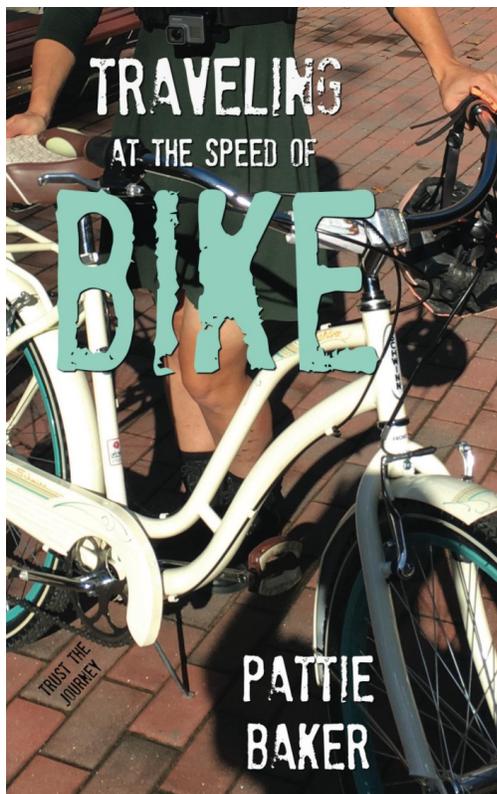


**Book Club Chat Guide for TRAVELING AT THE SPEED OF BIKE, by Pattie Baker**  
(available on [Amazon in all global markets](#), with free [bonus resources](#) on the author's blog)



### General

What did you think of **Traveling at the Speed of Bike**? Would you recommend it? Why, or why not? Was there anything with which you particularly identified? Did anything surprise you? If so, what? How did you feel about the author's belief in "trusting the journey"?

### Cover

The cropped photo on the cover was taken by the author's father during a particularly poignant recent visit the author made to where she grew up, the story of which is told in the Epilogue. He didn't know she was using it (and giving him a photo credit) until he received the paperback for his 85th birthday. Do you have any photos of yourself taken by your parents that are particularly special to you? If so, why?

### Prologue: What a Feeling

The author suggests that many people have a secret fantasy in mind when they ride their bikes, such as being in Paris; or a movie reference, such as *ET* or *Breaking Away* (or, for her, *Flashdance*). She also mentions several song lyrics in the books. Is there a particular scene or song that the thought of riding a bike conjures for you?

### One: A Time Machine

The first chapter takes us through age-specific bike-related memories. Did this chapter tickle alive any of your bike-riding memories? If so, what? How was your childhood similar to or different from the author's? Do you have a bike-riding story from your childhood, like the author did, that your parents never knew?

### Two: The Bike in the Attic

The author's life changes when she starts riding her bike in the City of Atlanta every day, and then even more so when she takes a different bike down from the attic after twenty years. She actually feels a spiritual inspiration to do this. Is there anything you have been moved to do because it feels divinely inspired? If so, what? Is there anything you've "put away" that you think about taking out again? Are there any barriers keeping you from doing that?

### Three: Pedaling as Fast as I Can

In contrast, the challenge of riding a bike in her supposedly family-friendly suburb-city that's not friendly to bike-riding hits home for the author when she actually tries to go places (beyond all the years riding on sidewalks to schools). Have you ridden a bike where you live? If not, why not? If so, what happened?

#### **Four: Elsewhere**

Following her realization that she is being called to try something new, the author applies for a job as a bike skills educator for seniors on tricycles and youth-in-need, which requires her to become a certified League Cycling Instructor. Can you think of a time you followed a hunch, stepped outside your comfort zone, and pursued something new? What resulted?

#### **Five: Precious, Repeatable Gift**

Seeing multiple, diverse scenarios where she is starting to fit in and feel useful again in a society at a crossroads, with perhaps new knowledge to give that is truly needed, the author finds herself in a situation where she ends up questioning what fitting in really means anymore. Where have you felt like you fit in best in your life? Where do you fit in now?

#### **Six: Noodle Lady**

After a story goes viral about a bike rider in Toronto who attached a pool noodle to the back of his bike so that drivers don't kill him, the author experiments with it herself. It is ridiculous, yet it works to reduce unsafe and aggressive passing by drivers. Have you ever allowed yourself to stand out, perhaps even in a foolish way, in order to test a theory or achieve an objective? If so, when? What was the outcome?

#### **Seven: It Feels Like Magic**

Through diverse stories, the author illustrates the necessity for both national and local change, and she shares her hope that bikes, in particular, be part of it. She mentions a book that shows families all over the world photographed with all their possessions. When asked what is their most valued possession, many say their bicycle, for many reasons. What is your hope for the future? What would you say is your most valued possession?

#### **Eight: The Map on the Wall**

The author has rubber-hits-the-road experiences while traveling at the speed of bike with a wide range of issues, including homelessness, harassment, inequitable access, and more. Did anything she shared in this chapter or throughout the book shed new light on these topics for you or reinforce/contradict something you've experienced as well? If so, what?

#### **Nine: Hipster**

Research that the author did years ago about how to ride a bike with one leg becomes suddenly pertinent during one of the classes she is teaching. She also talks about aging, and about there being a day she won't be able to do certain things. Can you think of an occasion when prior knowledge of yours became unexpectedly useful? If so, what was it, and what was the outcome? Is there something you do today that you treasure doing because you're not sure how long you will be able to do it?

#### **Ten: Your Turn**

The author gives specific tips for what you can do to make a measurable difference to help make your community more bike-friendly. Have you tried any of these tips either for this issue or for some other issue of importance to you where you live? What has worked for you? Do you have any additional suggestions? If so, what?

#### **Epilogue: Until Tomorrow**

Earlier in the book, the author says that bike riding caused her to start writing poetry again for the first time since she was a teenager. Two of the six poems in this book are in the Epilogue. Did any particular poem, or line from a poem, in the book have an impact on you? If so, which one, and why? And at the end of the day (and book), did **Traveling at the Speed of Bike** make you want to ride a bike?