CHAI CYCLE
CYCLING, CONVERSATION, JEWISH COMMUNITY

People of the Book in the Age of Scrolling

Jews have often been called *"People of the Book."*
Ours is a culture rooted in literacy, interpretation, questioning, debate, storytelling, memory, and intergenerational conversation.

For much of Jewish history, books and texts were precious. Learning required attention, patience, study, and relationship — often done in community, face to face, argument by argument, layer by layer.

Now we live in something very different: an *Age of Scrolling*.

We consume enormous amounts of information every day — headlines, posts, videos, memes, alerts, texts, outrage, commentary, advertising, endless feeds. We are more connected than ever before, yet many people feel increasingly distracted, fragmented, lonely, anxious, or cognitively overloaded.

Scrolling encourages speed.
Jewish learning traditionally values depth.

Scrolling rewards reaction.
Jewish tradition often asks us to pause, question, wrestle, and reflect.

Algorithms tend to flatten nuance into certainty, performance, or outrage.
Jewish culture historically made room for disagreement, multiplicity, interpretation, and ongoing dialogue.

So what does it mean to be "People of the Book" in an age shaped more by screens than by sustained attention?

What happens to wisdom when information becomes constant?
What happens to community when conversation becomes performance?
What practices help us protect reflection, presence, curiosity, and human connection?

And perhaps there's something meaningful about gathering for a bike ride — outdoors, embodied, face to face, moving through real landscape together — as a small counterbalance to a hyper-digital world.

Maybe rides like this create space for a different rhythm of attention:

- noticing instead of consuming
- conversation instead of commentary
- presence instead of performance
- movement instead of endless input

A few possible discussion questions:

- Do you think social media and screens have changed the way we think or relate to one another?
- What do you think we've gained from digital life?
- What do you think we've lost?
- Are there practices that help you feel more grounded or present?
- Does Judaism offer anything especially relevant for this moment?
- What does wisdom mean to you now?