

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ZOOTOPIA

Implicit Bias, Stereotype, and the Hidden Machinery of Prejudice

DISCUSSION GUIDE

For families, teens, and curious readers.

Use this guide to reflect on first impressions, fairness, and how fear can shape the way we see one another.

1. BEFORE WATCHING



Set the stage and open curiosity.

- Younger kids: Have you ever decided someone was nice or mean before you really knew them?
- Older kids and teens: What are some quick assumptions people make about groups, and where do you think those assumptions come from?

2. WHILE WATCHING



Notice bias, fear, and what gets activated.

- How does Judy try to be fair, and where do you see her assumptions still show up?
- What happens in the city when fear is activated?
- Who benefits when people become more suspicious of one another?

3. AFTER WATCHING



Reflect together and talk it through.

- How can a good person hurt others without meaning to?
- Why does Nick stop expecting people to see him differently?
- What helps prejudice begin to soften in the relationship between Judy and Nick?

4. TRY THIS



One small step toward fairness.

- This week, notice one quick assumption you make about a person or group.
- Ask: What am I basing that on?
- Practice getting to know one person more as an individual rather than through a category.

DR. Z TAKEAWAY



The most uncomfortable truth in Zootopia is also its most useful one: prejudice is not located only in obvious villains. Bias can live in kind, well-intentioned people too.

The work is not pretending we are above it.

The work is noticing it, owning it, and choosing differently.



DR. MICHAEL ZAKALIK, PSY.D.

Psychologist for Parenting | Z Psychology



Understanding minds.



Strengthening connections.