

# 6 Truths About the “Slow” Brain

Gloria DeGaetano, Educator, Author, Founder, Parent Coaching Institute

Children and teens need time to process their thoughts, the thoughts of others and the thousands of images they see each day. In our fast-paced world with fast-paced quick cuts on popular TV programs and movies, and fast-paced video games and fast-paced lifestyles—in this media/digital world where kids spend an average of 40 hours a week on screen technologies and an average of 2 hours a week talking with their parents—we need more than ever to slow down—to help them slow down—to talk and listen more—to provide space in the home devoid of distractions for more connected experiences with each other. We need to help each other to allow the slow brain to do its magic and tame our reactionary nature. After all, that’s what it’s built to do.

## **TRUTH # 1: THE SLOW BRAIN IS THE CEREBRAL CORTEX**

The cerebral cortex is the thinking function of the human brain. Thinking is slow. The cerebral cortex is slow. Problem solving takes time. Children need slow activities in order to grow the brain’s thinking function.

## **TRUTH # 2: THE CEREBRAL CORTEX MUST BE IN CHARGE**

There is a reason the cortex is the largest portion of the brain and takes the longest to develop. It is meant to be in charge. If slow activities are deprived during child and adolescent development, it is more difficult for the cortex to be in charge of the brain.

## **TRUTH # 3: THE SLOW BRAIN IS THE PATH TO SELF-IDENTITY**

Developing an interior life means nourishing the cerebral cortex. Introspection, reflection, and inner speech are slow brain activities necessary for learning about oneself.

## **TRUTH # 4: THE SLOW BRAIN IS THE PATH TO SELF-DIRECTION**

Children who enjoy slow activities will be more self-directed, able to play by themselves, do homework by themselves, and persevere to an outcome when faced with difficult situations.

## **TRUTH # 5: THE SLOW BRAIN IS THE PATH TO SELF-REGULATION**

Slow activities give children time to learn how to respond rather than react. The slow brain needs slow activities to provide the correct data information so children learn self-calming techniques, reducing angry outbursts and frustration.

## **TRUTH # 6: PARENTAL LOVE UNLOCKS THE SLOW BRAIN**

The parent-child emotional bond is the key ingredient for helping the slow brain grow. Your attention and communication support the optimal development of your child’s cerebral cortex and is key in growing children into self-actualized adults.