

Alertness (vs. carelessness)

Being aware of what is taking place around me so I can respond appropriately.

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"Stop and Smell the Roses"

By Jill Welte Tomey

Have you ever arrived at a destination and not remembered anything about the drive to get there? You suppose you followed traffic laws since you arrived but the details of the trip are lost. My life feels like that sometimes. I am involved in many activities that include a career, hobbies, passions and family obligations. Spare time doesn't really exist in my schedule. I have deadlines, appointments and responsibilities that dictate what I need to do at any given moment. My guess is that I'm not the only one.

I'm always thinking ahead to the next place I have to be or the next task I have to do. Alertness tells me to stop doing that. It tells me to pay attention to what I am doing now – to enjoy it, to relate to it and to the people with whom I am interacting. Alertness requires me to be present with both my eyes and my heart open.

This past month, my 'schedule' has been upset twice for funerals. My husband and I both lost dear cousins to cancer. Both funerals were out of town. Both women lived full lives with faith and focus. It's a wakeup call I can't miss. I don't want to arrive at the end of my life and wonder how I got there.

This month, join me in using Alertness along with Enthusiasm, Patience, and Gratefulness to be mindful of what I am doing – when I am doing it!

How to Practice Alertness,

- Keep my eyes and ears open
- Recognize and heed warning signals
- Choose to do right before I'm tempted
- Tell others of danger
- Stay away from unsafe places

"Observation, not old age, brings wisdom."

-Publilius Syrus

"In today's rush, we all think too much – seek too much – want too much – and forget about the joy of just being."

-Eckhart Tolle