**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Ryan Herrera-Murphy**

**Date: 17AUG20**

**Participant #: 328**

**Length of the Interview: 09:39**

**Interviewer: Do you mind if I record this?**

**Participant:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** It’s okay to record?

**Participant: Yes.**

**Interviewer: Okay. I asked it in the wrong way. And then what was your number?**

**Participant: 328.**

**Interviewer: Okay. So when did you start BUD/S? Is this your first BUD/S class?**

**Participant: Yes ma’am, I’ve been with 339 the whole time.**

**Interviewer: Wow you’re a rarity.**

**Participant: Sneaking through.**

Interviewer: Wow, that’s awesome. Um, how many siblings do you have? Like older brother, older sister?

**Participant: I have one older brother and one older sister.**

**Interviewer: So you’re the youngest?**

**Participant: Yes ma’am.**

**Interviewer:** Were your parents married, separated, divorced?

**Participant: Uhh, married and still are.**

**Interviewer:** That’s also unusual. What life changing events happened to you before you came to BUD/S? Whatever you think is life changing is life changing.

**Participant:Um, nothing crazy. I hurt myself in high school and that slowed me down for a bit. I was-**

**Interviewer: Like broke a leg or-?**

**Participant:I was playing football on our high school team in a freak accident in a game and dislocated all my toes and fractured it in twelve places. It was weird. It, uh, slowed me down for a bit. And then coming into the Navy I had a bunch of hardware in there and it felt fine but they wanted me to get it all taken out, so that hurt pretty bad and added another 6 months of waiting.**

**Interviewer:** Wow. So what did-how did those experiences factor into your experience at BUD/S?

**Participant: It just makes you make sure you want it.**

**Interviewer: So what do you think your personality contributed in your success in BUD/S? Like what made you successful in your personality?**

**Participant: Just being a team player. If you don’t- you can be the strongest guy, like by everybody, but you don’t work well with the team, it’s a no go.**

**Interviewer: Okay. And what in your background made you want to be a SEAL? Like did you have anybody in your family who was military, did you read a book when you were little?**

**Participant: Uh, no military. Um, one of my neighbors is in the teams- well was in** the teams, and that piqued my interest. Just knowing that I could serve, be physically and mentally challenged, do something real hard, and meet like minded individuals is nice.

**Interviewer: Okay. Tell me about a little bit of your childhood. How were you disciplined as a child? Like, did you get time outs, spanking, a belt-?**

**Participant: Um-**

**Interviewer:** -withholding toys, physical stuff?

**Participant: My brother and sister were always doing way more than me so I- so I always get.. I don’t know.. Much softer. But, it wasn’t anything crazy: grounded. Nothing physical. I think I got spanked once when I was little and my parents were like ‘nah okay we don’t really like that’.**

**Interviewer:** Okay. Did you move around a lot when you were a kid?

**Participant: Um, born in Indiana, moved to North Carolina when I was real little, and then moved to Savannah and been there for over 15 years.**

**Interviewer:** Military? No? Zero military-

**Participant: My mom’s job had us move around a little bit while she was in school.**

**Interviewer:** Okay. And then what about your teenage years? Did you participate in sports?

**Participant: Yes**

**Interviewer:** And were you close with any teams that you were on? What sports were you on?

**Participant: Uh, I was in sports ever since I was little. I played football, baseball, ran track, wrestled, little bit of everything.**

**Interviewer: That’s nice. What about college?**

**Participant: Uh, college just intramurals and stuff. I had just hurt myself senior year of high school, so..**

**Interviewer:** Ah, okay.

**Participant: Nothing too crazy.**

**Interviewer:** Okay. Any teams that stand out to you as really intense? Like, close bonds with?

**Participant: Mmm, high school was a lot of fun-**

**Interviewer:** Mhmm-

**Participant: -just training after school every day with everybody was fun.**

**Interviewer:** Okay. What did you do in the last 5 years of your life prior to BUD/S? So you went high school, college and then-

**Participant: College, and then I had about maybe a year where I was just working, trying to get in shape and then apply and had surgery to get the hardware taken out before they let me back in.**

**Interviewer:** Would you consider yourself impulsive, like do you have tattoos or do you like to binge drink or..?

**Participant: Uh, no. I don’t drink hardly ever. Maybe once a month. Uh, no tattoos.**

**Interviewer:** Okay. And what is the most- think of the most challenging day you had here at BUD/S, the hardest day you had… What was that day and what motivated you to push through?

**Participant: Probably OC8. I was on my last attempt and had to pass or I’d get rolled or dropped.**

**Interviewer: OC8?**

**Participant: Uh, it’s one of the pool diving tests.**

**Interviewer:**.Uh huh.

**Participant: Open Cert.**

Interviewer: Okay, gotcha, and um what motivated you to keep going and push through?

**Participant: Just seeing the rest of the guys- there was probably, oh I don’t know, maybe 15 of us that had to do our final test, and just knowing everybody else was already done and I don’t want to get rolled for a swim class.**

**Interviewer: Did you feel like the other guys supported you?**

**Participant:** Yeah! Everybody always supported us.

**Interviewer:** What practices did you have? Did you have anything that helped you, uh, push through, like, uh, meditation or spiritual, or.. Anything that you-

**Participant: Uh, I think just like box breathing, that’s always nice. Slow your heart rate down, and then just keep you from-**

**Interviewer: They taught it to you here?**

**Participant: Yep.**

**Interviewer:** And you think it worked? That it’s helped?

**Participant: Yeah, it’s good. It mentally and physically helped, you know. Slow your heart rate and then also keeps you, your mind from wandering, to just think about your breathing, just relax.**

**Interviewer: Okay. Did you have any difficult decisions that you had to make at BUD/S? Like, um, running a classmate out, or turning in somebody who cheated, and what went through your mind as you did that?**

**Participant: Um, I’ve been with a good group of guys pretty much the whole time**

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant: So, it’s been pretty nice.**

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:**. Never had anybody dragging us down and the people who physically weren’t as good are still nice guys, so we just keep ‘em around as long as you can.

**Interviewer: Okay, um, what, why do you think you were successful in completing BUD/S?**

**Participant: Got lucky, got a good group of guys.**

**Interviewer:** Well lemme ask you a different way, what do you think, did you notice about those who didn’t make it? Um, do you see any differences between the kids, the people who aren’t here?

**Participant: It’s pretty clear, you’ll just see them like ‘Wow, my legs hurt really bad’, they’re not looking to the left and right and being like ‘so do theirs. I should probably keep going, help them’. You know, just worrying about themself, ‘I don’t think I can keep going’.**

**Interviewer:** That’s interesting. How do you think this experience has changed you as a person?

**Participant:**.Mm, definitely don’t like being cold, that’s my-but, just like gets you a nice group of friends that you can always count on, so that’s nice.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so the Navy is trying to ask us to do this research and these interviews so they can do a better job, we can do a better job at picking who comes to BUD/S. Is there anything you can think of that we should have asked you, or that we can ask people coming into BUD/S? To pick a better group?

**Participant: Probably.. Have people, the stuff in BO, if people aren’t able to meet those, they have way more to worry about. So maybe, having people come out and run the O-course and run in the sand, like a lot of people show up and haven’t done any of those things.**

**Interviewer: Really?**

**Participant: It’s just too much to deal with. Like having never swim in the ocean, you come out and then swim in circles because you can’t swim straight. It’s just small things that add up.**

**Interviewer: Okay. Okay.**

**Participant:**.They do it for officers. They should probably-

**Interviewer:** Okay-

**Participant: -maybe have something like that-**

**Interviewer:** Yeah. that’s- yeah. That is a good idea. I thought they had it for enlisted, too. Okay. That’s very helpful.