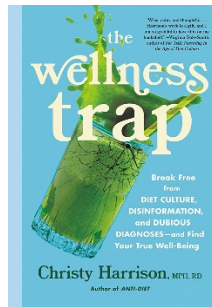


## Discussion Guide



### *The Wellness Trap* Christy Harrison

Little, Brown Spark  
2023  
320 pages  
ISBN: 978-0316315609

## Nutrition Misinformation

### Summary

“It's not a diet, it's a lifestyle.” You've probably heard this phrase from any number of people in the wellness space. But as Christy Harrison reveals in her latest book, wellness culture promotes a standard of health that is often both unattainable and deeply harmful.

Many people with chronic illness understandably feel dismissed or abandoned by the healthcare system and find solace in alternative medicine, as Harrison once did. Yet the wellness industry promotes practices that often cause even more damage than the conventional approaches they're meant to replace. From the lack of pre-market safety testing on herbal and dietary supplements, to the unfounded claims made by many wellness influencers and functional-medicine providers, to the social-media algorithms driving users down rabbit holes of wellness mis- and disinformation, it can often feel like no one is looking out for us in the face of the \$4.4 trillion global wellness industry.

*The Wellness Trap* delves into the persistent, systemic problems with that industry, offering insight into its troubling pattern of cultural appropriation and its destructive views on mental health, and shedding light on how a growing distrust of conventional medicine has led ordinary people to turn their backs on science. Weaving together history, memoir, reporting, and practical advice, Harrison illuminates the harms of wellness culture while re-imagining our society's relationship with well-being.

### Questions

1. What evidence does the author give to support her claims about the wellness industry? Are they personal observations and assessments? Facts? Statistics? Opinions?
2. Is the evidence convincing? Does it come from authoritative sources? Is it speculative?
3. What are the long- or short-term consequences to the spread of nutrition misinformation that are raised in the book?
4. Do you think modern wellness culture helps or hinders well-being?
5. Have you ever felt that wellness culture promotes a standard of health that is often unattainable and harmful?
6. Does misinformation about nutrition and food affect your life? Do you think it will in the future?

## Discussion Guide



7. How do you think chronic illness affects the prevalence of wellness culture?
8. Which problems with the wellness industry that the author raised do you think are most problematic? Why?
9. What solutions does the author offer to the problems raised? Do you agree with the solutions? Do you think they are attainable?
10. Did the author give evidence for nutritional misinformation? Does the author give misinformation in the book?
11. Did reading this book broaden your perspective about nutrition and health misinformation?
12. Do you think the body positivity movement has improved or worsened body image concerns for people?