



Hair is an Opportunity



Many people when diagnosed with cancer think of it as a death sentence, for one woman it was an opportunity to start a brand new business.

When an opportunity comes along not everyone actually recognises it. Aged just 27 years old Kewcha Ambrose discovered a lump in the crease of her nose, she dismissed it as an allergic reaction. She never imagined it could be cancer.

After being diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, two harrowing courses of chemotherapy treatment subsequently caused a loss of hair. The alternatives of wigs automatically offered to her via the NHS were unsuitable for a woman of colour and this opened Kewcha up to the realisation that there was a gap in the market.

Despite having no formal training she created her own wig using her previous hairstyle. It looked so natural that it didn't receive a second glance.

She began making personalised wigs for others also undergoing chemotherapy and radiography treatment and later on people dealing with alopecia. Couture Hair Therapy was formally launched in September 2009.

"The company was created, for the purpose of helping all women who are going through the frustrations of finding a way to hold onto that part of them that chemotherapy often strips away," says Kewcha.

Although challenging, she triumphantly proved to herself and those around her that she could do it.

Spurred on by initial funding from Unltd and Black Business Initiative her business now consults with the NHS, her first port of call when she needed a wig.

"There is a lot of protocol regarding businesses promoting within the NHS," reveals Kewcha. "It is not as simple as people may think, but with perseverance we have over come those challenges and learnt ways of how to deal with them."



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Couture Hair Therapy is specialised and targeted to a particular ethnic group and is therefore not a business that is considered to cater for all.

Kewcha says approaching cancer nurses or consultants and other organisations whose patients required her services helped immensely as they had a better understanding of what their patients required.

"They hear the woes from a Black woman regarding not being able to find a wig and in turn are more accepting of what we are doing at Couture Hair Therapy," she remarks.

Having gained the support of organisations such as Royal Free Hospital and North Middlesex University Trust,

Couture Hair Therapy now works quite closely with, and supports the fundraising events of a cancer orientated organisation, dedicated to improving the lives of people affected by cancer.

The services offered include creating and making bespoke wigs that are naturally thick and lustrous.

"All our wigs are made with materials that allow your scalp to breathe and for new hair growth to begin, so our clients can be assured that their wig will last for the period of hair loss and beyond, such is our commitment to quality and value for money," says Kewcha.

They involve the client in every step of the wig making process, from design to styling. Privacy is maintained at all times and consultations are always in person within the London area - the venue determined by the client.

Now 31, Kewcha has accomplished a great deal; besides launching her business, she has also obtained a degree in Media, Management and Production from West Herts College and a subsequent degree in New Media Writing and Black History from Middlesex University.

The business will continue onwards, providing not only a hair piece, but the invaluable support needed to those who require Kewcha's services, at this phase of their journey.

Whilst many would have thought their world was ending, instead of focusing on the negativity, Kewcha dared to look beyond and has carved out for herself a whole new beginning.

Note: The wig featured is not from couture Hair Therapy. To see their wigs visit: www.couturehairtherapy.co.uk or call: 07960 374 114

By Folashade Bello

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