

Stop proving. Start approving. by [Janelle Fletcher](#)

Superwoman goes about proving herself, and she constantly tackles the "have, do and be good-enoughness" syndrome. Her internal condition is "self impoverishment" and "insignificance" – even though she may feel on the outside that she has what others don't.

A super woman however goes about approving of herself and calmly knows her "greatness". Her internal "condition is "self empowerment" and "magnificence." Her external condition glows, and she inspires others.

Superwoman scales walls claiming her space on the career ladder, in the ranks of an organisation or perhaps she is disguised as super-mum. She dons her costume and flies into numerous and varied situations rescuing all who are putting their hands up, and running up a tally of goals and tasks that she has accomplished, generally in a short space of time. Probably competitive in nature, she feels that she is the one to help, the one to save the day so at one end of the spectrum she may tirelessly run after others and their needs. At the other end, she may be completely besotted and engrossed in her own "make me good enough" endeavours and therefore may become unapproachable or simply awful to be around.

Figuratively the cake she bakes is not an ordinary one. It is a gastronomic delight. Her house or work is either immaculate with the keen, never-ceasing eye of a perfectionist or it could be chaos because of the lengthy lists of things that need doing which may have crept up the priority list. She can't let her guard down. One of her key words is "yes" – she aims to please and to appease. Other self talk, whether conscious or not, may sound like this: "I am still not good enough." "I'm just a ..." "I couldn't possibly...." "I'm exhausted" "They won't think I'm any good...."

Her value and identity lies in doing and having, completing and accomplishing with competition taking priority over cooperation. Resentment and self doubt are common emotions. External validation and social approval is an intrinsic need. The downfall is that the "rewards", typically external, can easily be stripped away from her. What happens when her partner leaves, her children leave home or when her health prevent her from doing what she would normally do to sustain the superwoman role? What if she loses her job that has supported her maintaining her identity? What happens in a recession when money cannot support her in her quest for approval and having the "right" stuff or "right" lifestyle?

Criticism or disfavour almost kills her. Her superwoman cape masks her real appearance so she seldom feels "like herself, she may never feel truly happy or fulfilled and she is almost always exhausted.

Do you want to be superwoman or a super woman? Start approving of yourself and know your worth, rather than prove your worth. Be more. Do less. Start loving and stop judging yourself. Start being a circular train-track – admiring how you are constantly changing and evolving, rather than being the ladder, which you feel you have to climb and when you get to the top you fall off and start looking for a new ladder. When you try and prove yourself, you are without power. You give it away to others. You can however rely on yourself for approval – the power is within you. Decide how you wish to be.

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