



BROTHERS WHO CARE



Brothers; It is okay not to be okay!

“The battles that count aren’t the ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself, the invisible, inevitable battles inside all of us—that’s where it’s at.”
Jesse Owens

It is well documented that Black men experience lower quality healthcare services, disproportionate neighbourhood stressors, economic disparities and systemic racism. Today thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic, social unrest, the accumulation of generational trauma, and other stressors have further exacerbated these challenges.

When you feel overwhelmed it can impact you physically, mentally, and socially. Physically you may notice a disruption to your sleep patterns, a loss of appetite or overeating, which can lead to lower energy levels and frequent sickness. You may experience emotional or psychological distress leading you to feel anger, low motivation, anxiety, or even hopelessness. Socially you may withdraw into yourselves, isolate, or disengage in activities that you once enjoyed.

Research indicates that Black men are at a high risk for adverse mental health outcomes, statistics indicate that Black adults are more likely to have feelings of sadness, hopelessness compared to white adults.

What does this all mean? It means that as Black men it is okay for us not to be okay.

Recognizing and normalizing the conversations around mental health!

We can address these mental health issues by taking the first step; which is to recognize and normalize the conversation around mental health and wellness in the Black community. As Black men, if we can become more aware of the common signs of poor stress management then conquering our stressors will become a reality. By communicating about these challenges, we can help remove the stigma of mental health in our communities.

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Brothers Who Care is ever evolving,
and we want you to evolve with us.
<https://brotherswhocare.com/>



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R&B IN THE CITY EVENTS In Association
With BROTHERS WHO CARE PRESENTS

BLACK MEN OF EXCELLENCE WALK

SUNDAY MAY 1st, 2022

SUITS ONLY : 2K WALK : PHOTO : VIDEO SHOOT



PHOTO FROM 2020 WALK

MASK OPTIONAL • START TIME 11AM : YONGE & KING ST.

@GQHENDERSONEVENTS @WAYNECHUNG.CA @KLREID30 SHF

REGISTER @ BMOEWALK.EVENTBRITE.CA

May 1st “Black Men of Excellence Walk”

R&B In the City Events in association with Brothers Who Care presents The Black Men of Excellence Suit Walk – the Spring and Summer Edition.

This year it is taking place on Sunday May 1st, 2022 from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm. The two-kilometre walk will commence at Yonge St & King St, and will include a photo and video shoot.

We are doing something a little different this year; walking alongside these well dressed brothers, will be the women who made it all possible; their mothers! There is a dress code; we want our brothers out in the brightest spring and summer colours (soft lilac, canary yellow, hot pink, salted caramel, scarlet, and sky blue). Bring out those blazers, suits, suspenders, and comfortable, classy shoes.

We will be acknowledging Canadian Mental Health Week by having our men participate in a Circle of Sharing. Here we will respectfully share our stories, our struggles, our successes, and everything that makes us proud, Black men.

We will conclude the walk with a Mix & Mingle from 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm at a downtown lounge to be announced.

You can register at [BMOEWALK.EVENTBRITE.CA](https://www.eventbrite.ca)
(<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/black-men-of-excellence-suit-walk-2k22-photo-video-shoot-mix-mingle-tickets-315802071497>)

For more information you can contact: 416-704-5487

Our supportive sponsors this year are LifeWorks, & Mr Kaizen Custom Suits.

StartWell Mondays

StartWell Mondays is a Brothers Who Care video series documenting how different people get their week started in a positive way and carry that momentum throughout the week.

We are looking for people who are willing to share a video of various things that you feel start your week off right. This could be cooking a specific meal, going to the gym, playing a sport, writing down or organizing your week, or even cleaning.

We all have different ways of coping with life, and we want to be able to share with each other, learn from each other. We will be starting our video series in May, so stay tuned for more details, and let's find ways that we can start our weeks well!

I SEE ME Youth Investment Competition

We are off to a tremendous start. Since late March, students have already learned about:

- Short-term vs. Long-term financial goals
- Saving vs. Investing
- Emergency funds
- Risk Management

Secure Your Wealth Project Launch

The Secure Our Wealth (SOW) project aims to help the BIPOC community build a more sustainable society and feel confident about meeting their financial goals in a changing and ever evolving digital world.

We are in the development stage of the SOW project, and have put together the LEGUP Mastermind Group, a peer-to-peer mentoring group used to help members enhance their financial security status.

A Look at the Four M's of Mental Health

Discussing the four M's of mental health can be helpful in improving Black men's well-being and to assist in mitigating stress. The four M's of mental Health are: Meaningful Connection, Mastery, Mindfulness, and Movement.

Meaningful Connection

Meaningful connection is establishing meaningful connections with others, this is a valuable tool to improve well-being and mitigate stress. This is important for Black men because of the stigma that mental health has in the Black community. This stigma can create hesitancy in talking about mental health, and emotional experiences, which can result in isolation and suffering in silence. Black men have not been given the tools to adequately process and to talk about their emotional experiences.

There are societal pressures to conform to traditional gender norms of masculinity, if a black man were to display emotional vulnerability this may be seen as a sign of weakness in the community. This is where meaningful connection steps in; reaching out to someone you trust who will be non-judgmental or connecting with a companion animal can help promote resiliency, and prevent a mental health crisis.



Mastery

Mastery is focusing on your strengths and positive attributes. For example, when feeling down it may be helpful to reflect on past times of resilience. Reflecting can help elevate our motivation to endure the current moment. Mastery also has an action portion; engaging in activities that you enjoy can help reduce stress and improve your mood when feeling anxious.

Mindfulness

Practicing mindfulness can be useful. Being mindful of our emotions and current mental state can help us differentiate between what is and what is not in our control. Feeling out of control can increase stress levels and without reducing those levels, we will begin to see a decline in one's mental health.

To feel more in control each day, reflect on one aspect that you are thankful for in your life. It can be simply displaying happiness at winning a game, or displaying gratitude that you have enough funds to purchase any necessities during uncertain times. Focusing on what is currently in your control, while also practicing gratitude will help to promote resilience.

Movement

Finally, movement involves both physical and mental activity, to help manage our stress. It is a good practice to incorporate short walks, stretching or working out each day is helpful.

Movement helps us focus on something other than what is bothering us, and the sense of accomplishment after a good workout can improve our self-confidence. The most important detail about movement is that we should begin doing this regularly and it should be intentional.



Spotlight Profile

GQ Henderson

He is a man of calm demeanour, strong preserve, intellectual thinking, polite yet meaningful, well mannered and a considerate man with high standards of proper behaviour. He is a gentleman, a real man, and one who knows his worth and continues to share this worth with the world.

G.Q. Henderson is a man known in Toronto, Ontario, Canada for hosting some of the most prestigious events in the city. As the owner and founder of: G.Q. Henderson Events, R&B In The City Events, and Hooked On Rewards Inc. GQ is one of the most talented Lifestyle Event Planners in the city. Whether it is a role as a MC, taking charge as an event manager, or showcasing his experiential marketing skills, this man continues to show up and show out.

Born in Morant Bay, St. Thomas Jamaica, GQ came to Canada on August 11th, 1977. He came during the time of the West Indian Domestic Scheme, which was an immigration program, which targeted approximately 3,000 women from the Caribbean who came to Canada to work as domestic servants. It is what contributed to the growth of Caribbean culture in Canada, especially within the Toronto and Montréal communities.

GQ's mom was one of the seven Jamaican mothers who fought for women to bring their children over with them when they came here from the islands, and GQ shared with me that It was a fight just to stay in the country.

"Some of my earliest memories of Canada are standing in a picket line with my mom," GQ recalls. "In 1979 we were able to claim citizenship, and then we were finally able to move on with our lives. My mom began working at the Ontario Science Centre, and bravely she decided to open up a restaurant."

From ages 10 – 19 GQ's family lived in North York. When he was around 19, or 20 the family moved to Mississauga.



"We used to live in Willow Tree," GQ chuckled. "We were called the Willow Tree Boys. One thing I know for a fact is that my mom worked very hard for the three of us. I had two older sisters who she put through school, and I have to admit, being a part of my family growing up was a great experience. I had to travel to the west to go to school, when we lived in Willow Tree. She wanted me to go to school outside of the area, and not get caught up with some of the nonsense that was going on. Those were the years of partying at all ages clubs. It was a good time."

GQ knew that he wanted to be a businessman from an early age.

"I see myself as a serial entrepreneur. I started a co-op position at The Hudson Bay Company as a buyer, and then I got hired on at 19 years old. I was the only Black Man working in the corporate office.

I decided I would go back to school, and this was when we moved to Mississauga. I started at Sheridan College, and I got into the transportation and logistic industry. I graduated and did another co-op for the Campbell Soup Company.

Spotlight Profile

“I learned quickly that if you can get an in with a company and show your value, you have a good chance of getting a paid position. Just like at The Hudson Bay Company, I was able to get a job at Campbell Soup.

During my three years working there, I implemented a lot of new systems within our department. Once again, I was the only Black Man at that level in the company.”

GQ left Campbell Soup and went to work for Sharp. History continued to repeat itself, and GQ once again was the only Black male in a predominately Asian market.

“Campbell Soup came back to me a few years later and made me their Transportation Manager. I stayed there for another four years, and then opened my first marketing company TigerX Media.

We partnered with an organization that was supposed to provide us with 100,000 dollars of event contracts and we ended up just providing them with graphics. We were supposed to link the corporate world with the urban world, but unfortunately, things didn't pan out as expected. It was definitely a learning experience, and not a good one.

Not long after I started working in real estate and had money coming in there. When we bought that first house in Mississauga, I learned the power of real estate.

From there, I really began to see the power of entrepreneurship, and decided that I would enter the event-planning world. We started a few event companies, and this led to event, and event planning around the city.

It was in 1999 that we started to ramp up events. We did Sugar, then Fluid, we have utilized at least 50 different venues in the last 30 years. Lavalley, Citizen, Maverick, and The Grand Bazaar. From there came: G.Q. Henderson Events, R&B In The City Events, Bachelors In The City, Black Men Of Excellence Movement, Gresher Experiential Agency, Gresher Getaways, King West Lifestyle, Caribana Weekend specialized events, and the notorious New Years Eve Event.”



GQ's commitment to his community remains strong, a precedent set by his mother. It was this foundation that was the birth of the Black Men Of Excellence Suit Walk.

“Years ago, I had this idea to do a flash mob. My vision was a group of well-groomed Black men, getting dressed, and making a spectacle on Yonge Street. The pandemic hit, and it shut down the idea. Then the George Floyd incident happened, and we saw the protests. I wanted to do something that represented our lifestyle, our structure. Why don't we get together, dress up in suits, and walk, displaying what makes a Black man of Excellence. In 2020 we got to do our first walk. We wanted to change the narrative on a visual scale. We want our younger Black men to know how to present themselves in the world.

This year, we are putting a little twist on things by honouring our mothers. We are going to include them in the walk. What better way to thank these amazing women in our lives by putting them on a pedestal, and allowing them to see how far their sons have come.”

From his well put together profile, to his prodigious resume, GQ Henderson continues to shine as Toronto's King of event planning. You can become part of this vibe by checking out what is up and coming at <http://www.gghenderson.com/>