

Ingredients to Treatment of Fear of Flying

Presentation at ADAA annual conference, 2012.

1. Clarity regarding the nature of the fear
 - a. What do they fear will happen to them?
 - b. Is this a signal fear, or a conditioned fear?
 - c. What difference does that make?
2. Information about flying, and safety.
 - a. Here, the medium is at least as important as the message.
3. Acquisition of an accepting attitude toward the fear, and the use of acceptance based methods.
 - a. What stops them from flying is the idea that they first have to lose their fear.
4. Acquire, and practice with, ways of responding to negative anticipation about flying that don't add fuel to the fire.
 - a. This involves working with, rather than against, fearful thoughts.
5. Practice with the fears, in order to get better at calming yourself.
 - a. Practice with smaller doses of the fear in advance of the flight.
 - b. Visit airport, watch flight videos, observe flights from a vantage point near the airport – all done to practice with fear, not to stop fear.
 - c. A “practice” flight – not a “test”.
6. A shift in perspective. You're a passenger. Fully embrace the role of passenger.
 - a. Don't act like you're part of the crew, or the FAA.
7. Group process adds power to the method.
8. Repetition