

Your Fake Stoicism Is Ruining Your Relationships

A while ago, I had an epiphany. It is an epiphany about my shortcomings as a man. A lot of people write about toxic masculinity. I too have [given it some thought](#) before. But the truth is, that it is hard to grasp, what most people mean, when they use the term. And it is not because they aren't clear enough about it. It has to do with our patterns of behaviour, that are often hidden to ourselves. One of these patterns is fake stoicism.



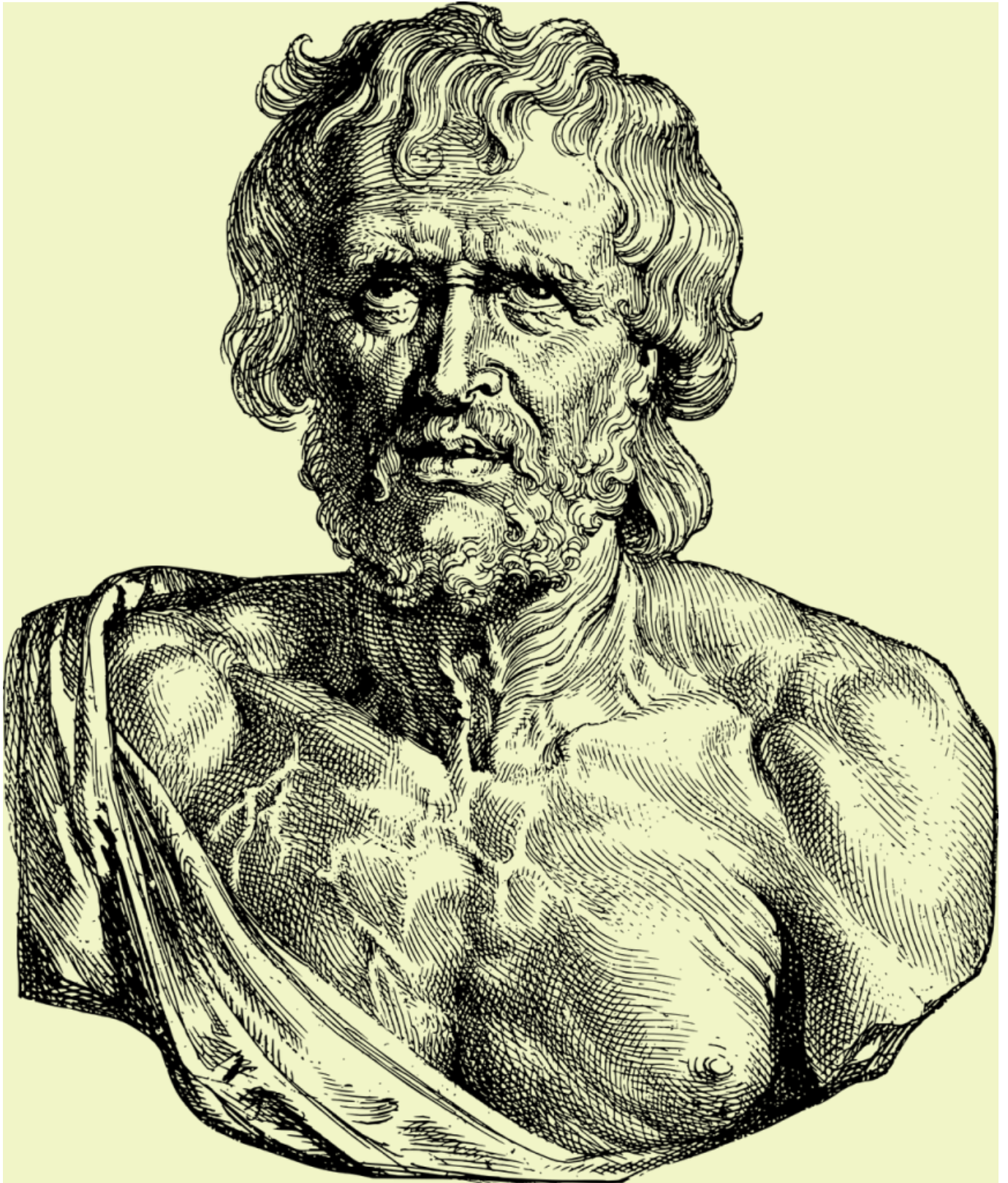
Denmark, my home for 25 years. Own photograph

We often like to call it stoic when men hide their feelings. But the stoics never meant that we should bottle up our feelings. Instead, we should accept them, and take responsibility for them. The fact that our feelings exist, is an undeniable reality. Hiding feelings is thus hiding a truth. It is fake stoicism.

***I would rather offend you
with the truth than please***

you with flattery.

– Seneca



Sometimes, the people in our lives give us learning opportunities. But it is our choice if we grab these opportunities when they arise. I didn't. Until it blew up in my face. Not the first time. Let me share an anecdote, to illustrate.

I Left My Home in a Messy Way

Some time ago, [I left Denmark](#), the country I called home for 25 years. I

settled again in Germany. Back then, my exit was messy. I was in a relationship, which turned out to be a dumpster fire. A very toxic one. But I didn't want to see it. I had plans to move to Brazil, which I canceled at the last minute. Thank god for that. Anyway, in the process I had some disagreements with long-standing friends over it. I ended up burning bridges, which I was not sure I wanted to burn.

Time has passed, since then.

I am in a relationship again and getting on my feet again. Meanwhile, I did lots of inner work. But I never stopped thinking about what I left behind. It was time for me to confront these ghosts of my past. And in the process, I almost f*cked things up again.

I Repeated My Pattern of Fake Stoicism Yet Again

I had an opportunity to go to Denmark. Consequently, I arranged to meet with some of my old friends to sort out the mess I left behind. I wanted to get clear on what I want, moving forward. Nothing wrong with that. Except for one thing.

I took that decision on my own. Did I discuss my plans with my partner? No, I merely informed her. I worked together with her to take precautions for the time I was gone. All was fine and dandy. Until reality hit for both of us. I was gone, several hundred kilometers away. She was angry with me and felt left behind. She only told me after my departure. I didn't want to understand why. We had discussed it, hadn't we? Hadn't we taken precautions? Hadn't we organized around my absence?

The fight escalated. I still didn't understand. I argued about how much I had tried to organize. How I tried to keep my absence short. How this was important to me. None of it mattered.

Fake Stoicism Ruined It Again

Days passed before it dawned on me. The real reason she was angry was not that I left. It was not that I took care of my past and my mental health. The real issue was, that I had not shared my fears about it. I had never shared with her before, why it was so important. Why I decided on a whim. I never shared with her, that I was afraid that I would not get another opportunity to do this. I had kept all this to myself. Because I never talked about stuff like this. Because I was used to fighting for every bit of autonomy since childhood. I had to learn to fight for my place. Both because I am a man. And because I suffered from [bullying as a child](#). I learned to practice fake stoicism.

Interestingly, it is this same fake stoicism, that was the reason for the burnt bridges in the first place. Back then, my friends were not mad at what I did. They were mad because I didn't let them in on, what I was struggling with. I fought on my own. Until no one fought together with me anymore.

This must be a prime example of toxic masculinity. I signaled that we were

not equal because I could not share these things with my partner. That my autonomy mattered more than her. This is the dark side of fake stoicism. You undermine your relationships. In my case, many of those are beyond repair. It is what it is.

This was a hard lesson. And it may have almost cost me another relationship.

What Red-Pill Writers Consistently Get Wrong

One of the favorite talking points in the red-pill community is, that most women condemn males for showing their feelings. But that is not true. What most women condemn is that we only show our feelings selectively. We often process emotions by finding pragmatic solutions. But we don't learn to take responsibility for these emotions. So our partners and friends only see the result of that process. The solution. Like the decision to go to Denmark on a whim, in my case. Yet, every decision we make has consequences. Even if we do not see them. Our partners and friends want to know, what they are getting into. And they have a right to. That is, what partnership means.

I could have said something like this. "I need to get some closure on my past. Therefore, I want to go to Denmark, and I want to do it alone. There is a unique opportunity to do this now. **I am afraid**, if I do not take it, I will not get another one."

It is more than likely, that my partner would have fully supported me. I will never find out now.

Sharing Your Feelings and Emotions Means Taking Responsibility for Them

As men, we often share our inner lives on a need-to-know basis. As if we are working for a secret intelligence agency. I did say that it was important for me to go. But I left out the fear part. That is why my partner was overwhelmed by my decision. Because outward, I never showed it. Or told about it. I took the decision and left her to deal with the consequences that fell on her.

This is, what pushes many women away. Because they feel insecure about us. How can you trust someone, who never tells you the full story? But we men, we are very used to doing exactly that. We never let on about what we think. What we feel. We find pragmatic solutions and expect others to go along.

In essence, we do not take responsibility for our feelings. And that is a major red flag. At least it should be in a relationship. Any relationship.