# Selling Happiness: The Promises & Problems of Self-Help Literature

ENG 3402: TOPICS IN LITERATURE • SECTION: D607

Do you dream of having more happiness, success, or love? Of getting better grades, jobs, relationships, or sleep? If so, you are not alone! Countless people want more from their lives and from others, and they turn to self-help to make their dreams reality. Some doctors even prescribe self-help books for their patients! What is this obsession with self-help? What does it offer us? Why do we keep reading it?

This course is an introduction to "the American love affair with self-help" through its literature, industry, benefits, and critiques. Though self-help is often dismissed as providing low-brow, quack remedies for the masses, this course considers it in earnest, exploring what makes the genre so compelling, and why and how self-help matters, to individuals and societies. Students will read self-help texts; try their techniques; reflect on their methods, effectiveness, promises, and problems; and create their own self-help texts for others.

This is a **writing intensive, capstone course** that satisfies the **Individual and Society** Common Core requirement.

Prerequisite of ENG 1121 or any 2000-level literature (ENG, AFR, PRS)

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| Section: | D607 |
| Days & Times: | Tu Th 2:30pm - 3:45pm |
| Room: | Voorhees V-325 |
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**For more information, please visit:**
openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/literature

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