**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Gordon Livermore**

**Date: 23AUG20**

**Participant #: 345 (345\_ 2020.02.10\_08.47\_01.MP3)**

**Length of the Interview: 17:31**

Interviewer (Code in Blue): Alex Dietrich

Participant (Code in black):

**Interview Guide**

**And then I’ll just confirm with you it’s ok if we record?**

**Yes**

**Great and then would you uh state your participant ID number?**

**345**

**Ok great uh so when did you start your BUDS class?**

**Uh 334**

**And uh so you hold**

**Yes**

**(Unintelligible) or is this the same class you started in**

**No I-I started with 334 now I’m in 339**

**Ok so um has this this BUDS experience been your only BUDS experience?**

**Yes**

1. **Standard Interviewer Question (SIO): Um so can we talk about your family? Uh do you have any brothers or sisters?**

**I have two older sisters**

**Ok so you’re the third**

**I’m the youngest yes**

**The youngest of three ok so, your sister uh your sister and then are your parents married, separated, divorced?**

**My parents are divorced, young age I don’t really remember**

**Divorced (unintelligible) are they remarried or..?**

**Uh no uh they’re both single**

**(unintelligible) and what’s your relationship like with them**

**Uh it’s been uh they came down um this past weekend to visit me which is nice**

**And so good relationship with both of those separated parents and then good relationship with your sisters**

**Yea yea definitely my sisters and I are really close**

1. **SIO: Ok great, um any life changing events that’ve happened before coming to BUDS?**

**Um just in in general or?**

**Yea so you have high school, have you gone through college**

**A little bit of college**

**Ok uh anything that stands out as being sort of a**

**Um**

**Pivotal experience?**

**Yea uh I had I had a friend of mine die um during a swim practice um drowned uh that I don’t know that that messed me up for like a few days um but I had like a lot of close friends and family kinda reach out um**

**And you were there in the pool**

**Yea yup um**

**I’m sorry**

**Uh and I think that kinda just um after that I became a EMT um I kinda just I never wanted to be like in a position where I didn’t really know what to do**

**Mm**

**So yea kinda just sought out every means of um I guess just being able to have the skillset to help in any situation**

**And that was in high school?**

**Yes**

**Um so again I’m sorry that must’ve been really hard**

**I just feel for the family more than anything**

* 1. **SIO: Um so how have those experiences factored into your experience at BUD/S?**

**Um \*pause\* (unintelligible) question um**

**As of (unintelligible)**

**Like kinda just like looking out for the other guys um makes things easier um just when you’re kinda not focused on yourself, you don’t really think about like how much pain you’re in um I think that’s something that will be (unintelligible) cause me and my friend uh pulled him out of the pool and uh like after that I spent a lot of time um like checking in on my friends like checking in on the family uh and all that and it kinda looking uh looking at like other people’s pain and like trying to help with that it takes away from your pain you’re feeling so that helped a lot**

**Yea**

* 1. **SIO: How do you think your personality contributed to your progression through BUD/S?**

**Um.. it worked I guess uh**

**\*laughs\***

**I don’t know**

**So are you familiar with personality traits uh things like introversion, extroversion**

**Yea**

**Openness, Agreeableness**

**Ok**

**Conscientiousness**

**Um**

**What are the traits that are unique to you that you think**

**I don’t know I guess I’m not like I’m not crazy outgoing um but I’m not crazy introverted uh...I’m not really sure**

**You’re just kinda a well rounded individual?**

**I-I’d like to think so um I don’t know, I just had a good sense of humor about the stuff we’re going through here and I try not to take all of it too seriously**

**Ok**

**Um I think that helped**

1. **SIO: Is there anything in your background that led you to pursue becoming part of the SEAL community, do you have any SEALs as family or friends, do you have a military family?**

**Uh a little bit my dad was in the Navy but he got drafted uh in Vietnam**

**Ok**

**Um but I have two cousins who’re brothers uh and they were officers in the teams**

**Ok**

**Uh just growing up like they were the uh they were just like the biggest role models like and everyone in the family looked up to them and they were just always happy**

**And they were your cousins you said**

**Yea tha-my cousins, they were brothers**

**Ok**

**Um and uh got like pictures of like like a family vacation and they’re just like throwing me in the air into a pool**

**Ok**

**Um yea they were uh yea they were just uh role models for me and um I-I just wanted to kinda be the type of man that they are**

**Yea and have they been able to mentor you or give you..**

**A-a little bit**

**Advice..**

**I check in with them on uh on my progress is going, they’ll yea they’ll throw in some tidbits of advice**

* 1. **SIO: Ok, tell me a little bit about your childhood. For example, how were you disciplined as a child? How would you describe your parents parenting style? (spanking, timeouts, withholding toys, etc.).**

**Yea um my parents had different ways of disciplining um my mom she yelled uh a little bit and uh I don’t know I’ve probably only heard my dad raise his voice once in my life uh it was kinda worse with my dad because if you screwed up uh wasn’t mad he was just disappointed**

**Ok**

**And that was way worse**

**Yea**

**Um yea so**

**Any spanking (unintelligible)**

**Um**

**Spoons..**

**I got spanked maybe like once or twice that’s about it**

**Um taking away toys or privileges..**

**Yea**

**Taking away a car..**

**Yea there was definitely um yea definitely like threats of like taking away a phone or car or like uh you know you can’t go do this on the weekend or whatever, it wasn’t anything crazy um**

**Ok did you move around throughout your childhood or your teenage years?**

**Yea um I stayed in so I was born and raised in Santa Barbara um and we always stayed there but we definitely moved some houses um it’s like um when my parents got divorced my dad stayed at the house he built and then my mom moved um to another house and then my dad had to sell the house um so I-I’ve moved houses a lot**

**Ok and did that require you to move schools or social groups?**

**No no not really**

* 1. **SIO: Ok um tell me about your teenage years? For example, did you move around? Did you participate in a team sport or an activity with a tight knit community? So like band or theater?**

**Um uh I was on sports teams my whole life bu- so I played water polo and swam in high school**

**Ok**

**Uh I was uh Boy Scouts uh from a super young age till I was like 17**

**Did you do Eagle Scout**

**Yea, yea I got my Eagle Scout um what else, I was I was a beach lifeguard for 6 years, um that was awesome loved that job yea**

* 1. **SIO: What have you done in the last 5 years prior to BUDS? So you mentioned some college**

**Yea I-I did a year in Colorado at UC Boulder um**

**And then what?**

**Then I did a year and a half at city college back home, Santa Barbara City College, uh where I was doing uh just I got my Associates in the only degree that didn’t really require Math which was Communications um um**

**So you have two and a half years of credits?**

**Yes**

**Ok and then why not finish the degree?**

**Um I I didn’t really like school and I-from a young age I’ve always known that I wanted to do this so I just decided to send it, um did jiu-jitsu um um**

**Extra-curriculars..**

**Worked a lot**

**Worked..what sort of jobs?**

**Uh lifeguarding the whole time**

**Ok, \*pause\* would you consider yourself impulsive? For example, do you have any tattoos that you got on a whim or..**

**No yea I wouldn’t consider my-**

**Speeding tickets?**

**I have one speeding ticket um I don’t ever want to repeat that um**

**It’s expensive**

**Yea**

**\*laughs\***

**Um yea no tattoos I no I-I think things through for sure**

**No big purchases uh**

**Nothing on a whim no**

**Everything’s premeditated**

**Pretty good at saving, investing yea nothing crazy**

1. **SIO: Ok so reflecting on BUDS, what was the most challenging component of BUD/S?**

**Uh**

**This could be a day, this could be a theme?**

**For me it was logs, I hated logs**

**Ok**

**Um**

**What was it about them?**

**They just they just sucked**

**\*laughs\***

**Um yea lot of lot of pain**

**Ok so what so motivat..what motivated you to push through it right? So you knew it was gonna suck before you did them**

**Yup**

**But you got through them, what was it that..?**

**I just knew that um if I just stopped doing logs (unintelligible) that would be like I quit and I knew I wasn’t going to quit um uh something uh one of my friends who was a team guy uh said to me before I came out here, we had lunch, uh he’s like no matter how much it sucks or how much it hurts just know like in the end it’s all worth it, so I kinda just kept that in mind um just kinda dealt with the pain then again I also just looked out for the other guys in the boat crew**

**Ok**

**And that helped**

**So you had sort of this internal perspective of pain is temporary**

**Yup definitely**

**Ok and then you had an external these guys are depending on me**

**Yea yea**

**Um and then uh not wanting to let the group down I guess**

**Big time yea**

**And then so that’s you not wanting to disappoint them or let them down, did you feel supported by them?**

**Uh this uh a lot of guys definitely, I-I’ve been under a log or a boat with a lot of great guys um but I’ve also had really some turds**

**Yea**

**Um**

**So you’d say that most of this motivation really came from the internal source**

**Yea I’d say so**

* 1. **SIO: Ok did you have any practices (physical, mental, spiritual)that you used to push through the challenges? So some guys say they have a prayer or a mantra or or a visualization exercise**

**Yea uh this was during hell week it really came out it was kinda like our class thing um sorry if I swear**

**Yea**

**Alright uh it was just I have this video from our hell week um one of the instructors took of us just crawling around in the water on like Thursday morning uh chanting “It doesn’t fucking matter” so it was like our thing was like it doesn’t matter what you do to us or like how much it sucks, I-I’m not going anywhere**

**Yea ok so this was sort of a group mantra**

**Yea a little bit**

**That developed….uh “it doesn’t fucking matter” mhm..(unintelligible)**

1. **SIO: So when you made a difficult decision during training at BUD/S, what went through your mind as you made that decision? And is there a decision you really struggled with? So for example running classmates out or turning in a cheating classmate were you ever confronted with like a hard choice**

**\*pause\* I don’t think so..I...think the only hard choice would be quitting and I wasn’t ever going to do that**

**Ok**

**Um**

**What about like evals (unintelligible)?**

**Um yea I mean that was never fun um but I I don’t think I ever wrote down anything I wouldn’t say to that person’s face um so it wasn’t really a hard decision um I don’t know maybe going to medical when I was screwed up cause I was really worried about getting rolled or dropped um but I know I couldn’t really continue...that sucked**

**So what helped you go-actually go, you went?**

**Yea um just uh talking to the other guys and uh seeing what they thought, get a lot of different opinions um and uh just kinda in-the-and doing what I do and what I had to do (unintelligible)**

1. **SIO: Why do you think you were successful in getting as far as you did?**

**Um think I-I think I had a really good friend group um a lot of close friends here uh then family uh yea family friends I just I knew if I-I didn’t go all the way, I’d just disappoint them and I didn’t want to do that**

* 1. **SIO: Yea ok what about those that didn’t make it? What was it in them that failed**

**Um I’m not sure I-I think there’s hundreds of different reasons like some of the fleet returnees that were getting out in a few months um they had that option um I don’t know I didn-I didn’t have a plan B to this and that was that was very intentional**

**Ok**

**Um I didn’t want to have an alternative cause some guys, there was some dude who had like a Masters um i don’t know uh**

**Something to pursue**

**Yes something crazy and he uh he quit cause he had a backup plan um he knew he'd be fine if he didn’t make it um**

**So you’d say they weren’t all in?**

**Yea**

1. **SIO: BONUS QUESTION - Ok, has this experience changed you as a person?**

**Yea definitely**

**Oh**

**Yea uh I don’t know if it’s made me a harder person or a softer person um**

**Huh**

**But it-I definitely don’t really like the ocean as much as I used to um**

**Ok**

**And I think um it's definitely made me mo-more confident in I guess my abilities just you know and I can go through a lot of..shit**

**Ok**

**Come out the other end ok**

**Confidence ok is there anything else that I haven’t asked about that you think is relative to this discussion of um.. Mental grit, heartiness, resilience, mindfulness…**

**No I-I don’t think so (unintelligible)**

**Ok so I’ll hit stop...stop**