Many different concepts regarding The Self can help us or rather say might help us understand the mindset of ISIL. Two concepts regarding the self that I think might help us understand their mindset is (1) self-esteem and (2) social comparison.

Self-esteem is defined as or refers to the positive (high self-esteem) or negative (low self-esteem) feelings that we have about ourselves. One way we might be able to understand ISIL's mindset is if we looked at their self esteem. From this perspective I think of it like this, people within ISIL might have such overly high self-esteem that they may be narcissistic. It is possible that members of ISIL have such high self-esteem and by having power over people, in this case through fear, might make them feel better about themselves. Another instance in which self-esteem that could play a part in helping us understand their mindset is that people may be joining ISIL in an effort to build their self-esteem because being a member of ISIL makes them feel as if they belong to something and have a purpose. Studies show that when we build relationships with other people (whatever way that may be) we tend to feel better about ourselves. This sense of power and sense of belonging might be a leading role in why people in ISIL act the way they do.

Like I said earlier another concept along with self-esteem that could help us understand the mindset of ISIL is if we look at social comparison. The social comparison theory states that we determine our own social and personal worth based on how we stack up against others. As I mentioned earlier, power and control may be a motivating factor for why members of the ISIL terrorist group act the way they do. By comparing themselves to other members of the group, some members may feel that they are not as successful as other members and in an effort to gain more power, the result is they torture and kill innocent people in order to gain respect, power and control through fear.

When I think of ISIL and the way they brutally murder people I reflect back to Zimbardo's prison experiment. Although people were not murdered during the experiment, the struggle for power can be seen in both situations and shows just how evil people can be in their ways of obtaining power. Brutality is never ever truly justified in my opinion, but if you step back and really analyze the behaviors and attempt to understand the mindset behind the way members of ISIL represents themselves, you can see the concept of self amongst them defined as brutal by being power hungry. This is why I see the concept of either really negative self-esteem (reason people join group) or excessively high self-esteem (power) and social comparison being two ways that help convey the image of Self amongst ISIL terrorist members.

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