

In The Mirror

When you look in the mirror, who or what do you see? Do you accept the muscles as well as the wrinkles? Or do you judge your appearance, wondering what else you can do to look better and to feel good about yourself? Do you wish you looked like the cover model; or if you do look like the model, is there a part of you that still isn't quite as good as the hot-bodied guy or gal you saw at the last party or night out on the town?

Truthfully, I don't know of a single person on the planet who does not succumb to judging themselves at some point. As a Personal Coach, I've met many very successful people. Every one of them didn't like something about themselves. If you are 5'6 and you want to be 6'0, what can you do about it? Breaking your legs and putting in metal extension rods may be an option, but I doubt you'll be dancing very well after the surgery.

People often ask me, "Robert, what can I do to look better, have people like me more, get a better job, find a hot boyfriend?" At first, I would give people advice like: go to the gym, eat less sugar, go to therapy, get a facial, try online dating or cut back on alcohol. Then I realized, as much as I gave unlimited advice, people didn't necessarily feel any better, even if they ate all of the broccoli in California. So, what is the real answer to feeling and looking better? The answer is actually quite simple: accepting where you are now, while making improvements along the way.

As I write this article, I anticipate some of you could view this as just more self-help jargon, or some positive thinking exercise that you learn at one of those men's healing retreats in Arizona. Honestly though, my advice is simple and effective, and comes from the lessons I've learned working with hundreds of other men just like you. If you want to make a plan to feel better, look better, have a great body, or find that hot boyfriend, you must first start with where you are now.

Let me give you an example. If you are in your car, and want to drive to Miami, don't you think it's important to first know where you are leaving from? Getting to Miami from California is a much different journey than driving there from New York City. If you want more in your life, you have to start at step one – the present situation.

So first step ask yourself, "What do I like about my life? And then what would I like to improve?" Honestly, you have it so much better than most people on the planet. I assume most of you have a job, friends, and money to travel. Being grateful for what you do have is important. If you are only focused on what you want more of, or what isn't going well, then how depressing is that? No one likes a complainer. In my coaching practice, I help clients think about what they do enjoy about life. When you start with the positives you have a much stronger foundation from which to move forward. And no, I don't suggest you stand in front of the mirror like Saturday Night Live's Stuart Smalley chanting positive affirmations like, "I love myself, and people like me." That may be fun for you and the mirror, or the person listening from the other room who thinks you missed your last Prozac dose, but it isn't going to get you very far. I do suggest, however, you start to really examine what type of person you are. Is your cup half-full or half empty?

One of my previous clients is a very successful model. He worked on runways all over the world and appeared in various magazines. By any person's standards, he is a physically stunning man. However, during the course of our coaching program, I realized that he didn't like what he saw in the mirror. He could only think about the parts of his face or body he thought were not as perfect as they needed to be, or that fashion shoot he didn't get accepted for. Coincidentally, he judged his boyfriends and dates similarly – as never good enough. So ultimately he ended up alone.

During the course of our program, he began to focus on the things in his life that he did like, and the parts of his appearance that he thought were OK. As he began to change his perception, his life changed. He became happier, more focused, and ultimately more successful. And for the areas of his life he did want to improve, we made a step-by-step plan towards those goals. I ask you to consider the same approach – focus on what is good about you now, while working on improving the rest.

I realize that the world is sometimes very superficial, and people are often judged only for how they look. It simply is what it is. When discussing this once, a friend told me that “comparison is the biggest form of unhappiness.” If you are bald, over 50 and no longer look like that 22-year old at your gym, you simply are bald and over 50. You can't be 22 again. Perhaps you can buy hair, or get a referral to a plastic surgeon, but there are certain things you cannot change. So why spend so many restless hours worrying about what you can't change, or comparing yourself to others? You are the one causing yourself to be unhappy, not the 22-year old. He will get older too.

And for the things you can realistically change, what are you doing about it? Have you formulated your goals, taken time to figure out what you really want? Or do you sit at home watching the latest “American Idol” episode, just waiting for that hot man or woman to happen upon your door. We are all ultimately responsible for what we get and what we have. If you want something new in your life, you have to stop spending so much time at the club or at the next party, and take equal time to work towards having the things in your life that make you feel good, even when you aren't in the middle of the latest remix.

By taking steps to actively create your life, you will have optimum health, greater happiness, more energy, your body will look its best, you will age less, and you become more desirable to others. Do you want to be the guy in the corner of the dance floor who is insecure and wishes he were someone else, or do you want to be the guy who knows he is hot, even if he isn't the most physically stunning guy at the party? Confidence is attractive, insecurity isn't. Which of the two do you choose?

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If you are interested in learning more about life coaching, and how to take steps to improve your life, please contact Robert.

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