

Cycling and Spiritual Experience

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Prologue – journal 160820 on the bike

I woke before dawn and sensed it was a good day to pray on a mountain top. So, I rode up the short but steep grind to the summit of One Tree Hill. Arriving just before dawn I could see for miles - it was still, clear and cool ... a beautiful Autumn morning. My eyes took in the vista from Rangitoto Island and beyond turning anti-clockwise in an arc to Great Barrier, the Hunua Ranges and the Manukau Harbour to where its waters almost join the Waitemata. As the sun edged above the horizon, I could no longer look east but if I looked west with the sun's rays, I could see everything ... and recalled CS Lewis, (1962, pp.164-165), saying, "I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else." A deep peace enveloped me.

Introduction

After I rode around Lake Taupo in 2005 a friend wrote to me saying "Great to ... hear you've seen the light and discovering the spiritual benefits of cycling." It was scrawled inside the cover of his new book "PROSACC - Profound Revelations Of Sunday Afternoon Cycling Church". His book begins, "We believe the act of cycling with an appreciation of the beauty of God's creation (Romans 1:28 [sic]) is a more meaningful experience than the average church service, and one that many people outside the church can relate to more easily."¹

In Romans 1:20 the apostle Paul argues that the "invisible attributes" of God can be clearly seen and understood through the created, "tangible" things of the world. In

¹ Steven Muir, 2004, p.4. He meant Romans 1:20, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse." {All Biblical quotes are taken from The New International Version, (Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1984)}.

fact he warns us that we have no excuse for misunderstanding who God is, since the purpose of these created things is to point us towards God.

Four years later I took up cycling in earnest with the same group I rode with in 2005. Recent back surgery and a mentally draining job demanded exercise and riding was easier than running. So began 10 plus years with “Team Going”, a group of mostly middle aged men who ride together most weekends.

I enjoy the physical exertion of cycling, the landscape and the chats over coffee. Solo riding helps me pray and process thoughts. Physical exertion in the beauty of creation is a stimulus to think about life and God and listen to what God is saying.

Cycling enhances my connection with God. While riding I marvel at the vista and feel peace. On the bike I compose poetry, I persevere through physical hardship, I think about my relationships, I work through solutions to situations at work and I talk to God. Sometimes the talk is through gritted teeth as I climb a steep hill and at other times it is sublime mumblings as I descend through rolling downhill.²

Many writers argue spiritual exercises are aided by physical exercise. Foster (1992, p.35) recalls “One summer ... alone, I would shoot baskets, all the time inviting God to do a spiritual inventory on the day.” Bakke (2000, pp.233-234) recommends repetitive exercise noting, “people say when they begin to move, they turn their thoughts toward God and talk about ideas, feeling, questions, and cares – letting whatever is inside flow out to God.” Bakke swims and notes any other kind of even, repetitive motion assists people’s prayer. In her book “Holy Spokes” Everett (2017) reports Brother Lawrence suggested we “think often” of God during the flotsam of each day, “in the daytime, at night, in all your occupations, in your exercises, and even during your time of amusement. God is always near you and with you.”³ Everett thinks of God while commuting on her bike through the streets of Boston and says cycling has made her “more faithful.”

² Hebrews 12:1-2 “... let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us...” and 1 Cor 9:27 “ Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly ... I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so ... I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

³ Introduction (Audible book).

Spiritual experiences are also aided by physical exercise. Eric Liddell, the flying Scotsman immortalised in the film “Chariots of Fire”, once said “God made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure.”⁴ When I ride I am reminded that God loves me. In particular, I often encounter birds and find, like St Francis of Assisi, in each one of them I perceive the handiwork of God.⁵ My constant refrain is “if God cares for the sparrow, then how much more me.”⁶ Subsequently, I discuss these experiences with my spiritual director.

So, for this spiritual interest project (SIP) I decided to survey my cycling mates to see if any of them reported having a spiritual or religious experience on the bike. This could lay a foundation for spiritual direction of cyclists.

Spiritual Experience

Three times a month a spiritual or religious experience is reported to the RERC (Religious Experience Report Centre).⁷ The centre was set up by Sir Alistair Hardy in 1969 to record and study contemporary accounts of spiritual experience. Hardy’s primary question is, “have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?”⁸ Hardy set out eight categories of spiritual or religious experience: synchronicity and the patterning of events; the presence of God; a sense of prayers being answered; a presence not called god; a sacred presence in nature; experiencing that all things are one; the presence of the dead; and the presence of evil.⁹ His work built on the model of William James who in 1901 defined four characteristics of religious experience; “ineffable” - defying description; “noetic” - providing insight to truth; “transient” - impermanent; and the “passivity” of the subject - a feeling of the will being ... held by a superior power.

⁴ https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/802465.Eric_Liddell.

⁵ Clissold, 1978, p41.

⁶ “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny. Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care,” Matthew 10:29.

⁷ Tagholm, The Guardian, accessed 170620.

⁸ Appendix A question 7.

⁹ Pickering, 2008, p.66.

David Hay, (2006) using categories of spiritual experience that mirrored Hardy's, found 76% of Britons surveyed in 2000 reported having had a spiritual or religious experience.¹⁰ Hay (2006) found 55% of people claimed an awareness of the presence of God; 37% cited answered prayer and 29% perceived a sacred presence in nature.

In this SIP only five of Hardy's eight categories were identified by the cyclists surveyed. These included: "the presence of God", "a sense of prayer being answered", "a sacred presence in nature," "experiencing that all things are one" and "synchronicity and the patterning of events."

Survey Method

I conducted an online survey with 40 cycling friends, including myself, to explore if any reported a spiritual experience while riding.¹¹ The survey focused on Hardy's primary question, "Have you ever had a spiritual or religious experience or felt a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday life"? and added "while riding a bike" (Q8). Subsequent questions sought to get them to identify the type of spiritual or religious experience they had (Q9);¹² asking them to consider what the term spiritual or religious experience meant to them (Q10).

The online survey was followed up with a 10 to 15 minute interview of anyone who said "yes" or "maybe" to question 8. This gave them opportunity to talk about their experience(s). Each cyclist was invited to expand on their answers to questions 5 (Why do you ride?), 9 and 10.

¹⁰ Hay, 2006, notes an earlier study in 1987 showed only 48% of Briton's sampled reported having a spiritual experience. Hay attributes the rise to "people's sense of the degree of social permission for such experience...", cited by Pickering, 2008, 67.

¹¹ The questions and results of the online survey are summarised in Appendix A. The email invitation began "*I (Andrew Saunders) am currently completing a spiritual directors course and as part of the requirements I am required to complete a special interest project. I have chosen to research "Cycling and Spiritual Experience" as I find that the physical exertion of cycling in the beauty of creation is a stimulant to think about life and God and to listen. I also enjoy riding with mates, drinking coffee and chatting about life. Can you help? - this survey should only take a few minutes ...*"

¹² I offered Hardy's eight categories" (Question 9, Appendix A) as described by Pickering, 2008, p.66. "Other" was also offered.

The final source of evidence was based on my self-reflection following solo bike rides. The four rides were on consecutive days during a five day silent retreat. My reflections followed the pattern of RERC's 'spiritual experience form' which asks simple questions like; What was your experience? How did it feel? What do you think caused it?¹³

Findings

Twenty eight cyclists completed the online survey.¹⁴ Most (96%) rode their bike to maintain good physical health; 24 (87%) because they loved it; 21 (75%) to improve their mental health; 19 (68%) to enjoy creation; and 18 (64%) to connect with friends.¹⁵

Of those surveyed 20 (72%) claimed they had, or might have had, some sort of spiritual experience in their life. Fourteen (50%) thought (yes or maybe) they had a spiritual experience on the bike (Q8). Eight of these were sure (yes) they had a spiritual experience while riding their bike while six thought they may have (maybe). Subsequent interviews with the 14 revealed all their reported spiritual experiences, whether acknowledged or not, fit into 5 of Hardy's 8 categories.¹⁶

The interviewees' responses to Q5 "Why do you ride?" gave insight to their spiritual experiences. Thirteen of the fourteen (93%) said they rode to 'improve my mental health' and 'to enjoy creation'.¹⁷ Ten (71%) said they rode 'to think about things or meditate'.¹⁸ Nine said they rode to do all three. With respect to spiritual experience there is obviously a correlation between 'to enjoy creation' and the Hardy category 'a

¹³ <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/library/alister-hardy-religious-experience-research-centre/research/>

¹⁴ The demographics of the respondents can be found in the Appendix.

¹⁵ These percentages compared favorably from the results of the Quora surveys where 85% rode their bike to maintain good physical health; 50% because they loved it; 13% to improve their mental health; 33% to enjoy creation; and 17.5% rode to connect with friends. Interestingly 40% of Quora respondents were commuters and rode to save money. See <https://www.quora.com/Why-do-people-ride-bikes>; accessed 170820. Quora allows users to ask and answer questions in specific category's.

¹⁶ I have received permission to quote the participants. I have assigned them each a "letter" and changed some identifying features to protect their confidentiality.

¹⁷ Compared with 75% and 68%, respectively, of all respondents.

¹⁸ Compared with 43% of all respondents. Interestingly 23% of Quora respondents ride to think with one claiming, "I find riding meditative, and use the mental white space to solve hard technical problems;" <https://www.quora.com/Why-do-some-people-like-cycling-biking-so-much>.

sacred presence in nature.’ Less obvious is the link between ‘to improve my mental health’ with the categories of ‘presence of God,’ ‘experiencing that all things are one’ and ‘a sense of prayers being answered.’ However, subsequent interviews revealed interviewees did correlate ‘improved mental health’ with a spiritual sense of wellbeing.

A selection of interviewee responses to Q9 ‘What type of spiritual or religious experience have you experienced?’ are outlined below.

Some were absolutely sure of their spiritual experience and linked it to a specific category:

The presence of God (53% of those interviewed):

- “a feeling of peace and distractions falling away ... and a feeling of well-being” (J);
- “... over time you build a relationship with the guys you are riding with ... you get to see the ‘imago dei’ in others – whether they have faith or not – God is there” (H);

A sense of prayers being answered (40%):

- “I have time to pray (on the bike) and talk and listen to God ... I remember one time I was riding out from New Lynn to Titirangi and (sensed) the Spirit of God saying to me this is what I made you for ... that was a spiritual experience” (G).
- “when I am praying on my bike I just feel close to God and ... sense that he is with me ... things get resolved so I believe that is an answer to prayer...” (K).

A sacred presence in nature (67%):

- “I love sunrise and even the sunset and coming around a corner and seeing a sunset or how the light reveals all I see and that is a spiritual experience for me,” (C);
- “I just feel close to God and I can’t say I have a revelation other than appreciation of God’s creation and sensing that he is with me” (K);

- “... in the Waitakere Ranges I enjoy the Kauri trees and the bush and the birds are beautiful ... there is always something to be thankful for ... I think that God somehow planned nature to help us refocus when we see its beauty” (L).

Experiencing that “all things are one” (27%):

- “... a sense of being one with creation – the mystical experience – I get that quite often and it is the beauty of God’s creation and handiwork as well as just feeling part of a bigger whole – just part of something greater” (C).

Synchronicity and the patterning of events (20%):

For the respondents who were not sure (“maybe”) they had a spiritual experience I have grouped their comments into a category I think fits:

The presence of God:

- “I do have a sense of peace which comes on me which I like to attribute to God, but it might just be that there are some good endorphins flowing and the beautiful view that naturally induces peace ...” (M);
- “I do remember a ride out to Piha, the pleasure of it and the thanks you can do it” (F).

A sense of prayers being answered:

- “I use cycling as a bit of a prayer time with kids and grandkids particularly and get into a bit of a habit of trying to train myself to pray for each kid each time I go out” (I)

A sacred presence in nature:

- “There is something quite special about our world and our universe; there is a powerful feeling that ... being there ... is a little deeper than just a nice day” (D);
- “I think I get some form of spiritual experience regularly and it comes from nature often or achievement in a personal sense after a ride ... one big one which I always remember now was going up *Col du Tourmalet* ... and I was

just doing my normal thing ... but I got a real charge out of that one – it was just sensational, going up there was hard work and you get up there you think that was brilliant!” (B);

Four interviewees added comments in the “other” category (Q9):

Meditative presence/awareness of “self”

- “being present, dropping other concerns and getting out of headspace, acceptance of ‘what is’” (E).

A sense of balance in created nature

- “... when I am riding along and waves keep coming in I think those waves just keep coming and there is just this force of nature that impacts on the way the ocean behaves and waves just keep rolling in so that is something I am a bit in awe of– that everything is in balance” (I).

The survey responses to Q10 “What does the term spiritual or religious experience mean to you?”, revealed some interesting differences between those interviewed and those who were not. Eleven of the non-interviewees (79%) said it involved “anything that gives me an awareness of God’s presence” but only three (21%) of those interviewed selected that. In contrast, the interviewees selected the more specific definitions of ‘touches our core’ (93% versus 21% of those not interviewed), ‘produces peace’ (71% versus 7%) and ‘changes us’ (50% versus 14%).

Interviewees comments included ...

Touches our core

- “Might be as simple as out on the bike God can talk to me instead of me talking to him. He “speaks” to me and illustrates his will, instruction and love for me ...” (N).

Produces peace

- “a sense of peace ... I am breathing hard but my breath comes from God” (C).

Involves the mysterious 'Other' and 'changes us'

- “... acceptance of the mysterious other changes us, changes the way I perceive, which may change what I do and believe” (E).

Other findings

Eleven interviewees (79%) talked about other physical pursuits opening them to spiritual experiences: “... in a way running is more pure because you don't have to think about traffic or falling off especially if you are running in a quiet place where there are no distractions – you can go into an almost trance like space” (D).

Motorbike riding, fishing, hiking and walking were also referred to.

Nine interviewees (64%) said the connection with others was important: “Over time you build a relationship with those you ride with” (H); “I really treasure our group” (B) and “these guys mean more than I realise” (L).

Three interviewees (21%) claimed an important part of riding for them was the physical struggle. One said “there is something about pain and suffering when riding that is quite important to me ... it is a Jewish thing, Jews are quite good at suffering and pain!” Two others agreed.¹⁹

A similar number (21%) talked about practising meditation on the bike as a way to forgive or “let go” and move on from painful events or experiences: “There is nothing that will change, so accepting what is, will enable you to move on and allow what is or what has happened to settle into the memory or ... see it in a new kind of way. I have seen people years later who have not moved on and they are still in anguish, they are still blaming others...” (E).

With respect to what hinders spiritual experience, three people (21%) said it was often difficult to think about things while riding as they were concentrating on the mechanics of the ride: “I'd have trouble thinking through a problem on the bike

¹⁹ As CS Lewis (1940, p.81) contends, “We can ignore ... pleasure. But pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”

because there is too much going on to concentrate and be able to seriously think through an issue” (J).

Two interviewees (14%) acknowledged they were at times too competitive on the bike and hence less open to spiritual experience; ‘A’ reflected “when someone passes me on the bike I often begin to compete and race ... In reflection I realize when my mind is engaged in personal pursuit I think less about others and less about God.”

The significance of these responses is addressed in the discussion below.

Personal reflection (adapted journal entries while on a 5 day silent retreat)²⁰

For the first three days I rode the same route in the same direction – a one hour route. On the fourth day I rode the reverse route and added 30 minutes. Each day was named according to what occupied my mind and I encountered a different type of bird each day.

Monday, 7 September 2020: “Ezra John”

My first grandchild, Ezra John, was born just before the retreat began and I had held him once. A question on my mind as I rode was “Lord – do you want me to provide oversight for the young so they can grow strong and true?” I came across a duck leading her ducklings crossing the road. Some of the brood were spooked by the bike and scattered ... but others followed the mother to safety.

Soon after, while rounding a corner, I was alarmed by a hen in the drain. Its solitary chick dangerously close to the tarmac; it will not last long!

As I ascended Ridge Road another duck with its two remaining ducklings crossed in front of me – As I approached the duck moved to protect and usher her ducklings across. What parenting style is best – to be both engaged and empowering!

²⁰ Being on retreat I intentionally placed myself in a state of receptivity to God.

Tuesday, 8 September 2020: “Kia kaha”

I began my second ride feeling agitated about a text I’d just received from a friend. The timing was suspicious as I had just applied for the job he was leaving and he should not have known. For 15 minutes I fumed and schemed replies – then I realized he had got under my skin. Kia kaha Andrew! be strong.

As I road silently up Ridge Road a magpie attacked ... but I saw the shadow – ducked low and shouted “Kia kaha, be strong”. This is what I must do – be strong in the face of criticism ... the magpie soon went back to nesting. *Kia kaha!*

Wednesday, September 9, 2020: “On the Prowl”

On the third ride the only bird I saw was a hawk on the prowl.

That morning I had reflected on the time, as a young student, I heard a speaker talk about God taking our branch and stripping us and fashioning us into an arrow fit for purpose – the whittling away is painful and produces a shaft that will in time run true.

From this day Lord I will be who I AM – I will not be shaped or fashioned into what someone else wants me to be. Yesterday, I yelled kia kaha at the bird that wanted to attack – be not concerned! The hawk is the alpha predator at the top of the food chain of the farm land ecosystem. Hawks keep other birds in check and increase the health of the ecosystem overall.²¹ And God gave humans dominion over all of his creation (Genesis 1:28). I will be who God has made me – I am not afraid.

Thursday 10 September 2020: “Working together”

In the morning I confirmed my future focus of growing God’s Kingdom by supporting those that support others. I will support pastors and leaders and seek to build resilience in them. True grit! A sense of peace enveloped me.

On my ride I saw many groups of pukeko – “twos”, “threes” and “fours”. The pukeko is a social bird whose extended family works together in one territory. Offspring are raised communally by related kin. Lord, like the pukeko, we are meant to work together with others to forge something stronger.

²¹ <https://greenerideal.com/news/environment/7066-the-importance-of-apex-predators/>

Discussion

On my cycling journeys I often ride with others. A significant majority of those who responded to my survey have a religious faith (68%).²² These same friends who chat on the road and over coffee generously shared their spiritual experience stories with me. We are companions in life. Like Hardy, Hay believes spirituality is “prior to religion and is a built-in, biologically structured dimension of the lives of all members of the human species.”²³ Our connections with both our spiritual nature and each other is therefore a critical part of being human and being friends. Our spiritual experiences on the bike have become part of our shared conversation or taonga.

The percentage of survey respondents who claimed to have had a spiritual experience (72%),²⁴ is similar to Hay’s findings (76%). However, it is higher than a recent New Zealand study where 61% of respondents said they’d had a spiritual experience.²⁵ Furthermore, half the cyclists surveyed here (14 of 28 interviewees) claimed to have had, or may have had, a spiritual experience on the bike. Eight of them easily identified their cycling experience as aligning with one of Hardy’s categories. Of the six who were not sure I think each of their described cycling experiences is also a ‘spiritual experience.’

Interestingly, many other cyclists who completed the survey (11 of the 14 I did not interview), when asked ‘what does the term spiritual experience mean to you’ selected ‘anything that gives me an awareness of God’s presence.’ It is possible they too have had spiritual experiences on the bike, but do not identify them as such.²⁶ Romans 1:20 “people are without excuse” suggests everyone has who has

²² Eighteen identified as Christian and one as a Jew (see the responses to question 6 in Appendix A). This sample group is probably more open to spiritual things than a normal cross section of cyclists.

²³ Retrieved from <https://www.catholicireland.net/something-there-the-biology-of-the-human-spirit/>; accessed 06/12/20. Also Cited by https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1171872.Something_There

²⁴ The full summary of survey responses is outline in Appendix A. In this paper I am focusing on the fourteen respondents who responded “yes” or “maybe” to Question 8.

²⁵ Vaccarino et al, 2011, p. 85 – 96.

²⁶ Ojava, p11, had a similar finding in his special interest project on ‘the communication of God through his creation.’ He placed seven volunteers alone in the wilderness for a period of time and encouraged them to look for signs of God. He said, “It was apparent in my research that people are not always conscious of religious experience when it is occurring”.

seen 'nature' has been exposed to a potential spiritual experience but some are blind to it or have chosen to ignore it.

Given that an estimated 730,000 New Zealanders ride bikes,²⁷ if even a third of these have had a spiritual experience on the bike, that is a lot of people! I wonder how many of them have spiritual direction?

Barry and Connolly (2009, pp.8-9) define Christian spiritual direction as, "help given by one believer to another that enables the latter to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her." A spiritual experience whilst riding reflects the personal relationship God has with each individual who is listening. It is now my common practice to invite God to speak to me during each solo ride. One Friday, after a tough week, I experienced such a procession of bird life on the ride that it touched my very core.²⁸ For some time my encounters with birds have deeply imprinted God's love for me – if God cares for birds (Mt 6:26, 10:29; Lk 12:6, 12:24) then how much more for me. Rankin (2005, p.10) suggests a third to half of people have "had some experience that has profoundly affected their lives." For me this was one such experience.

So how do you unpack these treasures? Asking great questions and listening well helps. Pickering (2008) says spiritual direction enables the directee work out where the spiritual experience might be leading them. My own spiritual experiences on the bike have helped me connect with God and find a way forward in life. Each day during the five day silent retreat I took my diary to spiritual direction and talked about experiences on the previous day's ride. The most common question my Spiritual Director asked was "what is the invitation from God in this?"

It is clear from the survey findings and the subsequent interviews that many of my cycling friends have spiritual experiences. A conversation with a spiritual director could be helpful for them to understand these experiences and themselves more fully. A spiritual director could listen to their experience, clarify what they hear and

²⁷ Can Advocates Network, accessed 111220.

²⁸ See Epilogue.

explore the directee's feelings and thoughts. I could help by encouraging some to seek out a spiritual director in the same way I have.

For cyclists where "the mechanics of the bike can get in the way" and running puts them "more in touch with the environment,"²⁹ a spiritual director could still be helpful. Examination of a directee's spiritual experiences whilst in a repetitive exercise routine, as Bakke (2000, pp.233-234) suggests, is a useful subject to probe.

Conclusions

Spiritual experience is common to all humanity including my cycling friends. If we are open, we can have spiritual experiences while riding our bikes.

I have spiritual experiences on the bike. God often uses bird-life and nature to either mediate his love to me or show me a better way of making sense of my life. God communicates with friends in other ways. Some friends have spiritual experiences and are aware of them, while some are not sure. God mediates his presence as peace, a sacred beauty in nature, answered prayers and experiencing all things are one. Self-discipline, struggle, meditation and processing forgiveness all contribute to spiritual experiences.

My encouragement to cyclists is to continue to be open to spiritual experiences when you ride. Place yourself in a cognitive state to hear. For some, this means thinking about your relationships when you ride, forgiving yourself and others. For others it means meditating on the beauty of God's creation or being open to answers to prayer. Cyclists can work through issues, become aware of the presence of God, experience a sacred presence in nature and know peace. A conversation with a spiritual director would allow for exploration of such experiences resulting in a deepened awareness of the Divine.

My encouragement to spiritual directors, whether they ride a bike or not, is ask your directee about their exercise. In the least the directee should be encouraged, each

²⁹ E.g. Interviewee "F". This could also apply to swimming, surfing, hiking and other outdoor activities.

time they step out the door and start spinning their wheels, to intentionally place themselves in a position where they can meet God.

Epilogue – journal 271120 on the bike

I rode to Ihumātao this morning. On the way well over twenty birds from almost as many different species flew across the road directly in front of my bike. It was a reminder of “Kawaupaku, Te Henga”, the Don Binney painting of the little shag (Kawaupaku) flying majestic over Bethells beach near Lake Kawaupaku, that hangs in the Maclaurin Chapel where I work (pictured in Appendix A). The birds each conveyed God had not forgotten me and the little shag, being the last species to cross my path, sealed the deal unmistakably. Again and again I felt God say through his creation – Andrew I know you, I love you and you are mine.

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Why do people ride bikes? Retrieved from <https://www.quora.com/Why-do-people-ride-bikes>; accessed 17/08/20, 43 answers.

Why do some people like cycling so much? Retrieved from

<https://www.quora.com/Why-do-some-people-like-cycling-biking-so-much>; accessed 17/08/20, 21 answers.

Appendix 1. Team Going spiritual experience survey

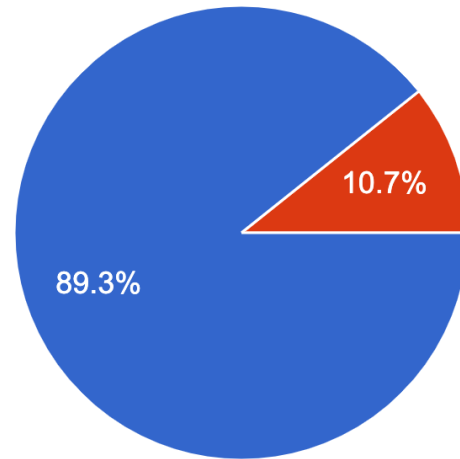
Attached.

Team Going spiritual experience survey



1. What is your gender?

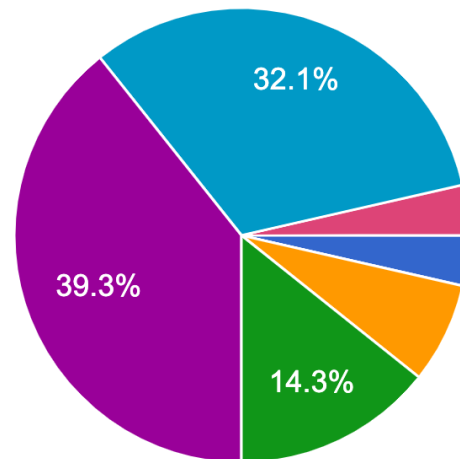
28 responses



- Male
- Female

2. What is your age?

28 responses

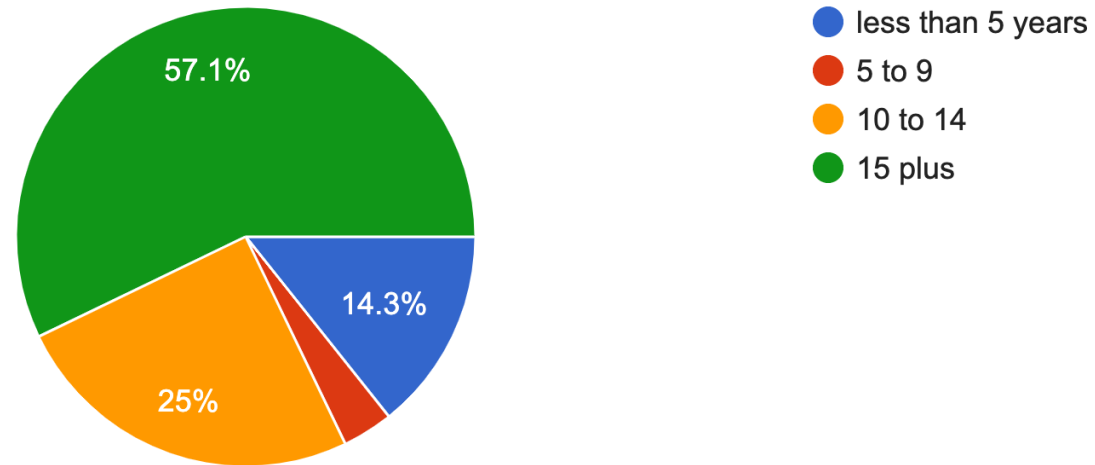


- Less than 45
- 45 to 49
- 50 to 54
- 55 to 59
- 60 to 64
- 65 to 69
- 70 plus



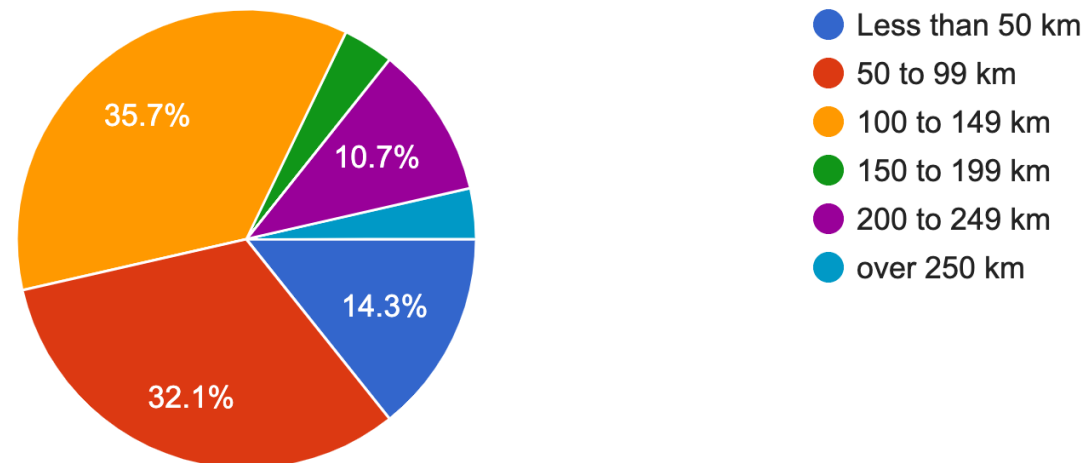
3. How many years have you been riding (over 40 km per week average) ?

28 responses

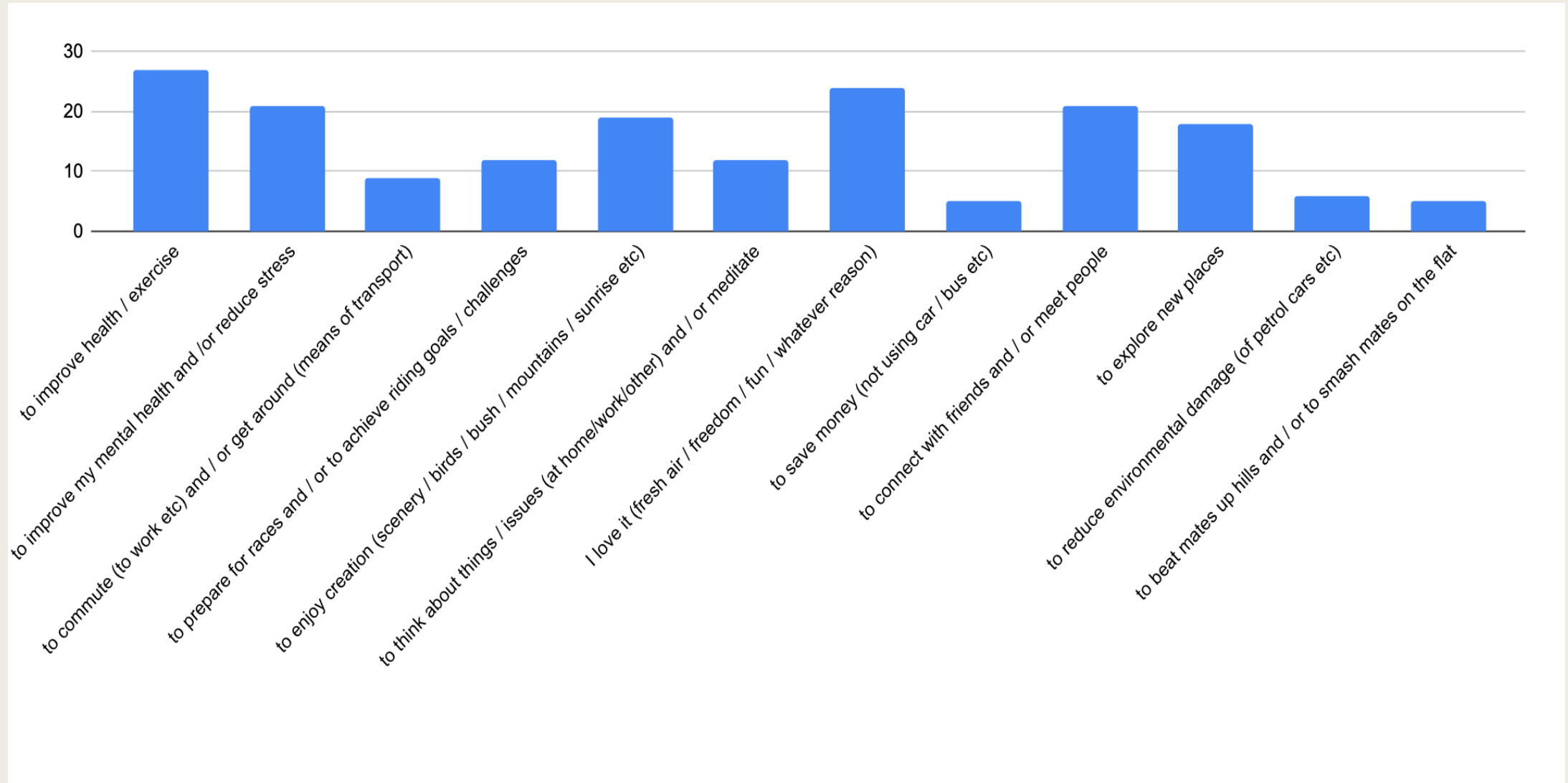


4. On average (2020) how many kilometres do you currently ride a week?

28 responses

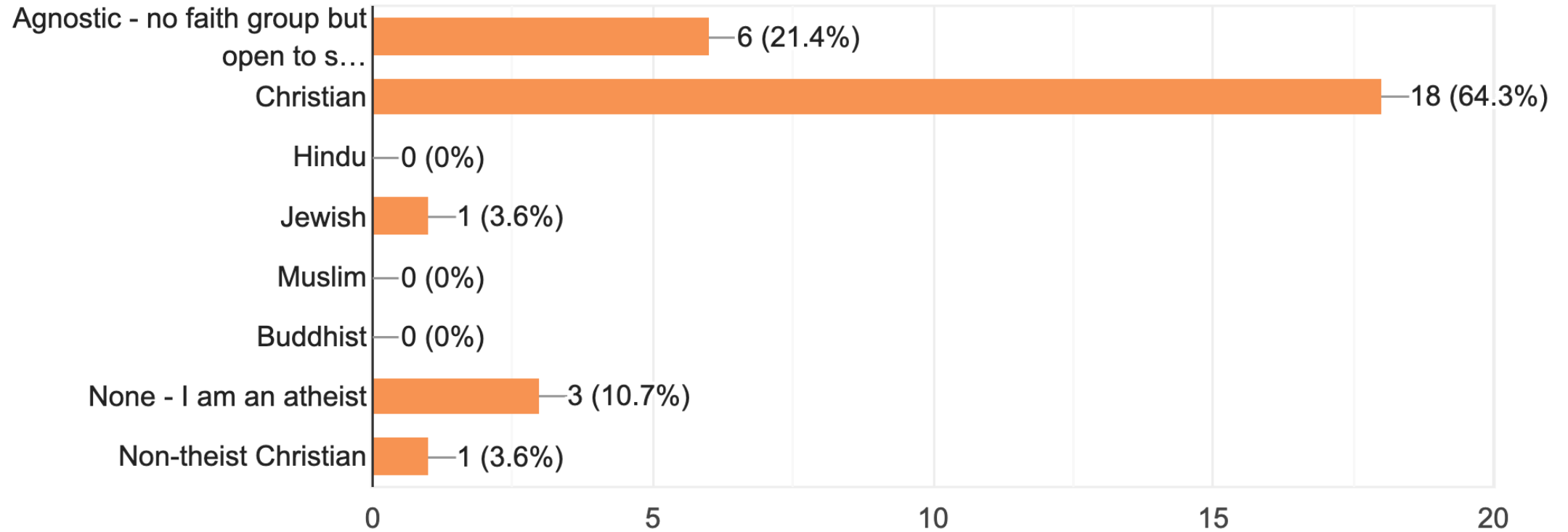


5. Why do you ride? (tick all those that apply) 28 responses



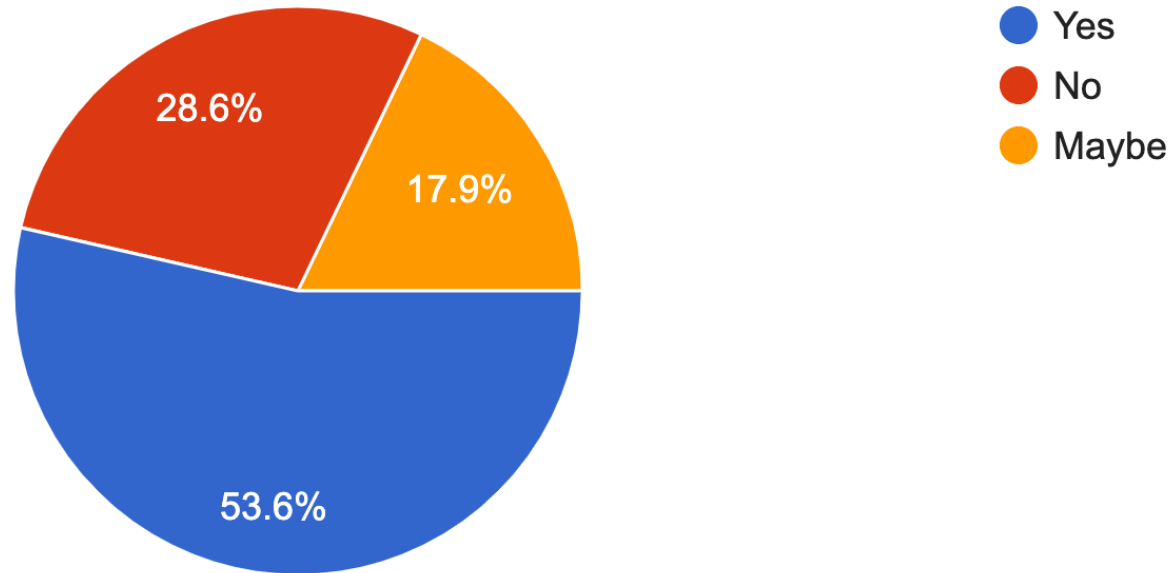
6. What faith / spirituality do you identify with?

28 responses



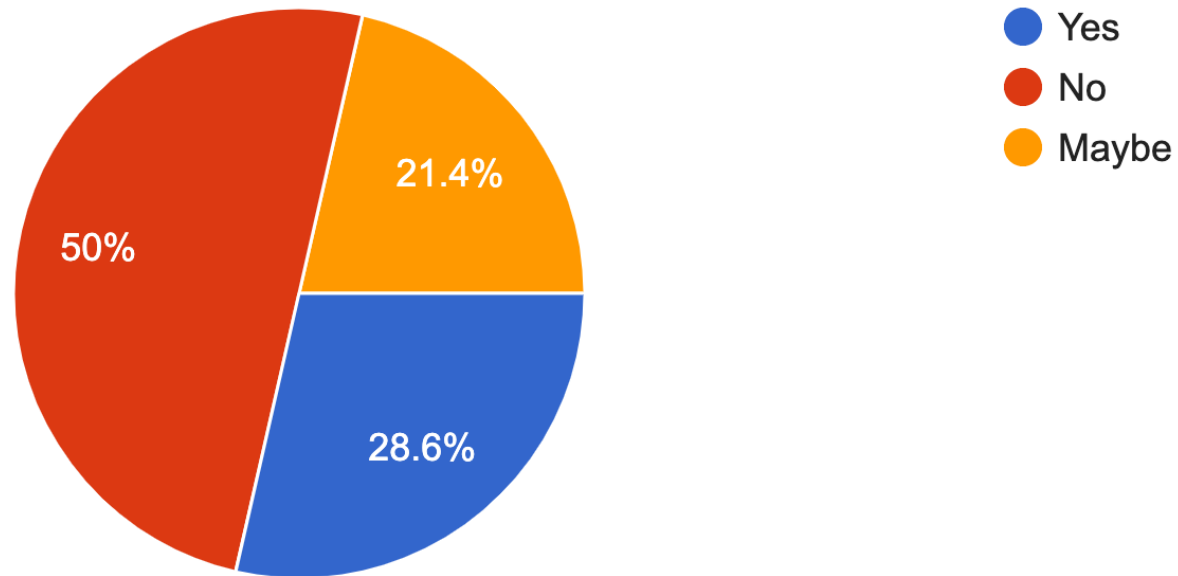
7. In your life have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?

28 responses



8. While riding the bike have you ever had a "spiritual or religious experience or felt a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday life"?

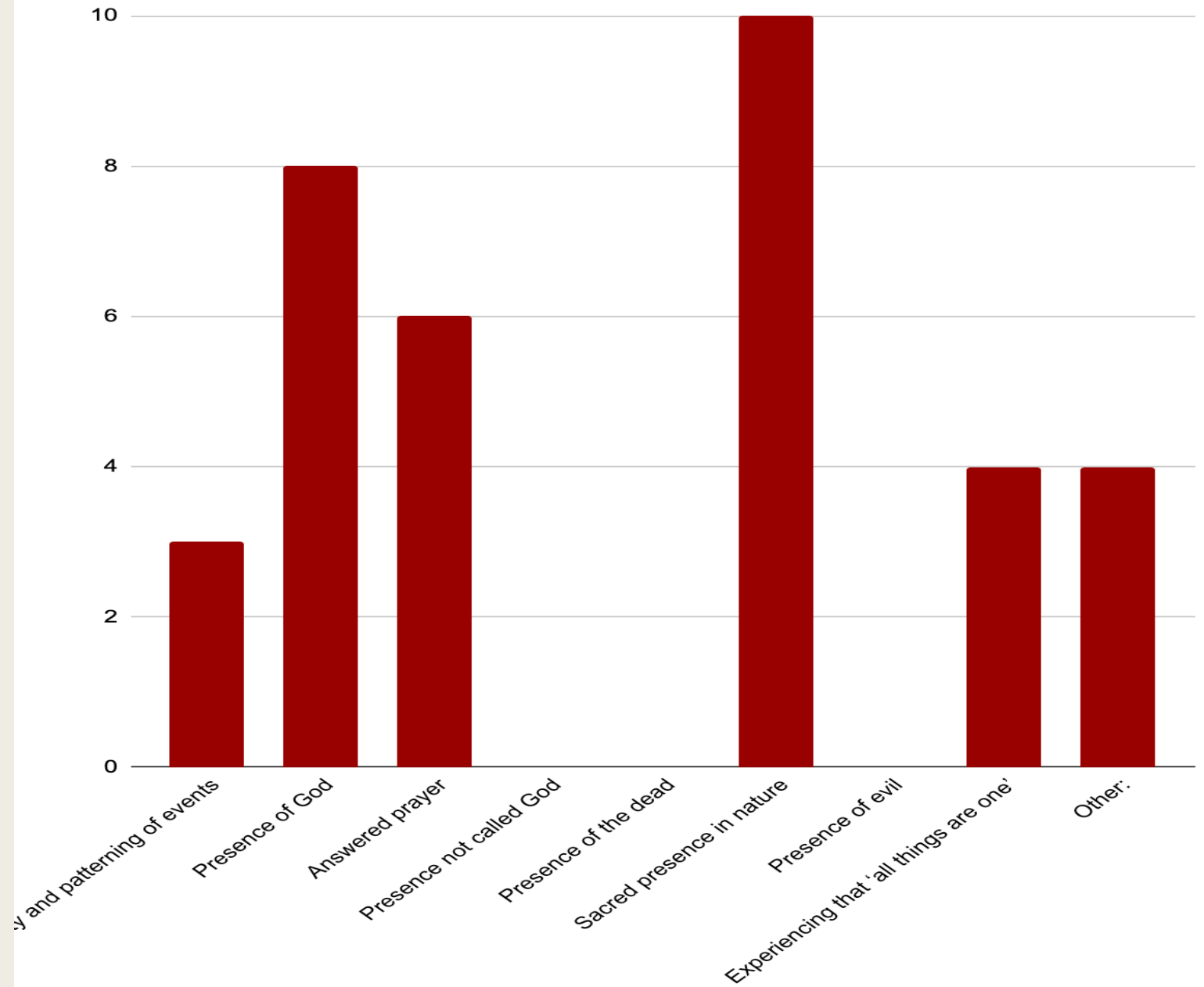
28 responses



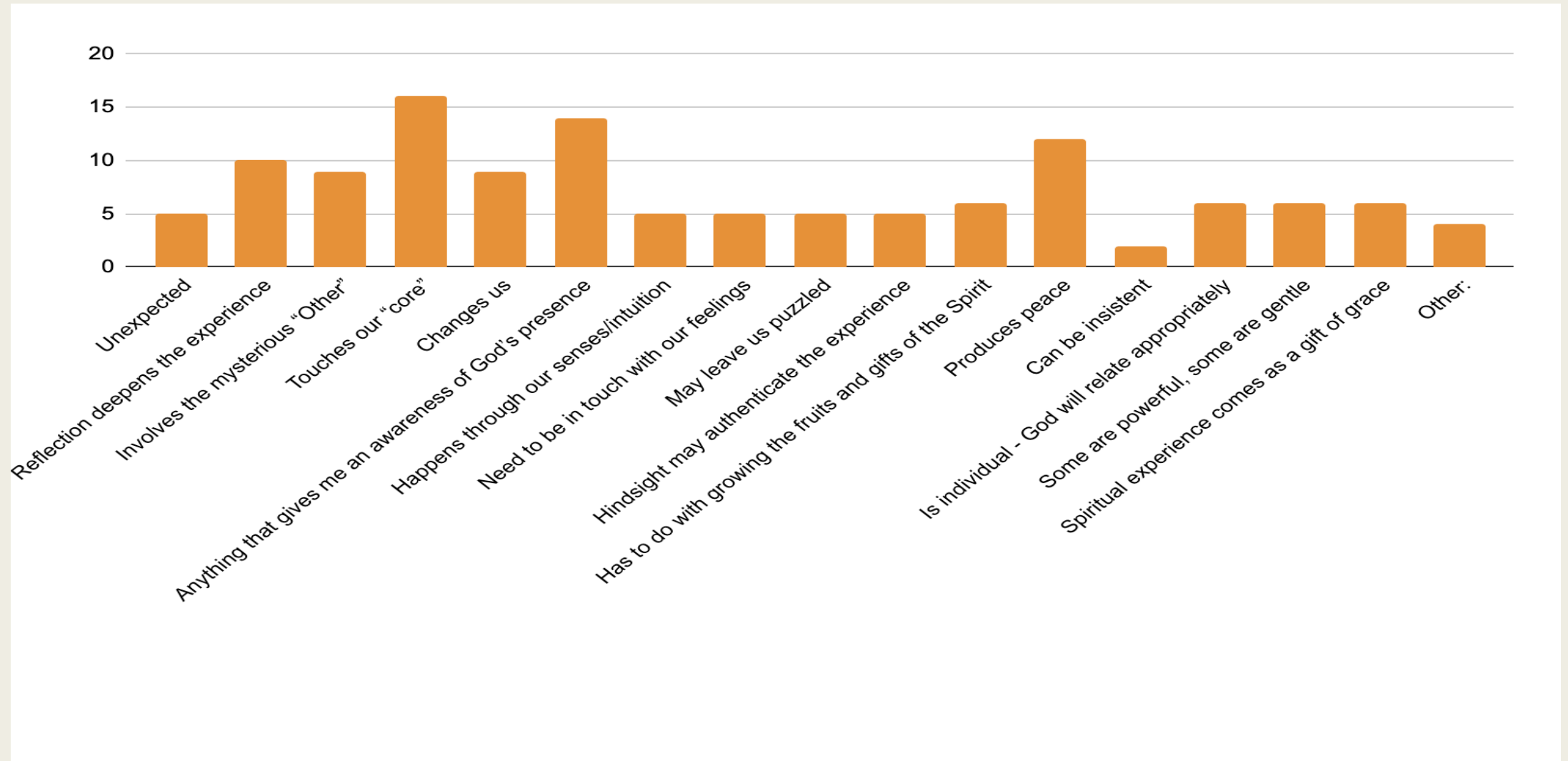
Two types of religious experience have traditionally been emphasized by philosophers of religion:

1. numinous experiences - i.e. experience of the presence of God
2. mystical experiences - i.e. experience of something like a 'merging' with the rest of reality

9. What type of spiritual or religious experience have you experienced?
24 responses



10. What does the term spiritual or religious experience mean to you? 24 responses

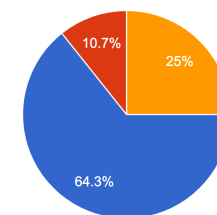




Team Going crew from an early trip

11. Are you available for five to ten minutes on the phone or bike to expand on your answers to questions 8, 9 and 10?

28 responses



● Yes
● No
● See you on the bike!