

Can a haircut change your life?

Joshua Coombes is a London hairdresser who makes a big difference to homeless people's lives. Watch the video to find out more.

Tasks

Do the preparation task first. Then watch the video and do the exercises. You can also read the transcript.

Preparation task

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

benefit	confidence	hairdressing	hip	homeless
humanise	impact	magnitude	reaction	stereotype

- Someone who is doesn't have a home.
- If something has an, it has a powerful effect.
- If you see the of a problem, you see its large size and importance.
- Cutting and styling people's hair is called
- If someone has in themselves, they value themselves and their own abilities.
- Your is a joint that connects your leg to the upper part of your body.
- A is money that the government gives people who need financial help.
- A is a fixed idea about a particular person or thing which is often not true in reality.
- If you an issue, you show how it affects individual people.
- A is how you behave as a result of a particular situation.

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

	Answer	
	True	False
1. Joshua helps homeless people by giving them money and food.	True	False
2. Joshua thinks that he can stop the problem of homelessness.	True	False
3. Joshua thinks that a haircut can help homeless people feel better about themselves.	True	False
4. Stuart's problems started when he broke his arm.	True	False
5. Stuart didn't receive any financial help any more and had to leave his home.	True	False
6. Joshua thinks that hearing individual people's stories helps us to understand homelessness.	True	False
7. Joshua's favourite thing is when he sees how the person feels about their new haircut.	True	False
8. Stuart doesn't think that he looks very different with his new haircut.	True	False

Task 2

Put the words and phrases in the correct order to make sentences.

1. can make impact. of love Small a big acts
2. to make smile. do something someone I had to positive
3. was had you a haircut? the last time When
4. come How homeless? to be did you
5. and I've homeless That was 24 January 2016 been since.
6. a lot of and there's with homelessness lot of things You see a stereotypes.
7. their haircut. One of the the mirror most amazing moments is giving someone
at the end of
8. a right You're new now. man

Discussion

Is homelessness a big problem in your country? What are people trying to do to help?

Transcript

Morgan Freeman: I'm in London to meet Joshua Coombes. He's a hairdresser. And he believes small acts of love can make a big impact. Joshua hopes he can help the homeless, not by offering them money or food but by giving them a haircut.

Joshua: The reason I started cutting hair on the street, initially, was actually the magnitude of the problem, like, seeing how big this problem is in each city. It's really hard to know what to do about that. And I think it was from that feeling that I had to impact today. I had to do something positive to make someone smile. And realise that even if you can't solve a problem, actually it's OK to just do your own thing. And for me, that's hairdressing. I love what I do, so it's a great way to be able to give someone confidence.

Joshua: When was the last time you had a haircut?

Stuart: In November last year.

Morgan: So January, February.

Stuart: Five months to March, April.

Morgan: How do you come to be homeless, Stuart?

Stuart: I broke my hip and they stopped my benefits. At the time, I was like, that's stupid. And I was getting involved with drugs and things. I didn't really care. And next thing I knew, they came round and said, 'Right, you're out.' That was 24th of January 2016 and I've been homeless since.

Joshua: You see lots of things with homelessness. And there's lots of stereotypes. And really, what I do is try and humanise this issue. Because, as I said, this problem's so big, I think when you bring it down to one person and tell their story, that's a great way to start and a great way for people to understand.

For me, like, one of the most amazing moments is giving someone the mirror at the end of their haircut because it's great to see someone's reaction because they might recognise someone they haven't seen for a few years.

Morgan: Five, four, three, two, one. Ta-da.

Stuart: I'm 20 years younger. Oh my God.

Morgan: Yeah!

Joshua: Stuart, what do you say?

Stuart: Nobody's going to recognise me.

Joshua: Mate, you're a new man right now.

Stuart: Yeah, thank you.

Joshua: How do you feel?

Morgan: Like a new man.

Stuart: Like a new man.

Joshua: Do you recognise yourself there?

Stuart: Um ...

Answers

Preparation task

1. homeless
2. impact
3. magnitude
4. hairdressing
5. confidence
6. hip
7. benefit
8. stereotype
9. humanise
10. reaction

Task 1

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. False
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. False

Task 2

1. Small acts of love can make a big impact.
2. I had to do something positive to make someone smile.
3. When was the last time you had a haircut?
4. How did you come to be homeless?
5. That was 24 January 2016 and I've been homeless since.
6. You see a lot of things with homelessness and there's a lot of stereotypes.
7. One of the most amazing moments is giving someone the mirror at the end of their haircut.
8. You're a new man right now.