

important posits in understanding Beckett

1. *existentialism says* -
 - a. Individuals create the meaning and essence of their lives.
 - b. Wo/Man is defined only insofar as s/he acts and s/he is responsible for her/his actions.
2. From Beckett's friend Albert Camus, Absurdity !!!!! **yikes.....**
 - a. is endemic to the human condition - a meaningful life can suddenly lose meaning – happiness is fleeting and the human condition is one of mortality.
 - b. So, **dah dah dummmmmmm** the Camus paradox:
 - i. We value our lives and existence so greatly, but at the same time we know we will eventually die, and ultimately our endeavors are meaningless. While we can live with a dualism (I can accept periods of unhappiness, because I know I will also experience happiness to come), we cannot live with the paradox (I think my life is of great importance, but I also think it is meaningless).
 - ii. Our life must have meaning for us to value it. If we accept that life has no meaning and therefore no value, should we kill ourselves?
 - c. whew..... thank Go...no... thank humanity...Camus says: despite humans being subjects in an indifferent and "absurd" universe, in which meaning is challenged by the fact that we all die, meaning can be created, however provisionally and unstably, by our own decisions and interpretations. *Goes right back to existentialism....*
3. Beckett's plays and his **Theatre of the Absurd** are the demonstration of Camus' concept of "the absurd" AND
4. Beckett says through Nell – and this is a point that I hope to make in the production: "Nothing is funnier than unhappiness, I grant you that. ... Yes, yes, it's the most comical thing in the world. And we laugh, we laugh, with a will, in the beginning. But it's always the same thing. Yes, it's like the funny story we have heard too often, we still find it funny, but we don't laugh any more."
5. My theoretical concept is loosely – you are responsible for your life, get off your ass and get to it! Tone is dark. The characters vacillate abruptly (sometimes very quickly) between joy / playfulness, anger, and despair. This abruptness gives both pieces their dark comedy. When you look at your lines, notice that the vacillation is also a circular pattern. Visual concept – absurdity (humorously speaking) of spinning your **wheels.**