

When Fast Meets Slow



By Jonno Bright

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In a cozy tree hollow at the edge of Woodland Park stood a small sign: "The Backbone Animal Clinic - Chiropractors Dr. Pippin & Dr. Slowbert - Helping Animals Move Better!"

(Chiropractor is just a fancy word for a special kind of doctor who helps you when your body feels stiff or sore by gently moving your joints and muscles back into the right places.)

Dr. Pippin was a fluffy, long haired guinea pig with tiny round glasses who loved everything to be quick and efficient. Her fur was always perfectly groomed, and she carried a small clipboard everywhere she went.

Dr. Slowbert was a gentle sloth who moved very, very slowly and believed in taking time to understand each patient properly. His favorite saying was "Good things come to those who wait... and wait... and wait a little more."

This particular morning, Dr. Pippin was bouncing around the clinic, organizing her tools at lightning speed. "Slowbert!" she called impatiently. "Your rabbit appointment was five minutes ago, and you're still reading her file from last week!"

Dr. Slowbert looked up slowly from his notes. "Ah... but Pippin... I'm discovering... very interesting... patterns in her... hopping habits..."

"Patterns?!" squeaked Pippin. "She has a sore back! Pop, crack, done! Next patient!"

"Not... everything... can be... rushed..." Slowbert replied, turning a page at the speed of a sick snail.

Just then, the waiting room erupted in chaos.

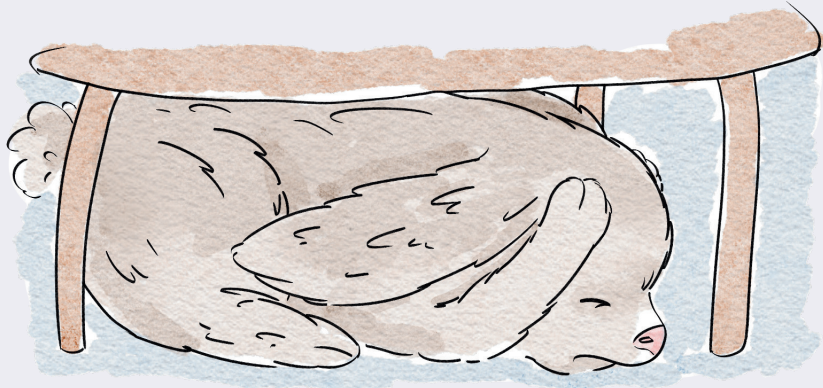
"HELP! That fox is looking at me funny!" squeaked Ruby the rabbit, diving under a chair.

"I wasn't looking at anyone!" protested Felix the fox, trying to appear innocent while his stomach growled loudly. "I'm just... admiring the... uh... furniture?"

Bella the bird kept flying in nervous circles, chirping, "Spider! There's a SPIDER in here! With a LAPTOP!"

And indeed, there was. In the corner sat Webster, a small black spider wearing tiny glasses over two of his eight eyes, typing frantically on a miniature laptop. "Just trying to finish this debugging session," he muttered. "My client needs their web-site launched by— OW! My legs are killing me!"

The waiting room was pure chaos. Ruby was under one chair, Felix was pacing near the door, Bella was perched on the ceiling fan, and everyone was eyeing everyone else suspiciously.



Dr. Pippin rushed in, clipboard raised. "Everyone calm down! Form an orderly line! Let's address these issues systematically and—"

"Shhhhhhh," came a very long, very slow sound from Dr. Slowbert as he glided into the room. "Everyone... take... a... deep... breath..."

Something magical happened. The sloth's incredibly calm presence seemed to slow down time itself. His peaceful energy spread through the room like warm honey.

"Ruby..." he said softly, "you are... safe here... Felix is... a patient... just like you..."

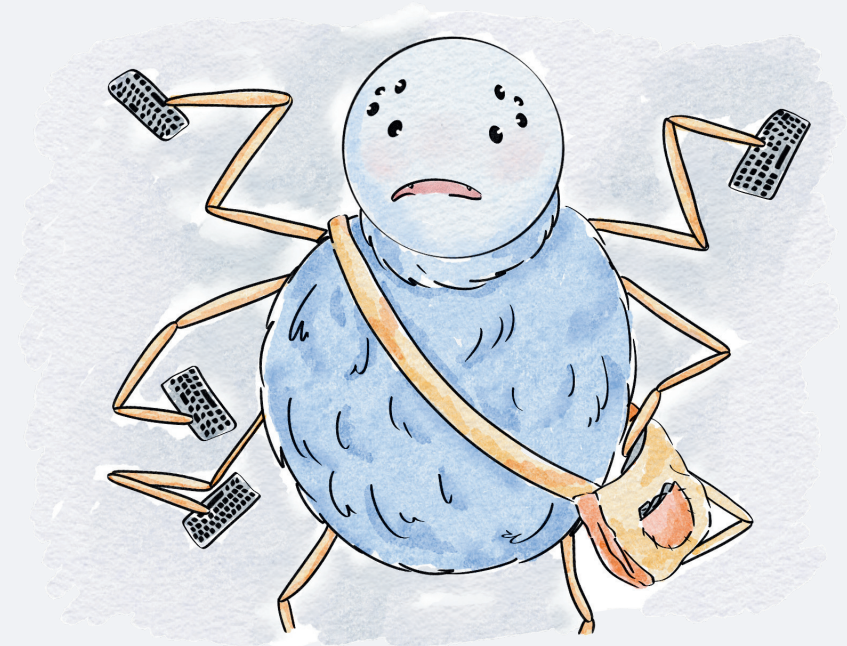
Felix's ears drooped. "Sorry, Ruby. I know I look scary when I'm hungry. I should have eaten breakfast."



"Bella..." Slowbert continued, "Webster is... just a very... busy... professional..."

Webster looked up from his laptop. "Thanks. Sorry about the typing noise. I've been coding for 72 hours straight and my RSI is acting up again."

"Your... what now?" asked Slowbert, genuinely confused.



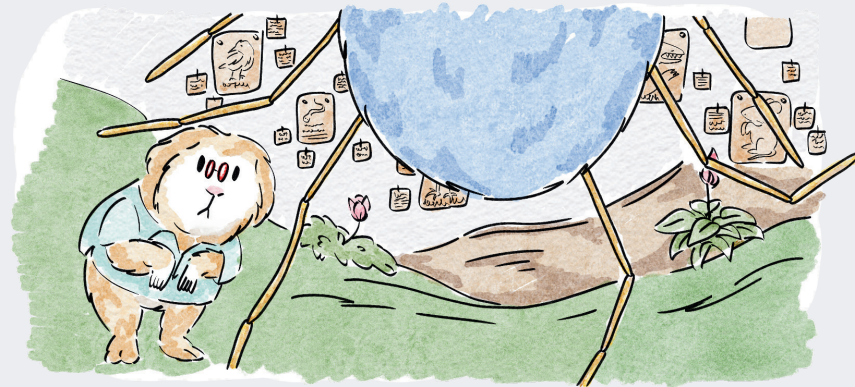
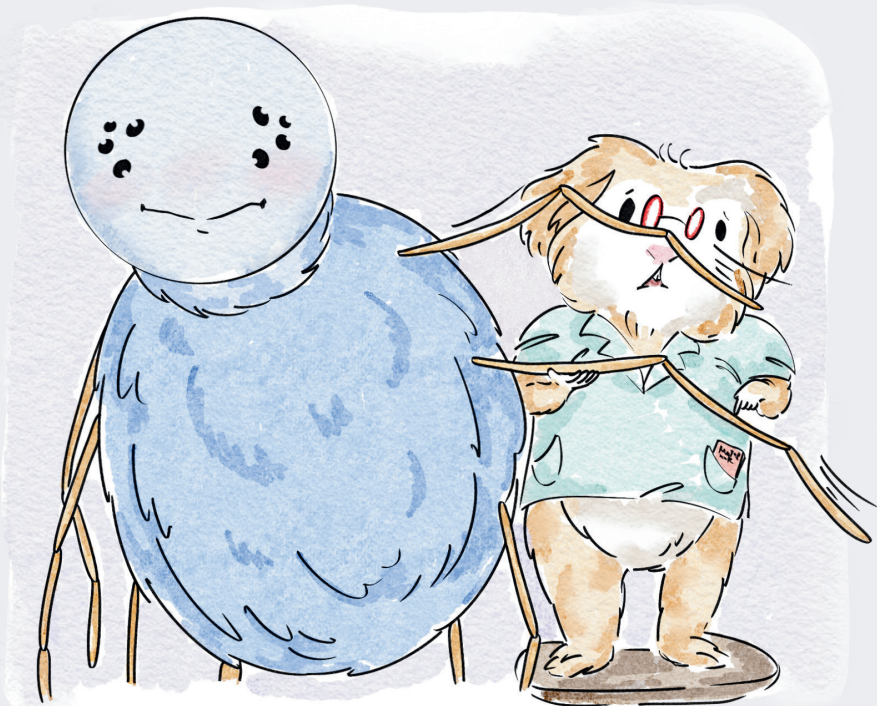
"Repetitive Strain Injury," Webster explained. "From too much computer work. Though I probably shouldn't be using four keyboards at the same time, right?" He gestured to his setup with all eight legs positioned over different tiny keyboards.

Dr. Pippin's eyes lit up. "Muscle strain! That's my specialty! Right this way, Webster!"

Dr. Slowbert took Felix to examination room one, while Dr. Pippin led Webster to examination room two.

"Now then," said Dr. Pippin, putting on her professional voice, "let's see what we're dealing with. Can you stand straight up for me please?"

Webster tried to extend his legs properly, but they moved in jerky, uncoordinated patterns. "It's weird," he said. "Some legs extend fine, others barely move. And my neck is killing me from hunching over the monitors all day."



Dr. Pippin began her usual examination, checking each joint carefully. "Hmm, joints seem aligned... flexibility looks normal... let me try some adjustments..."

Pop! Crack! Dr. Pippin worked quickly, adjusting each of Webster's seven joints per leg with impressive speed and precision.

"There!" announced Dr. Pippin proudly. "All joints properly aligned! Try walking now!"

Webster attempted to walk, but his legs still moved in the same jerky, uncoordinated pattern. If anything, he seemed worse.

"That's... strange," muttered Dr. Pippin, flipping through her textbook frantically. "The joints are all properly positioned. This should have worked!"

Dr. Pippin swallowed her pride and knocked on Dr. Slowbert's door. "Um... Slowbert? Could I... borrow your expertise for a moment?"



Dr. Slowbert glided slowly into room two and observed Webster carefully. "Ah... I see... the problem..."

"You do?" asked both Dr. Pippin and Webster together.

"Webster... you're not... just a regular... patient... you're a... spider... Spiders don't have... muscles like us... and their... bones are on... the outside... They move their legs... by changing the... pressure of their... blood..., like in mechanical hydraulic systems..."

Dr. Slowbert turned to Dr. Pippin. "My... elephant patients... have similar... circulation issues... when they... hold positions... too long... The pressure... takes time... to redistribute..."

"Time?" Dr. Pippin looked confused. "But I fixed all the joints!"

"Joints... are only... part of... the system..." explained Dr. Slowbert patiently. "Webster's... circulation... is blocked... from poor... posture... You can't... rush... hydraulic pressure... to rebalance..."

Dr. Slowbert gently placed one slow claw on Webster's cephalothorax (his head-chest area). "Now... Webster... take... very... slow... deep breaths... and... relax... completely..."

As Webster relaxed, Dr. Pippin watched in amazement as the spider's legs gradually began to extend more smoothly.

"The... circulation... needs time... to adjust..." explained Dr. Slowbert. "Dr. Pippin... can you... make those... precise... tiny adjustments... to the... pressure points... while I... hold steady?"

Working together, Dr. Slowbert provided the slow, steady pressure that allowed Webster's hydraulic system to rebalance, while Dr. Pippin made quick, precise adjustments to help the circulation flow properly.

"Wow!" said Webster after ten minutes of treatment. "My legs feel amazing! I can actually coordinate all eight of them again!"

"But," added Dr. Slowbert slowly, "you'll need... to change... your work... setup... maybe... fewer... keyboards?"

Webster laughed. "You're right. Maybe just two keyboards. And I should definitely invest in a hanging desk, where I can work hanging from the ceiling."

"And," added Dr. Pippin, "take breaks every hour for stretches!"



As Webster packed up his laptop (much more carefully this time), he turned to both doctors. "Thank you! You guys make a great team. Dr. Pippin's precision and Dr. Slowbert's patience - perfect combination!"

After Webster left, the two doctors looked at each other with new respect.

"You know," said Dr. Pippin, "I never thought about circulation timing before. That was brilliant!"

"And... your precise... joint work... was exactly... what was needed..." replied Dr. Slowbert. "I could... never have... made those... tiny adjustments..."

From that day forward, Dr. Pippin and Dr. Slowbert worked as a real team.

Dr. Pippin handled the quick, precise work that required speed and accuracy.

Dr. Slowbert took care of the complex, whole-body issues that needed patience and time.

And Webster? He became their favorite patient to tell other animals about. "Remember," they would say, "whether you have bones or hydraulics, good posture and regular breaks are important for everyone!"

A few weeks later, as they worked together perfectly in their clinic, Dr. Pippin had an idea. "You know, Slowbert," she said, "I think our clinic needs a new name."

"Oh?" Dr. Slowbert looked up slowly from his patient notes. "What... did you... have in mind?"

"How about 'The Perfect Pace Practice'?" suggested Dr. Pippin.

"Because we've learned that the perfect pace isn't always fast or always slow - it's finding just the right speed for each patient and each problem."

Dr. Slowbert smiled his slow, warm smile. "That's... absolutely... perfect."



The next day, they painted a new sign together. Dr. Pippin worked quickly on the neat, precise lettering while Dr. Slowbert carefully added beautiful, flowing decorations around the edges.

The Perfect Pace Practice became known throughout the forest as the place where any animal could get help - no matter how they were built or what kind of body they had.

And if you visited on a quiet afternoon, you might see Dr. Pippin organizing her tools at lightning speed while Dr. Slowbert slowly, carefully read through patient files. But now, instead of being annoyed with each other, they'd share a smile. They had learned that the best solutions come when different talents work together at just the right pace.

When Fast Meet Slow

At the Backbone Clinic, what a sight,
Two doctors working day and night!
Pippin quick and Slowbert slow,
Helping animals wherever they go.

One day chaos filled the air,
Animals frightened everywhere!
But Slowbert's calm and peaceful way,
Made everyone's worries melt away.

Then came Webster with his plight,
Eight sore legs that weren't quite right.
From coding webs both night and day,
His hydraulics had gone astray.

Pippin tried with all his might,
Pop and crack - but not quite right.
"I need help!" he had to say,
"Slowbert, please show me the way!"

Together slow and together fast,
They solved the problem unsurpassed.
Different skills that work as one,
Make the hardest problems done!

So remember when you're feeling stressed,
Two minds together work the best.
Fast and slow, big and small,
At Perfect Pace, there's room for all!



Conversation Starters for
"When Fast Meets Slow "
Questions for Children Ages 4-8

1. Understanding Different Working Styles: "Dr. Pippin works very fast and Dr. Slowbert works very slowly. Which one are you more like when you do your homework or chores?
Is one way always better than the other?"
2. Teamwork and Strengths: "Dr. Pippin and Dr. Slowbert didn't like each other at first, but then they realized they both had special skills. What's something you're really good at that might help someone else?"
3. Problem-Solving Together: "Webster's problem was too hard for just one doctor to solve. Can you think of a time when you needed help from someone else to figure something out?"
4. Managing Conflict: "When the animals in the waiting room were scared of each other, Dr. Slowbert helped everyone calm down. What do you do when you feel scared or worried about something new?"
5. Learning About Differences: "Webster the spider is very different from the other animals - he has 8 legs and moves differently. What makes you special or different from your friends?"



6. Understanding Hydraulics: "Spiders move their legs using pressure, like in mechanical hydraulic systems. Think of a water pistol - when you squeeze the trigger, you put pressure on the water, and it shoots out. That's hydraulics in action! Can you think of other things that use pressure to work?"

7. Personal Health Awareness: "Webster had sore legs and a sore neck from working too much. Do you ever have any aches or pains in your body that bother you? What helps you feel better when something hurts?"

8. Asking for Help: "Dr. Pippin had to ask Dr. Slowbert for help, even though she didn't want to at first. When is it hard for you to ask for help? When is it easy?"

9. Patience vs. Speed: "Sometimes Dr. Pippin needed to slow down, and sometimes Dr. Slowbert needed to speed up. Can you think of times when it's better to go fast? When is it better to go slow?"

10. Celebrating Change: "The doctors changed their clinic's name from 'Backbone Animal Clinic' to 'Perfect Pace Practice' because they learned something new. Have you ever changed your mind about something after learning more about it?"



These questions encourage children to:

- Connect the story to their own experiences
- Think about different personality types and working styles
- Understand the value of teamwork and asking for help
- Learn basic science concepts through relatable analogies
- Develop empathy for others who are different
- Reflect on problem-solving strategies

*Dr. Pippin the guinea pig works FAST.
Pop! Crack! Next patient, please!
Dr. Slowbert the sloth works S-L-O-W-L-Y.
"Take... your... time..."*

*They share a clinic, **but they can't agree on anything!***

Then Webster the spider scuttles in with a BIG problem. His eight legs won't work right! (Maybe using four keyboards at once wasn't such a great idea...)

Dr. Pippin tries her speedy tricks—nothing works!

*Dr. Slowbert knows something special about how spiders move.
But he needs Dr. Pippin's help too!*

Can a fast doctor and a slow doctor work together to help their new eight-legged friend?

Find out what happens when these two very different doctors discover....

A funny story about teamwork, friendship, and why spiders are basically tiny hydraulic machines with too many legs.

Perfect for curious kids who love animals, problem-solving, and discovering how bodies work!

