

AirSafe.com

Fear of Flying Resources



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Flicker – global-jet

What is fear of flying?

Fear of flying is a complex psychological issue, one that has been made more complex by the security concerns of the last few years. There are many books, videos, and other resources that deal with the fear of flying, so deciding what may work for you may be a difficult process. The resources on this page and on this web site will give you an idea of what fear of flying is, what you can do to deal with it, and how passengers can conquer the fear of flying.

Without getting too technical, fear of flying, is an anxiety disorder. Such fears can come about during a flight, or even well before a person gets to the airport. Often, the source of the fear has little or nothing to do with the risks associated with the flight. Depending on the person, the fear of flying includes one or more of the following fears or concerns:

- Heights
- Being over water or having the aircraft land in water
- Darkness (flying at night)
- The unknown
- Airline accidents
- Hijackings, bombings, and other attacks
- Enclosed or crowded space
- Being idle for long periods of time
- Loss of personal freedom
- The security screening process
- Turbulence and other weather conditions
- The unfamiliar sights, sounds, and sensations of a normal flight
- Loss of control, or being dependent on technology or people
- Lingered issues from past psychological or physical trauma

Signs you may be afraid of flying include becoming anxious in elevators, having panic attacks before getting on a plane, or going out of your way to avoid air travel.

Fear of flying warning signs

Fear of flying is not just about flying, it could also be about some part of the flying experience that is unrelated to airplanes, but closely related to one or more situations that may make you stressful or anxious. Not all of these symptoms below look like they could be due to fears or anxieties around flying. However, the act of flying may make it difficult or impossible to avoid having to face these stressful situations.

For example, if you have a fear of enclosed spaces and get dizzy when you are in an elevator, you can always get out at the next stop. In an airplane, that next stop may be hours away, and the amount of stress that builds up over that time can be tremendous. Whether you are a veteran passenger, or if you have never flown before, the following list may help you identify whether you have a fear of flying problem.

You may have a fear of flying if:

- You don't like being in enclosed or crowded spaces.
- You don't like being around strangers.
- You have a fear of heights.
- You have a fear of being over water.
- You have a fear of the dark or a fear of being out at night.
- You don't like being idle for long periods of time.
- You experience panic attacks when you fly.
- You self-medicate with drugs or alcohol when you fly.
- You arrange your life to limit your flying, or you avoid flying altogether.
- If you have one or more of these symptoms, it may be worth your while to do some personal research on the subject.

[Click here for more information or to order the SOAR Program](#)

How does fear of flying affect people?

Every person responds to fear of flying differently. A common reaction is to avoid flying as much as possible. There are a number of celebrities, including John Madden of video game and NFL football fame, who would go out of their way to arrange their personal and professional lives to avoid flying.



Photo: Flickr - practicalcures

How many people are afraid of flying?

The airline industry is clearly aware of the fear of flying and how it affects the traveling public. Research is somewhat sparse, with one of the most important studies on fear of flying dating back to 1980, when two Boeing researchers found that 18.1% of adults in the U.S. were afraid to fly, and that another 12.6% of adults experienced anxiety when they fly. In short, about one in three adult Americans were afraid to fly.

The study was also interesting in that it provided details about why the surveyed adults avoided flying, with only about 6% doing so because they considered flying unsafe. A more recent poll conducted by Newsweek magazine in 1999 found that 50% of the adults surveyed who flew on commercial airlines were frightened at least sometimes.

Once a person with flying anxieties is in the air, physical reactions may be absent or quite noticeable, including the kind of physical reactions associated with a white knuckle flier, such as sweating, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, and nausea.

Dealing with the stress by seeking answers to common questions about airline safety can have a positive effect on a passenger, but doing things like using drugs or alcohol to deal with stress can lead to a passenger being abusive to other passengers, the cabin crew, or to airline representatives.

Risk, statistics, and the fear of flying



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Often, the aviation safety experts point to the statistics associated with flying risk to show how flying is safe and that passengers should not be afraid. For most who have anxieties associated with flying, these statistics are meaningless because in most cases, the fear is not associated with flight risks, but with things that have very little to do with the aircraft or the crew.

In other words, risk and safety are two different things, and you can't just use risk statistics to convince most people that flying is safe. Even if the chance of something bad happening is a million to one, most people are worried about whether their flight is going to be the one that doesn't end well.

Risks when it comes to fear are different because the consequences of that risks are not death or physical injury, but rather anxiety-related issues that can make that flight unpleasant for that passenger and the people flying with them.

Fear of flying resources

The aviation safety and security site AirSafe.com has many fear of flying resources, including links to the resources of the SOAR program, which has a range of products and services, including licensed therapists, who can help passengers from all walks of life effectively deal with their fear of flying issues.

Risk and fear of flying

Risk is a combination of an unwanted outcome and the likelihood of that bad outcome happening. For passengers who have fears and anxieties around flying, the bad outcome includes all the effects that the person may have when they are stressed and anxious, and that stress may also include anyone who is traveling with that person. The likelihood of this happening may be a lot higher than the one in a million chance of an aircraft accidents, and for some passengers it can happen just about 100% of the time that they fly.

Conquer fear of flying with SOAR

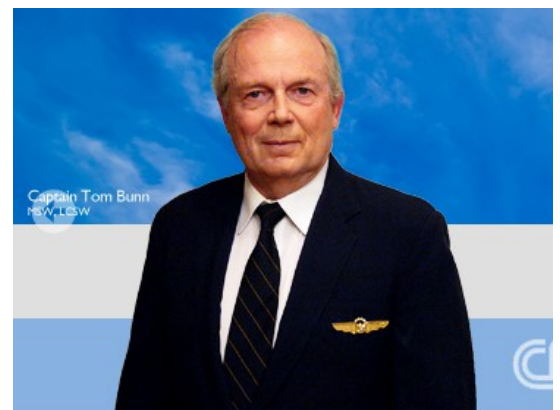


If fear of flying is affecting you in a way that you don't like, there is no reason to accept it as normal. If you want to take positive steps to deal with it, there are plenty of options available. One of the first steps to take is to recognize that you may have a problem.

The Fear of Flying Warning Signs section in this document has a very basic checklist to indicate if you may have significant anxieties associated with flying. You can also visit AirSafe.com and review the story behind the [SOAR fear of flying program](#), one of the few programs designed to help people deal with fear of flying that is actually designed and led by an airline pilot, Capt. Tom Bunn, who is also a trained therapist. You can also [review SOAR's products and services](#) on its web site.

Therapist Captain Tom Bunn

Licensed therapist and airline pilot Captain Tom Bunn offers a variety of fear of flying courses that can help you deal with the stress and anxiety that comes with a fear of flying. In addition to his decades of experience as a USAF fighter pilot and as an airline pilot, he also has a MSW and is a licensed therapist.



Therapist Lisa Hauptner

As a former SOAR client herself, licensed mental health counselor Lisa Hauptner knows from personal experience what it is like to deal with fear of flying, and along with Captain Bunn runs the SOAR program and counsels fearful fliers.

What is SOAR?

SOAR is an organization that has been helping people overcome fear of flying since 1982. Created by Captain Tom Bunn, a former airline pilot with 31 years of experience as an airline pilot, 7 years as an Air Force pilot, and 25 years as a therapist, SOAR grew out of program that was created by Pan Am airlines. Captain Bunn worked with the creators of that program before founding SOAR.



SOAR has continually evolved since then, led by both Captain Bunn and Lisa Hauptner, another licensed professional who has worked with Captain Bunn for almost 20 years to create an organization that provides not just one time instruction, but ongoing support to its clients, multimedia resources to deal with anxieties, weekly group counseling sessions, ongoing support, newsletters, blogs, and other resources. SOAR's success is based on a two-step process.

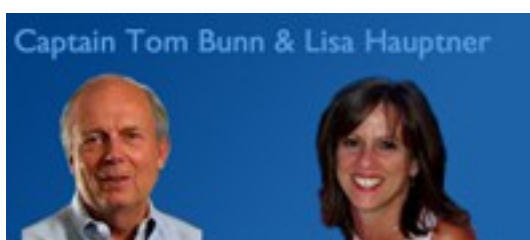
First, the program teaches you how flying works, why it is safe, and the psychology of aeroanxiety. Then one-to-one counseling establishes **automatic** control of feelings for when you are flying. At SOAR, they want to let you know that you are not alone in this fear. On the next page are a few points that SOAR feels are important and which are addressed in their program.

The SOAR courses

When you take one of the SOAR courses, you may connect directly to what thousands of people already deal with. Take a look:



- Many fearful fliers don't understand why flying is a problem for them. Trying to regain control is difficult. The first set of the course, [*Psychology of Flight Anxiety*](#), explains why and teaches you how to gain control.
- You may have heard that you are safer on a modern airliner than doing your ordinary daily routine. It's true – and the second set, [*How Flying Works*](#), gives you the information to help you understand why.
- Okay, so information is good, but you need more to deal with this fear. The third set, [*Control of Anxiety*](#) is just that. It teaches you how to control the anxiety and panic automatically.
- When you feel as though you are “the only person that has such a debilitating fear” or “the worst case”, it's easy to keep things to yourself and suffer through yet another uncomfortable flight. The fourth set, [*At the Airport*](#), shows a group of volunteers, fearful fliers like you, and their candid interview with an airline Maintenance Supervisor, their cockpit visit on a 747, instruction on takeoff on the 747, and their comments while in the cabin during the flight.



**Find out on the next page
how Captain Bunn and
Lisa Hauptner can help!**

SOAR relief options – *Rapid Relief*



conquer fear of flying
helping people since 1982

You can get this information in several convenient formats: on DVD, on MP4 (play on your iPod, iPad, or other MP4 player), or view online using your computer. Check out the following choices to see what SOAR has to offer:

Rapid Relief

Are you flying soon, like tomorrow or the next day? [*Rapid Relief*](#) allows you to :

- Receive 4 DVDs to watch on your TV or computer
- Download to iTunes for your computer or mobile device
- Compatible with Mac, PC, IOS, and Android
- View 18 key video clips (3 hours total) from the SOAR Video Course
- Get a free 30 minute session with Captain Bunn
- ***Experience effective help in 90 to 190 minutes***

[*Rapid Relief* is priced from \\$199.95](#)

Rapid Relief bonus: Get unlimited one-hour weekly group sessions with SOAR therapists. You can either just listen in, or participate in as many group sessions as you wish.

If you want to have the full range of what SOAR has to offer, try the 11-DVD [*Complete Relief*](#) option on the next page.

SOAR relief options – *Complete Relief*



conquer fear of flying
helping people since 1982

Complete Relief includes 40 video clips (four total). A half-hour counseling session with airline captain and licensed therapist Tom Bunn makes sure your fear of flying (feelings of fear, panic, anxiety and claustrophobia) are controlled when you fly.

Complete Relief

Are you flying in 3 to 10 days? Then you may want to go with a more comprehensive [Complete Relief](#) option where you can:

- Receive 6 DVDs to watch on your TV or computer
- Download to iTunes for your computer or mobile device
- View 40 key videos from the SOAR Video Course
- Compatible with Mac, PC, IOS, and Android
- Includes unlimited access to weekly group sessions
- Get a free 30 minute session with Captain Bunn
- ***Experience complete relief in 3 to 10 days***

[Complete Relief is priced from \\$299.95](#)

Complete Relief bonus: Get the “Take Me Along” program for your mobile device. Captain Bunn explains everything you hear and feel – as you hear and feel it - so you will know everything is OK. With the “Take Me Along” bonus, you will never fly alone again! Let Captain Bunn reassure you moment by moment throughout your flight.

If you want to get an even greater range of benefits, consider the complete [11-DVD SOAR Program](#) on the next page

SOAR relief options – *Complete SOAR Program*



conquer fear of flying
helping people since 1982

The [Complete SOAR Program](#) contains all the bonuses included in the **Rapid Relief** and **Complete Relief**, as well as the four-part SOAR program:

- **Psychology of Flight Anxiety** - Explains why and teaches you how to gain control.
- **How Flying Works** - Gives you the information to help you understand why airplanes fly, how pilots fly, and what makes flying safe.
- **Control of Anxiety** - Teaches you how to control the anxiety and panic automatically when you fly.
- **At the Airport** - Shows a group of volunteers, fearful fliers like you, and their candid interview with an airline Maintenance Supervisor, their cockpit visit on a 747, instruction on takeoff on the 747, and their comments while in the cabin during the flight.

[The Complete SOAR Program is priced at \\$480](#)

Guaranteed SOAR Program: If you are unsure about the cost or effectiveness of this program, choose the [Guaranteed Complete SOAR Program option for \\$595](#) and get a complete refund if you are unhappy with your improvement.

About AirSafe.com

The site was created in July 1996 by Dr. Todd Curtis to provide the aviation community and the flying public with timely and useful information about airline safety and airline security.

Over the years, the site has expanded its role by adding significant information and resources related to baggage issues, airline complaints, and fear of flying.

Free AirSafe.com Resources

If you subscribe to the AirSafe.com mailing list at subscribe.airsafe.com, you will receive several bonuses, including free copies of the following Todd Curtis books: AirSafe.com's guides on airline Complaints, baggage and security, family air travel, as well as the book Parenting and the Internet.

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Twitter: [@airsafe](https://twitter.com/airsafe)

Facebook: facebook.airsafe.com

Email: tcurtis @ airsafe.com

SOAR history

In order to develop a program that would help everyone, Captain Bunn established SOAR in 1982.

Using a variety of therapy and counseling techniques developed by Captain Bunn and others, SOAR developed ways to change the automatic and unconscious mental processes that cause the unwanted feelings like high anxiety, claustrophobia and panic.

Now, using video to guide you step-by-step, the processes that cause anxiety, claustrophobia and panic are changed.

Though many clients are able to fly successfully in just one day, Captain Bunn recommends one video-guided session a day for a week, if time permits, before flying.

Photo credits

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