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The meme presented above is a simple png file of an illustrated frog known from the popular computer game “Valorant” with a galaxy in the background and the text printed around it that says “there is no need to be upset”. Without context this meme would not be fully understood if presented to the average person, but within the online gaming community most would find it humorous as the frog is rather cute and subtle and the text can also be read in a “wise” yet playful manner.

This meme was one I would use often with friends when they would become slightly aggravated or “tilted” while gaming as a way to calm them down in a funny way. As for myself, it could be interpreted in endless ways. One of the many ways it could be interpreted is in its literal form. A simple meme to let someone know that there is no

reason to be upset or agitated. The meme could also be used on a more personal perspective if broken up. The frog would serve its purpose of being rather adorable which produces a positive feeling within people, the text could serve as a reminder that at there is no reason to be so upset due to the realization that we are simply playing a game (valorant or other games I would play), and lastly, the background serves as a more superficial reminder that in the endless speculation of the universe and everything bigger than us, there is never a reason to stay upset for too long at things on such a minimal scale when compared to the reality around us. This could all be applied to my pandemic experience. Throughout the COVID pandemic I played an absurd amount of video games (valorant) due to the vast amount of time I had on my hands while being quarantined in the vicinity of my home/room. Valorant was the main online game I would spend hours on in an attempt to join the competitive scene at high levels (ended up achieving this, but with university right around the corner I was forced to step down).

Even with gaming taking up a large majority of my day there were many other things that the pandemic brought to me besides more time to spend online. My job at the time had a massive layoff due to COVID and unfortunately, I was one of the many laid off. Without a steady income there wasn't much I could do so gaming was a rather convenient use of my time as it did not require much money consumption. Along with this I had just gotten out of a rather unhealthy relationship and all the time alone with myself allowed me to heal, find new perspective on various subjects, and develop stronger and more confident ideals, values, self-perception, etc. The gym also became a new consistent/healthy habit that I got into and luckily I was able to avoid becoming contaged with COVID even to this day.

School wasn't too much of a harsh topic since I had just graduated and had a lot of time before officially going off to attend. However, COVID did still manage to affect my school/social life. For my first year of university I had to take remote classes and it was rather rigorous since all my credits had successfully transferred from my early college and I was forced to jump straight into heavier topic classes related to my major. My grades suffered from the lack of being able to attend face-to-face classes and being held responsible for my assignments and pursuit of knowledge. Social life took a heavy hit because of covid as well. Friend circle grew exponentially smaller and even to this day I only have a few close friends (enough to count on my hands), but in my opinion this was a positive consequence. All my current friends are highly respectable people who, despite any hardships, will continue to strive forward in life with admirable qualities and strong passions.

In brief summary, this image felt very close to my experience with COVID during the pandemic. All things previously stated can tie into the image shown through certain aspects that branch out into many interpretations. COVID was a drastic change to the normal life we people previously had, but I think there were still many great things to take away from such a scenario. In the end, I personally grew much more as an individual through the pandemic than I could have ever imagined.