



Wellness for the Soul:

A Leadership Retreat in the
Heart of Nature



*The INUKA Leadership Wellness
& Strategic Dialogue retreat.*

I had the pleasure of being part of a truly transformative experience – the Leadership Wellness Retreat & Strategic Dialogue, tailored for dedicated delegates from Civil Society Organizations in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

I arrived at the serene Great Outdoors on the evening of February 20, 2023, eager yet a bit anxious as I prepared to facilitate this leadership retreat. Sending love and good vibes to the participants is a personal tradition of mine, and this time, they were to travel many miles to reach them. As a member of the host team, I had every confidence that each participant would not only enjoy their stay but also depart feeling relaxed, rejuvenated, and full of energy.

The cottages were meticulously prepared, adorned with thoughtful gifts, and the meal plan for the entire duration was carefully crafted by a seasoned dietician. We even had a skilled yoga instructor on hand to guide them through daily physical exercise routines.

Over the next three days, we engaged in profound discussions about wellness. We explored various aspects of wellness through activities such as forest walks, body stretches, mindful eating, nature immersion, and self-expression. In my role as a facilitator, I was privileged to listen and learn from the participants, hearing about their unique wellness journeys, their individual challenges, and their collective experiences within civil society.

I was invited into their world and deeply moved by their stories of courage, resilience, and persistence in the face of adversity, work-related stress, neglect, and burnout. Witnessing their willingness to be vulnerable and open up about their wellness experiences was truly humbling. For them, wellness was not just about physical comfort; it was also found in the beauty of their surroundings, the sights and sounds of nature, the invigorating scents, and the nourishing food.

Our conversations were nothing short of—healing, revealing, and liberating. The evenings around the fireplace reminded me of ancient traditions where communities gathered to check in on each other, sharing meals and stories. The burning ritual was particularly powerful, symbolizing the shedding of old burdens and the birth of new beginnings. Watching the flames consume the past and give rise to beautiful sparks of renewal was a sight to behold.

As the retreat came to an end, the participants had not only bonded but also pledged to collaborate in creating a wellness hub tailored to the needs of those working in Civil Society. Personally, I pledged to embrace wellness more intentionally in my own life – through mindful eating, daily exercise, nurturing positive thoughts, and surrounding myself with the beauty of nature.

I, too, benefited greatly from the experience. The wholesome food, daily exercises, and the enchanting night forest walk all revealed a deeper layer of my own bravery and resilience. This retreat was a truly enriching journey for us all.

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Wellness Retreat Facilitator







