No, this is not about learning faster, this is about living longer.

In any challenging highspeed actvity you go through three main phases:

1: Learning the basic reaction patterns - commonly referred to as "muscle memory" or "intuitive reaction patterns"

2: Applying, finetuning and interlinking those patterns in interaction with your eyes and other senses.

3: Developing reaction shortcuts via your backbones nerve tissue that allow for complex reaction patterns to be fired in milliseconds without any self- noticable brain activity.

And then you are there, you feel comfortable and relaxed flying down a mountain with your tiny speedwing inches off the ground or riding a mountainbike down a narrow hiking trail like a magic carpet made of a long travel suspension seemingly welded to your body.

You soak in the scenery and enjoy this great moment of PURE FLOW.

FULL STOP.

In order for something to feel comfortable and "safe" to do, we - as humans - must have repeated that thing with a positive outcome multiple times - thats how evolution made sure that we remember useful behaviour (in terms of survival of the species) and drop non useful behavior patterns (hopefully ,-) .. but in general that tactic seems to work quite well.

What works well in "standard" life can end up as as a major disaster in flowsports.

A lot of incredibly skilled people have lost their lives in what they thought was their comfort zone.

In Phase 3 (that - by the way - never ends) anything runs well just AS LONG as the paramters are not changed.

We humans usually don't like changing parameters as they rob us our reward for learning ("the comfort zone"), so we are genetically programmed to ignore them to some degree.

The biggest challenge for Flow Sports People like you and me is to fight that ignorance towards slight changes in outside parameters.

Especially in a sport with a lot of invisible, air induced parameters like Speedflying its easy to fall victim to our own learning curve - we might not want to hear it, but the more skilled we get, the more we are prone to ignore a change in parameters.

Imagine doing a downhill run on your mountainbike, a well known singletrail, you know all the brakepoints by heart, you know how much grip the tire approximately can transfer as its dry etc. NOW imagine that the surface of one fast blind corner is replaced by polished steel and covered with a thin layer of unsuspicious looking gravel... BANG. No chance, not even for the Best of the Best. No skill in the world will save you from loosing the traction on the front tire.

An unlikely scenario ? of corse.

But how unlikely is a change of parameters in (speed)flying ?

Are you really able to see and predict air movements while doing 50 to 90kph downhill, close to ground under your speedwing ? Me not.

So outsmart your learning curve, don't feel too comfortable with that tiny set of reactive skills you aquired on the way, don't fall for the false sense of security that an often enough repeated activity induces into your brain.

Step a few centimeters back from the edge, decrease the amount of unknown factors (e.g. air movement), its not much, not far, but far enough to multiply the long lasting joy of the flow.

Dont get fooled, its not about that short visual rush that the media loves to publish, its about that great sustainable long lasting rush called "life".

May the force be with you.

Paul