## **What is Existentialism?**

Existentialism, at its core, is a philosophy that emphasizes the individual, their emotions, actions, and the freedom and responsibility that come with these. It's a perspective that tells us that we are not just passive beings in the world; we are active participants who shape our own lives and destinies.

## **Main Philosophers of Existentialism**

* **Søren Kierkegaard:** Often regarded as the "father of existentialism,"
* **Friedrich Nietzsche**
* **Jean-Paul Sartre:** A French philosopher and writer, Sartre is perhaps the most well-known existentialist.
* **Albert Camus:** Another French philosopher, Camus rejected the label of "existentialist," but his works are often associated with the philosophy.

## **Key Principles of Existentialism**

1. **Existence Precedes Essence**
2. **Freedom and Responsibility:** Existentialism holds that we are free to make our own choices. But with this freedom comes great responsibility.
3. **The Absurd:** The world, according to existentialists, often doesn't make sense. This nonsensical aspect of existence is what they refer to as "the absurd."
4. **Authenticity:** Being true to oneself is a central theme in existentialism.

Understanding these principles gives you a clearer picture of what existentialism is all about. It's not just a philosophical theory—it's a way of looking at life that emphasizes individual freedom, authenticity, and the inherent strangeness of existence.