```
$ ping 1.1.1.1
64 bytes from 1.1.1.1: icmp_seq=0 ttl=57 time=23.960 ms
64 bytes from 1.1.1.1: icmp_seq=1 ttl=57 time=23.287 ms
64 bytes from 1.1.1.1: icmp_seq=2 ttl=57 time=27.577 ms
```

The above message was a glimmer of hope for me just a month ago.

I had moved into a new apartment in the midst of COVID, dead broke, as a college student who decided to launch a startup company. Because I was short on cash, I had cheaped out, and got the lowest-cost cable internet plan and wireless router I could find.

I set everything up, and was able to check my email, load Twitter, stream YouTube videos (albeit with lots of buffering), but then everything slowed to a crawl when I tried to deploy a 36MB ZIP file to AWS Lambda. It failed, again and again.

I typed s3.amazonaws.com into the browser… stuck on "Resolving host…" every time. Then it started happening on other sites. I unplugged and reset everything, turned it all back on again, yelled at an automated 1-800 support number, and still nothing would fix it.

Until I switched the DNS servers on my router and laptop to 1.1.1.1 and 1.0.0.1. Pages resolved quickly and loaded just as fast as they should. It was so simple that I couldn't believe it.

At that moment I understood the importance of CloudFlare, and the ethos behind web services more broadly. When they work, they go unnoticed; when they don't, they cause undue frustration even for the most savvy customers.

I know that the Built For This challenge will spawn a new generation of companies that have the same intent: building things that just work, solving the unnoticed problems that hold back entire industries.

With my experience working with startups in the InnoVention Competition and NYU Veterans Future Labs, as well as being part of two startups from the earliest stages, I'll bring a passion for communicating between technical and non-technical people, and audiences of all kinds.

Like a DNS server, I will connect teams and ideas as efficiently as possible, and "resolve" under unpredictable circumstances and stress.

Without CloudFlare's service, I couldn't continue my education remotely. Without me, CloudFlare would pass up on a promising opportunity.

— Sam Winslow (samwinslow@nyu.edu, samwinslow.net)