

Self-Care: Genuine Practice or Consumer Trend?

Advanced (C1-C2)



WARM UP

Part 1. Read the quote below and then discuss the questions.

"Self-care is not a luxury. It is a necessity."

— Audre Lorde

1. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
2. How do you personally practise self-care?
3. Is self-care always about health, or has it become about lifestyle and image?
4. Should employers or governments encourage self-care, or is it purely personal?



READING TEXT

Part 1. Read the following text.

Self-Care: Genuine Practice or Consumer Trend?

The concept of self-care has grown from simple acts of rest and nourishment into a booming global market. Advocates argue that self-care is essential for physical health, emotional resilience, and mental wellbeing. From exercise and meditation to therapy and digital detoxes, these practices can help people cope with stress and prevent burnout.

Yet critics claim self-care has been commodified into products, apps, and luxury experiences that often exclude those who need support most. The wellness industry profits from selling candles, supplements, and spa retreats under the label of "self-care," while the original meaning—basic acts of maintaining health—risks being diluted.

The debate is whether self-care remains a genuine practice of wellbeing, or whether it has become another consumer trend packaged for profit. Should self-care be reclaimed as a necessity, or embraced as an evolving part of modern culture?

Part 2. Discuss the questions below based on the text.

1. How has the meaning of self-care expanded in recent years?
2. What benefits do advocates associate with self-care?
3. Why do critics argue self-care has been commodified?
4. What risks come from treating self-care as a consumer product?
5. Does the author suggest rejecting or redefining self-care?



DEBATE

Part 1. Match the terms to their meanings.

Commodified wellness

Preventative practice

Consumer privilege

Lifestyle marketing

Wellbeing necessity

Burnout prevention

Holistic balance

Accessibility gap

1. _____ Actions that reduce stress and illness before they become severe.
2. _____ A state of harmony across physical, mental, and social wellbeing.
3. _____ Wellness goods and services transformed into marketable products.
4. _____ The difference between who can and cannot afford wellness options.
5. _____ Actions or routines seen as fundamental for maintaining health.
6. _____ Campaigns that link products with aspirational identities.
7. _____ Measures that reduce exhaustion caused by chronic stress.
8. _____ Products or services seen as luxuries available only to the wealthy..

Part 2. Complete the sentences with the correct terms.

1. Doing yoga or meditation can be a form of _____ that prevents health crises.
2. Marketers often use _____ to link beauty products with self-care.
3. Some argue that candles and spa treatments are examples of _____.
4. Building routines of exercise and sleep hygiene is a _____.
5. A true sense of _____ involves balancing work, rest, and relationships.
6. Retreats and apps can widen the _____, excluding those with lower incomes.
7. Regular breaks and healthy boundaries are key to _____.
8. Many see massages and retreats as a form of _____, not accessible to all.

Part 3. Look at the useful expressions. Rewrite the sentences using these expressions to make them sound more formal and persuasive for a debate.

Framing the issue: The key question is whether... / We might reframe this as...

Hedging : It could be argued that... / To some extent, I agree, although...

Challenging assumptions: Doesn't that overlook the fact that...? / Are we assuming that...?

Weighing trade-offs: We must balance genuine X against Y... / The benefits are clear, but we must also consider...

Conceding then pivoting: That's a fair point; however... / I agree up to a point, but..

1. Self-care is always good for people. ->
2. Self-care products are just a waste of money. ->
3. Only rich people can practise self-care. ->
4. Self-care has lost its real meaning. ->

Part 4. Take part in a structured debate with your teacher/partner. Use the vocabulary and debate expressions from this lesson. Speak fluently, challenge ideas politely, and support your opinions with clear reasons and examples.

Commodified wellness

Preventative practice

Consumer privilege

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Round 1: Argue that self-care is a genuine practice essential for wellbeing.

Round 2: Argue that self-care has been commodified and turned into a consumer trend.

Round 3: Free debate — propose how self-care should be defined and practised in the future..



REFLECTION

Part 1. Discuss the following questions.

1. What role does self-care play in your life?
2. Do you think commercialisation has improved or harmed self-care?
3. How can societies make self-care more accessible and inclusive?

WRAP-UP TASK (OPTIONAL HOMEWORK)

Part 1. Write an opinion article(180–220 words) on:

“Self-Care: Genuine Practice or Consumer Trend?”

- Use at least 4 vocabulary items (e.g., commodified wellness, preventative practice, holistic balance, accessibility gap).
- Use at least 2 debate expressions.
- Present one counterargument and refute it

