Pilots can perceive hazards by using the CARE checklist:

Pilot

- Consequences: Gayle's inexperience and lack of recent flight time create some risks for an accident, primarily because she plans to travel over mountains on a hazy day and land at an unfamiliar mountain airport that is still in IMC conditions.
- Alternatives: Gayle might mitigate the pilot-related risk by hiring a CFI to accompany her and provide dual crosscountry instruction. An added benefit is the opportunity to broaden her flying experience in safe conditions.
- Reality: Accepting the reality that limited experience can create additional risks is a key part of sound risk management and mitigation.
- External Factors: Like many pilots, Gayle must contend with the emotional pressure associated with acknowledging that her skill and experience levels may be lower than she would like them to be. Pride can be a powerful external factor!

Environment

- Consequences: For a pilot whose experience consists
 mostly of local flights in good VMC, launching a long crosscountry flight over mountainous terrain in hazy conditions
 could lead to pilot disorientation and increase the risk of an
 accident.
- Alternatives: Options include postponing the trip until the visibility improves, or modifying the route to avoid extended periods of time over the mountains.
- Reality: Hazy conditions and mountainous terrain clearly create risks for an inexperienced VFR-only pilot.
- External Factors: Few pilots are immune to the pressure of "get-there-itis," which can sometimes induce a decision to launch or continue in less than ideal weather conditions.

Aircraft

- Consequences: This area presents low risk because the aircraft is in excellent mechanical condition and Gayle is familiar with its avionics.
- Alternatives: Had there been a problem with her aircraft, Gayle might have considered renting another plane from her flight school. Bear in mind, however, that alternatives sometimes create new hazards. In this instance, there may be hazards associated with flying an unfamiliar aircraft with different avionics.
- Reality: It is important to recognize the reality of an aircraft's
 mechanical condition. If you find a maintenance discrepancy
 and then find yourself saying that it is "probably" okay to fly
 with it anyway, you need to revisit the consequences part of
 this checklist.
- External Factors: Pilot decision-making can sometimes be influenced by the external pressure of needing to return the airplane to the FBO by a certain date and time. Because Gayle owns the airplane, there was no such pressure in this case.

External pressures

- Consequences: Any number of factors can create the risk of emotional pressure from a "get-there" mentality. In Gayle's case, the consequences of her strong desire to visit family, her family's expectations, and personal pride could induce her to accept unnecessary risks.
- Alternatives: Gayle clearly needs to develop a mitigating strategy for each of the external factors associated with this trip.
- Reality: Pilots sometimes tend to discount or ignore the
 potential impact of these external factors. Gayle's open
 acknowledgement of these factors (e.g., "I might be
 pressured into pressing on so my mother won't have to
 worry about our late arrival.") is a critical element of effective
 risk management.
- External Factors: (see above)

Figure 2-12. A real-world examples of how the 3P model guides decisions on a cross-country trip using the CARE checklist.

and carrying sufficient fuel to reach it. This course of action would mitigate the risk. The pilot also has the option to eliminate it entirely by waiting for better weather.

Once the pilot has completed the 3P decision process and selected a course of action, the process begins anew because now the set of circumstances brought about by the course of action requires analysis. The decision-making process is a continuous loop of perceiving, processing, and performing. With practice and consistent use, running through the 3P cycle can become a habit that is as smooth, continuous, and automatic as a well-honed instrument scan. This basic set of practical risk management tools can be used to improve risk management.

Your mental willingness to follow through on safe decisions, especially those that require delay or diversion is critical. You can bulk up your mental muscles by:

- Using personal minimums checklist to make some decisions in advance of the flight. To develop a good personal minimums checklist, you need to assess your abilities and capabilities in a non-flying environment, when there is no pressure to make a specific trip. Once developed, a personal minimums checklist will give you a clear and concise reference point for making your go/no-go or continue/discontinue decisions.
- In addition to having personal minimums, some pilots also like to use a preflight risk assessment checklist to help with the ADM and risk management processes. This kind of form assigns numbers to certain risks and situations, which can make it easier to see when a particular flight involves a higher level of risk
- Develop a list of good alternatives during your processing phase. In marginal weather, for instance, you might mitigate the risk by identifying a reasonable