

Retreat Recap: Building Mental Health Resilience in Black, African & Caribbean Communities



From welcome remarks by host Noah Boakye-Yiadom to the breathtaking views of Grassi Lake, our recent retreat was a powerful mix of learning, reflection, and community connection.

We kicked off with a buffet dinner and a session with the DIVERT Mental Health team (CIHR-funded), who engaged youth and parents in surveys to better understand mental health in Black communities.

Day 2 began with a calming meditation session led by Fimo Mitchell from The Village Meditates, followed by Kisa Hamilton from the Transform Practice Team guiding us through “Why we do the work we do.” Breakout groups explored root causes of mental health challenges—like loss of identity, generational trauma, and self-esteem struggles—using art to bring these experiences to life. In the evening, we enjoyed a Nigerian cultural dinner in Calgary, strengthening bonds and celebrating diversity.



Day 3 took us outdoors for a silent meditative hike at Grassi Lake, a unique experience that taught us the value of patience, personal pace, and mindful reflection. The day continued at Afrifest Cultural Experience and the Brong Ahafo Ghanaian Association BBQ, where Dr. Odame shared how MHFA training is making a difference in Calgary.

A heartfelt thank-you to Noah and Gifty for hosting this inspiring weekend at Grey Eagle Resort & Casino. Together, we’re building a Mental Health Toolkit for Black, African, and Caribbean communities—and we can’t wait for the Black Mental Health Conference in Ghana, 2026!



Written by Mary Akuamoah-Boateng.