

AU NATUREL

SCHATZI'S RENAISSANCE Personal and Salon Updates

As stated in our website blog, we were closed for business from August 7-17 due to renovations. We have been in business for 17 years with the same salon look and feel. It was working and was quite welcoming to our clients; but, I decided it was time for a change. While the salon furniture has not be changed, key pieces have been re-upholstered. It's a lot cheaper than new furniture. All flooring has been replaced, and the walls have a bright, new face!! I have also acquired some new artwork for the walls courtesy of GDBee, an artist from Western NC. I'm really pleased with the outcome. The stylists and I worked all night Friday, August 18th to re-organize the salon. Everything was vetted and re-affirmed or purged. The result is that everything looks fresh, new and with plenty of space. I know that our regular clients are going to love it! It's a whole new vibe. Come check it out! For those who need a bit of coaxing to appreciate the new look, check out the website video to the right which shows off the salon's new look.

[VIRTUAL TOUR OF SCHATZI'S](#)

With all of the salon activity and excitement coming to a close, I am looking forward to our scheduled vacation for the last week of August. It's been a REALLY BUSY SUMMER. It's seems that every aspect of life has been on overdrive. I don't mind; but, I can safely say that a vacation is needed and warranted. The vacation itself is jam-packed with activity, primarily because that's how I like it. But, I know we'll have restful opportunities throughout. I will be back to business as usual the first week of September. Wishing you all a wonderful end of summer, Labor Day weekend! Embrace the beauty of you.

2023 BEST IN RALEIGH NOMINATION

We would like to extend our great appreciation to whoever nominated us for Raleigh's Best for 2023. It is indeed a great honor that we don't take lightly. Shout out as well to everyone who voted in support of our establishment. Many have never seen the salon and likely never will. But, we appreciate that you have confidence in our nomination enough to extend a vote on our behalf. As stated on our blog post, nomination is the highest honor that we could ask for. Our salon is small and intimate. And so, I do not expect to receive more votes than many of the larger businesses. But NO ONE is more upscale than we are. Our salon pops and the energy vibe spells HOME. That can only be realized inside our doors. And that gift resides within those who know and appreciate it. We give thanks for God's blessings. We endeavor to remain true to our calling, prayerfully for the next 17 years and beyond. Embrace the beauty of you.

ANDROGENIC ALOPECIA SOLUTIONS

My Experience with Platelet Rich Protein Treatments

As I talk with more and more women my age, I hear a common concern for thinning hair due to aging. It's not really that they have changed their diet or lifestyle fundamentally. It's simply that menopause is catching up with them. Well last year August after shampooing and twisting my hair, I began to look closely and realized that my hairline is receding. Menopause is catching up with me too. I wasn't overly concerned because I have enough hair to cover it up, but I realized that this may not be the case forever. I had spoken with clients in the past who received platelet-rich protein scalp treatments and were encouraged by the results. After [watching a segment](#) by Dr. Jen Ashton of Good Morning America and seeing regular promos regarding the service at my dermatologists office ([Dr. Scales](#)), I decided "nothing ventured nothing gained." So, I bit the bullet and forked over the \$800 for three treatments with six-week intervals between each service. (Note: Health insurance does not cover this procedure.) The procedure involves the withdrawal of blood which is spun in a centrifuge. The blood separates and the platelet rich plasma/protein is extracted and injected into the thinning areas of the scalp. I confess that the injections were very uncomfortable. I am not afraid of needles and receive regular treatments from my acupuncturist. But, this injection was truly painful. I don't know if that's because it's in your scalp or what. But, I was glad when each service was over and vowed that if I don't see results, that's a wrap! Ain't doing THAT again.

Well, the photos below are before and after of the right and left front sides of my head. In the before pictures, it looks as though I've lost the equivalent of one or two

twists from corners of my forehead lines. In the after pictures, it is apparent that the hair has grown back. The twists are shorter than the others but they are present and accounted for. Now full disclosure: My hair in the 2022 photo was blow-dried while it was not in the August 2023 photo. So, the curly texture of my hair is likely camouflaging some of the thinning. But, I can't deny the fact that I have a whole twist at the edge of my hairline that was not there a year ago. So, voila!! You decide for yourself. But, I can legitimately testify that the procedure was worth that discomfort. Now if you are the more squeamish type when it comes to injections, you may want to check out [this video on derma rolling](#). It is way too high maintenance for my liking but you can't deny the fact that *brother re-grew his hair!* Happy hair revitalization!



Right – August 2022



Right – August 2023



Left – August 2022



Left – August 2023

MINING FOR THE IMMORTAL DIAMOND

Reflections from Coursework with the Center for Action and Contemplation

As stated in the last issue of Au Naturel, I took a course in the spring with the Center for Action and Contemplation called "Immortal Diamond" by Fr. Richard Rohr. The coursework is built off of a book of

the same title and is a reference to finding our True Self that is hidden within and which is eternally one with our Creator. The imagery is synonymous with the hidden treasure or pearl of great value ([Matthew 13:44-46](#)) that

is one of several parables about the kingdom of heaven. It is hard to imagine that a part of ourselves is ancient and immortal, unperturbed by the machinations of life, connected, esoteric and transcendent. We spend so much of our lives completely unaware of its existence. It makes one wonder: why?

I took the course to more fully engage with the work of Fr. Richard Rohr. He is a theologian, a Bible scholar, a historian of Christianity and a profound intellectual. He has devoted the entirety of his life to studying Christianity, God and the church. As such, he is one of the most insightful scholars that I have encountered and also one of the most vociferous critics of religious practice. He is a priest in good standing in the Catholic church, but I have often wondered how he has not been ex-communicated as a result of his writings and beliefs. But it is BECAUSE he can back every word ever stated with Bible scripture, historical truth and references from church leaders of the past that his reasoning is unimpeachable. I have learned a lot though discovering him AFTER gaining awareness of my own immortal diamond. His writings have helped me to fully accept the truth of that experience as unprescribed, unconventional and unintelligible as it was. In this section, I am sharing my final reflections from the coursework of the Immortal Diamond. Keep what makes sense, leave the rest. Embrace the beauty of you.

Question: What does John 20:15-17 say to me about loving without attachment? The obvious response is that Jesus is illustrating that I am not dead so there is no need to try to hold onto me. Because he is eternal, grasping is not necessary. The reference to "not yet ascended to the Father" when he says in previous scriptures "My Father and I are one." suggests that his ascension is a period of separation from God but I don't believe that to be true. This reference is somewhat confusing to me, if I am honest.

Question: What experiences in my life have taught me to love in a very passionate and yet very detached way? The experience that taught me to love in a passionate and detached way is....private. Yet, I am amused to see a Biblical reference to this type of love.

Question: Fr. Richard says "that our fear of death is actually our fear of God." How have you seen that to be true in your life or the life of others? My father passed away on April 5, 2012. I was present to witness his passing over that 3-week period. It was inevitable. I felt the powerless of it all for him and for us. When my father was able to communicate with us, I knew he wanted and expected to live. But when he told me that his dead sister was coming to visit him, I knew he would not. My mother told me that my father had seen a lot of death and had always said, "As long as you're eating, you'll survive." When the nurse brought food for him and he stopped eating, I was shocked because it confirmed what I believed about his pending death. But when he began to eat food that he believed he was served but which really did not exist materially, I sensed that the angels had to comfort him into believing that he was eating so that the end stage countdown could begin. He spoke to my sister and me of seeing a light in the distance with a lot of people around it. He looked at the light while chomping away at his spiritual food. He was between two worlds. The veil was lifted but his body was still operational.

Our aim as advised by the doctors was to keep him comfortable. I recall sitting with Daddy in hospice care and hearing him groan after he had gone beyond the stage of being able to communicate coherently. I did not realize that he could no longer communicate, so I did not administer the morphine that was at arm's reach. I felt in my heart of hearts that we were anesthetizing him into submission. I was not enamored with the treatment protocol. My father was an Army Ranger, Silver and Bronze Star recipient (VietNam)--a born fighter. He had a passion for life and I knew he was not ready to go. I knew he would fight if he were able but that the medication robbed him of the will to make a conscious decision. So, I stopped administering the drug. The doctor came into the room and asked me: "Does he sound like he's comfortable to you?" I responded with some disdain, "I don't know! He can't tell me when he's medicated!" The doctor walked over and administered the morphine and then left me with my thoughts. I remember feeling that Daddy was afraid to die. I sensed that he was fearful of the punishment

that awaited him for all of the lives he had taken. I was a teenager when I realized that my father had to make A LOT of girls fatherless in order to come back home to raise and nurture me. The truth of that knowledge still brings tears to my eyes to this day. In my heart and soul, when I envisioned all of the people on the other side of the veil waiting for my father in the midst of the light, I believed it to be all of those fathers in VietNam, Panama and Iran who had forgiven him when he could not forgive himself. He struggled with PTSD up until the day he reached his deathbed. He was always functional and a very hard worker. You would not know of his struggles unless he told you. It was my mother and my stepmother who told me. He never acknowledged the struggle or sought compensation. He was a proud man. In the end, I was quite okay with his passing because I knew he finally had found peace and acceptance rather than the torment that I sense he believed was merited.

Question: To what is great love calling you? My salon is my ministry. It is a service that requires emptying of the self. You approach the work from a place of humility because the care and comfort of the client comes before your own. It requires hours of physical ministrations to an individual for the elevation of their self-image and spirit. It is a giving profession by nature. I love my clients and enjoy seeing them happy. I also work exclusively in the service sector through government and non-profit employment and volunteer work.

Question: Who in your life models a sense of healthy risk-taking? What have you learned from them? My Grandmother Mabel McMillian is 107 years old this past March 21st. She is a radiant beauty. When she was married to my grandfather and had four children, she took a risk and left him so as not to kill him. It was a time in history when women didn't leave bad husbands, and especially not Black women. She told me the spirit told her to leave and she did. She had

no idea how she was going to survive, but she took the risk all the same. It taught me to have faith in The Spirit. When it directs you, it does not promise that the road will be easy. But travel it, you must for your own well-being. I know that if she had stayed with him, she would not be here today to share her rich life history with grandchildren and great-grandchildren alike. Following her example, I go wherever the Spirit leads, even when it doesn't make sense to me. [Note: My grandmother has passed since my writing of these notes. But, she will be with me eternally, because she was instrumental in molding me to be the woman I am today.]

Question: Fr. Richard says that "love will get you to resurrection more quickly than power, office or role." How have you experienced or witnessed that in your life? I believe that God hard-wired me to love those who are difficult to love. As a child, I knew that I had an uncanny ability to empathize with other people. I could easily imagine myself in their situation and understand why and how they behave as they do, even when it is unloving. And so, I have been able to love despite the challenges or unlovable nature. I likewise believe that God suppressed my False Self achievements to keep me humble. It is through my own death and resurrection that I know his words to be true.

Question: How do you intend to integrate what you have learned as you move forward in life? I point others to Fr. Rohr's teachings whenever I can. I also attempt to model an active and contemplative life through all that I do. I aim to be a fountain of giving. Often, I fall short. But, the beauty of Fr. Rohr's teachings is that I can actually see and recognize when I am falling short through False Self mastery. I don't think I will ever master the True Self. But, I believe that if I can hone my capacity to early detect the False Self, then I am equipped to limit its diversionary impact on mining my immortal diamond and living from the heart space.