

## **A Few Thoughts About Pilot Complacency**

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People look at “Complacency” as an active process. In other words, you are a bad person if you are complacent. It must be something that you are aiming to do - - to be complacent.

Instead of “complacency,” I think of it as becoming “de-sensitized.” And I can see this happening to me and to those around me.

We start out with everything black and white, with a very narrow line in between. As things go well, we step just a few inches over that line from the white into the black and nothing bad happens. We become somewhat “de-sensitized” by the lack of bad consequences. As time goes by, the thin line becomes a gray area that we have been in without bad things happening. Then this gray area gets bigger and bigger as time passes, until at some point, your whole world is gray.

It’s like gaining weight or growing old. It’s not something that we notice every day, but then one day, it’s just there.

This gray area gets so big that we don’t notice it - - until something goes wrong. If it is a minor thing, we may narrow our gray area a bit to get ourselves back into the white side.

If it is a horrible wrong, the gray may disappear completely - - if the pilot is still alive to notice.

To me, this situation is something I can see happening to me and to those around me as we fly. It’s not the intentional action of complacency. It is the gradual and unintentional crossing of that “line.”

The rules are there for a reason. Just my thoughts.