



The Wellness Trap by Christy Harrison

Discussion Guide

1. Christy provides her definition of “wellness culture” in Chapter 1. Does it align with your own experience(s) of wellness culture? What have you found especially problematic about it?
2. In Chapter 2, Christy explains how traditional healing practices are often removed from their roots and commodified for a Western audience. What role has cultural appropriation played in the creation of wellness culture, and how is this harmful for marginalized communities?
3. How is wellness culture intertwined with other harmful belief systems, such as diet culture and beauty culture?
4. In Chapter 3, Christy defines social determinants of health as the social and economic conditions under which people live. How do social determinants of health impact and inform our collective well-being? Does this knowledge change your assessment of personal responsibility when it comes to health and well-being?
5. In Chapter 4, Christy explains how prevalent mis- and disinformation related to health and wellness have become. Where do you find yourself looking for reputable information and how do you verify it? What role, if any, does social media play in undermining our collective well-being?
6. A 2014 study found that half of Americans believe in at least one medical conspiracy theory. Have you seen examples of this in your own life? Why do you think we’re susceptible to these?
7. The global wellness industry is worth \$4.4 trillion, with a \$702 billion segment devoted to “healthy eating,” nutrition, and weight loss. What do you think it would take to reform such a massive segment of the economy? Is it possible?
8. In the U.S., it’s illegal for the government to regulate the supplement industry in any meaningful way. What are some of the negative repercussions of de-regulation? How does it impact you as a consumer?
9. How do forms of discrimination manifest in the wellness industry at large?
10. As Christy explains, it’s important to practice self-compassion when you are experiencing pain and body shame. What are some ways to cultivate your mental well-being?