Several years ago, I learned a wonderful exercise from Jack Canfield that I’d like to share. It’s called:

The Mirror Exercise

I’d like to ask you all to consider upping the ante whenever you’re ready, by doing this exercise without clothes on as you stand looking at yourself in the mirror.

The purpose of this is to look deeply into your eyes and see the love and vulnerability that lies beneath the surface and see that you are very loveable and perfect as you are right now!!!

It’s a very powerful and effective means of healing the hurts within and changing the tendency to criticize yourself so harshly.

My recommendation is to do this exercise at least once a night until we meet each other again on Wednesday.

Here it is:

The Mirror Exercise

1. Say your name

2. Appreciate yourself for:
   a) achievements
   b) Disciplines kept
   c) Temptations overcome

3. Say, "I Love You"

4. Take it in and receive it, breathe.

The Mirror Exercise:

This is one of the most simple and effective yet powerful self esteem and self confidence building exercises. It replaces the negative self talk that dominates our thoughts with loving, affirming positive self talk. It is recommended to do this every day for 40 days.

Every night before going to bed, stand in front of a mirror and appreciate yourself for all that you have accomplished during the day. Look deeply into your eyes and notice your mirror image looking back at you. Say your name and begin to appreciate yourself for the following things:

1. Any achievements (business, financial, educational, personal and emotional)
2. Any personal disciplines that you have kept (exercise, meditation, prayers, eating well)
3. Any temptations that you did not give in to (lying, drinking too much, etc.)

Maintain eye contact with yourself throughout the exercise. When you are complete, end by continuing to look into your eyes and say, "I love you" Then stand there for another few seconds to feel the impact of what you have done and experienced. Imagine that you are the only person
in the mirror listening to someone else talking to you, loving you. The trick is to keep your self
fixed on your eyes as you speak and allow the feelings to flood through your body. You may cry,
or laugh or think this is ridiculous and perhaps be embarrassed and feel stupid,
but challenge yourself to go the distance and take it all in. It's intense.

Example: Here is a sample of what it may look like:

"______ I want to appreciate you for the following things today. First I want to appreciate you for
going to bed on time last night without staying up too late and surfing the internet or watching too
much TV. Great job, you got up bright and early this morning and you had a really good
conversation with ________. And then you meditated for 20 minutes and took a shower. You took
care of everything that you needed to and you ate a healthy, nourishing breakfast. You got to
work on time and led a great staff meeting with your support team. You did a great job of getting
everyone comfortable enough to share their concerns. And you were great at drawing out the
quiet ones. Let's see and oh, then you ate a really healthy lunch, soup and a sandwich. Great job
for drinking your water today and keeping your commitments. Congratulations on that one! You
also stayed in a good mood all day. You didn't let other people's problems become yours. You
maintained your boundaries and said "No" when you needed to. And you didn't take anything too
personally today. Good job!... you also finished editing that project that you wanted to finish and
did a great job on that too. I like the way that you have been managing your time lately and
maintaining time for yourself and keeping your self care as a priority. I like the way that you
appreciated others for having done a great job today also. That was really nice and it helped
them to feel really good. They just lit up when you said those nice things to them today. It was
great that you took time to spend that special time with ________. That was really special
particularly when you showed that you really enjoyed their company. And now you're going to bed
again when you need to in order to be bright and bushy tailed tomorrow a.m.. You were really
great today... And one more thing, - I love you!"

Don't be surprised if you have some really weird reactions the first time that you do this exercise.
You might feel guilty, or scared, silly, embarrassed or uncomfortable. We're just not trained to be
kind to ourselves and acknowledge ourselves.

It's so common to beat up on ourselves and called ourselves names and then want to reach for
food to ease the discomfort.

Believe me the more that you do this exercise, the better you will feel. Don't believe me, try it
yourself!

Let me know how it goes.

Note: Jack suggests that if you find yourself lying in bed and notice that you haven't done it, then
get out of bed and
do it. He says that the part of looking at yourself in the mirror is a very important part of the
exercise. Remember you will only get out of it what you put into it.

If you are living with other people, you want to do this in private and tell them that you are
taking time for yourself and not to interrupt you. You certainly don't want them to walk in
on you and find you talking to yourself in the mirror! They'll think that you are off your
rocker!