

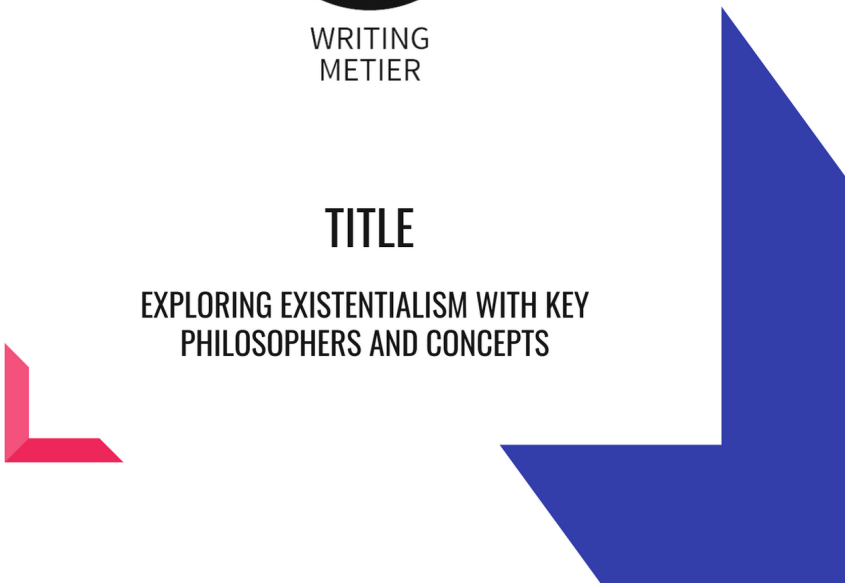


PHILOSOPHY PAPER SAMPLE



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EXPLORING EXISTENTIALISM WITH KEY
PHILOSOPHERS AND CONCEPTS

Title: "Exploring Existentialism with Key Philosophers and Concepts"

Introduction

The philosophical stance of existentialism, which is robust and notion-scary, originated in the 19th century. This philosophical movement thoroughly investigates the nature of life, freedom, and the intrinsic responsibility that all and sundry have for his or her personal life.

Existentialism's quest for expertise forces us to address fundamental queries concerning the cause of being and the essence of lifestyles. Within philosophy, existentialism¹ opposes traditional conceptions that aim to characterize and make straightforward human life. It represents the destruction of essentialist philosophies that hold that human beings have predetermined features in lifestyles with the aid of arguing that a person's presence is the idea in their identification and cost. This ruin enables an extra objective evaluation and reflection on existence.

Existentialism is fundamentally concerned with the organization and duty of the man or woman². Existentialists contend that freedom is an important human right and that our decisions profoundly impact how we specify our humanity. Existentialism forces us to face the inherent worries and uncertainties of embracing openness by emphasizing responsibility. It also demands that we examine the sincerity of our selections and ask ourselves if they're consistent with who we indeed are.

However, to understand fully the philosophical movement that is existentialism, it's necessary to study the writings of influential thinkers who have developed and defined it. One of the greatest thinkers in existentialist philosophy is Jean-Paul Sartre³. In his epochal essay 'Being and Nothingness', Sartre explores the concept of "bad faith" and explains how people often give up their independence to cooperate with others. To read Sartre is to be made aware of the shortcomings of real life. It entails taking responsibility for your choices.

¹ "Existentialism." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Stanford University, 2022, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/existentialism/>.

² The Ethics Centre. "Existentialism." Ethics Centre, <https://ethics.org.au/ethics-explainer-existentialism/>.

³ Anderson, Thomas C. "Jean-Paul Sartre." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Stanford University, 2017, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sartre/>.

The great existentialist thinker Albert Camus⁴ first defines absurdity in his philosophical work 'The Myth of Sisyphus,' exploring the contradiction between a universe that appears meaningless and humankind's quest for itself. For Camus, the absurd is an encounter between an indifferent universe and human attempts to find meaning. His work encourages us to struggle against the absurdity of being instead of trying endlessly in vain to find some overall cosmic meaning. Existentialism is a philosophy that takes from all corners of the philosophical world. Many say that Simone de Beauvoir⁵ was an existentialist feminist, and she has developed the existentialist framework for gender. It's about how people are constructed through society, particularly womanhood. In *The Second Sex*, she examines the realities of women's existence and exposes society's dubious assumptions about femininity.

At the beginning of this essay, one is led to reflect upon humanity and our existence here. Existentialism advises living authentically and owning up to our stories while enjoying life's many unknown quantities. We examine critical existentialist philosophers and ideas to peel back the layers of the human experience and address the age-old query: In a universe that seems not to be listening, what is the meaning of being human?

Historical Context:

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, existentialist philosophy arose against profound historical and cultural change. It was a reaction to the difficulties brought about by scientific progress, industrialization, and significant changes in social institutions. This existentialist philosophical concept develops as a response to the conventional ideologies' certainties and an acknowledgment of the complexity of human reality.

The origins of existentialism can be found in the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard⁶, who lived in the 19th century and is frequently recognized as the forerunner of existentialist

⁴ Baghramian, Maria. "Albert Camus." Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, <https://iep.utm.edu/albert-camus/>.

⁵ Mussett, Shannon M. "Simone de Beauvoir." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Stanford University, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/beauvoir/>.

⁶ Watkin, Julia. "Søren Kierkegaard." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Stanford University, 2019, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kierkegaard/>.

philosophy. Existentialist⁷ themes derived from Kierkegaard's investigation of the subject's subjective experience and the significance of free will. His disapproval of institutionalized religion and focus on personal faith as an individualized, intense commitment paved the way for later existentialist philosophers.

In continental Europe, existentialism came into being in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in reaction to the severe disruptions brought about by World War I. After the war, the existentialist movement strengthened as Europe struggled to deal with the terrible fallout and the dashed hopes of progress. The existentialists tried to explain a world that appeared to be losing its conventional certainties. The 1943 release of Jean-Paul Sartre's⁸ "Being and Nothingness" was one of the turning points in the evolution of existentialist philosophy. The French philosopher and heavyweight Sartre was crucial in establishing the boundaries of existentialism. In this critical essay, Sartre explores the essence of human consciousness, freedom, and responsibility. His claim that "existence precedes essence" challenged the widely held belief that people have predefined ends and became a pillar of existentialist philosophy.

Concurrently, the writer and philosopher Albert Camus provided a unique viewpoint within the existentialist framework, shaped by the absurdity of the human predicament. "The Myth of Sisyphus" by Camus (1942) examines the idea of the absurd or the fundamental conflict between the universe's seeming meaninglessness and humankind's need for meaning. Even though Camus shared existentialist principles, he remained critical of the genre and refused to accept the title. His theories gave the existentialist debate more nuance and variety.

Existentialism captivated minds all through Europe, even past the bounds of France. Though he did not subscribe to existentialism without delay, Martin Heidegger's deep investigation of the nature of Being and the individual's enjoyment had a widespread impact on German philosophers exploring associated existential problems. The existentialist panorama changed significantly, motivated by Heidegger's emphasis on the length of existence and personal preference.

Renowned for her work, 'The Second Sex,' Simone de Beauvoir not only delivered existentialist concepts on feminism and gender but also significantly contributed to the development of the

⁷ "Existentialism." Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, edited by James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, <https://iep.utm.edu/existent/>.

⁸ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Jean-Paul Sartre." Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jean-Paul-Sartre>.

movement. Her perceptive evaluation of the social expectancies and existential struggles confronted by girls' aid marked a substantial turning point in developing feminist ideas and existentialist notions.

In the end, the philosophical underpinnings of existentialists are deeply rooted within the sociological, cultural, and intellectual developments of the nineteenth and 20th centuries. Existentialism encompassed a variety of thoughts, from the early insights of Kierkegaard to the modern contributions of Sartre, as well as the works of Camus, Heidegger, and de Beauvoir that included many philosophical topics. While now not an unmarried school of idea, existentialism centered on themes of individual autonomy and responsibility to assist it in negotiating the complicated terrain of human existence in a more and more unpredictable environment.

Key Philosophers - An Overview of Kierkegaard, Sartre, and Nietzsche

In particular, existentialist philosophy has the foundation provided by great minds from different countries: Friedrich Nietzsche, Søren Kierkegaard, and Jean-Paul Sartre, who each emphasized personal freedom, choice, and responsibility. Inevitably, these three men came together with their temporal and cultural differences to form a philosophical trio that profoundly influenced existentialism and sincerely defined its nature. Each offered his song to the symphony of human life.

Søren Kierkegaard: The Originator of Existentialism (1813–1855)

Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, the Father of Existentialism, laid this foundation during the 1800s. Through an investigation of the individual's personal experience, Kierkegaard called into question the two ideologies that ruled his age--idealism and rationalism. His most incredible legacy was the concept of "subjective truth," which elevates the importance of dynamic lived experience over static objective realities.

Kierkegaard built his existentialist theory on the idea of the "leap of faith" in works like *Fear and Trembling*; he returns to the question: Can you logically explain Abraham's readiness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice? Later existentialist philosophers benefited from Kierkegaard's insistence on making authentic, personal choices and the individual's subjective truth. Moreover, Kierkegaard's attack on the Hegelian system and objective universal truth influenced later existentialists. His writings stressed the individuality and peculiarity of each person's experience, denying that human life could be quantified in abstract laws.

Jean-Paul Sartre, 1905–1980: Humanism as Existentialism

French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre expanded upon Kierkegaard's theories and put existentialism at the center of philosophical debate throughout the 20th century. Sartre's masterpiece 'Being and Nothingness' in-depth investigates human awareness, autonomy, and accountability. His famous aphorism soon became the rallying cry of existentialist philosophy: Existence precedes essence. In the view of Sartre, humans are, by nature, free beings, and our essence depends on what we choose to do. In his "Existentialism is a Humanism," Sartre argued for the significance of free will and maintained that our decisions define who we are as people and what it means to be human. He stressed the depthless freedom to be and ultimately denied any fixed substance or moral rule.

Also, Sartre put forward the latter concept of bad faith, that it was in people's nature to sacrifice their freedom by conforming to social norms and playing roles assigned by others. This idea emphasized the existentialist call for authenticity: confronting the discomforts of real life and being responsible for one's actions. Sartre's legacy goes beyond philosophy. He also left a mark on activists and fiction writers. Active in political and social circles, he was a prominent member of the existentialist movement. He maintained his philosophical thinking to encourage social reform and individual freedom. His existentialist ideas are still relevant today. They influence current debates about politics, ethics, and the meaning of life.

Friedrich Nietzsche: Eternal Recurrence and the Will to Power

But if Nietzsche himself had little direct influence over existentialism, the movement made great use of his concepts. So his dismissal of orthodox conceptions of morality, together with the exploratory investigation in Origin "The Will to Power" and the notion of 'The Eternal recurrence' offered a language of existentialism that allowed German thinkers to abandon inner polarization between its belief in absolute values and its emphasis on individual creation, superimposing exchanges between such concepts as original sin. This rejection of Nietzsche's conventional theological and moral frameworks, which appeared in such works as Beyond Good and Evil or Thus Spoke Zarathustra, questioned objective universal truths; genuineness and self-expression became important goals; each person could formulate their values.

Nietzsche's idea of the "will to power" fits smoothly with existentialist notions of personal freedom and following your path. Nietzsche foresaw a society in which people take control of their destiny into their own hands and stress those parts of life that are creative and dynamic.

On the other hand, Nietzsche's idea of "eternal recurrence" promotes reflection on the consequences of one's choices. The topic of existentialism is that every choice in life is important and that personal accountability is a burden concerning the repetition of life.

In conclusion, Kierkegaard, Sartre, and Nietzsche's intellectual contributions form a trinity that both launched and enriched the existentialist tradition. A philosophy oriented toward the individual took shape under Kierkegaard, Sartre, and Nietzsche. Kierkegaard stressed subjective truth and the act of faith, Sartre radicalized individual freedom and responsibility; Nietzsche gave the will to power full rein. Together, they wove an elaborate garment of existentialism, challenging variously received ideas and spurring us to examine the great questions about human existence.

Central Concepts in existentialism's core ideas

The philosophical concept of existentialism⁹ uses the three interrelated ideas of freedom, individuality, and authenticity to define the vital additives of human lifestyles. These thoughts offer deep insights into the nature of human life and its issues and constitute the cornerstone of existentialist philosophy. In existentialism, freedom is of maximum significance, occupying a vital and perfect place within the human situation. The famous quote from Jean-Paul Sartre, "Man is condemned to be free," sums up the existentialist point of view that people have to mold their essence through alternatives in a global without that means or reason. According to this paradigm, freedom extends past political rights and includes the capacity to shape one's values, the liberty to pursue one's goals without limitations, and the duty for the alternatives one makes. It isn't an idealized abstraction but an actual revelation that exposes humans to the strain and pain of creating alternatives.

Sartre's notion of "bad faith" emphasizes how human beings regularly absolve themselves of the complete weight of freedom with the resource of adopting roles that might be predefined for them or using ways of following social norms. According to existentialism, freedom is going through the discomforts of natural lifestyles and making selections that are real to one's dreams and dreams.

The concept that each human is profoundly precise is well known as the valuable resource of existentialism, which originated with Søren Kierkegaard's research of subjective reality.

⁹ "Existentialism." Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/existentialism>.

Existentialism rejects the belief that human conduct is dictated by significant truths and preset ambitions, contending that all and sundry's lives are stunning trips inspired by their tales, ideals, and picks. People are advised to oppose conformity and encompass their authentic selves through this part of individuality.

Albert Camus highlights the problems of looking to make an experience of a meaningless universe, underscoring this is seeking a particular and customized person. One of existentialism's central thoughts is authenticity, the conscious interest in freedom and duty. It necessitates an ongoing self-mirrored photo of 1's mind, convictions, and conduct, rejecting social effects that could result in "terrible religion" and choosing routes constant with one's dreams.

The idea of "existential desire" makes authenticity so vital, as positioned by the manner of Jean-Paul Sartre. In an uncaring universe, people should make choices that might be ordinary with their convictions and ideals to define their identities and contribute to humanity's collective individual. As hooked in Sartre's play "No Exit," in which people ought to confront the results of their acts in a hellish area, existentialist literature characters often warfare with anxiety about authenticity and conformity. This highlights the inherent responsibility of dwelling in an actual lifestyle.

To sum up, the fundamental ideas of existentialism—freedom, individuality, and authenticity—create a coherent framework that questions familiar philosophical assumptions. The recognition placed by existentialism on the need for profound liberty, subjective revelation, and authenticity has had a protracted-lasting impact on many disciplines, including psychology, philosophy, and literature. As we manage the intricacies of our lifestyles, the existentialist attitude gives a profound invitation to realize our individuality, be given the duty of freedom, and paint the path of a real engagement with existence's inherent uncertainties.

Conclusion

There remains an area for existentialist philosophy within the twenty-first century. In the same way, existentialist thoughts about freedom, strong points, and authenticity resonate with our dilemmas and problems; they also provide important insights into human amusement. In a time when there may be abundant information and extraordinary connections, the existentialist emphasis on individuality emphasizes self-discovery and the technique of creating connections.

It is a timely antidote to the homogenizing effects of contemporary technology to embody one's tremendous individual, which is an existential yearning¹⁰. This constant social strain to comply with predetermined roles is consistent.

In existentialist freedom dilemmas, rapid technical development and ethical concerns are brought to the forefront. Our world is transforming due to the upward push of biotechnology, surveillance, and synthetic intelligence, creating increasingly complex moral contexts for our alternatives. While navigating morally tricky surroundings, the assertion made by using existentialists that human beings are destined to be unfastened resonates powerfully. Authenticity is more important than ever at this point of hyperconnectivity and thoroughly created online profiles.

In the context of social media, virtual relationships, and the stress of assigning an idealized self-picture, the existentialist undertaking to stay aware, confront conformity, and embody the uncertainties of genuine lifestyles is relevant. Conversations about mental health and well-being in the modern-day generation reflect existentialist ideas. In fragmented and rapid-paced surroundings, existential acceptance of hysteria and alienation, in addition to the realization that meaning search is appropriate for mental issues, is important. The existentialist appeal to confront those troubles, keep one's composure, and take possession of one's story is a supply of inspiration for resiliency and introspection.

The enchantment existentialist thinkers have for critical engagement with ideologies and power systems continues to apply in the context of climate exchange, social injustice, and geopolitical tensions. Existentialist perspectives contribute to political and social discourse on traits inclusive of man or woman corporation, obligation, and group selections.

In conclusion, our contemporary society is guided by existentialist philosophy, which developed as a reaction to the ambiguities that existed in the 19th and 20th centuries. Due to the truth that it places a robust cognizance on freedom, distinctiveness, and honesty, it is an everlasting guide for cutting-edge existence. Existentialism is a term that guides us through the ever-converting landscapes of our shared humanity as we are facing technological, social, and ethical problems. It is a name that encourages us to confront the responsibilities of freedom, to laugh with individuality, and to seek proper involvement with lifestyles.

¹⁰ Drake, William, PhD. "What Is Existentialism?" Verywell Mind, <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-existentialism-5667161>.

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