

(6) Anguish is experienced by the man who chooses himself and thus all mankind, fully realizing the responsibility of his action.

(7) Forlornness is experienced by the man who faces the realization that God does not exist, and thus realizes that there is no pre-determined universal human nature and no universal-objective standard of values. Thus everything is possible. Values are defined by actions; i.e., values depend entirely on the choices a man makes. Man must invent values.

(8) Despair is experienced by the man who depends on his own will only, together with the possibilities open to him; who realizes that things will only be as man has decided they are to be. Thus there are no "potential but latent capabilities" in man on which he can fall back; there are only actualities. There is no such thing as a cowardly or heroic nature or constitution; men make themselves cowards or heroes by their actions.

(9) If there is no such thing as a universal human nature, yet there does exist a universal human condition (the a priori limitations of man's fundamental situation in the universe). This condition includes:

- (a) the necessity for man to exist in the world
- (b) the necessity for man to be at work in the world
- (c) the necessity for man to be there in the midst of other people
- (d) the necessity for man to be mortal in the world

(10) Yet there is a sense in which man transcends himself, projects himself, passes beyond himself in seeking a goal of freedom outside of himself. In this sense existentialism is optimistic; and is a doctrine of action and of human self-fulfillment.

A Typical Existentialism Position

The following represent key motifs of Existentialism (as a philosophy):

(1) "Existence precedes essence" This starting point of all existentialism reverses the formula prevalent for the preceding two thousand years- that *essentia* precede *existentia*. Existentialists say either that particulars of existence precede forms, or that particulars of existence are all that exist.

Jacques Maritain (a Neo-Thomist Existentialist) expresses the difference between these two kinds of existentialists in a pointed statement:

Let it be said right off that there are two fundamentally different ways of interpreting the word existentialism. One way is to affirm the primacy of existence, but as implying and preserving essences or natures and as manifesting the supreme victory of the intellect and of intelligibility. This is what I consider to be authentic existentialism. The other way is to affirm the primacy of existence, but as destroying or abolishing essences or natures and as manifesting the supreme defeat of the intellect and of intelligibility. This is what I consider to be apocryphal existentialism, the current kind which "no longer signifies anything at all."