not that this is a Paul Mitchell platform, because MASTERS certainly is not, but we raised over \$1.5 million—

John: Wow.

Winn: —throughout this campaign. I have a friend of mine that's heavily involved in the real estate industry in New York City and he flies in every single night just to attend that night. And he says the reason why he does that is because he works with people who literally have billions of dollars and they give less than what was raised that night by—*[laughs]* by students.

John: Yeah.

Winn: By people like you who are hitting the streets, 'cause you weren't just sitting at home and checks were flying in. You had to get on the road and hustle—

John: Oh yeah. It was a lot of—

Winn: —to make that happen.

John: A lot of sleepless nights. A lot of plane rides. Sometimes I was taking three flights in one day. Sometimes I was in two different cities and I think the closeout fundraising, I did seven states, six cities in six days.

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: You know, to close it out so I could make sure I hit my goal.

Winn: Wow. Congratulations.

John: Thank you.

Winn: Little bit more about John and let's see: okay, your work has been published in *GQ*, *New York Times Style*, *British GQ*, as well as *Vogue*, the cover of *Billboard* magazine. Who was it that you were styling on the cover of *Billboard* magazine?

John: I got the cover of *Billboard* magazine with Kendrick Lamar.

Winn: Wow.

John: Yeah.

Winn: Tell me about your relationship with him.

John: It's pretty crazy how it goes from—I was working with Kendrick before he actually blew up to the world as who he is now. And, you know, there was some things that came up where I had to kind of walk away from the situation. And in doing that I just focused back on the shop and working behind the chair. And then I knew someone that was still connected to him. I told him, I said, "Yo, I just need one shot again. Just give me one opportunity again." And that opportunity came up. I was working at the Costa Mesa school and, you know, I went in and talked to my director and said, "Hey, I've got an opportunity that I asked for." I put it out to the universe and I asked for it and now it's here and, you know, I asked for permission to leave work that day to go fulfill that. And ever since that day happened, I've been back with Kendrick through the Grammys, through every magazine cover, and just on that journey. And working with him, he has taught me a lot because he's very humble and he gives back a lot to his community and to other people as well. And so just being able to be around him and, you know, looking at the man he is and how he does things and, you know, I kind of adapted to some of that stuff that I learned by working with him.

Winn: Such as—because, you know, everybody loves to slam and trash celebrities.

John: Yeah.

Winn: They wear the wrong outfit to the gym and they get slammed. Their private lives are forced to live publically.

John: Yes.

Winn: And so, you know, we could sit here, as many people do, for days and days and days and talk bad about celebrities but, you know, when you hear these kinds of stories, these are the ones that we want to expose. So what have you learned from him?

John: Just his work ethic is crazy. There's no excuse. Like he just gets up and he will stay in the studio all night to get his, you know, tasks taken care of. And, you know, he doesn't drink so he stays pretty focused and that allows him to not have impaired vision of where he's trying to go and the insight of what he's trying to do. And, you know, just the humble aspect of it and working with someone who has started out in the bottoms and progressively worked his way all the way up to the top. And now he's sitting at the top and now he's bringing other people with him. And, you know, he takes care of his team and he looks after his unit and he's very loyal to, you know, the people around him. And, you know, just looking at that is amazing to be around and, you know, taking that all in from him, I think has helped me a lot, you know, doing this journey that I'm on because sometimes you get lost in all the stuff that happens and I think just being grounded by someone like that is definitely a good person to have in your circle.

Winn: What does humility look like?

John: Just—

Winn: For somebody like him, and then what have you adopted for yourself?

John: It's not about the flashiness. It's not about the jewelry. It's not about the flashy-name clothes. It's not about none of that. Humility is about being able to help others, being able to put back into the earth, you know, what has been put into you. And so, for me, that's kind of like what I look at and it's like, you know, I don't wear flashy name-brand stuff. I'm not that guy. Like I wear, you know, \$7 T-shirts sometimes or, you know, because it's not about that. It's not about the flash. It's not about the glitz. It's not about the glamour. It's about how hard do you work and what will separate you from being just average to great? And just that's—all of that all goes back to how much you put back into others as well.

Winn: You said that he's really good at taking care of his team. What do you mean by that?

John: You know, just looking after them. Making sure that everybody's happy. Making sure, you know, when he comes to work everybody's having fun. It's not such a serious environment. He's just laughing and joking and always having a smile. And just, you know, guiding his team. And even though he's the artist he's involved with the creative process of a lot of things and, you know, just making sure that everybody around him is well-taken care of and looked after and, you know, happy.

Winn: Hm. Now, let's see. You've also worked with *Black Enterprise* magazine, *Ebony*, and *Rolling Stone*.

John: Yes.

Winn: What did you do with those magazines?

John: All of those was covers.

Winn: Really?

John: Yeah. I have—

Winn: All with Kendrick or with others?

John: Others as well.

Winn: Oh, who else?

John: *Rolling Stone* was Kendrick's cover. *Black Enterprise* was Laurence Fishburne.

Winn: Okay.

John: The guy from *The Matrix*.

Winn: Right, right.

John: And then the second, *Ebony*, I was actually featured in a photo with me behind the scenes doing Kendrick. And—it was an interview of Kendrick but—

Winn: Yeah.

John: —they featured a photo of me and him together having—

Winn: Oh wow.

John: —a moment where I'm actually, you know, cleaning him up and giving that behind-the-scenes aspect of what I do.

Winn: Now, do you always get a photo credit? So like when he was on the cover of *Billboard* magazine or *Rolling Stone* magazine, do you get a credit?

John: Yes, I definitely get a credit.

Winn: Really?

John: Yes.

Winn: Sweet.

John: Yes. I definitely have them and I—but even though I get the magazine for free, I still buy the magazine because I'm a big supporter in supporting who supports you.

Winn: Right.

John: And I feel like if, you know, the way the Internet is and things like that now, so it's so easy to just take things without giving back. And I'm an artist and I feel like if an artist comes out with something or an artist has something to do with it and you had something else to do with it, instead of just waiting for it to come out to you for free—

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: —go support it and buy it.

Winn: Hm.

John: Because that's how they track what happens to this featured piece on this person. And if you had something to do with it, buy it. Don't get it for free. Just because, at the end of the day, in order to keep your job valid and valued, you have to be able to show that "We need to do another feature on him because these are the numbers that came with this interview." And I think if, you know, you just do it for free—you get the magazine for free—

Winn: I totally agree with that because—especially when, again, it's a celebrity, an artist that's putting something out there—

John: Mm-hm.

Winn: So it's their new film, it's a magazine, whatever it is, and they do good work, the only way that they can do good work, i.e., use their name and their celebrity and their money for good causes, is they have to have a successful career. So I will go to their movies *[laughs]*—

John: Yes. *[laughs]*

Winn: I'll pay money to see them because I like what they do with their name and celebrity outside of that.

John: Yes. And that's exactly how I feel. You know, I have Apple music but if I listen to the album for free and I like it, I turn around and buy it and support it.

Winn: Yeah.

John: Because it's like these guys are putting into their craft and this is their art form.

Winn: Right.

John: I want to support their art form because, at the end of the day, they helped support my art form and get me put out to the world because, like you said, those magazine covers and, you know, photo credits and grooming credits wouldn't have never happened if it wasn't for that person.

Winn: Now, are you also doing music videos?

John: Yes, I have a lot of music videos under my belt.

Winn: Give us some names and examples of who you've worked with and—.

John: As of recent, I did Jidenna, his *Bambi* video. I also did Jidenna's *Let Out* music video. I've worked with Travis Scott, his *Goosebumps* video with Kendrick Lamar. I've actually done Taylor Swift's *Bad Blood* video. I've worked with—

Winn: So working with Taylor Swift, you're working on Taylor Swift or the other people in the video or what does that look like?

John: It was a remix video that Kendrick was featured in.

Winn: Oh, sweet.

John: So it was Taylor Swift and Kendrick Lamar.

Winn: Oh, wow.

John: And so they called me to work on Kendrick but it was for the Taylor Swift music video.

Winn: Huh.

John: And I got to meet Taylor and hang out with Taylor.

Winn: Hm.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: What was that like?

John: It was fun. Like she's just, you know, another person. She's just another human being that loves cats and, you know, it was amazing.

Winn: Loves cats. *[laughs]*

John: *[laughs]* Yeah. She showed me pictures of her cat.

Winn: There you go.

John: And it was just fun, you know? Like I said, it's just amazing being able to be around the people that I'm around.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And, you know, learn from.

Winn: Have you done films, as well?

John: I also—

Winn: Movie sets?

John: I also have experience in movie sets. I've done the movie, *Obsessed*, with Beyoncé and Idris Elba. I've also worked on, as of recent, this movie named *Deuces*, that's on Netflix.

Winn: Okay.

John: It's Lance Gross, Ricky Gonzalez, Rotimi, Larenz Tate, and Siya. And I actually styled and cut all the men for the movie.

Winn: Wow.

John: Yeah.

Winn: So talk to us about—just walk our listeners through this: so you're doing Kendrick for the cover of *Billboard* magazine, *Rolling Stone* magazine. Does that take like five minutes? Does that take three days? Does that—what does that whole thing look like? Was it in the studio? At his home? Is it on location? Is it all of the above?

John: Preparation starts when they check my availability. Then after they check my availability, I say okay. I agree to the numbers and everything and then from that I get a call sheet and that gives me my call time. And then once I get the call time, I get the location. I map it distance-wise to be prepared. Then from that, I'll go into preparing Kendrick's kit. What will I need for him? So it goes down to his grooming products, making sure that my clippers are not too sharp for his face. You know, making sure that, you know, everything is covered, grooming aspect-wise. And then everything is pretty much done on location. And then after I groom Kendrick, we go out to set. You know, I hold his water, hold a towel for him—a black towel to make sure that I keep him, you know, sweat-free through the shoot. And just making sure that I'm—at that point I'm a step over just being his groomer and barber. Now I'm his personal assistant to make sure that he's okay at that moment when he's on set.

Winn: Now, is that your choice to do that? I mean, did you just step into that and assume, *Hey, somebody needs to do that so I'll just do that?* Or did they say, "Cool. After you've groomed him, now you need to make sure that he's sweat-free." Or—

John: No, that's just—it's just what it is. You know the problem, you become the solution. And that's one of the problems—

Winn: But how did you know that? How did—

John: I was groomed by my sister and my mother. You know, I come from a hair family, so being able to have those mentors groom me for that type of stuff and it makes my job a whole lot easier to understand. And, you know, I would want somebody—if you're my barber, don't just be my barber, be the person that takes care of me through this process.

Winn: Perfect.

John: And that's how I look at it.

Winn: So in other words, you didn't look at it like, *Well, he's groomed. I'm done. I'm going to go sit back here and text while this photo shoot is going on.* And yet he's still sweating through the process of the next three or four hours, right?

John: *[laughs]* Oh no, no, no. I stand next to the camera guy. So as soon as he takes a picture, I can look over at the monitor and if anything needs to be changed, adjusted, I can adjust right there on the fly. I always want to see what he looks like on camera. Even in rehearsal. I'll go through walk-through rehearsal with him so I can see exactly what camera angles they're shooting so I know how to clean him up and make him look the best that he can look, or any of my artists look when they're on camera.

Winn: Okay. So cleaning him up—I mean, getting him ready for any kind of a shoot, what are you doing? You're doing beard, you're doing—tell us everything that you're doing and how long does it take?

John: Cleaning his face, prepping his face, lining him up, lining his beard up, lining his neckline. He also wears braids now and so his fiancé braids his hair. Then I'll come in and spray a little hold on his braids to make sure that they don't move through the shoot. And then I'll add a little shine spray to him. You know, rub his beard, put a little moisturizer on his face, and then turn around and just make sure that he—everything is intact. And then walk him over to camera, watch them shoot him for a minute, and then if I—like I said, change anything, adjust anything, see if he likes it. Once he likes it, then at that point it's a go and now it's just maintenance from that point on and that normally takes about—the grooming aspect—probably about 15 minutes—

Winn: Okay.

John: —just to get the perfect look. And then after that, the camera stuff, that's all up to him.

Winn: So, like the shoot for *Rolling Stone* magazine, how long did that take?

John: That shoot—*Rolling Stone* probably took about five hours.

Winn: Wow.

John: Five hours. It was a lot of different looks.

Winn: Okay.

John: A lot of different looks. Then we also have been on set where he's spitting at the camera with water and those images take a while 'cause they've got to clean the lens off and—but they come out so great. *[laughs]*

Winn: Right.

John: So great. So.

Winn: Fun stuff.

John: Yeah. Yeah, definitely fun. Definitely fun.

Winn: So when you're paid, are you paid just to groom him or you're paid to be there for the whole day?

John: I'm there for the whole day.

Winn: Okay.

John: Yeah, I'm there grooming him or being around him, taking care of him, for the whole day.

Winn: You mentioned prepping your kit for that day.

John: Mm-hm.

Winn: Is your kit pretty much ready to go at any moment or is that something like a nightly ritual that you have at the end of every single day just in case you get a phone call in the middle of the night: "I need you here"? What does that look like?

John: My kit stays ready to go.

Winn: Okay.

John: I actually have my kit here with me today. I never leave home without it.

Winn: Really?

John: Yeah. It's over in the corner—

Winn: Just in case.

John: Just in case. You never—

Winn: Just in case you need to clean me up today.

John: If you needed—

Winn: I need help.

John: If you need—

Winn: Look at me. I need help.

John: *[laughs]* If you need it, I'm ready for you. *[laughs]*

Winn: *[laughs]* Okay.

John: But, you know—and I look at it like I'm almost like a 24-hour doctor. You know, my phone can ring at any moment, anywhere in the world, and so I always have my passport with me in hand and I always have my tools with me.

Winn: Really?

John: I could buy a T-shirt and pants anywhere.

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: So I just—

Winn: But your kit.

John: But my kit is the most important and I make sure it's TSA-ready and I travel with any—my shears travel up to a seven and a half because that's the largest shear you can carry on a plane.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: So I never check my kit. My kit always stays on my person. And so I always have that ready to go no matter what time of the night it is, no matter where I'm at in the world.

Winn: And that could be for anything that comes up.

John: Anything that comes my way, I'm ready to go.

Winn: Are you only grooming men or are you grooming women as well?

John: I'm only grooming men. Like they label me the barber, the men's grooming specialist, so—

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: —I only groom men. I will assist in helping someone with a woman as far as holding clips, pins, whatever. You know, giving them a different creative artist-type vibe to help them see in maybe a different vision. I have taken care of women on set as well, but that's not my main focal point.

Winn: Right. So when you were on set with Kendrick and Taylor Swift, there was obviously another stylist who was taking care of Taylor Swift.

John: Yes.

Winn: Right. What do you learn from these stylists and what's your banter? What's your relationship like? Or—I'm asking to give some advice because what can happen—what I've heard—is that people can turn into little divas on that set and—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —the last person that needs to be a diva on a set would be somebody like you.

John: Yeah.

Winn: I mean, you're there to serve and I mean that in a really, really good way. It's wonderful what we do. We serve people and that's a very, very noble profession.

John: Yes, sir. It's funny because you do see divas come out. You know, some teams, you will see like the stylists be divas and, you know, I experienced something when I was on tour with Eminem and Rhianna. And, you know, somebody's staff was kind of, you know, not being nice to some of the stadium workers. And, you know, when I see that I feel bad for those workers because it's like you're just doing your job but this person feels like they have status over you because of who they work for. And—

Winn: But they're serving as well. They're—

John: They're doing their job. They're doing their job and that's all—you know, and it's sad but luckily I haven't encountered that so much because my talent is pretty up there himself and so people respect you when you come through—

Winn: Right.

John: —with certain talent. And when I'm on set, I network. I'm a student of everything.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: So I watch photographers and how they shoot and how they create looks and images and—because photography is my hobby.

Winn: Right.

John: So I take away that aspect and I talk to the photographers sometimes like, "Hey, what are you shooting with? Why do you like this?" On our down time I'm just not hanging out. I'm actually picking brains of different people so that—

Winn: Again, you're not texting.

John: No, no. I'm—

Winn: And I keep on bringing that up because that's the number-one complaint that I've heard from my famous friends who have given an opportunity to have a student come on set with them for whatever—a music video or a photo shoot or whatever—and that's the number-one complaint that I hear. Not often, but on occasion it's like, "Well, they were on their cell phones the whole time."

John: Yeah.

Winn: What could have been a career-changing opportunity and they're too busy texting who knows who doing what.

John: Yeah, you know, celebrities don't like that because, at the end of the day, you're in their private zone.

Winn: Right.

John: And they don't know what you're texting about. They don't know who you're texting.

Winn: Oh, you could be taking pictures—

John: Pictures.

Winn: —and—oh yeah.

John: So you want to leave your phone out of that equation. And if you—

Winn: In the car.

John: It's in the car, it's in your backpack or in your kit and if you need to use your phone, walk out of the trailer.

Winn: Right.

John: And get away from the area and text or make your phone call and then come back to it. Just so that the celebrity is comfortable because right now the way social media is running the world—

Winn: Right.

John: —it's too much stuff getting leaked.

Winn: Right.

John: And so to secure your job and secure your next, you know, job—

Winn: And be respectful—

John: And be respectful—

Winn: —for their space. That’s their space.

John: You’re in—

Winn: You’re talking about being a diva, there’s about 10 people who could be on that diva list prior to the stylist, prior to the men’s groomer. I mean, the producer could be a diva, the director could be a diva, but—

John: Just be a good human.

Winn: There you go. There you go.

John: Be smart. Like I think nowadays a lot of people don’t have common sense. And that common sense sometimes is just as simple as putting yourself in the celebrity’s shoes.

Winn: Hm.

John: What would you like and what would you not like done?

Winn: Hm.

John: And then if you put yourself in their position, you’ll understand your role a whole lot better.

Winn: You said that you’re a student when you’re on set. So what have you learned from other people in your position from being on set like that?

John: I’ve learned different little tricks. I pick up on makeup tricks a little bit, you know, because even though I’m a barber, I still want to make myself of value.

Winn: Right.

John: And so just learning makeup tricks, you know, learning how to be a head of a department on set; learning how to, you know, make a continuity book; making sure all the paperwork is filled out right. Just stuff like that that people forget about as an artist. You just forget, you know, ’cause you’re an artist but the art of the business is business. And so just learning those business aspects and set etiquette. You know, the simple things of when you’re walking out of a trailer, you know, yell back, “Stepping down,” so people know to stop working because you’re going to step, that’s going to shake the trailer. Things of that nature—

Winn: Right.

John: —that people just don't learn or don't even pick up on is the stuff that I like to pay attention to because that also makes people say, "You know what? He has proper set etiquette. We can trust that he's going to do the work. He knows how to fill paperwork. He can also fill in and do this if we need him to." So just being the—like that aspect of being a student. And then just learning, just soaking that all in and then spitting it back out by, you know, being present in the moment and showing people like, "Hey, I understand like what to do on set."

Winn: Hm.

John: And, you know, just being there, helping out.

Winn: You said—you mentioned paperwork, so I would assume that there's a lot of the business side of it. So you said that it took you 15 minutes to groom Kendrick.

John: Yes.

Winn: How much do you believe that your being re-hired, that you're so in demand, is because you're so good at grooming Kendrick or whoever else it is compared to how good you are with all the behind the stuff, which is, you know, paperwork. I mean, I—like I know some amazing, amazing people who I would love to work with more but they're horrible at email.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: Like I can't get a response.

John: And that's funny. *[laughs]*

Winn: You know, for two weeks I'm like, I'm waiting, you know, but once I finally connect with them and I can book them and I put them on a stage or I give them an opportunity or I get to work with them, they're brilliant. But all the work behind the scenes is so much work that sometimes it's like why bother?

John: Yeah, you know, it's funny 'cause I go back to that night that me and you were laughing, emailing back and forth. It had to be about midnight and you're like, "Go to bed." And I'm like, "I can't." *[laughs]*

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: But it's just—I feel like, you know, it's a 24-hour window. It's a 24-hour window to get back to an email. And if you don't respond in 24 hours, you just lost that opportunity.

Winn: Right.

John: That's what most people think. For me, I look at it as if an email—I check my email every 30 minutes to an hour.

Winn: Wow.

John: And the reason why I do that is to stay on top of everything. So if I see it, I don't like to let nothing get past me. So if I see that email come through, if I've seen it, I'm going to answer and reply that quick. And in that first email response I will give them my phone number.

Winn: Right.

John: Because sometimes it's easier just to hop on a call while you have that person's attention—

Winn: Right.

John: —to cut down on emails, we can just talk about it and then get all the details worked out via email. But we initially have this call, set it up, you show this person your personality. It's a formal-type meet and greet over the phone instead of just emailing back and forth. So now when you show up, everybody's comfortable with everybody because you've already had this wall breaking down from the Internet and actually picked up the phone—

Winn: Hm.

John: —and handled business and talked to this person and kind of laughed and joked with them before—

Winn: Yeah.

John: —which you can't do through an email.

Winn: Right. Well, I think you had called it common sense. Common sense, good manners. Paying attention.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: Being a good student; being aware; being really, really good with all the little details.

John: Yes.

Winn: Good for you. What is a continuity book, by the way?

John: A continuity book—so if you're working on a movie—another great thing is reading the script. As the hairstylist, barber, makeup artist: reading the script before the talent shows up so that you know if he didn't go home or she didn't come home the night, that means her look has to look like she didn't show up

at home. So she's not going to be groomed the next day and be well put together.

Winn: Oh wow.

John: She's going to look like she didn't show up at home. So if I'm reading the script then I'm saying, *Okay well, this guy was at the bar late last night. He got home late, he was a little drunk, so his hair shouldn't be perfect when he's on camera shooting the next day.*

Winn: Right.

John: He needs to have a 5 o'clock shadow.

Winn: Right.

John: He can't be clean-shaved because he didn't go home in time to—so just knowing that and reading that and being a student in that aspect. And then the continuity book is, you know, first day on set you build a character. You cut his hair or you do her hair—male or female—then you take a picture, send it to production. The production team say yea or nay on the look. If they say yea, then you take that picture, put it in a book, and this is the character's look for the rest of the movie.

Winn: Got it.

John: Besides the little aspects of reading that script and finding out what's happening in the film to make everything still look true as if you were really just reading and watching the story happen.

Winn: Now, how did you learn all that?

John: My sister. *[laughs]*

Winn: Well, tell us about your sister then. What—obviously she does the same stuff.

John: Yes. My sister, Lily, she's amazing. She's amazing. At the age of 18, my mom sent her off to Vidal Sassoon in London.

Winn: Okay.

John: And that's where she studied.

Winn: Okay.

John: And then she came back and she toured the world with musicians and artists and she works on movie sets still today, TV shows today, and so she has 10 years ahead of me.

Winn: Okay.

John: In age. And so when I went into barbering school, I kind of said, “Okay,” I wanted to do the things that my sister was doing but I also wanted to do the things my mother is doing. So I kind of walked that fine line down the middle of both of them. And so my sister always would like, you know, “If you ever need anything, just call me if you don’t understand something.” So every job I got early on in my career, I would call her and ask her like, you know, “What should I do here? What should I do here?” And she kind of just coached me through—

Winn: Hm.

John: —and we were actually blessed to work on a couple sets together.

Winn: Oh really?

John: Yeah, we’ve been—

Winn: Ah.

John: —able to work on some sets together so having her there and being able to share moments like that, it helps. And I’ve learned so much from her, like those little key things because she’s been doing it longer than I have.

Winn: Now, let’s talk about all the other things that you’re doing, too, ’cause you have about ten jobs, right?

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: You work in a shop.

John: Mm-hm.

Winn: Where is the shop? How many days a week? What’s your clientele like? What are you charging?

John: My shop—I’ve been there since I’ve started my barbering career.

Winn: At what year?

John: Two thousand one. I walked off the football field and I just decided to do hair. It was a joke. I just didn’t know what else to tell my mom and I thought if I just told her I would do hair, she’d back up off me a little bit and give me a little wiggle room. And so it didn’t happen like that. She was like, “Boy, this is the last thing I’m paying for,” and I came downstairs two days later and there was a box of clippers on the table and I was enrolled in barber school. And, you

know, I walked that journey and then I started out in Premier Hair Stylists in Long Beach, California, and that's where I'm at today.

Winn: Yeah.

John: And going into that shop, I told the owner, I said, "Hey, I will be the best guy you have working here. I will work harder than anyone else and I promise you I won't leave your shop until it's time for me to do something bigger and better."

Winn: Hm.

John: And still, to this day, I'm still at that shop even though I have accomplished so many things because I feel like, you know, I'm loyal to the community and loyal to my clientele because these are the people who helped me get to this point. And that's going to continue to help me grow further because they're my practice.

Winn: So you've only had one job—

John: I've only had—

Winn: —when it comes to working in a shop.

John: Behind the chair, I've only had one job.

Winn: And how—so now how many days a week are you there?

John: Due to travel and the fact that I'm teaching probably about 30 classes a month, I am only there Fridays and Saturdays.

Winn: Okay.

John: And sometimes I can't be in those days so if I can jump in anytime during the week, I'll open my appointment book and allow, you know, clients to book with me throughout that. But I try to get there Fridays and Saturdays.

Winn: What do you charge for your services there?

John: I start out—old clients are grandfathered in at \$25; new clients \$45.

Winn: Okay.

John: Wow, good for you. Now, you're also an educator. Is that what you picked up from Mom?

John: Yes, that is definitely a Mom trait.

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: Teach, share. So you're doing 30 classes a month. That's a lot.

John: Yeah. It's definitely a lot but I love it.

Winn: Classes strictly on barbering.

John: Strictly on barbering but actually I take this barbering platform and I—when I'm at schools I try to motivate the students because it's not about just me getting up there and showing them I can cut hair. I think sometimes walking into these schools, those students need more than just you being a haircutter.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And so I take that to our class time and turn an hour into motivation and inspiration and a little question and answer. And then the next hour is me going into haircuts and talking about the haircuts, the tools that I'm using, and how to build haircuts. Because I feel like I was a student and I know sometimes just sitting back, you don't want to just see somebody come in and talk about haircuts or talk about how they got to where they're at now. You want to talk about what did it take and how are you continuing to grow? And I feel like that's more important than just me showing up, cutting hair.

Winn: What is the motivation? Like what are the topics where you open up your—so you got a bunch of students sitting there, or a bunch of stylists or barbers sitting there, and sometimes you and I know what that looks like.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: They're, you know, leaning back with their arms folded like, "Yeah, what have you got for me?" People that say, "Oh Winn, I want to do what you do. I want to stand on stages." And I'm like, "Really? Really?" *[laughs]*

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: You know, follow me around because sometimes it's like you're at the worst hotel, in the worst city, in the worst part of that city—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —with 20 people who are upset that they have to be there. Their boss threatened them that if they didn't go to the class, they were in trouble. And so they're like, "Yeah, what have you got?" So what is it that, when you open up your mouth, you—certain words come out of your mouth that all of the sudden they relax, they lean forward, and they're like—what is that topic?

John: One of them is sacrifice.

Winn: Really?

John: One of them is definitely sacrifice because I feel like a lot of people don't sacrifice things but they want everything given to them.

Winn: Talk to us, you know, more about that. Some people call this the microwave generation.

John: Yeah.

Winn: They just want everything instantly.

John: *Instagram.*

Winn: They want—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: They want the—there you go. They want the results without the work. You know, they all want the spotlight, and the truth of the matter is, they'd probably make a total fool of themselves if they got the spotlight 'cause they're not ready.

John: Yes.

Winn: So, but you say it's the sacrifice.

John: Yeah.

Winn: So talk about that.

John: The sacrifice. Family time. You sacrifice family time. You sacrifice, you know, missing important things and you sacrifice, you know, sometimes a paycheck to go do what you love and what fills your cup up. And so I—one of the biggest things I talk about is sacrifice. I talk about family, you know, because—

Winn: You're a father.

John: Definitely a father. *[laughs]*

Winn: How many kids?

John: I have three beautiful kids.

Winn: How old?

John: Thirteen, ten, and a one-year-old.

Winn: Okay.

John: Yeah.

Winn: So you're a dad.

John: Yeah, I'm a dad. I have full custody of two of my children, the 13 and the 10-year-old.

Winn: Okay.

John: And so, you know, being able to share that, I think, with the audience right off the bat, opens them up because now you're not looking at somebody who's just sitting back and not being a father, or somebody that, you know, just living the life of glitz and glamour. You're actually looking at somebody that gets up in the morning, takes his kids to school, and then goes to the shop or then goes to set and finds ways to make sure I'm still showing up to parent-teacher conference or, you know—and I think a lot of times when you have an audience full of adults or Future Professionals or just people in general that have children and have families and don't know how to balance it, they sit there and like, "How do you do this?"

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And my answer is you sacrifice a lot because you know your why. You know your purpose. When you know your purpose and you know your why, everything else balances out automatically because then you understand what you're doing it for and who you're doing it for. And I think that's one aspect that gravitates people to, you know, my stage presence and just the fact that I'm real. I'm an open book. I don't hide, you know, nothing. I don't hide the fact that I was once married and divorced. I don't hide the fact that I've, you know, been broke before. I don't hide the fact that I've struggled. I don't hide none of that. It's very out, open into the public, because I feel like sometimes a lot of people use their platform and lie and they hide. And I feel like if you hide your plat—while you're on this platform, nothing you say is relevant or valid once you step down.

Winn: Hm.

John: And so, for me, to me always being on a stage and being that open book and accepting the fact that my past is my past—

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: —but also accepting the fact that my present is bright and my future is even brighter—

Winn: Hm.

John: —I think that helps people pay attention a little bit because they're looking at someone that is not afraid to say, "I messed up a lot in life but now look what I'm doing, not just for myself, not just for my children, but for others as well." And I think that's what makes people pay attention and love to hear what I say.

Winn: My good friend, Tim Storey, says that he was having a conversation with Quincy Jones, the famous record producer—

John: It's funny, I actually—

Winn: —did Michael Jackson and everybody else—

John: I have a picture with me and Quincy Jones.

Winn: Do you really?

John: Yes.

Winn: What an incredible man.

John: Shaking hands. We were laughing and joking.

Winn: Wow.

John: Yeah.

Winn: Well, Tim was saying that Quincy—Tim asked him, "Why is it that some artists have one hit? They're a one-hit wonder." And he says because they get that one hit and that's—they just want to live in that one hit. They're just content. Whereas other artists, they have that hit and they look up and, "Okay, well, I've got a hit," but they're back down, they're back focused on the next one and the next one and the next one. And I think a lot of people—kind of along the lines of what you're talking about right now—they're not willing to make that sacrifice over and over and over again to get there.

John: Yes. Yes. I listen to a lot of motivational stuff when I'm on my flights. A lot of times I listen to music but majority of the time I play motivational stuff in my ear a lot. I like Eric the Hip Hop Preacher.

Winn: Okay.

John: He's a great motivational guy and I feel like my motivation style is similar to his.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: You know, I don't dress the part like most motivational speakers. I don't. I just dress like me. And, you know, sometimes I throw people off because they're

like, “Oh this guy’s showing up in a baseball cap and this,” but then when I stand on stage and open up, they realize it’s deeper than just that outside appearance.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And so one of the things that, you know, Eric talks about a lot is that, you know, college basketball players come out of college the first year because they only focus on one paycheck. But that one paycheck is only like \$10 million. But if you stay in college for, you know, the full time and hone your skills, you’re not only focused on that one paycheck but now you’re focused on the second one. And that second one is not \$10 million, it’s normally about \$125 million.

Winn: Wow.

John: So that goes back to what you were bringing up is that one-hit wonder. Do you come out of school at 18 when your body is still a boy and then you fall short but you got just a quick paycheck?

Winn: Hm.

John: Or do you stay in and develop and then come out and get the \$10 million first but then get the \$125 million three years later with all the endorsements that come along with it?

Winn: Hm.

John: And that’s the way I look at a lot of things. Like I don’t mind working right now for a little because I know what I can do past that point and that’s how I work. And that’s what I share with the people in the audience, is just don’t think short term. Think long term and push, push, push. And that’s why I always say you find the problem but become the solution.

Winn: For you, what has been the toughest sacrifices that you’ve had to make?

John: Huh. *[pauses]* Man. One of them is having a daughter in Florida that I don’t really get to see much.

Winn: Hm.

John: You know? I don’t really get to spend that time with her. I can’t say I’m able to be the best father because I’m not there.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: You know, so I think that’s one of the hardest things for me. I battle with that all the time, you know? It emotionally gets to me sometimes. And then the

sacrifice of—or, you know, breaking the stereotype of I'm an African-American male that is doing things that a lot of African-American males don't even think about doing. And so being a leader in that aspect is sometimes hard because, you know, they look at you and think that you're supposed to be an athlete or you're supposed to be, you know, a rapper or something. But no, I'm a hairstylist and I love doing what I do. And, you know, I go speak to the high school students sometimes and just tell them like, you don't always have to be in front of the camera. Be successful behind the camera and do things different than other people and don't care, you know, don't care about what others may think because you're you at the end of the day and you're who you have to live with not, you know, trying to be someone else for other people.

Winn: What are some of the difficult stereotypes that you have to break?

John: One of them I think I've already accomplished and conquered is that, you know, I couldn't cut straight hair. *[laughs]*

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: You know? A lot of people thought I was just a clipper pony. They thought I was one trick. And then now I'm showing you that I'm more than that one trick, you know. And then—that is one I think I've accomplished. And just showing the world that nobody knows how to be a father or nobody knows how to be a parent but being able to be the parent that I am right now—that I have the other two children that I have full custody of—I think being an example for them and showing them, you know, like I said, I'm an open book to the world. I'm an open book to my children as well. And I sit down and talk to them a lot about stuff because I feel like I need them to know and understand. And I think a lot of times that was part of the things that most people don't share, most people don't take the time to talk to their kids about. And so that is part of the stereotypes of, you know, just being a good dad, just being there and being a good father. And like I said, nobody's prepared and nobody understands how to be that. It's just something that naturally takes over you and instinctively you do. So I think being that and, you know, just learning how to adapt in all situations that I'm put in. And, you know, just working on being liked by many. *[laughs]*

Winn: *[laughs]* Let's talk about branding a little bit 'cause you—how did you come up with this name and brand, Popular Nobody?

John: *[laughs]* The Popular Nobody brand was kind of created in a crazy conversation with one of my clients. You know, like you said in the beginning of the interview, I don't really talk much about my celebrity clients. I don't really talk about really anything that I really do. I just do it. And when it comes out, it's out and I'm—like look at it and say, "Hey, thanks." But one of my clients was, you know, client to the stylist conversation and we were going

over some stuff that I've worked on and have done and he was like, "Man, your work is everywhere." He's like, "You're popular." I was like, "Yeah, but I'm still a nobody," you know? When people say stuff like that I always say like, "I'm just my mother and my father's son."

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: That's all I am. I'm just John Mosley, son of Doris Mosley and son of John Mosley. That's who I am. And, you know, I don't let that other side of what I do get too big. And so that's how it happened. And then, you know, for students and people who trying to brand, you have to understand that you don't want to brand yourself in a box. I look at Instagram all the time and I see the barber this, the barber that, the barber this, master barber this, this and that barber. You've only branded yourself to one selective group of people. You're not opening your brand up to the rest of the world. And so, for me, that's kind of like the thought of it was, *Do I want to brand myself only for this industry, which is hair? Or do I want to brand myself and create products and things like that for the world and allow other people to join my brand and my movement and say, "Guess what? You're a Popular Nobody, too."* I'm a Popular Nobody, you're a Popular Nobody. So it's not just the hair brand, it's a lifestyle. It's you being you and loving you. And I think, you know, being popular is something a lot of people want, but the inner person wants to be the nobody. But through the way society is set up, you're constantly fighting and battling, do you want the popularity or are you okay just being with who you are?

Winn: Hm.

John: And I think people struggle with that, so that's kind of like also the back and behind it is like just be hungry, just be humble, work hard and do what you do, and do it for you. And you don't have to impress nobody. You're—it's okay to be a popular nobody.

Winn: Well, you said that your brand is—you also named it a movement. So how do you protect your brand and how important is it for you to be very, very aware of how your actions, your postings through social media—all of these things affect your brand? How much do you think about that?

John: I think constantly about it because it's not just me that represents my brand. I have other artists, I have DJs, I have graphic designers that all represent the brand as well.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And so, for me, it's not just how do I reflect the brand? It's how do we, as a unit, reflect the brand? And so I think about it when I reach out to people that say, "Hey, do you want to, you know, be a part of the brand and join the movement of spreading this Popular Nobody movement around the world?"

And one of my things is I always tell the team, “Post with purpose. Don’t just go on there and post crazy and, you know, watch the words you choose to use. Watch the imagery that you put out.” You know, you won’t see me on Instagram with a picture of a drink in my hand ’cause I don’t drink.

Winn: Right.

John: You know, so I don’t put that out there. You know, I feel like a lot of people think it’s okay to hold drinks in your hand and take photos or flick the middle finger up on their camera and take a photo and post it. And if I see any of that, I automatically unfollow you. And my team members know not to post that because that’s not what we’re about. And so I always send those reminders and I lead by example. You know, my team knows that I’m a leader of leading by example, good and bad.

Winn: Well, I want to come back to your brand but as long as we’re talking about this, you said, “Post with purpose.” So what are some other guidelines? You said there’s no drinking. I would guess that there’s nobody smoking or—

John: No, no smoking.

Winn: —in any of your—

John: No drinking.

Winn: —images that you’re posting and—

John: No.

Winn: No selfies in your underwear. You’re not posting that.

John: No selfies in the underwear. It’s really no negative stuff being posted, period.

Winn: Right.

John: Because that’s not what we do, you know?

Winn: Right.

John: That’s not what we need to help change the world and be a part of, so.

Winn: Your mother would hit you upside the head.

John: Oh yeah. She would definitely.

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: It’s funny now ’cause my mom is like one of my biggest fans and supporters and I love it because it’s like this is a product of her and so, like I said, when it

comes to Instagram, everybody on my team posts pretty much clean and we focus on work. You know, we definitely focus on what we're trying to do and, you know, we believe in picking each other up. We text each other every day, most of us.

Winn: Is that your primary platform? Is it Instagram?

John: Yes.

Winn: Are you on other platforms as well?

John: No, I don't have Snapchat. I don't have Snapchat anymore.

Winn: What about Twitter or Facebook? Any of those?

John: I have Twitter but I don't really tweet. *[laughs]*

Winn: Okay.

John: And I have Facebook only for like business purposes.

Winn: Okay.

John: But other than that, I'm—

Winn: It's Instagram.

John: Yeah.

Winn: And how often you posting on Instagram?

John: On Instagram I probably post maybe two or three times a day.

Winn: Okay.

John: Sometimes four.

Winn: And what's your content? You're just out and about? Just—

John: Oh no. My content is work. It's haircuts, me on different platforms, maybe a magazine article that I've been featured in or magazine cover. But that's mostly what it is. You're going to see mostly my platform being work-related, not really my kids on there. It's business-oriented because so many people are looking at Instagrams now to hire people for different things.

Winn: Right.

John: And so if you have a bunch of pictures of your kids up and cheeseburgers and everything you really like to eat—

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: —they're like, "Oh so,"—*[laughs]*—"what are we hiring?" But if—

Winn: Right.

John: —I give you content of just these are my haircuts, these are the companies I work with, this is the platform, these are the people that I'm in front of, I think that kind of content makes people intrigued by, you know, seeing that because nobody knows that I—you know, I could go speak in front of a thousand people because you wouldn't think that. But then I could drop down and take a class of five people and speak to them as if there was a room full of a thousand.

Winn: Right.

John: And so I show that different versatility of who I am and what I can do and what I bring to the table. And so that's what my Instagram consists of. It's just posting with purpose.

Winn: And have you got a lot of work through your Instagram?

John: Yes, I have gotten calls to do magazine shoots—

Winn: Right.

John: —just off of my Instagram. Movies off of my Instagram. Celebrity clients off of my Instagram.

Winn: Wow.

John: Yeah, so it—the formula that I've worked out for myself has worked a great deal and I'm very, very thankful and—

Winn: Well, and like you said, you're also setting that standard and guiding and monitoring a team of people who believe in the same philosophy that you have about posting with purpose.

John: Yes. Yes, sir.

Winn: Okay. Let's go back to the importance of brand. So how do you feel about people who promote themselves as a master barber? Do you consider yourself a master barber?

John: No, I'm not.

Winn: Okay.

John: I'm not a master barber. And I really—

Winn: You just don't like that term or you feel like you need 10 more years of experience before you can call yourself a master barber or you never will call yourself a master barber and—? What's your feelings on all that?

John: I will never call myself a master barber even though I put the time in, I have the knowledge behind it, I have the skillset behind it. But I feel like if you're a master you stop growing.

Winn: Okay.

John: And so I just personally don't call myself a master barber because I'm constantly working, not just from the technical aspect of what I do but also the business aspect of what I do. And am I mastering my craft? Yes. Am I a master of my craft? Yes. But I will not call myself that because I'm technically still a student of my craft, as well.

Winn: Got it.

John: So.

Winn: As a student, you said that you learn on set, you network on set, you're asking questions of other stylists or of the photographer. I'm sure you're learning lighting from—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —them, which is very, very important.

John: Yes.

Winn: Not just because you dabble in photography. Maybe that wasn't the right word: dabble. Maybe you're more—

John: I still dabble—it's dabble.

Winn: Okay. All right.

John: I do a little bit. *[laughs]*

Winn: Okay. How else do you learn? As a student, where is your knowledge coming from?

John: Having wise conversations with people such as yourself. You know, just reaching out to people and just talking to people and taking on new journeys. Meeting with CEOs of companies and, you know, listening to motivational stuff and tweaking what I'm hearing, learning it and tweaking it to fit me and so then I can spit it back out in my verbiage form. And just being around

different networks of people and learning their ways and adapting and just, you know, being a student of life still.

Winn: Just so our listeners have a visual: how tall are you?

John: I'm 6'6".

Winn: You're 6'6". You're a big guy.

John: I'm 6'6", about 300 pounds.

Winn: Okay, so and you said you had a football career or you were heading down that path.

John: Yeah, I was definitely walking that line.

Winn: And what made you decide that that was not for you? I'm going to have a purpose for asking all of this, but.

John: *[laughs]* I literally, honestly, I just got tired of getting hit by grown men for free.

Winn: *[laughs]* For free. Getting hit by grown men for free.

John: While you're in college, that's free and you're getting beat up every day. And I was like, *Do I really, really want to do this?*

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: And they made—it made me question myself and a couple headaches and a couple bruises. I'm like, *You know what? Ya'll can keep this. I'm going to go try this hair thing out.* *[laughs]*

Winn: So how much—because of your stature, when you walk into a room, like you're surprising people? Are they like, "Who is this guy? Is—did we hire the wrong guy?"

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: I mean, how much have you had to like overcome, so to speak, just because of your stature?

John: Because of my stature, because of my presence when I walk into a building—and I always smell good. You know, I always smell clean. You know, so that's one. People look at me and like, "Oh, you smell amazing." "Thank you."

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: Like, you know? But that's one way to break—

Winn: I was not expecting that answer but—

John: *[laughs]* That's one way you break the—

Winn: What, they expected that you came off of a sweaty football field or something?

John: *[laughs]* Yeah.

Winn: All right.

John: So that's one way you break it down and just—

Winn: Oh wow.

John: —welcome with a welcoming scent.

Winn: Right.

John: And then I'll always make a joke. When people are like, "God, you're bigger than I thought," and I'm like, "Well, my name's Little John."

Winn: Hm.

John: You know, and that—they're like, "Oh, okay. Well." They laugh and joke about it and then they're like, "Well, wow, you must have played football." "Yeah, I did but now I do hair." And so just having that sense of humor and being able to talk about it. Like I know I'm a big dude. I've been a big guy my whole life, you know, so now it's like nothing to me. I don't—I always ask myself, though, "Am I really that much bigger than everyone else?"

Winn: Yeah, you are.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: *[laughs]* Sorry. Every time we hug I just feel like I just disappeared for a second.

John: Yeah, that's one of the main—like I look at other people's hands and now it's funny because I had a moment when I was watching the Paul Mitchell Men's Cutting DVD and I actually put my hand on the guy's head and his head just disappeared.

Winn: Right.

John: And I was like, "Oh, I might not want to do that again on camera."

Winn: Right.

John: *[laughs]* But those type of moments is when I really realize that I'm really a big guy.

Winn: That was one of my finest moments when Magic Johnson used my head as a basketball. That was one of my finest moments.

John: *[laughs]* Yeah.

Winn: I was pretty proud of that video shoot but—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: Yeah. Yeah, you guys are—you're big guys. So has anybody ever told you that you couldn't or wouldn't be able to do something?

John: Of course.

Winn: How do you respond to that?

John: When people tell me I can't do something, I'm going to show you I can and I'm going to do it ten times greater than I ever thought or you ever thought. And that's just the way I think. I don't take it as, you know, a knock when people say, "Oh well, you can't do this." I just take it as they're challenging me.

Winn: Okay.

John: And I turn that challenge into a promise.

Winn: Hm.

John: You know? And that's how I turn around and I work on that promise.

Winn: How much of this comes natural to you? And I'm talking about everything from your skillset to being able to be an open book, as you were talking about, to sharing who you are to—how much of that comes natural to you?

John: None of it really came natural. I've always kind of been like an introvert.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And I still kind of stay that way but, due to work, it brings me out.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: Like I'm very comfortable on stage, no matter who I'm in front of.

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: And I've practiced that a lot: speaking in the mirror, speaking in front of cameras. I used to—when I first started out being a barber, I used to have my boys ride with me to classes and film me so I could see what I looked like on camera. And so I've always prepared myself and practiced where I wanted to be so when I get in the moment on camera, I can pretty much get stuff done in one take because I've already practiced. I know body position; verbal, nonverbal communication skills; everything. And so, you know, going through with my mom: platform artistry training, how to be a platform artist. I did all this stuff before I even got to this point. So I've always trained myself to be prepared for these opportunities.

Winn: Hm.

John: And I think that's one of the things that made me successful, so none of it is natural. And then just going through life growing pains and that kind of made me an open book because now I know I'm a public figure. And it's going to come out any way, form, or fashion so you might as well be that open book.

Winn: You be the person who brings it out. *[laughs]*

John: Yeah, you might as well bring it out on yourself before you let somebody else do it.

Winn: The classes—you said you were doing like 30 a month—how much do you still do stuff for free?

John: I still cut hair for free. I still, you know—I'll make anything work for anybody. If I can help you, I'll make something work. So if it's sometimes having to do something for free, I don't mind. You know, I just raised \$54,000 for free.

Winn: Hm.

John: So I really don't mind. You know, it's just—what is the purpose and what are we doing it for? And then I'll figure out, okay, if that's going to work for me, if I don't have anything else around that schedule then let's make it work.

Winn: Maybe we should expand more on what you were saying earlier about knowing your why and your purpose. First of all, how do you develop that for yourself and then how do you inspire others to discover that for themselves?

John: One of the things I always speak about when I'm on stage: I tell people if you cannot self-evaluate yourself and be honest with yourself, you can't be honest to somebody else. So if you wake up in the morning or you go to bed and you say you want to change, you want to change who you are, you want to do things different, you have to look in the mirror and talk to you. And once you talk to you and say, "Okay, this is the negative stuff that you're doing. How is this affecting other people and how can you make this better?" then you grow. At that moment, you're choosing to grow. So then you do that and that makes

your why. That starts the journey of your why. So now that I've self-evaluated, now why do I want to be great? Why do I want to be a great father? Why do I want to help others? Why do I want to see others succeed? Why do I want to, you know, put my family in a better position? And those then become the whys to the purpose of what is my purpose? My purpose is to fill life's cup up for myself and for the people that I'm doing it—the why.

Winn: Do you often just kind of feel as though hair and grooming is just the silly excuse that you're using? It's just the vehicle—

John: *[laughs]* Yes.

Winn: —*[laughs]* that you're using.

John: Yeah.

Winn: “They think I'm a barber but that's not what I am. That's not what I'm really here to do.”

John: Yeah. Honestly and that's why when I go to the schools I speak first before I even touch my clippers. Because I want you to understand that I'm here to fill your cup up. I'm here to give you a vision. I'm here to give you more than just a haircut. I'm here to look at you dead in the eye and tell you, “You can do anything you want to do. You can believe that you can be great. You believe in you 110%. You turn people that don't believe in you into believers in you.” Not by words but through actions of this is who I am, this is what I'm about, this is who I'm doing it for, and this is why I'm going to do it. And I believe strongly that, you know, hair is just the vehicle for me to deliver this message through. And, you know, I'm fine with that 'cause—

Winn: Hm.

John: —I like doing hair.

Winn: What are some of the questions that people are asking you? So you speak before you even pick up clippers 'cause you want to set the stage. You want to change the energy in the room. You want to change whatever perception or thoughts that they had about, “What's this class all about?” You wanted to make sure that it was in the right mindset of everybody in that room. What are some of the questions that come up?

John: How did I get to this point? What motivates me? What drives me? What makes me tick?

Winn: Mm-hm.

John: You know?

Winn: 'Cause I'm always amazed that I'm 58 years old and, you know, I've had a few things happen to me that were difficult to overcome. But then when I compare myself to stories that I hear—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —people that are 20 years old and they've already dealt with self-harm—

John: Yeah.

Winn: —rape, homelessness, addictions, abuse. I mean, I'm just thinking, *Wow*.

John: Yeah. It's a tough journey but the crazy thing is my family history has all of that in it.

Winn: Okay.

John: And I share that, you know? And I think that's one of things that make me that open book is because I'm just telling the world, "I'm just like you." You know? And one of my biggest things is I tell people, "Look at your watch. Our watches tell the same time. But it's a matter of what do you do in your 24 hours different than what I do in my 24 hours that separates us from each other." You know, I don't care if their watch was 10 cents. I don't care if their watch was \$10,000. At the end of the day, it's not about how much it cost, it's about what do you do in those 24 hours that separates you from greatness and failure.

Winn: So who does inspire you? Who are your current mentors?

John: Definitely my mother and my sister. You know, my family is my mentors. I really look up to, you know, my mother for being a woman that came from, you know, a small town in Georgia to LA to live this dream and get away from, you know, all the abuse and stuff like that. And, you know, coming to LA with my sister, got on welfare, started beauty school, and then turned that into something totally different. And so I, you know, I have to look up to her for that—

Winn: Right.

John: —because that's amazing. You know, and then my sister, you know, 18 years old going to London, studying at Vidal Sassoon and coming back home and doing the things that she's doing. Amazing. And just my family, period. Just looking at my cousins that have been in prison and looking at, you know, my cousins that, you know, did sell drugs and just having that all around me, that—the evil and the good, all around me, I think that kind of like pushed me to—my mentality is, you know, just work hard because you've seen both sides of what can happen. So if you work hard, you don't have to worry about neither one of those sides. You just go through and push.

Winn: I like to tell people that I know what I'm capable of in a negative way.

John: Mm-hm.

Winn: Like I know if I allow myself to go down that road, I know how low I can go.

John: Definitely. But that's also, like I said, self-check.

Winn: Yeah.

John: You looked yourself in the mirror and said, "I know what this looks like. Now let's get to the good side of me."

Winn: I can't believe we've already been talking this long. I'm going to start to—

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: —to wrap this up. When people describe you to their friends, what do you want them to say about you?

John: That I'm humble. Humble. Thankful. Blessed. A father, a son, an artist, an educator, a leader, provider. I think those are the words that I feel like should come out of people's mouths first—

Winn: Hm.

John: —when they, you know, introduce me to people because that's kind of—that's just what I am, you know? I'm a learner. I'm a student. I'm everything. I adapt to any situation and so I want people to know that, you know, when people introduce me, it's, "This is John Mosley and, you know, he comes from a family of hair and, you know, he's humble about his success. And, you know, he just loves being a father and, you know, being an artist and being able to create. And, you know, leading people and guiding people in different directions and helping others."

Winn: You've been doing this for how long now in your career?

John: Seventeen years.

Winn: Wow. So what's in the next 17 years?

John: I want to open six barbershops.

Winn: *[laughs]* Six. Where did the six come from? Just six.

John: It's just six.

Winn: Six.

John: That's the number that—I want to open six barbershops, you know, and take my adventures to, you know, greater heights. And keep pushing the brand. Like I said, it's not a hairstylist's brand, it's not a barber brand. It's a lifestyle brand.

Winn: Hm.

John: So creating stuff like socks, more T-shirts, hats, you know, stuff that people don't mind wearing. I want to see like, you know, I created barber cases so I would love to see more schools carrying the barber case because it is my brand but I did it to—I found a problem and I made the solution, you know? This—you know, being creative that way, being able to keep challenging myself with creativity and pushing, pushing, pushing. And I feel like the more that my brand grows, the more I'm able to pull others up and help and get them, even though I have a team of people that work with me. I sit down with them and talk individual goals and show them how to start their brand, even though they're a part of my brand. I want them to all know like I support you 110%. I want you to be great, too. Not just stick with me, but go spread your wings and be great and let's all grow together.

Winn: Well, everybody has a name and their *name* is their brand.

John: Yeah.

Winn: What's your *name* stand for?

John: Yeah. I feel like the most important word in the English language is your name.

Winn: Hm. Wow. John, do you have a final message for our listeners? We covered a lot of stuff.

John: *[laughs]* Yeah. My final message for, you know, our listeners today is, first of all, thank you guys for listening. I want to thank you, Winn, for allowing me this platform to, you know, sit down with you and just have a friendly conversation with someone that I've looked up to. You know, for all the efforts and hard work that you do daily to change the thoughts of people around the world, you know, so thank you for that. And for the listeners listening, I want you guys to understand something: it's okay to be you. Gay, straight, lesbian, transgender, it's okay. Like you don't have to change or hide who you are to be accepted. You stay who you are and make people accept you for you because that's the only way you're going to be truly happy is if you constantly stay you. Understand that life is not about fame and fortune. Understand that life is about giving. Life is more about depositing into others than withdrawing from others. Understand that your purpose is greater than what you think it is. And understand that you have the power to do whatever you want to do. You have the power to be whoever you want to be. You have the power to be great. You just have to get over the step of FEAR, which is False Evidence

Appearing Real. A lot of times fear stops you from being great. If you don't take the shot, you'll never know if you can win or not. So be you, love you, respect you, respect your journey, respect your process, know your purpose, know your why, and everything else will be all right. Everything falls into place, you know? And that's what I think has helped me understand life a little bit better is just being me. Nobody can change me. Nobody can be me better than me. So be you and love you and it makes it easier to love others.

Winn: Beautiful. Hm.

John: *[laughs]* Thank you.

Winn: You're a good man.

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: All 6'6", 300 pounds of you. *[laughs]*

John: *[laughs]* Yeah, I got my heels on today.

Winn: *[laughs]*

John: *[laughs]*

Winn: Thanks, John. This was great.

John: Thank you.

Winn: This was really, really, great.

John: Thank you, thank you. Thanks for having me. Like I said, it's an honor to have this, you know? Not too many people can say they've sat in a room with you on a MASTERS CD and, like I said, I'm just a little guy, you know, my mother and father's son. And I appreciate every moment and I love all of this and, you know, it's a moment for me to take this in and accept it and It's—you know, I do it with my kids in my eyes and my mother, my father and my family because where I come from a lot of people don't make it. A lot of people don't get these opportunities. A lot of people don't get to see, you know, days like this.

Winn: Hm.

John: And I'm happy. You know, I had a lot of cousins that, you know, were murdered. I had a lot of things happen in life that I'm not proud of but moments like this make me, you know, smile and go home and, you know, talk to my mom about it. That's the first person I'm going to call when I get off the plane. You know, from the airport

Winn: Tell mom I said hi.

John: Yeah, I'm thankful. I'm very thankful.

Winn: Thanks, John.

John: Thank you.

Winn: Love you.

John: Love you, too.