Existentialism

- Refers to the focus of this philosophical approach: existence over essence

- Existence = daesin “just being” rather than “being essentially” like everyone else/or essentially like a group

- Do what you want as an individual, but be willing to face the consequences for those choices

- Free will/choice central tenet (principle)

- Live on your own accord/own rules

- Be willing to be unhappy with your choices…. as long as you are free/making decisions on your own

- Cannot transfer the blame onto someone else; “no excuses”

- Do not live by/abide by social structures/restraints (school, family, religion, society)

- Freeing but it’s also “dreadful freedom”: recognition that while you’re “free,” you’re also alone, in an absurd/chaotic world, and you are responsible

Characteristics of Existentialism (Existential Hero; Ubermensch)

- The individual is aware of the absurdity of existence.

- Man is alone in the universe.

- There is no superior being.

- Existence precedes essence (“group”)

- There is no predetermined order in the universe (no fate) – contingencies, random obstacles.

- There is no fixed human nature.

- Man is completely free (“dreadful freedom”)

- Man is entirely responsible for his own actions.

- Goal is to be a “Subject” and not an “Object”: Man has a choice:

Subject: authentic, self-determining, find meaning within self, finding meaning in your actions, taking the hard road – choose to be the subject rather than an object of someone else’s expectations, rules