

## More rationalization



And what exactly is this that they served on my Guam to Manila flights? Chicken-something. Edible yes. Tasty no. There's more to the story of why someone would fly 16,250 miles and not stay anywhere more than three hours. Most people aren't going to get this, because they're more-or-less normal. But if you can stretch your thinking a bit, one of the attractions to spending 48.5 hours on planes, in an uncomfortable seat, eating not-so-great food, and trying to hastily make your way to your next connection in an unfamiliar airport, is this-

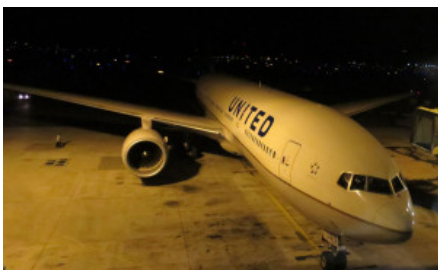
Nobody can call me in the air. I've got anywhere between 4 and 8 totally uninterrupted hours during which I can do some "heavy" thinking, or not think at all. I can actually read a book. And I can put myself totally at the mercy of other people whose job it is to get me where I'm going. Which, in this case, is nowhere.

Most of my life is so planned out that I don't get much time to plan, if that makes sense. Sometimes I end up wasting time when I should be working, just because I get so many things going on in a normal day that I feel like I'm going to explode if I keep myself 100% to the task at hand.

Flying "nowhere" really does get me past that, at least for a while. And I will admit that I have a preference for the absurd, for challenges that most wouldn't want to take on because they're not something that a reasonable person would want to do. I mean seriously, if you get uncomfortable and fidgety after just an hour in an airplane seat, how can you intellectually face the fact that you're voluntarily going to be putting in another 47 hours worth? That's a mental challenge, and seriously, when you can stare down that sort of thing and ride it out, can you imagine what that does for your patience elsewhere? Nothing can stop you!

The other thing this satisfies is my love of figuring out how things work. Systems. Airports alone will tell you a lot about how things work in a given country. And it's also fun to observe people, and how different they are in, say, a Manila airport than just about anywhere else I've ever been. Maybe Cairo comes close. You do start to develop an appreciation for just how nice SFO really is, and how relatively-orderly things like security and finding your gate are here, vs, say, Guam (or Manila).

And finally, one of the greatest things about an epic two-day trip through the air is that feeling you have when you arrive back home. Maybe it wouldn't feel so great if you weren't fighting a shoulder that just can't get comfortable in an airplane seat?



My plane pulled up right underneath me as I type. In one hour it flies me from HNL to LAX. I hope! But for now, it's time to come home. I'm in the United Club at Honolulu Airport (HNL, but I'm trying to avoid too much jargon), with a red-eye leaving soon for Los Angeles (LAX) followed by a short flight to San Jose, arriving 9:45am. I'm arriving at LAX at about 5am so I'm going to see if I can get my San Jose flight switched to an earlier flight going to San Francisco. Not technically within the rules, but might be possible. That way I can take BART and CalTrain back to Redwood City, so nobody has to drive far to pick me up. We'll see how it

goes. And hopefully I'll catch some sleep on this flight. So far about 4-5 hours last "night". Which does bring up the weirdness of time. I left Guam at 7am Friday morning. It's 8:17pm Thursday as I type this in Hawaii. Weird, eh? --Mike--