

★ THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ★ ROCKY

SELF-WORTH, GOING THE DISTANCE,
AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
WINNING AND PROVING YOURSELF

★ DISCUSSION GUIDE ★

“It ain’t about how
hard you hit. It’s about
how hard you can get hit
and keep moving forward.”
— ROCKY BALBOA

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

★ BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Rocky is more than a boxing movie. It’s a story about self-worth, effort, and proving to yourself that you matter—no matter what your record says. Before discussing, take a moment to reflect on your own experiences with setbacks, criticism, and what it means to feel “good enough.”



1 THE WOUND TO SELF-WORTH



Rocky has absorbed messages that tell him he’s a nobody. How do those messages show up in his thoughts and choices?

Where in your life have you felt “not good enough” or dismissed?

2 WINNING VS. GOING THE DISTANCE



Rocky knows he probably won’t win. His goal is to go the distance. Why is that goal meaningful to him?

What is something you’re proud of that had nothing to do with “winning”?

3 EFFORT AS A SOURCE OF SELF-WORTH



Training changes Rocky’s beliefs about himself. His daily effort becomes evidence that he can keep promises to himself.

How does steady effort affect the way you see yourself?

4 LOVE AND BELONGING THAT SEE THE REAL YOU



Adrian sees Rocky’s goodness, not his failures. Her belief in him helps him begin to believe in himself.

Who in your life sees the real you? How does their belief in you help?

5 GOING THE DISTANCE: THE MOMENT OF TRUTH



In the final round, Rocky hears Adrian’s voice and finds the strength to keep going. It’s not about beating the opponent—it’s about not quitting.

When have you found strength in a moment you didn’t think you had it?

6 THE REAL VICTORY



Rocky’s victory is internal: he proves to himself that he’s more than his circumstances.

What does “proving yourself” mean to you? How can you honor that victory in your everyday life?

★ PERSONAL REFLECTION

- ♥ When have you let others’ opinions define your worth?
- ♥ What is one area where you want to go “the distance”?
- ♥ What small daily actions can help you build self-respect?



★ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: REWRITE THE SCRIPT

Think of a time you doubted yourself. In your group, do this exercise together:



1 Write the old script:
What did you tell yourself at that time?



2 Rewrite the script with compassion and truth.



3 Name one action you can take this week to live it out.

Share if you feel comfortable. Listen with respect.

★ TAKEAWAY

Self-worth isn’t found in trophies or titles. It’s built in the choices you make when no one is watching—when you show up, keep trying, and refuse to define yourself by your past. That’s how you prove to yourself that you matter.



DR. MICHAEL ZAKALIK, PSY.D.
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Understanding minds.



Strengthening connections.

