

# Searching For Sanity With Samuel Beckett, Norman Mailer, And My Perfect Zen

In a world that often feels like it's spiraling out of control, it can be difficult to find sanity. We are bombarded with information and stimuli from all sides, and it can be hard to know what to believe or how to make sense of it all. In times like these, it can be helpful to turn to the works of great thinkers who have grappled with similar questions.



## Four Men Shaking: Searching for Sanity with Samuel Beckett, Norman Mailer, and My Perfect Zen Teacher

by Lawrence Shainberg

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Two such thinkers are Samuel Beckett and Norman Mailer. Beckett was an Irish playwright, novelist, and poet who is best known for his absurdist works, such as *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*. Mailer was an American novelist, journalist, and essayist who is best known for his novels about masculinity and violence, such as *The Naked and the Dead* and *An American Dream*.

Despite their different backgrounds and styles, Beckett and Mailer shared a deep interest in the human condition. They both explored the themes of existentialism and absurdism, and they both sought to find meaning in a world that often seems meaningless. In their works, they offer us a unique perspective on the human experience, and they can help us to find sanity in a chaotic world.

### **Beckett's Absurdism**

Beckett's absurdist works are characterized by their lack of plot, character development, and resolution. His characters are often trapped in repetitive situations that seem to have no meaning. They speak in a fragmented and illogical way, and they often engage in nonsensical activities. This can be frustrating for readers, but it is also part of Beckett's point. He is trying to show us that the world is often absurd and meaningless, and that we must learn to accept this.

In his play *Waiting for Godot*, two tramps named Vladimir and Estragon wait for a man named Godot who never arrives. They pass the time by engaging in meaningless conversations and activities. At the end of the play, they are still waiting for Godot, and they have no idea why. This play is a classic example of absurdism, and it shows us how the human condition can be absurd and frustrating.

However, Beckett's absurdism is not simply a matter of despair. It is also a way of finding meaning in a meaningless world. By accepting the absurdity of the world, we can free ourselves from the need for certainty and control. We can learn to live in the moment and appreciate the simple things in life.

### **Mailer's Existentialism**

Mailer's existentialist works explore the themes of freedom, responsibility, and the meaning of life. His characters are often complex and flawed individuals who are struggling to find their place in the world. They often make mistakes, but they also learn from their experiences and grow as human beings.

In his novel *The Naked and the Dead*, Mailer tells the story of a group of American soldiers fighting in the Pacific during World War II. The soldiers are faced with extreme violence and hardship, and they must make difficult choices in order to survive. Mailer's novel is a powerful exploration of the human condition, and it shows us how we can find meaning in even the most challenging situations.

Mailer's existentialism is not based on despair, but on hope. He believes that we can create our own meaning in life, and that we are responsible for our own actions. He challenges us to live our lives with authenticity and purpose, and to make a difference in the world.

## **My Perfect Zen**

I have found that the works of Beckett and Mailer can be a source of great comfort and inspiration. They have helped me to understand the human condition better, and they have given me the courage to face the challenges of life with a sense of purpose and meaning.

I believe that everyone can find their own perfect Zen, and that it doesn't have to be a traditional Zen practice. For me, my perfect Zen is found in the works of great thinkers like Beckett and Mailer. Their words have helped me to find sanity in a chaotic world, and they have given me the strength to live a meaningful life.

If you are struggling to find sanity in a chaotic world, I encourage you to explore the works of Samuel Beckett and Norman Mailer. They may not offer you easy answers, but they will challenge you to think deeply about the human condition. And in ng so, they may help you to find your own perfect Zen.

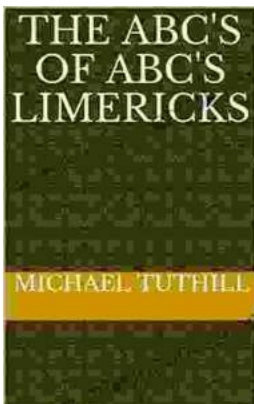


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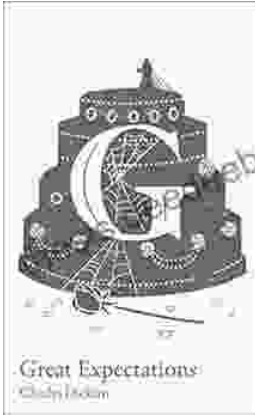
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