**Adam Kress**

Hi everyone and welcome back to another episode of Aerospace Unplugged. I'm your host, Adam Kress. On today's episode, we're revisiting a topic we've been talking about a lot lately on this podcast, that's autonomy and automation in aviation. But today we're taking a different approach and unpacking the first-hand experiences of seasoned pilots as they navigate the evolving role of technology in the cockpit and reflect on how their responsibilities are beginning to shift a little bit.

On a recent podcast, we spoke with one of Honeywell's advanced air mobility experts and discussed the nuance between automation and autonomy in aviation, diving into the differences between the two from a technical, a human, and an emotional perspective. Now we learned that automation involves systems that assist or perform tasks under pilot supervision, but autonomy, it's a different beast. It means that the system operates independently without requiring human oversight. Think about like a cargo drone rerouting itself without direct pilot input.

So to help us ground these concepts in real-world experience, I'm joined by two fantastic guests on the pod today. First up is Alyssa Silva. She's a commercial pilot who's worn just about every hat in aviation. She began her career as a flight attendant, then became a flight attendant supervisor before moving out to Arizona, and from there she became a flight instructor, a ferry pilot, and even volunteered with non-profits flying patients in need. Alyssa has also flown private charter MEDEVAC missions under Part 135 operations, and today she flies regionally and brings a unique full spectrum view of how pilots interact with evolving cockpit technologies.

Also, joining me on the podcast today along with Alyssa is Pete Zaccagnino. He's a test pilot, an aeronautical engineer, and he's the CEO of PC Aviators. Pete has flown over 500 test flights, including dozens of prototype aircraft. He's also built and restored aircraft and designed planes himself. Pete's also an author, former professor and alum of the Discovery Channel and an aviation race champion with more than 16 trips around the world under his belt. For those of you counting that 16 more than me, but we're having him on anyway. Pete has flown just about every category of aircraft and brings deep expertise in both defense and commercial aviation. His perspective on autonomy is shaped not just by experience but by survival. He's even walked away from a jet crash.

Thank you both for joining me on the podcast today. Those were long introductions, but I'm glad to have you both here.

**Alyssa Silva**

Thank you so much for having us.

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Thanks Adam.

**Adam Kress**

All right, let's jump in. So I want you both to tell me a little bit about your career journeys, how you got into aviation and how that influenced you to become a pilot. So Pete, why don't we start with you? How did you first fall in love with aviation and want to become a pilot?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

I have no idea what drove me to aviation, but as far as I can remember, when I was a little kid, I did the classic fly around model airplanes in the living room and through the hallways, et cetera, and decided I wanted to design, build, or fly airplanes, and I thought that test flying would be the best path for that. So I did my undergrad in engineering, aeronautical engineering, pursued a bunch of flying, aerobatics, various aircraft, led to my first test job. Went through that pathway and until I became a little bit autonomous myself.

**Adam Kress**

Nice. Alyssa, I should mention as a return guest on the podcast as well, and I probably asked you a version of this question the first time, but how did you get into aviation and kind of fall in love with the whole thing?

**Alyssa Silva**

Sure. I was a flight attendant and then when I was a flight attendant supervisor, I mentioned to one of the chief pilots, we had meetings with them every day. Oh, something along the lines of, "Maybe I'll have a son one day and he'll be a pilot." And he was like, "Well, why can't you be a pilot?" And that planted the seed and that chief pilot actually purchased my first introductory flight for me and then the rest is history after that.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah, awesome. Well, yeah, you both have such a wide variety of experience flying all sorts of different types of aircraft on all different types of missions, so it's cool to have that perspective from both of you. Now I want to talk a little bit about autonomy and automation. That's kind of the theme that we're going for today. Now both of you, like I said, have a real mix of experiences in your career, but when you hear the term autonomy and Alyssa, we'll start with you, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

**Alyssa Silva**

First thing that comes to mind is autopilot, autothrottles advanced technology such as in the cockpit, if you're hitting one button, different things pop up for Anthem. When I use the Anthem product, I remember there was that screen where you can hit and then it already knows you're heading if it's a frequency or what, but automation is something that can be a tool if you know how to use it properly in the cockpit and saves a lot of time and is very efficient and helps us in ways that would never be possible with just human bodies in there.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah, it makes sense. So Pete, for you, and we talked about a little bit already and we will more, the difference between autonomy, different levels of autonomy versus simply automating some tasks. But when you hear that word autonomy, I mean a lot of laypeople guess people not in the industry, they may think, "Oh, autonomous flight, no pilot, I'm not so sure about that." But they may also not realize how much of flight is already automated. So where does your head go when you hear this?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Well, I think one of the best examples presently is with autonomy is in the new weather radar systems. Because early radars and recent radar systems, the pilot had to mess with the tilt, the gain, a lot of

settings to determine that he was getting a good picture of the weather pattern and weather system. Whereas the current generation of Honeywell products, you turn the weather radar on and you're getting an amazing picture of what's happening in front of you without any interpolation and the pilot's input is very much nil. And at that moment that autonomy is within that radar system where it's giving you the picture that's allowing you to avoid hazardous weather compared to previous radar. We're not talking old radar, just previous radar where the pilot, it's an automation to have the weather radar, but the pilot still has to manipulate it to get the right results in the cockpit.

**Adam Kress**

Well, I think you actually answered the next question I was going to ask, which is how have you seen autonomy shape the industry since you started your career? That's a great example in advancement in weather radar, but Alyssa, what would you say there since you started out how automation and autonomy has kind of changed the way you handle things as a pilot?

**Alyssa Silva**

Sure. Well, when I first started my flight training, I flew aircraft. I didn't have autopilot any autothrottles. For those who aren't familiar, autothrottles, if you type in the speed and have the autopilot and the autothrottles on, then the throttles adjust based on the speed that you have set. So when you're flying a Cessna 172, which is often a training aircraft, those things are not in there. So over time when you first begin you want to have the ground set and you're learning things like kind of old school style and then autonomy kind of gets more complex as you grow as a pilot. So I've been, I feel like every aircraft I've flown, it's become more autonomous throughout my career.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah, that makes sense. A lot of the reason for automation and the introduction of autonomous systems and aircraft is to increase safety, right? To automate tasks where you take out any potential risk of an unforeseen error. I'm curious to know from each of you, are there instances that you've experienced as pilots where autonomy has played an active helping role in making the flight more safe?

**Alyssa Silva**

Sure. I mean even with extreme turbulence, simple example with the autopilot on, I would say that it helps us with the turbulence. If you think about it, if you're just hand flying and you have extreme turbulence, it's kind of easy to go with the bumps or your hand might slip. So I personally think that with turbulence, especially in the summer with thunderstorms, keeping autopilot on helps us with that.

**Adam Kress**

Okay. Pete, what would you say?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Terrain following radar, that's a autonomy that's pretty impressive. To be going at high speeds down low and their radar is reading the terrain in front of you and controlling the aircraft through the autopilot so that you don't hit the ground basically. That's a very high level of autonomy that you're relying on.

**Adam Kress**

Is that on most everyday commercial aircraft, I'm having a Top Gun flashback here to Maverick, right? Where they're going through the canyons and everything. That's exactly where I went when you mentioned that, but is that like an everyday technology?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

No, that is not everyday. The technology is there, it's just that's in a military aircraft application for sure. I don't think the passengers want to fly at 50 feet and go through the canyon.

**Adam Kress**

Probably not. That might be a little too thrilling for the mom in 10B or something. So Alyssa's talked about autopilot and as we know autopilot has existed for what, 80 plus years, right? I mean it was one of the first automated tasks in flight where the system performs very specific tasks like maintaining an altitude, but the pilot still needs to supervise it and can override it if it's needed. But now we're seeing more advancements in AI and that's taking autonomy and automation kind of to a whole different level where more autonomous flights where the pilot no longer needs to supervise what different systems are doing. So I guess my question to each of you is like, well where's the line there between smartly automating more tasks that the pilots don't have to deal with versus like, "Hey, the pilot probably needs to be on top of all this stuff."

**Alyssa Silva**

I truly believe that there should always be two pilots in there no matter what. I feel really strongly about that. I think the autonomy has helped us a lot and will continue to help us a lot, but I think that a human being monitoring the systems is beyond necessary. There are certain things that a AI or a computer I feel as though wouldn't be able to pick up. Also a computer AI is not always reliable. Like anything, there's glitches in the system that may happen. The training that we go through helps us identify those risks and be able to say, or the first officer or captain, "Hey, click off the autopilot and go get the glide slope", or, "Hey, kick off the autopilot and go do this." Because at the end of the day we have the training that we need in case those glitches happen.

**Adam Kress**

Okay. Pete, you've flown a lot of military aircrafts where one pilot may just be more of the norm, but I'm curious more from your perspective on the commercial side of things. Again, can we define that line between over automating or are we not there yet?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Well, I don't think we have addressed it philosophically. And here's what I mean by that. We right now can uplink a flight plan that is loaded autonomously to the FMS, the flight management system, the brain of the navigation and performance of the aircraft, and then with a few pushes of the keys, the pilot can have the plane do everything through the automation with a level of autonomy. Technologically we're there. It could just be downloaded uplinked in, programmed all without the pilot's input completely. And that's removing the pilot from being a key integral part of it potentially. I think it's a talking point that needs to be expanded on as an industry because the autonomy is great, but is it excluding the pilot or taking the pilot out of things he should be aware of?

In our operation for example, there are certain checklists the captain is required to do along with the co-pilot and even if it's a co-captain, it doesn't matter. And part of that logic is so that the captain's head is in the game of flying and he or she is ready to do the tests that are important for the pilot from a philosophical perspective, not just the rote and understanding perspective, but really about, "Hey, we got some weather to avoid." And the automation is great and helpful through the radar to use that example again. However, what is the radar not showing us? Well, it's not showing the growing tendency of that thunderstorm. Is it going to be at 49,000 feet before I get there? And maybe we'll get to that point, maybe it'll have a real-time response to that. But I think philosophically we have to approach that whole gamut of over-automation, over-autonomy being used too much and the pilot is not as integral to the system and the overall system, which is not just autonomy, automation and aircraft, but it's also pilot, ATC, weather the complete package.

**Adam Kress**

So as AI becomes a bigger part of all our lives and gets more introduced into aviation, based on some of the comments you guys have made, I'm thinking about testing and aviation has always had such rigorous testing, but I'm thinking about the example you said Pete, about the weather radar. Right now the human can see where there is a storm but doesn't necessarily know if it's growing or shrinking in intensity. But I wonder if an AI algorithm, sometime soon we'll be to predict that with some level of accuracy. So what I'm getting at is how do you safely test some of this stuff when of course you're not just going to take it up in a commercial flight today, but are there different types of testing protocols that are going to need to be implemented as full-on autonomy may be approaches in some type of aircraft?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

We don't have the protocols we need yet. Like everything, it's going to evolve and we're going to learn and we're going to figure it out. One of the big issues is in a fully autonomous thing, you can't test for everything. It's not possible. And even in current flight testing, we can't test for everything. We test an envelope. And so we're going to have to create new envelopes using and implementing AI. And again, as things become more autonomous, I mean look back to the IRS and the IRU, inertial reference system that Honeywell invented and that was an autonomous independent navigation system and however, it still needed to have an input of pilot to tell where it started from and that input could have come from the computer, but it doesn't matter. Pilot said, "Yep, I'm starting in Phoenix and I'm going to France." So at any moment on that flight, that system could completely take that aircraft to within 30 miles of Paris, France.

And that was impressive and it still is because we still had great reliance on that in certain places of the world where there has been GPS spoofing that I've been able to test, but the protocols for testing it were pretty straightforward. It was a linear test program, whereas AI and the others, are they going to get into a self-test mode? That would be a little bit interesting where you say, "Hey, Mr. AI, I want you to fully test this program and tell me it's completely safe in every single scenario." Now what would that look like at the end of the day? And I don't think we have that answer nor has it been challenged in a technical sense yet as of yet.

**Adam Kress**

Kind of follow up question for you, Alyssa, do you think the aviation industry in general right now is prepared to lean that far into at least exploring the potential of all these technologies?

**Alyssa Silva**

Yes, I definitely do. I think we're growing and with the question you asked before, I truly think that we could maybe test some of these things out with simulators and the technologies that we have. I mean the training that we go through is in those advanced simulators. It's kind of crazy to think that we do all of our training in the simulators and then our first day of the job is a legitimate airline flight. Most people probably don't realize that. But yeah, I mean if we can do that, if we can bring a flight instructor to an airline pilot in the sim, then we should be able to test AI in the sim. And to answer your question, I do think that we're there to bring AI and to keep growing it and bring automation to wherever it needs to be or whatever goal we have in mind.

**Adam Kress**

As we move, if you think of autonomy, I've heard it described by Honeywell's people and other people along a spectrum, just flip a switch and you have full autonomy. But as we move along that spectrum as pilots, if you think of each of one of your routine flights, where do you see the greatest potential for reducing pilot workload with more automation or autonomy?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Weather.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah, I mean you talked about better weather radars earlier, but in your mind there's still just because of the unpredictable nature of weather, there's just still a ways to go?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Yeah, there's still a ways to go. I mean, imagine planning a flight from Salt Lake to Iceland and it's a seven-hour flight in an average jet. And imagine the AI and the autonomy able to fly that flight three-dimensionally before the plane takes off and tell you the best path to take for weather, ice avoidance, visibility, wind and efficiency of the wind, and it spits out the answer and allows you to view that in 3D. That would be a big step in stress reduction for any pilot about the launch on a trip.

**Adam Kress**

I would think as well that there could be advantages to the airlines if you're flying more efficient routes too, right?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

A hundred percent.

**Adam Kress**

Where do you see Alyssa just potential for decreasing pilot workload?

**Alyssa Silva**

I agree with the weather, but I also agree with flight planning or punching in the flight plan or what we refer to as the box. It's like the MCDU. So for example, there's a lot of risk with even just typing in a point. They always have kind of funny names and different types of spelling. So human error, if you type in a point with a misspelling, now you have the incorrect flight plan. Let's say the runway changes last

minute and they clear you to take off and you still have the previous runway in there. So just I think that simple things like that that are kind of forgotten about that are little human errors could make the world of a difference.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah, okay. So both really good examples of how it could help. I guess a related question is what are the critical functions though that pilots do not want to give up and do not necessarily want automated or help with autonomy?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

I think the critical functions that pilots don't want to give up are what gives them that feeling of charge and for example, final fuel. If you want more fuel because you know there's delays or they descend you early going into Orange County or it's backed up for flow control, all of those things you want to figure out your final fuel. Landing gear is a big topic, when I've had this conversation with other pilots. There's more things happening autonomously. For example, pitot-static being turned on, excuse me, the pitot-static heat being turned on automatically at certain airspeeds in certain aircraft, whereas in the past in a generation four aircraft pilot had to flip that switch on. Well, if the pitot heat's turned on automatically, I don't think any pilot's going to feel bad about that. But what if the plane put the landing gear when you were one do below the glide slope every single time or glide path and it just automatically put the landing gear down?

And I've had every answer on that. I'm very good on both sides and I'm kind of neutral about it, so I'm not going to get put in a corner, but should the landing gear be automated and autonomous without the pilot's input? I think that would be a big fight for pilots. And also the ability to shut down an engine. That is a big factor for preventative shutdown. Something's not quite right and the AI or automation, or excuse me, autonomy's saying, "No, we're not going to shut it down. Everything's great." And the pilot's like, "No, I don't like that vibration. My gut says shut it down and revisit it later." I think that's another one that will be a very testy point.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah. Going back to the landing gear real quick. For those out there who aren't pilots, what is the protocol for making sure you remember to put the landing gear down?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Well, there are several. We have checklists, of course. We have an enclosed check that's our company policy as well as the checklist from the manufacturer. And so there's three occasions where landing gear is put down and verified. One of our techniques for example, is your hand stays on the handle until you have three green and the call-out in most of the jets is three green, no red, meaning the doors are also closed behind it or some other warning which is aircraft specific. And that three steps so to speak, is because the landing gear is pretty important. The landing rollout takes a long time if the gear is kept up and unfavorable for the career path.

**Adam Kress**

Alyssa, what would you say in terms of the pilot functions that we should not be looking to automate or make autonomous?

**Alyssa Silva**

Autopilot, autothrottle is the basics. I've had plane swaps with pilots that their autopilot was not working and they were profusely sweating on the jet bridge and we're like, "Have fun with that." I would definitely want to keep those things, the qualities that we have like the autopilot and the autothrottles because those really, really help us and help manage our workload.

**Adam Kress**

If you were to design the ideal partnership between the pilot and an autonomous system or at least a partially autonomous system, what would that look like for you in the cockpit?

**Alyssa Silva**

It would look like being able to give the pilots less error, making the aircraft as safe as humanly possible. But if for some reason it was, we were noticing that there was a mishap or reading information was wrong, that we would be able to quickly disengage it. Sometimes systems I feel as though take, even when it was first getting used to the autopilot, you had to click it a certain amount of times and getting the, "Autopilot, autopilot", that sound can kind of trip people up sometimes. So basically making it as user-friendly as possible and if it's not doing what you want it to do, being able to quickly identify that and quickly turn it off and just be able to humanly fly it if necessary.

**Adam Kress**

I mean overall, I guess if you guys look to the next, say five or 10 years, a lot of the conversation around autonomy and aviation now at times could be around air taxis, advanced mobility aircraft, new types of aircraft that are being built. I don't think anyone in aviation would say right now there's a serious conversation around full automation in the commercial cockpit. We're not there yet. I don't think anyone is truly advocating for that. However, there have been unfortunate instances across aviation in 2025 in particular where we've seen unfortunately some tragedies. That has sparked conversations around things like cameras in the cockpit and greater levels of automation to just try to prevent super unfortunate accidents that pilots could make. So I'm curious to get each of your thoughts on if you think autonomy and automation in aviation should get pushed a little further on the commercial side, simply in the interest of trying to avoid tragedies?

**Alyssa Silva**

I have mixed feelings about it. I feel as though if you push automation too far now you're going to be used to that to the point where what happens if for some reason it doesn't work? Now your level of your baseline is even less than it was before because now you're used to even more autonomy. I feel as though this is something that goes back to our training that we should practice this in training and make sure that we're still able to utilize the aircraft and be able to fly the aircraft as safely as possible without automation, but it's difficult to practice that if we have even more automation, most people are going to use it.

**Adam Kress**

Yep, good point. Pete, what would you say?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

I think there's definitely a fit for the autonomy. Back to Alyssa's point earlier, pilots putting in incorrect waypoints have caused accidents, fatal accidents, whereas the autonomy could be a cross-check, almost like a third pilot on a two-pilot crew. Gross navigation errors across the Atlantic, 95% of the time are from incorrectly entered lat-long positions. And the autonomy could avoid that almost completely. The landing gear we talked about, it's a notion. You're at 300 feet, should the autonomy do a go-around without the pilot's import or should it put the landing gear down or should it just be the way it is right now? Again, I think it's an industry conversation that needs to happen, but there's definitely room for autonomy and automation improvements in the cockpit. I mean, automation is here. We're at level eight automation. I say that glibly because it doesn't exist, but we are there.

The downside to it is anytime, in my experience, you make things easier, you're reducing the abilities of the operator because it's gotten too easy and too simplified is probably even the better word I would use. And that's a concern that it's not just about when a mistake happens or a fault in the system, it's about awareness in the bigger picture. And if it's that simple, people are disconnected. And that disconnect is an alarming point right now as we bridge this gap from simple automation to level three automation to artificial intelligence and full autonomy.

I mean, look how nervous people are about autonomy in UAVs and similar vehicles that are just out crop dusting or similar. "What's it going to do if?" And of course the manufacturers all say, "It's great, it'll never happen. It's lovely." And everyone's thinking about the watch that has a button on it that you can just push and it self-destructs in the fully autonomous vehicles destroyed. Being glib of course. But I think it's back to the philosophical perspective on the three points, the automation, the autonomy, and the pilot, and it's a conversation that has to happen at a very deep level that's not motivated by marketing and cost improvements.

**Adam Kress**

I'm going to ask you both to predict the future a little bit, but as you think of your own roles as pilots, if you think about children today and the way they're raised on the technology, and I mean an iPhone since birth, basically it seems like. People's technological habits continue to change and evolve, and I think it's safe to say like most of people's everyday life as humans is more automated than ever before. So from a pilot perspective, how do you think it's really going to profoundly change? If you look at the next say 10, 20 years?

**Alyssa Silva**

I would say that instead of a two-person cockpit, maybe you'll go down to one or I know some longer haul flights, maybe there's three and there's one sleeping or four and a couple are sleeping. Maybe it'll be less pilots up there, but I still believe someone will be up there at all times. I do think along the lines of what Pete saying, maybe we'll get more updated weather radar systems or AI helping with flight plans or being able to assist with our entries or being able to double check our work like a third pilot, what he was referencing. But I do feel as though there'll at least always be one pilot up there for sure. Monitoring the systems for risk assessment for everything. I don't feel like it will totally go to no pilots up there. Yeah.

**Adam Kress**

Pete, same question, a little different spin on it. Aside from how many humans are in the cockpit, how do you think just as technology advances what the humans in the cockpit will be doing will change the most?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

They'll be eating a banana and the dog will be biting them if they touch anything. No, all joking aside. I think it's going to become more of an observer role, a manager role. I mean, we already manage the flight deck, but I think it'll be more of that. And I think, again, I'm beating a dead horse here, but I think the industry has to ask the question, does the technology make us smarter? And is the technology autonomy, AI doesn't matter, including automation, which we've obviously had for a long, long time, does it make us smarter? Does it make us better? And that ultimately equals the safety quotient. And are we getting safer? If those questions can be answered, it tells you if the technology is worth our time and money and effort. It's not going away though, that's for sure.

**Adam Kress**

Do you think there's a role for pilots to help the public better understand where this is all going? To essentially not make him afraid of new and better technology while holding short of the robot controls the entire plane?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

I think there's always a role. We should be ambassadors, we should be technology ambassadors. I mean, aviation has invented some of the greatest things that have transferred to other vehicles, other technology locations, and we should always be the ambassadors of that. We should always be interactive with the public in many ways. I mean, we've all watched the "expert" on the news after an event occurs and they're reading off the expert, "He's a commercial pilot with 2000 hours." And you're sitting there cringing that 250,000 people are listening to this expert and you're like, uhh. But it's called registering and you need to register yourself as an expert to the public and including the news outlets.

**Alyssa Silva**

I agree. I think we could all be ambassadors for aviation and what's going on in autonomy in the cockpit. I feel as though when accidents do happen, that scares the public. And what we lose with that is what each pilot goes through to get there. I talk to my family members, friends about even our recurrent training, which in other occupations is a continuing education and even how structured that is and how important it is and how strict it is. And if you don't pass something at continuing training, it's a big problem. In other careers, a continuing education could be just a video. I think that something that would help people feel more comfortable is knowing what we go through to get to that seat. It's something that I didn't know about until I went through the training. It's not really knowledge.

Instead of highlighting accidents that happen or on unfortunate events, maybe they should highlight our training and what we go through to get there and how many hours of studying and training we put in. I tell stories to my family, friends and anybody, and they're like, "Wow, that makes me feel so much more safe." And yeah, I think if other people heard those stories, it would really help them feel more confident getting on an aircraft.

**Adam Kress**

Yeah, I think that's an excellent point. And it's one that is lost on most common flyers, right? Everyday people who maybe will fly a few times a year and maybe they're a little nervous, but have absolutely no idea what it takes to train to become any sort of pilot, let alone a commercial pilot that's hauling hundreds of people. And something that shouldn't be lost in this entire conversation around making flights safer and autonomy and automation is how unbelievably safe flights and commercial flight already is. When you do the math and you look at the numbers compared to other modes of transportation, frankly it's not even close, but the trouble lies in when these big news events happen, the eyes of the world are on it even though they are amazingly isolated events. One last question on topic for each of you is just when you look toward the future in general and maybe your own careers as well, whether it has to do directly with automation and autonomy or not, what just gets you most excited about the future of aviation overall?

**Alyssa Silva**

I think that it will be more maybe appealing to other pilots or people looking to become a pilot because it might be a little bit something that they're used to. For example, you mentioned how a lot of people are glued to their iPhones and they're very familiar with technology. When I first started my flight training, we were still doing paper flight plans. So to some people that are glued to their iPhones, they would probably never want to become a pilot because like, "Oh my gosh, I need to-

**Adam Kress**

They wouldn’t even know how to do.

**Alyssa Silva**

... I need to do dead reckoning with a map and a pen and paper. I'm never going to do that." So I think I'm excited for new, safer, utilizing our resources, safer items, people more feeling a little bit more confident that they could do this because they're familiar with using their phone or they're familiar with technologies and things like that. And just utilizing the safety and double checking our work as pilots.

**Adam Kress**

Pete, what do you think? What gets you most excited just about the future of aviation overall?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Going from California to Paris in four hours.

**Adam Kress**

Oh, supersonic guy over here.

**Alyssa Silva**

That would be cool.

**Adam Kress**

Right?

**Alyssa Silva**

Yeah.

**Pete Zaccagnino**

And in that same day, I get to wake up and fly a taildragger doing 80 miles an hour. That'll be a fun day.

**Adam Kress**

All right, so different. Yeah. I mean, joking aside, there are companies now that are working on bringing back supersonic flights. There's companies working on all variety of air taxis and uncrewed aircraft, whether it be for people or cargo as well. So it definitely feels like it's a point in aviation where there is a lot of change happening and vast majority for the good, right, for the better of the flying public for sure.

Well, thank you both so much for joining me on the podcast today. It was a lot of fun and very educational. One last question we ask everyone who comes on the podcast, as you know, we call this podcast Aerospace Unplugged. So when you guys unplug and you're not thinking about flying or actually flying, Pete, maybe I'll start with you, but what do you do to unplug?

**Pete Zaccagnino**

God. A lot of things. Anything outdoors, skiing, hiking, biking, mountain biking, anything like that. I used to do a lot of boxing and stuff like that, but they shut down my club years ago, so I haven't done that in a while.

**Adam Kress**

Well, you mentioned to me that you're coming to us from Park City, Utah, so you got some pretty good ski territory over there to-

**Pete Zaccagnino**

Yes.

**Adam Kress**

... keep you busy. Excellent. Alyssa, what about you when you unplug?

**Alyssa Silva**

I love Bikram yoga. I love working out or maybe dragging my family and friends to the Bikram yoga. That's my favorite pastime. But yeah, or traveling, even though I spend most of my time in the airplanes, it's still fun to use our flight benefits sometimes. Yeah.

**Adam Kress**

Thank you again, Alyssa and Pete and always thank you to all the listeners out there as well. We'll catch you on the next episode of Aerospace Unplugged.