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Zimbardo’s Stanford Prison Experiment

Questions to answer while watching the video:

1. Consider the psychological consequences of stripping, delousing and being put in prison-style uniforms and given a number. What transformations take place when people go through an experience like this?
2. During the experiment, how did the prisoners and guards conform to their roles? List specific examples.
3. How did Zimbardo, the psychologist conducting the experiment conform to his role as prison superintendent?
4. How did the guards break the solidarity of the prisoners?
5. What prevented “good guards” form objecting or countermanding the orders from tough or bad guards?

Questions to answer after watching the video:

1. If you were a guard, what type of guard would you have become? How sure are you?
2. If you were a prisoner, would you have been able to endure the experience? What would you have done differently than those subjects did? If you were imprisoned in a real prison for five years or more, could you take it?
3. Was it ethical to do this study? Was it right to trade the suffering experienced by participants for the knowledge gained by the research?
4. What does this experiment tell you about the nature of man? Are we all really inherently evil?