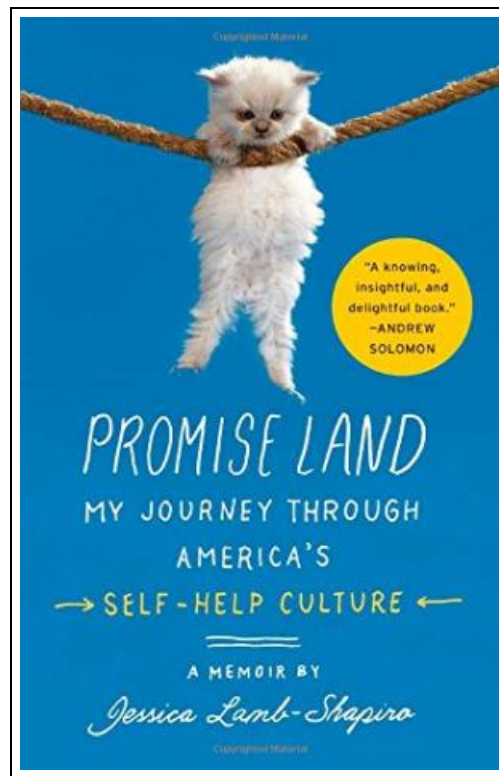


Promise Land: My Journey Through America's Self-Help Culture (Paperback)



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Reviews

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(Prof. Erin Larson I)

PROMISE LAND: MY JOURNEY THROUGH AMERICA'S SELF-HELP CULTURE (PAPERBACK)



SIMON SCHUSTER, United States, 2015. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book. A funny yet surprisingly nuanced look at the legends and ideas of the self-help industry (People, 3.5 stars), *Promise Land* explores the American devotion to self-improvement—even as the author attempts some deeply personal improvements of her own. Raised by a child psychologist who was himself the author of numerous self-help books, as an adult Jessica Lamb-Shapiro found herself both repelled and fascinated by the industry: did all of these books, tapes, weekend seminars, groups, posters, t-shirts, and trinkets really help anybody? Why do some people swear by the power of positive thinking, while others dismiss it as so many empty promises? *Promise Land* is an irreverent tour through the vast and strange reaches of the world of self-help. In the name of research, Jessica attempted to cure herself of phobias, followed *The Rules* to meet and date men, walked on hot coals, and even attended a self-help seminar for writers of self-help books. But the more she delved into the history and practice of self-help, the more she realized her interest was much more than academic. Forced into a confrontation with the silent grief that had haunted both her and her father since her mother's death when she was a baby, she realized that sometimes thinking you know everything about a subject is a way of hiding from yourself the fact that you know nothing at all. A jaunty, cannily written memoir (Chicago Tribune), *Promise Land* is cultural history from a witty and enjoyably self-aware writer. Jessica Lamb-Shapiro's talent as a storyteller is undeniable (The New York Times Book Review).



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