

So that's what makes a woman amazing

OK, so it's no surprise that us women are the superior sex – smart, loving multitaskers. But what turns us into the kind of woman who inspires others? We asked these celebrities and readers...



'JOAN RIVERS: SHE MAY BE 75 BUT SHE CAN STILL GET BANNED FROM DAYTIME TV!'

says comedienne Shazia Mirza (right), 31

"My icon is Joan Rivers [above] – the queen of facelifts, the big blow-dry, and of a ribald and candid humour. Yes, she's now a 75-year-old grandmother but she's been making waves for 40 years. You might have seen her recently, being sent off the set of *Loose Women* in disgrace for swearing. It's



a classic example of Joan doing what she does best: saying exactly what she thinks.

"She's a survivor, a strong imperious woman from a conservative background rather like my own. Her father was a doctor (which is my parents' idea of the ideal job) and Joan was never expected to be a comedienne. She fought tooth and nail extension to get onto US TV. When they told her a woman could never host a prime-time show, she kept fighting and got that TV show in the end. So, every time someone refuses to give me a gig, or writes a bad review, I think of Joan's determination.

"My parents never wanted me to be a comedienne; they thought of it as shameful and a hindrance to me getting a husband.

They were right. I've turned all this into material and tell strangers about it every night to make them laugh, and I hope to continue until I'm dead. Joan does the same – when her TV show failed, her husband, who was also her producer, killed himself. Joan's way of coping with the tragedy? She made jokes. 'I said it was my fault because we were making love and I took the bag off my head. Everybody gasped, but it got me through my

husband's suicide,' she said afterwards. If Joan can make jokes about the darkest time in her life, surely 'Why my cousins won't marry me' can be a routine, too.

"Despite her age, the knock-backs, her insecurities and addiction to plastic surgery, she keeps going. Her own face may not be moving, but she's still moving other people's."

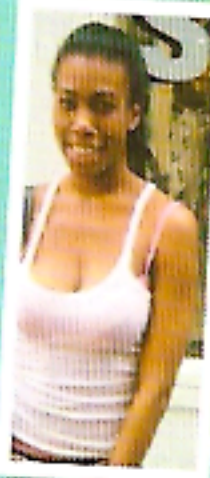
"It's all about making the right choices. Gone are the days when we had to choose between kids and a career, and gone are the (more recent) days when we felt we had to 'have it all'. Now we can pick and choose all the parts of the package we want."

MYLEENE KLASS, 30



"Mariah Carey is my ultimate woman because she suffered a total breakdown and then made a major comeback."

CARAN ELLIOT, 25, DRAMA STUDENT, ST ALBANS



"Being fun is about having a laugh and staying positive, while being fearless is about having the drive to get what you want. What I love is that, today, you don't have to choose between the two."

DENISE VAN OUTEN, 34

