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# The Black Love Experience, 2017 Edition

Posted by [Moni Pearson](#) / 21 Feb 2017

Honestly speaking, I'm not good at mixing and mingling at social events unless someone approaches me. At the Black Love Experience (however), it didn't matter at all that I'm a tad bit awkward.

Within the heart of Black History Month, one of Washington DC's most creative and unifying events was held at the Anacostia Arts Center, located on 1231 Good Hope Road SE in the Anacostia Historic District of Washington, DC.

The Black Love Experience threw their 4th annual event under the vision of Anika Hobbs, owner of the store Nubian Human, that is also housed in the Anacostia Arts Center.

I met Anika at her store a few years ago and was immensely impressed by the store's layout that showcases African and ethnic clothing, artwork, and accessories. The visual eye of Ms. Hobbs is undeniably gifted and a force that has earned her the respect of her peers.

The Black Love Experience (BLE), was a visionaries' dream house. The lighting patterns added to the lounge-like atmosphere that showcased multiple vendors and artists upon entering the venue. There were so many things to try and people to connect with, I started my experience by getting a complimentary back massage from Better Backs Therapy, LLC.

Then I made my way into a panel discussion about the relationship between Black buyers and Black sellers. The thing I appreciated most was the balance of perspective. More knowledge is gained with diversity of opinions. This panel was anything but one-sided. I connected with Madia Brown - a design, marketing and communications expert who was on the panel. She explained that building trust in the Black community is imperative for the Black buyer/seller relationship to thrive. She spoke in great detail about the responsibility of the seller to know their market, and to truly understand what branding accomplishes for both parties.

There was a speed-conversing session hosted by <http://www.RealLifeConvo.com> and Krystal Glass where there were 4 rounds of 3-minute speed conversations among strangers. They were given a phrase/topic for each conversation and it was a brilliant ice-breaker.

The event was being run in adjacent buildings where different forums were taking place (men and women had their own special discussions). The lower level of the arts center was used for lounging, mingling and there was even a table filled with magazines and scissors so attendees could make their own vision boards.

Overall, the vibe matched the visual appeal of the Black Love Experience, which was a vibe of positivity, creativity, great networking, and fellowship. This event made me wish I had attended the other 3 because it was absolutely amazing. I cannot wait for the next one!!!