Have you ever been in such a hurry to get something done that everything went wrong? Or maybe you thought you knew how to do something and instead of checking to make sure you were doing it right you just did it, and then everything ended up in a big mess?

It’s happened to all of us. It happened to my mom last week when she was in a hurry to bake my birthday cake, and it happened to Dad when he tried to help with the laundry and didn’t read the instructions, and it even happened to my teacher when the bell rang for recess and Tibbles escaped.

Slowing down and taking our time to get something done right the first time is always a good idea.
SLOW DOWN AND TAKE YOUR TIME
Have you ever been in such a hurry to get something done that everything went wrong? Or maybe you thought you knew how to do something but instead of checking to make sure you were right, you just did it? It’s happened to all of us and when it does happen, we need to remember to slow down and take our time.
Last Saturday was my birthday and Mom was planning a big party with balloons, games and even a clown. Like every year, Mom wanted to bake me my favorite cake: chocolate double fudge. Yummy!

Except this year, everything went wrong!
On the day of my party when it was time to bake my cake, Mom was so worried that she wouldn’t have enough time to blow up balloons and hang streamers that she quickly threw all the ingredients into the bowl without measuring any of them.
We didn’t know anything was wrong until all of a sudden, we heard a big BANG coming from the oven. My cake exploded! There was chocolate cake everywhere except for in the pan. That’s when mom turned to me and said, “Sometimes you just have to slow down and take your time or else everything can go wrong!”
But sometimes you may not be in a hurry and everything still goes wrong, like with my dad. Dad likes to do chores around the house, like mowing the lawn, taking out the garbage and fixing the car, and he's really good at them. But one day, Dad tried to help with the laundry. “How hard can it be?” he said. And even though Dad wasn’t in a hurry, he didn’t think that he needed to read the directions on the laundry soap box...
You guessed it! Everything went wrong! Not only did Dad throw all of the clothes into the washing machine together, but he poured too much soap into the machine. Before we knew it, the washing machine was overflowing with bubbles. There were bubbles everywhere! And Mom’s favorite white shirt turned pink! Yikes! Sometimes you just have to slow down and take your time!
My second grade teacher, Mr. Merdy, is always telling my class to slow down and take our time whenever we are doing our school work. Mr. Merdy says that if we do our work right the first time, it won’t take as long to finish. Mr. Merdy is right, but the funny thing is, even Mr. Merdy is in a hurry sometimes.
I’ll never forget that day! It was right before recess and Mr. Merdy was in the middle of introducing us to our new class pet, a guinea pig named Tibbles, when all of a sudden the recess bell rang! Everybody ran for the door! Can you guess what happened?
Yep! You guess it! When we got back to the class after recess, Tibbles’s cage door was wide open and Tibbles was gone! Some of the kids cried, and others started looking around the classroom calling “Tibbles, come here Tibbles.” But we couldn’t find Tibbles anywhere!
That’s when Mr. Merdy told everybody to slow down, take our time and think like a guinea pig. Mr. Merdy said, “and what do all guinea pig like to do? EAT!” And that’s exactly what Tibbles was doing. We found Tibbles sitting in Simon’s lunch bag crunching on a bunch of carrot sticks!
Just like Mom, Dad and Mr. Merdy, sometimes when I’m in a hurry and I don’t slow down, and things go wrong! And the last time that happened, I was stuck up in a tree!
Whenever I play hide-and-go-seek, I’m always in a hurry to find the best hiding place. The last time we played, without slowing down to think about where I was hiding, I climbed to the top of a very tall tree.

Even though I won and nobody could find me, I didn’t think about having to climb back down the tree. I was scared!
Being stuck up in a tree really showed me that it’s always better to slow down and take your time before you decide to do something. And trying to make things better after you do something can be worse, especially when you have to climb back down from a really tall tree. Yikes!
Everybody is in a hurry once in a while, but try to remember that if you forget to slow down and take your time, everything can go wrong!
Slow Down and Take Your Time is a familiar saying to many of us. And although we all recognize the value of completing a task correctly the first time, sometimes we are in such a hurry to be done that everything ends in disaster. For children in particular, slowing down and taking their time is a necessary self-regulation skill that needs to be taught.

The purpose of this book is to not only acknowledge that everybody can make mistakes when they are in a hurry to complete a task but to also reinforce the value of slowing down and taking our time in order to complete a task correctly.

There are many reasons why a person may have a hard time slowing down and taking their time to complete a task. Oftentimes we are simply in hurry and just want the task to be done, while other times we may feel anxious or overwhelmed with the task at hand and therefore have difficulty focusing on what needs to be done to complete it.

Many of these same reasons can apply to our children. One of our roles as a parent, caregiver or teacher is to teach our children how to approach a task without feeling the need to be rushed. Therefore, it is up to us to teach our children how to be calm and exercise patience in their journey towards completion.

There are many ways that we can teach children how to slow down and take their time when completing a task, and many of these skills can be taught through play, games and intentional guidance.

1. Teach children how to relax and calm their bodies through relaxation and deep breathing techniques prior to starting a task.
   Studies have shown that when an individual is calm, not only does their ability to stay focused on a task increase, but so does their overall ability to learn.

2. Use specific games that support the development of patience and having to take their time. Puzzles, pencil mazes, connecting the dots, paint-by-number activities and a variety of games can encourage children to slow down and take their time while having fun.

3. Bake! Everybody loves to bake and baking usually involves having to follow a recipe. Taking your time to follow the recipe, including preparations, reading, following directions and measuring the ingredients will not only reinforce the importance of slowing down to complete a task, but you will also be rewarded with a tasty treat!

4. Slow Motion. Throughout the day, have children do things in slow motion, such as dancing, walking, brushing their teeth and even putting on their clothes. This will not only reinforce the concept of slowing down, but think how much fun you can have completing tasks in slow motion!

Encouraging children to slow down and take their time, is not only a necessary step in self-regulation, but it also fosters enhances detailed attentiveness and a work ethic that lead to long term success.

As parents, caregivers and teachers, let’s Slow Down and Take Our Time so our children can, too!
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