

SUPERGIRL, DO YOU HAVE AN EGO?

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Is a female entitled to have an ego? Yes of course! Did you take a second to answer that question? Maybe you were working out whether ego is a good thing or bad thing. Good girls don't have questionable qualities!

Supergirl, take a look at yourself. Take five to break from being a 'good girl'. Are you standing tall or bending over backwards? Oops better watch it! The only way to look at you is to climb out of that super hero body suit that is your ego boundary.

Yes everyone has an ego. It is the awareness of self and one's power package. Awareness of self is best when it is closest to reality. From within we perceive ourselves differently than how others perceive us. Each view-point yields a distinct picture, but the external picture is usually closer to reality than the internal one with a correction factor for the colored glasses of relationships (compare the perception through the eyes of your mother versus those of your mother in law).

Self esteem emerges from self assessment. We can be cruelly judgmental and even unforgiving to ourselves or conversely have more lax rules for ourselves than for others. Attitude to self has its roots in our values and upbringing. Stop punishing yourself for a mistake you made some time ago. Everyone makes mistakes. It is wise to periodically evaluate our values. What was frowned upon yesterday could be quite acceptable today. Take sex education, consumerism or coalition politics.

A similar inventory and prioritization should be done for our fears. Believe it or not, we all have our fears. With growing wisdom and experience the list does shorten but some fears must remain for prudence and for safety in society. The commonest fears are of ridicule and loneliness. These are also the basis of all manipulation and arm-twisting. Self confidence and fears are inversely related, so we should work on reducing and eliminating debilitating fears in order to break free.

Economic independence is now a necessity not a luxury for women. Qualifications, Money and Skills are great ego-boosters, not necessarily in that order. Dependence of others upon us is another power building sensation but this is perverse power. Never mistake dependence for love – don't fool yourself!

So you are economically independent – do you have a professional ego? Those who are generous enough to grant that women are entitled to an ego often overlook that women can be professionally proud too. Women in the working environment are expected to be pleasing and self effacing 'good girls' just like at home! Tough stands, tough decisions, ticking off offenders, demanding 101%

and putting work before family is just not for the girls. Assertive women are labeled 'aggressive'. Fiddlesticks! Ignore the labels – go ahead and be just as professional as you want to be. Just be aware of the boundaries you set for yourself and don't two-time in using gender excuses opportunistically. This brings a bad name to the whole working woman species.

Sexual ego too is not a male priority. Women are proud of their bodies and fertility. This is rooted in instinct and nature's need to continue the species. Sadly, conditioning by taboos and lecherous glances teach young girls to slouch to hide their breasts, and to avoid eye contact. This remains as a habit disqualifying many at interviews and group discussions. The downside of ego of fertility is that women are easily manipulated to conceive just to prove that they are fertile, regardless of whether they are prepared for parenthood or not, bringing unsuspecting babies into love-less homes.

Falling in love with a prospective sex partner and doting pure love of infants both have an instinctual, hormonal and pheromonal basis. This is where intellect meets physiology (mind-body connection). During natural 'love' the ego-boundary between two identities melts down in blissful connection of partners and between mother and child. This ego melt-down triggered by hormones is an opportune time to consolidate the relationship into spiritual or intellectual love commitment. When the hormonal rush subsides, differences become visible and when the infant develops a mind and will of its own – the honeymoon is over and the ego wall becomes palpable again.

Mahatma Gandhi said 'One cannot do right in one department and do wrong in another. Life is one indivisible whole' Professional ego, sexual ego are just different sides of the whole ego. One needs to first be a balanced person before becoming capable of balancing the various aspects of life – living from inside – out. Starting from the inside – we are human first. When 'women's rights' are mentioned, stop to think about 'human rights' first. Every adult and child must have an ego and self esteem. We need to be proud of who we are and what we are. From cradle to the pyre the messages we get denounce womanhood. Yet we have seen proud women – through the dark ages – if they could hold their heads up, we surely can.

Women need to express solidarity. We need to acknowledge our women friends. Friends are great for self-esteem. Girlfriends can give us true feedback. Lower your ego boundary and listen actively for what this magic mirror has to say. Don't interrupt or react and explain in the middle – just listen. Deal with it for two days or more, to let the stage of denial pass. Then resurrect your ego closer to reality. A well fitting super-girl suit (read ego) is more comfortable and less likely to trip you up.

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