

Reading Questions for *Joy Ride: A Bike Odyssey from Alaska to Argentina*, by Kristen Jokinen

What draws you to Kristen's ride from Alaska to Argentina? Do any of the details about her trip resonate with your own aspirations? What would excite and frighten you the most about embarking on such a trip?

On page 17, Kristen says, "Discomfort was a catalyst for growth, and it forced us to adapt and change." -How has discomfort in your own life spurred change? How did you adapt in those moments?

Kristen encounters several challenges and obstacles on her journey. How does she handle them, and what can we learn from her experiences?

A major theme in *Joy Ride* is spontaneity and kindness. How are these themes mirrored in your life? How does community and kindness enhance our lives?

How does Kristen's relationship with Ville evolve over the course of their journey, and what lessons can we draw from their experiences? Describe the dynamic between them. How would such a trip be with your loved one?

A major theme of *Joy Ride* is to provide a unique perspective on the people, landscapes, and cultures of North, Central, and South America. What are ways we can do this in our own lives without traveling to other countries? How can we exemplify these themes in our own lives and communities?

What would you do differently if you were riding a bike from Alaska to Argentina? Would you plan more? Have a bigger budget? Camp less and opt for the \$9 hotel more?

How do you think the ride was different for a woman versus a man? Would it have been different if it were two women on the road?

In the beginning of the story (page 4), Kristen states, "the best-laid plans changed." Kristen and Ville appear to thrive in situations without plans. Does that sound stressful or freeing? Do you feel that over-planning has kept you from beginning or doing something?

How did you feel after finishing *Joy Ride*? What emotions did Kristen and Ville's adventure and interactions incite in you? How do you think you would readjust to life after completing a journey like this one?

On page 33, Kristen writes, "I was no longer needed in my former life as Kristen, the teacher, the real estate broker, the city dweller who walked the same route to work every day(...).-If you were able to shed your titles and roles in life, how would your life be impacted in both negative and positive ways?"

On page 167, Kristen writes, "What made these families (in southern Ecuador) so different from mine or other American families? Less office work for one. More human connection. Their priorities were not efficiency here..." Did this observation challenge you at all? If so, how?

On Pg. 198, Kristen questions, "What would my life have been like if I had been born in a Peruvian village? What are ways the community you grew up in impacted you? How do you think the morals and values you abide by would have shifted if you had been raised in a different environment?"