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Conquering My Fear of Flying

By Heather Peters

I admit it, I am afraid to fly. And I'm not alone, as many as 1 in 6 adults has at least some fears

about flying. For me it's definitely not a rational fear. In fact all my analytical and logical skills fly right out the window whenever I think about getting on a commercial plane. The most amazing part is that I grew up flying. My father owns a small plane and we would go flying every weekend.

In my preteen years I had an aborted takeoff during a commercial flight and while it didn't scare me at all during the event, when I later found out that it had made the local news I began to see that this was perhaps a bigger deal (it really wasn't but I was a preteen after all). I also began to recognize my own mortality and realized that I am a control freak and don't enjoy the thought of putting my life in the hands of pilots I don't know.

However, I'm gradually working my way out of my fears and back into a state of mind that is not afraid. It's taking me a lot of time, but I make progress everyday.

My first technique is to get a large inside picture of a commercial plane (preferably one that I'll be flying in soon) and make it the background image of my computer desktop. This way, every time I get on my computer I'm looking toward the front of an airplane as if I am a passenger. Initially this worked so well my pulse would race and my breathing rate went up. I've now conditioned myself to seeing that image so it no longer bothers me.

I also like to watch internet videos of planes taking off and landing. My favorite videos are those that are taken from inside the plane, looking out the window at the wing; hearing the roar of the engines and seeing the ground fall away beneath the plane as it rises upon takeoff. Sitting in my recliner with headphones on and watching those videos enables me to participate in a takeoff without actually being on the plane. I can condition myself to the sights and sounds I would normally experience.

I've found several helpful online courses designed to give information to fearful flyers. I use them a lot as I get closer to departure, and I've bought every book I can find about conquering one's fear of flying. I take them with me, I read them often.

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I don't watch news clips or specials about airplane crashes. The media sensationalizes airplane crashes simply because they happen so rarely. That also means they repeat that horrific story over and over, scaring the wits out of unsuspecting people.

There are dozens of helpful statistics about the safety of air travel; The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) says your chances of being in a fatal plane crash are anywhere from 1 in 400,000 to 1 in 10 million depending on the airline you're flying. To someone who has a genuine fear of flying those numbers don't mean anything when you're locked in a steel tube with no way of setting foot on the ground until AFTER you've gone through takeoff, landing and turbulence.

I recognize that I need help and am trying to look at air travel from a logical perspective again. Each trip I hope to get a little better. If you are suffering from a similar fear, I encourage you to go through the various online resources available and seek additional professional help if your fears are strong enough and you are unable to get through them on your own. It's ok. We can get through this and learn

to enjoy (or at least tolerate) this means of travel in order to take that awesome vacation, see family or fulfill the requirements of a great job.

Heather Peters is a recovering fearful flyer who runs

<http://www.fearofflyingtips.com>

in order to help

others overcome their fear of flying. The site is a commentary and directory of the resources available to fearful flyers.

Fear Of Flying

By Joseph Kenny

There are a few fears in life that defy logic. Fear of spiders may be one, fear of lifts is another, and perhaps a fear of flying is another. Everyday, thousands of planes take off around the world, carrying millions of passengers safely to their destination. Flying is one of the safest, if not the safest, form of travel available. It is far safer than getting in the car, yet over one third of the population still report a fear of flying.

People cite many concerns when they talk of their fear of flying. Many report a lack of confidence in the air traffic control system and fear that a simple mistake on the ground can lead to disaster in the air. Then there are fears of faults with the plane itself. Most people saw the pictures of the concord crash a few years ago and when you're sitting on an airplane, a few feet from the massive jet engines humming steadily, it seems very hard to believe that nothing could go wrong with such a machine. In fact the very shape and appearance of airplanes does little to inspire confidence in passengers who already are having doubts about the airworthiness of the plane.

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Then there are the reports and press attention of the troubles of deep vein thrombosis.

The fact of the matter however, is that flying is extremely safe. It is one of the wonders of technology that air travel, with all the multitude of potential failures, keep delivering flight after flight, on time and without a hitch. In fact, in contrast to almost all other forms of travel, air travel is becoming safer and safer every year.

The statistics speak for themselves. Do you know what the chances are of having a single fatality on a flight? Well according to the BBC, it is 1 in 16 million. And in the vast majority of accidents where there are fatalities, more than half of the other passengers survive. What this means is that even if you defy all the odds and are on one of the few unlucky flights that does crash, you are still more likely to survive than die in the accident.

However, there is one issue with air travel that the statistics don't commend so highly. Delays, lost luggage and missing flights are still frequent issues that plague passengers. Luckily, all of these can be covered for with some good, comprehensive travel insurance.

Joseph Kenny is the webmaster of the insurance site

<http://www.insure121.com/>

where you will find

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