***At Boston College, we hope to draw on the Jesuit tradition of finding conversation partners to discuss issues and problems facing society. Who is your favorite conversation partner? What do you discuss with that person? (400 Words)***

As an avid Esports fan and gamer, Esports has become my regular conversational topic with my friends. In particular, Keith Bryce - my best friend for five years now - has always been my constant conversational partner on anything related to Esports, gaming strategies, and the accompanying philosophical values behind it. He’s the chill-guy-of-a-few-words-type, so I usually have to initiate our conversation. Eventually, our chats brought us to our first gaming competition in 2020, which was the beginning of how our conversation branched out to one of the most pervasive issues of life: anxiety and nervousness.

I've always been a nervous nelly. On our first match, I remembered going up the stage being witnessed by dozens of people. My hands got cold and were shaking profusely. On the other hand, Keith seemed calm; he told me to take a deep breath through the nose, hold for 3 seconds, exhale through the mouth, and do it multiple times, which I later learned is called box breathing. He then recited a bible verse as he held my hand to pray to God for strength. Surprised, what he did calm me down. I can breathe normally, my hands stop shaking, and I can play like I always do. We didn’t win, but I gained something important: a method to overcome my nervousness.

Ever since Keith and I would talk about ways to help people with anxiety and nervousness. To facilitate our conversation, I’d google popular books and articles about dealing with such issues starting from Burns’s “When Panic Attacks CD” to scholarly articles from Current Psychiatry Report on “Moving to Beat Anxiety.” As I brought up new topics each time I read further chapters of a book or article, we’d always discuss how the methods from these sources were for those with extreme conditions. However, we acknowledged that if they work for them, it should work for us - the non-extreme ones - daily. We’d also try out different methods, such as praying, multiple breathing techniques, exercising, playing games, and many more, to see which worked out best and share it with our family and friends.

Eventually, we learned that people have triggers for their anxiety and nervousness. However, that shouldn’t stop them from functioning under pressure. So, in college, Keith and I vow to one day be able to help people overcome their anxiety and nervousness, even if we have to do it one by one.