

Mike Pence's Daughter: Why the Label 'Toxic Masculinity' Only Perpetuates the Real Problem

The actions of specific men have led to the creation of a grand category of "toxic masculinity" where oftentimes masculine traits are generally condemned rather than only specific unacceptable behavior.

Masculinity can certainly be toxic, but it can be nontoxic, as well. The positive traits should be celebrated as much as the negative characteristics are called out. Using one's masculinity to put others down is absolutely wrong, but our culture should engage in a conversation about the beneficial masculine traits that should be embraced over these.

Legitimate complaints about toxic masculinity need to be heard out, but in our modern-day meme culture, we jump to labeling all too easily.

There are certainly actions that are toxic, wrong and sinful. Everyone can act in toxic ways—and create unhealthy environments for those around them. We all have to actively work every day to make the lives of the people with whom we interact better, not worse.

While many who use this term are earnestly pointing to specific actions taken by men, the effect on culture, in general, can be negative. The message sent to young people is that masculine tendencies are inherently hurtful. Using masculinity in order to be abusive is the problem; throwing out "masculinity" in its entirety is not the solution.

Certain characteristics of women used to be considered

undesirable in a workplace setting, where now we know that is not true at all. The best and most efficient workplaces are those that have both men and women, performing to the best of their individual ability and applying their strengths to areas where they can best be a positive addition.

The current cultural narrative is overwhelmingly pushing for workplaces to hire more women, outlining how this will improve companies and make them even more profitable. Companies who acknowledge the benefits of having both women and men in their environment are celebrated. This means there is something different to be gained by having both sexes working together. Therefore, men are necessary, too, and their different abilities and strengths also complement the strengths of women.

If we start labeling “masculinity” as a toxic trait, rather than calling out certain men who act in specifically toxic ways, we run the risk of falling into a trap where we only see the weaknesses of certain genders. Let’s not perpetuate stereotypes about either sex, but rather call out specific unhealthy patterns and celebrate men and women who act in nontoxic ways by building others up, not tearing them down.
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