

## Reminiscences

In my earlier days as an aviator, I remember climbing above the terra firma and the higher that I would climb the farther away from my problems I seemed to be. I would look down at the airport that I had just departed from and see all the tiny little cars, airplanes and the hangers which all seemed so small and far away. It was like I was getting away from or at least higher than all the problems of this life. God had given me a private perch from which I could observe His creation. I felt very blessed. I felt that God had given me an ability to see my problems from a different vantage point which made them seem smaller and less significant.

Later as I progressed in my career, I started flying more complex aircraft and acquired a job where I was expected to perform to a specific standard. In simple terms, I was expected to haul whatever it was that I was assigned to carry from point A to point B and to arrive there at a specific time. It was of little significance to my bosses that there were times when it was necessary to navigate under, through or around large lines of very threatening thunderstorms from the Spring months through the Fall months. They failed to realize that there were days of freezing drizzle, rain, icing, low visibility and other scary things to be dealt with from early Fall through Springtime. What was noteworthy to my bosses was that there were plenty of pilots available at the time and that finding a replacement for me was a piece of cake for them. I never complained about anything! I knew better.

Surprisingly now there were only brief moments that I could feel as if flying the airplane was climbing above my problems. On the contrary, sometimes it seemed that flying the airplane was creating more problems than I had ever known before. Then when arriving home, back on the ground safe and sound my old problems remained just as I had left them.

Then after a few years, I was blessed with a job flying even more complicated aircraft. I had moved into the Jet Age. Jets had the capability of flying over almost any kind of weather. They had the capability of dealing with icing conditions as long as the icing conditions were not too severe, the noise level in jets was much lower and the comfort level was awesome. However, there were new dangers and hazards associated high altitude operations, high speed and low speed buffet boundaries, heating and cooling issues, fuel planning, plus the fact that I could move from summer operations to winter operations in a matter of hours, took some getting use to. These hazards were not completely new to me, however, they were much more complex than the ones that I had dealt with before. All things considered, I fell in love with the operation of jet aircraft.

Any self-significance that may have developed seemed to wane when I started working for an airline. There were hundreds of guys just like myself that were flying more hours than I could imagine. Most of them were much more educated and had received better flight training than myself. Suddenly, I was a part of a large group of people totally different than any before, some of them were fantastic, and others were complete jerks. I only flew with the Captains as I was the new guy, and now, did all my flying from the

co-pilot's seat. Right away, I wanted to hang out with the up-beat group and stay as far away as I could from the jerks. Hanging out with a jerk is the same as hanging out with an unhappy person — not much fun.

Physical things are relative to other things as we live life in this dimension. One day, while letting down for an arrival somewhere in America, we were advised of traffic by the approach controller. We were to look for and to make visual contact with a Boeing 747 which was ten nautical miles away at our twelve o'clock position. It took a few seconds to identify the traffic. Suddenly, I was amazed at how small the aircraft appeared, especially in comparison to the cumulonimbus cloud forty miles ahead. The Boeing 747 dwarfs the Boeing 737 that we were flying which held well over a hundred passengers. Now this huge airplane was only a tiny speck against a beautiful white cloud.

As I continue to visualize the larger part of God's creation, I realized just how small the planet that we live on is. Planet Earth is just a speck in our Galaxy, and our Galaxy is only a tiny light among millions of others throughout the universe. And, no one has a clue what is beyond the universe. These thoughts often come into my mind. I am blown away to think that God the Almighty Creator of all knows me individually and that I am precious to him. How can that be? ***Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.*** That's the extent of my understanding. I can comprehend a few things, but to understand the Greatness of God is far beyond my present ability. This thought is a pleasant one and I have received much joy and pleasure from pondering it over and over again.

~Adverse Yaw.