



What's the word???

Awareness



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Introduction:

In this eBook we look at the psychological aspect of safety, through the eyes and brain of the individual. Through experience doing many investigations to ascertain "**root cause**", it has been shown that most incidents and near misses are caused by mobile plant operators or workers on foot not having awareness to their surroundings.

It is a case of the old saying, ***YOU CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FOR THE TREES.***

It is normal for the brain to become lazy, if it sees the same thing over and over again, and will not recognise a slight change in the pattern, when things do change marginally, we do not see the danger when it does confront us until too late.



Training the brain:

In order for us to be aware of what is going on in our surroundings, we must endeavour to teach our brains to refresh the information it is receiving from our eyes.

Practicing the art of awareness is neither hard, nor time consuming. Having awareness to your surroundings will allow you to be a safer worker, and may even prevent you getting that speeding fine next time you put your foot down. Try the brain train tutorial, it may surprise you how little attention you actually pay, even when your brain has pre warning of what to do.

Tutorial:

Next time you are in a parking lot, walk down the beginning of the centre of the road, having cars to your right and left, look at the first car on your right, then look at the first car on your left.

Walk and count ten cars on your right, stop count to ten, and then say what type and model the first car on your left was. You will most likely not recall, although you do know what type and model of car it was, it is in your brain as a snap shot.

By first looking at the first car on the left, then looking at the first car on the right, counting a further ten cars, then counting to ten, has confused your brain with meaningless information, in order to successfully recall the type and model that was the first car on your left side, we must be able to bring up that snap shot, not easy, but training your brain to do this is the start of having an awareness to your surroundings.

It's likely happened to most of you at one point or another. A phone call, text, or TV show distracted you from cooking dinner...until the smell of scorched food drifts your way. It's easy to be distracted, no matter where you are or what you're doing. It takes practice to become more aware of your surroundings, whether you're cooking, driving, or trying to be safe at work.

But how do you practice becoming more aware? It's actually simpler than you may think. All it takes is to "Get your head up, open your eyes and look around." To get started, a basic example of walking into a room and giving it a quick scan as you sit down to see who is nearby, or to glance in a window as you walk down the street to see who may be walking behind you. By observing the people around you, you're not as defenceless as you would be if you were totally oblivious of your surroundings.

You can also step up your awareness training up a notch through more specific observation. For instance, taking note of a car that passes you as you are driving, and then look away. After looking away, would you know the following?

- The make, model, and colour of the car?
- The number on the license plate?
- How many doors are on the car?
- The gender of the driver and any passengers?

A similar approach to training yourself to be aware of your surroundings can be taken the next time you're out shopping. Take a moment to observe the people you pass, try describing them to yourself, and check to see how accurately you were able to describe them. Or, simply sit down, close your eyes, and try to visualize every aspect of your living room. By taking the time to train yourself to become more aware of your surroundings, you'll naturally start paying more attention to them within a few weeks, decreasing your chances of becoming a victim, should the unexpected occur.

Have you ever used techniques like these to train yourself to be more vigilant to take in your surroundings?

Be Aware of Your Surroundings When Driving:

The ability to visually search the road and look for hazards is an essential skill for all smart drivers. Practice the following techniques often.

Look ahead:

Drivers should always make sure they can see ahead before starting out and can see ahead at all times while driving. When approaching an intersection, make sure your teen keeps their eyes moving to the right and left to see traffic that may be approaching from either side or for cars stopping suddenly.

Look behind:

Make sure you learn how to do a quick turn of their head to the right to check the blind spot before pulling into traffic or making lane changes. Before backing up, drivers should turn their head to look all the way behind and around the car.

Teach yourself to check the rear-view mirror periodically and in the following situations:

- After seeing a sudden change ahead
- Before braking

- While stopped in traffic
- Before and after turning
- Before and after changing lanes

Conclusion:

As you can see, it just takes practice to train your brain to be aware of your surroundings.

Once you have achieved awareness, you will look at things in a different light, but this training must be forever ongoing, as your brain over time will again file those snap shots of what it has decided is useless information into some dark part of your brain.