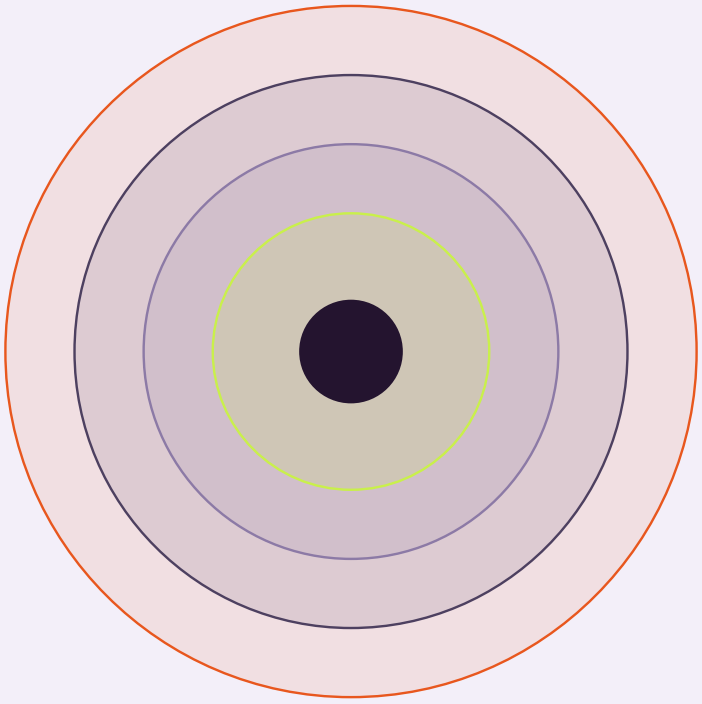


Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road

A reading of the book by Neil Peart (2002)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of Ghost Rider: Travels on the Healing Road, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Neil Peart was the drummer and lyricist of the Canadian rock band Rush. In August 1997 his 19-year-old daughter, Selena, died in a car accident, and about ten months later his wife, Jacqueline, died of cancer. Soon after, he got on his BMW motorcycle at his home in Quebec and rode for some 14 months and around 55,000 miles across North America, north toward Alaska and south into Mexico. Ghost Rider is the record of that ride, told through his travel journal and the letters he wrote to friends on the way. It makes no argument and offers no method; it is a slow, honest account of grief, solitude and motion, and of the small part of himself he tried to keep alive. It ends with him finding love again and marrying the photographer Carrie Nuttall.

Below are the 9 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

When you cannot think your way out of grief, you can sometimes ride your way through it.

Peart set out with no plan beyond moving. The road gave each day a shape he could manage: a route, a tank of fuel, a meal and a bed for the night. Motion did not fix anything, but it gave him something to do with a day while time did its slow work.

2 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The part of you that survives a great loss is small, and it needs looking after.

Peart names it his little baby soul: the fragile self that was left after everything else had gone numb. The book is in large part about tending it. He keeps it going with small comforts and kindness rather than big decisions.

3 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Feeling like a ghost of yourself is part of grief, not proof that you are broken.

The title is how Peart saw himself on the road: a rider going through the motions, not quite present in his own life. Naming that feeling let him live alongside it instead of fighting it. A name for the numbness can make it less frightening.

4 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Solitude can help you heal, as long as you keep one line open to other people.

Peart rode alone for most of the trip, yet much of the book is letters to friends. Being alone gave him room to feel what he felt. Writing to people kept him tied to a life he could one day go back to.

5 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

When everything big has been taken, small pleasures are not trivial.

A good meal, a quiet room, a long view at the end of a hard day: the journal keeps coming back to small things like these. They are not distractions from grief. They are what keeps a person going through it.

6 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Writing it down turns a blur of days into a road you can look back along.

Peart kept a journal through the trip, and the book grew out of it. On the page, days that felt the same become a route with places and weather. Looking back, you can see you have moved even when it never felt like it.

7 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Grief does not run in a straight line, and a bad day after a good one is not a step back.

The journal does not climb steadily from dark to light. Clear days and heavy ones come in no fixed order. The road keeps going either way, and so does the healing.

8 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

You do not have to choose between honouring the dead and choosing to live.

The book ends with Peart falling in love with Carrie Nuttall and marrying her, and he later went back to making music. Living again did not mean forgetting his wife and daughter. It meant carrying them into a life that kept going.

9 HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Healing takes months and years, not a timetable you can set.

The ride alone lasted over a year, and the return to ordinary life took longer still. Peart did not decide when he would be better. He kept moving until, slowly, he was.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Write down who to call on a bad night
- [ ] Pick a notebook for the road
- [ ] Plan one day of motion
- [ ] Name two people to write to
- [ ] List your small comforts

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Log three lines each evening
- ◯ Move once a day
- ◯ Send one letter a week

30 days · Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Write down who to call on a bad night

Put two names and a crisis line on a card or in your phone's notes: a friend, a family member, and your local emergency number.

Do it on a calm day so it is there when you need it.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

Pick a notebook for the road

Choose one notebook or one note on your phone that is only for this.

Keep it where you will see it at the end of the day.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

Plan one day of motion

Pick a route you can do this week: a long walk, a bike ride, a drive or a train to somewhere you have not been.

Write down where you will start and where you will stop for food.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Name two people to write to

Choose two people you trust and tell them you may send the odd letter or long message with no need to reply.

Knowing someone will read it makes it easier to write.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

List your small comforts

Write ten small things that still feel good, even a little: a hot drink, a song, a bath, a view, a dog's company.

Keep the list next to your notebook.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Log three lines each evening

Before bed, write one thing you moved through, one thing that hurt and one small thing that was good.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Move once a day

Go outside and move for at least twenty minutes: walk, ride or swim.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Send one letter a week

Once a week, write to one of your two people about where you have been, inside and out.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
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December 2026

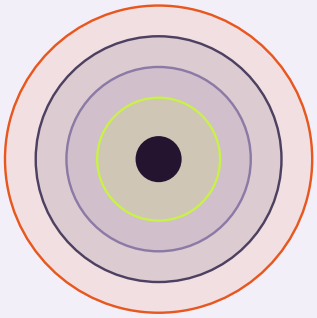
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



When nothing makes sense, keep moving, write it down, and feed the small part of you that is still alive.

HOURLIFE NOTE AFTER NEIL PEART