**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Boskov**

**Date: 1/27/2022**

**Participant #: 640**

Interviewer (Code in blue): Dr. Dixon

Participant (Code in black): #640

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Record, record. Okay, great. So first I wanna ask you, um, what's your number?**

**640:**

**640.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And is it okay if I record?**

**640:**

**Yes.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay, great. Thank you. Um, so what phase did you leave?**

**640:**

**Uh, first phase.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**First phase. And how many weeks ago was that?**

**640:**

**Oh, that was probably like, 12 weeks ago.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**12 weeks ago? Okay, great.**

**640:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Can you take a minute and tell me a little bit about your childhood? In other words, um, you know, are you the only child? Did you move around a lot when you were little? Are your parents still together? Just anything you'd think is pertinent.**

**640:**

**Um, when I was a child, I only moved one time. It was like, when I was in third grade.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**But from third grade to high school, graduating, I stayed in one town. And then, I have two, a brother and a sister, both older. And then, my parents or, he was my stepdad but he raised me since I was little. So they were together my whole childhood.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay, great. Okay. If you had to describe your personality in three traits, what would you say?**

**640:**

**Hmm, my personality in three traits. Uh, I'd probably say, uh, that's a good question. Probably a little bit more on the reserved side. And then, um, not super talkative and, unless I get to know you, of course. And then also, um, like when I get my mind set on something or I have the decision to make it, it's pretty set.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay, thanks. That's helpful. Um, what did you do in the five years prior to BUD/S like, high school, college, work?**

**640:**

**Okay. So, um, four of those years, I was in Las Vegas. I worked over there. And then, I did do two years of college right after high school. But...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And where was that?**

**640:**

**That was in Stockton, California.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**I was in junior college. I did a little bit of wrestling there. Um, I finished half a degree so like, 66 units. But I don't really see that paying off so I stopped. And I, uh, decided to move away from my hometown area.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And what did you, what were you doing, working as, in Vegas?**

**640:**

**In Vegas, I did, so I was into working at the gyms a lot 'cause I eventually wanted to open my own gym. But once I got into the whole mechanics of it, I didn't really want to do that anymore. So I switched over to, 'cause I've done a lot of sales up to that point, I switched over to selling cars.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**So just kept it in sales, just switched to cars.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah. Yeah, sure. Um, let's see. So you were in high school, junior and senior then.**

**640:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And then, you went to a junior college for like a year and a half.**

**640:**

**Uh, two years.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Two years.**

**640:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And then, you went to Las Vegas and you were there for five years?**

**640:**

**Uh, four years.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Four years. Okay, so...**

**640:**

**I was in, in between, I was in Long Beach for about a year.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**I just moved there with a friend.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay. And then, if you think of all your experiences prior to BUD/S, would you think of anything that you might describe as life changing experiences that happened to you?**

**640:**

**Uh, yeah. I mean, one experiences was just moving in on your own, moving out on your own 'cause I didn't know anybody when I moved to Vegas except for one guy that I knew. So I just moved there and kinda had to figure it out. Uh, but other than that like, if deaths would be major changes, I would say. Um, just stuff like that, in terms of like being on your own, having to figure it out.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah. A death of someone close to you, do you mean?**

**640:**

**Yeah. So I had, I had quite a few deaths. So I, one of the guys that I had worked with when I moved to Vegas, uh, 'cause we did like this presale for this gym so like, it was like a tiny office not as big, as the room we're in, right now. And we had to do like, all these sales so we were together all the time. He died on a motorcycle accident.**

**640:**

**And then like, probably six or seven months after that, the following year, my cousin died in a car accident. And then, um, that was in 2018. The other, my friend was 2017. And then, in 2020, my uncle passed away from a heart attack. And that was the one that was like, okay, the cousin was probably the worst one because me and him are the closest. But, and then, my uncle after he passed away, that was when I decided to come do this because I was like, I just didn't want to sell cars and that would be my whole life.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**So...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**So that's my next question.**

**640:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**What did, how did that impact your training and your life?**

**640:**

**Um, it impacted it quite a bit 'cause it was like, like, if you go back to my cousin, um, you know, it was really like, hard to deal with on your own. I guess, I was like, just kind of worked and then, stayed in the gym a lot 'cause I was trying to body build at the time. So it was like, that kind of stuff pr- it's kinda crazy 'cause it's hard to progress in like, body building. And I've lost a lot of weight now, but I used to be like, 30 pounds heavier but not fat. Like, actually bigger.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**But like, I made that progression because of that death, you know. So like, you're just focused in that area. So, and the same thing when...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**It made you work really hard.**

**640:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**Same thing with like, selling cars. I just work, work, work, you know. And then, when my uncle passed away, I decided to lose all the weight to come do this instead. So I had to lose like 30 pounds. So I lost that. And then, got in shape for this and, yeah, just pretty much came here like this.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Wow, okay. So what was in your background that led you to the Navy?**

**640:**

**Um, well, I remember in high school when I was wrestling like, my friend, he, one of the guys that I wrestled with, he was like, "Oh, yeah. My brother just got through BUD/S," whatever. At the time, I didn't know what it meant. I was just like, well, is this, I'm like, l- I know it's hard, I know that.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**But, um, I remember that. And another thing, I wanted to go to the military when I was, when I graduated. And I went to the Air Force recruiter and, you know, did that whole thing. But it was just like, I didn't want to go into the military and just do any job. If wanted to go, I want to go do, uh, something more along the combat lines.**

**640:**

**And then, at, when I was 18, the more decision that to me, with the military, was just I wanna keep wrestling 'cause I didn't know if I wanted to continue or not in college. But I also didn't know like, this is my last chance to keep wrestling so I was like, 'cause I could always join the military later. So I decided to go down the wrestling route.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**So that's why I didn't do that then. And then, you know, obviously like, I went into body building. That kinda kept me from, um, coming in here to do this 'cause you gotta be able to run and all that stuff. And then, after those I guess, I kinda just decided, okay, now it's time. 'Cause I'm in my late like, late 20s.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**So if there's a time to do it, it'd be now.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**So why Navy? I'm Army so I always-**

**640:**

**Well, I...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**... like, I, I always listen to the answer of that question.**

**640:**

**So it was actually between, um, SF for Army.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Air Force... Okay.**

**640:**

**No, the only reason, I'm sorry. The only reason I did Air Force, I went to the Air Force recruiter, was because my brother was in the Air Force. So he's been like, for 11 years. And my mom was like, "If you're gonna talk to anybody, go talk to the Air Force." And then, so that's the only reason why I went there. Um, so, but when I was making the decision, it was either, I was gonna go Army or I was gonna go Navy. And it was either gonna be SF or it was gonna be SEAL. It was one of the two.**

**640:**

**And then, I ultimately decided, uh, SEAL because I was not a good swimmer. So I wanted to become a good swimmer. That's kinda why I decided to go that route.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Wow, okay. That's interesting. What do you think motivates you on a daily basis? You've, you've done a lot of awesome things already in your life, you know, the body building and gaining weight and then, losing weight. Uh, what keeps you focused doing that?**

**640:**

**Um, I just, main thing is like, I just don't wanna sit down and feel like I'm not doing anything. And like, for example, it could be like, sitting around all day or just feeling like, I'm not amounting to anything 'cause I'm like, not doing any type of work, not challenging myself. That's like, not what I want. Or if I sit around like, if I s- Like, I was on leave to go see my parents for Christmas. And it was pouring rain over there. So pretty much locked up for five days. And I'm just like, ah, I just gotta sit here. And it's, 'cause I had planned on gonna go climbing or to go skate 'cause I still skate and do something else 'cause I know I wasn't probably gonna go to the gym because there's not, uh, a gym that I have a membership to, over there.**

**640:**

**And so I wanna stay active but I was locked up. So it was kinda like, like, dragging me down.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Drove you crazy.**

**640:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**I see that. Um, so describe your experience in BUD/S. What happened?**

**640:**

**Um, the f- so I got enrolled to the first class. Actually, uh, I'll start from boot camp.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah, yeah, please.**

**640:**

**It was kind of like, the pretty situation. So went to boot camp. You know, boot camp was lame, whatever. (laughs) Boot camp is what it is. And then, we went to prep in Illinois. So I was with the original, original class of the, it was 348 [inaudible 00:09:29] prep class. But I had, had shin splints really bad before I joined the Navy. And, um, I had worked and I had, they had healed. But in boot camp, 'cause they give you like, these really bad shoes, so I had gotten shin splints really bad again.**

**640:**

**So when I got out, um, my leg was like, inflamed. My right leg like, where if you pushed, pushed on it you could see the indents. And so it was the very first week, we just did out PST, passed that. And then, I went to medical and I said, "I just need a couple days for the inflammation in my leg to go down," because it was like, a Wednesday. And then, um, so he said, "Yes, fine. I'll give you two days and then, plus the weekend. And then, the inflammation should be fine by Monday." I'm like, "Okay, cool." But I specifically asked him if, if I did this, would I be able to go with this class? Or if have to stay around with the next class? He said, "It'll be fine. You go with the next class."**

**640:**

**So did that, went through all of prep for that class. We were doing our test out, in the middle of the test out like, I already done the swim portion. I was doing the push-up portion. They pulled me out and said, I had to go to the next class. And, and I told him, "Why?" And they said, I didn't have enough training days. And they said that I needed 20 training days to leave and I had 19. And I told them that I specifically asked if this was gonna happen. And they said, "No." I said, "There's no way that I can get a waiver or anything?" 'Cause I was in perfectly fine shape to go. Any waiver to go? And they said, "No."**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And that was 348?**

**640:**

**Yes.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**So then, they held me back for three, four nights so I had to stay an extra eight weeks. So I did the whole eight weeks, um, you know, tested out. Went to, came here. Went to 349 for [BO 00:11:12]. Started it and was good, passed everything. Um, but I had hurt my knee. I'm not exactly sure how it happened but it ended up being the nerve going down my right tibial, my tibial nerve. And it was, it was like, this shooting pain. I don't know, was it. It almost felt like it broke my leg. But I had to have to go to physical therapy for it so I got rolled out of that class.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**Um, I had to tell our proctor, to specifically not to class me up 'cause I couldn't even... When we did our last evolution, I couldn't walk on my knee. Like, I had, uh, luckily one of the guys was LD and I had to use his crutches to get back. But I had to do physical therapy for that. Got better and then, came back to 350, no, 351. I'm sorry.**

**640:**

**351 and then, I was even better. All my test grades were faster. And was going through it, um, everything was fine. You know, in between, in between all this, I was doing, you know, whatever they have us do in between, whatever it is. Like, uh, PTR or dealing with the tasks that they have us do, uh, they do. And then, when I classed up, went through all of those, passed everything like, no problem at all. And then, classed up and I had actually been noticing like up to that point like, comparing the guys that were making it through and not making it through. And, um, and then, kinda comparing like, who was in that realm of like, who would I be working with. And went through the first day, passed everything like, no problem.**

**640:**

**Uh, actually our crew, 'cause we did logs and our crew was one of the only crews to secure logs. And then, I just didn't want to be around that anymore like, what was going on in that whole situation. Um, for me personally, it's just isn't the right time not for me but like, to be around the people. 'Cause I saw a lot of people that I felt were better to be suited for the job that didn't go in versus, the people that did. I never really wanna be with those other people. So I, it's only the second day but it was kinda crappy. But I decided not to do it anymore**

**640:**

**So I didn't fail anything.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Right.**

**640:**

**I was just was like, all right, um, don't really want to be a part of this community right now.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**So coming back to the Navy but really, probably end up, end up going to SF in the Army instead.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Oh, really.**

**640:**

**Yeah, 'cause that was my other choice.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**So that was basically what happened with me.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay. Um, well, tell me about a time that you have to make a difficult decision at BUD/S? And can give me an example of what went through your mind?**

**640:**

**Difficult, as in like, physical or...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Uh, anything. Physical, mental.**

**640:**

**Hmm.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**I mean, maybe it was a decision not to, not to continue.**

**640:**

**Um, difficult. I mean, let me think. Difficult decision. All right, that's really the, the main one was just...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Thinking about.**

**640:**

**Yeah. 'Cause I was like, who was there to like, [inaudible 00:14:26] like, we're doing whatever they're having us do. And it just, it just didn't feel right at that moment. So I'm like, do... 'Cause I was just talking to my friends like, like, if inv- like, I saw people clearing like, this, you know, you guys shouldn't be quitting, you know, whatever. Like, it's not that bad right now. And then, some people had good decision like, oh, I'm hurt. Like, I just gotta come back. Okay, that's fine.**

**640:**

**And then, like, I'm going around like, I'm not hurt. Like, I can pass everything right now, perfectly physically fit for all this. And then, just looking like, this was just gonna really suck 'cause I said I'm gonna do something and I hate saying, I'm gonna do something and not do it. And then, I'm gonna have to go and try to explain to everybody like, for things that nobody can really understand unless you're there, you know.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**I have to explain why.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah.**

**640:**

**That was like the, the hardest decision right there.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah, sure. Um, is there anything that you would have done differently during BUD/S, looking back on it now?**

**640:**

**Uh, the only thing I would have done differently would have been like, different training. So I was probably lifting a little bit more than I needed to. But going back to the original classes like, if I would have known that I would have been put to the next class, I would have never done that 'cause that's like, a ton of extra time that was wasted. Um, versus, I mean, that's like months wasted versus, just getting into it. And I know that does play a big role on, uh, like wearing people down.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**So I interview a lot of people with, about this.**

**640:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**And, uh, a lot of people who have graduated. And what I found really interesting and I think [inaudible 00:16:11] talked about this a little bit, is a lot of people quit and leave and then, they go into the fleet for a year or two and then, they come back. Would you ever consider doing that? Or do you think this isn't the right direction for you?**

**640:**

**If you want me to be really honest.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah.**

**640:**

**The only way I would come back is if things changed on the, not on the students side but on the staff side of like, some things that were going on like, if that stuff changed.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Can you give me an example? 'Cause you're not the first person that said this. And everyone is being really vague. If we don't know like-**

**640:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**... what are you guys talking about?**

**640:**

**Okay, I can give you examples.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**So when I was in prep for 348, we had heard that the previous class 347, only had seven guys secured. And we're like, well, even the, um, our instructor tells everyone, "Well, what's going on?" Like, nobody knew. And then, we found out that instructor staff had gone into an in-house investigation. So they had 348s class, the chief had to be the new proctor and some instructors had to leave because they were caught doing stuff that shouldn't be done. Like, I guess, uh, one thing that they told us was, um, there's pretty more miles on people's legs, on people's bodies that even the instructors that have gone through before like, that would wear them down. Some of these guys are gonna make it through.**

**640:**

**So like, they said that they had, and like the proctor timed their classrooms like, uh, probably about a quarter mile from the surf. So they would say, "Go hit the surf." So a quarter mile there, a quarter mile back, that's half a mile. But they would say that like, 20 times, over the course of two hours. So they were running an extra, what was that? Close to 10 miles on their legs. And they shouldn't be doing that stuff.**

**640:**

**And then, we had also heard that they got caught saying things like, "Oh, how many guys can we get to quit," you know, instead of actually just doing the program. So, um, just things like that. And then, each class, 'cause I've had friends in 348, 349, 350 in each class. Like, 'cause they had to ramp it back and I'm 348. And then, each class, they kinda start...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**What do you mean by ramping up back, so...**

**640:**

**Like, uh, taking, toning that down of like, how many guys can we get to quit, just to quit. So that was 348. 349, they kinda got away with doing a little bit more, which is nothing crazy. And 350, they got away with doing even more like, just crazy stuff with their rucks and, uh, the logs. And then, 351, it got even worse with our class. So like for the logs, they had us do, um, they just had us do so many hot laps, which is not a big deal. Uh, but we went to lunch and then, we came back, we had to do more logs. And they're like, "Oh, this is the first time we've ever made somebody do that."**

**640:**

**And then, and then, we hear from the ground troops that already through hell week and they're like, "I've never seen them do this to a class before." And they're like, "I'm glad I'm not in that." Just stuff like that. And then like, for example, one of my friends like, we had the rucks on 'cause those were like, 40 pounds, uh, 37 pounds. Uh, you have to do body squats sometimes but they're like, y- they were making you do body squats with the rucks on, with both rucks on. And if, that's you know, I'm like, uh, 180 pounds plus a 37 pound ruck, that's 210 pounds plus this guy's extra 37 something pounds. That's like 250 pounds that they're squatting on their back.**

**640:**

**And one of my friends that was in, uh, my class was, they were doing that. And at that moment, some, I don't know who it was. But somebody on the enlisted side that was higher up like, a master chief, had been out there on the off chance and said, "You can't be doing this to these guys. They gotta take these rucks off like, what is going on?" So like, I saw that happening a lot. And that's what made me not wanna be a part of it anymore. And like, that's why I try to tell people like, I don't know, let's, uh, you, like, nobody can really understand unless you're there.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**And you see some of that stuff happening.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Well, thank you for giving me that specific example 'cause that makes it, you know, more illustrative to me. It's not just saying, they, it's changed.**

**640:**

**Yeah. And you know, it's, it's very unfortunate 'cause it's like, I really wanted to do it but I also don't want to be a part of that. Even, even if on the off chance, you make it through, I still don't want to be a part of that, you know. So yeah, and the other thing is like, we, we all did numbers like, they say, your success rate is supposed to be like, 20 or 15%. And like, for the last four classes have been like, 5% just because of stuff like that's going on. And I've seen more guys that are really, really good, that deserve to be there, go out because of dumb things like, they kept them in the water extra long to make sure they got sick. Just little stupid stuff like that.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative),**

**640:**

**So I didn't, I don't want to be a part of that.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay. No, that's, that's, uh, thank you. Did you do any, uh, practices like, physical, mental, spiritual things that helped you push through when you really were thinking about quitting?**

**640:**

**Um, I mean, yeah. Like, there's always the, the mental of the self-taught portion of it, that you gotta, tell yourself, "Hey, like, this is just, this is just a moment of hurt. It'll be fine afterwards."**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**Or you know, how is it gonna feel tomorrow? It's gonna be fine like, whatever. Just stuff like that.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay.**

**640:**

**And then, I mean, uh, obviously preparing for whatever physical activity is coming. That's helps a lot too. 'Cause then, if you're not prepared, it's gonna be 10 times worse, so.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah, for sure. Okay, thanks. And then, do you think this experience has changed you as a person?**

**640:**

**Um, I mean, as a person, not really. But I mean, I'm still a little resentful inside about everything that's going on 'cause this is like, really what I wanted to do. But just kinda gotta keep it in the back of my head, carry on, do whatever else I do. So that, it doesn't repeat. Does that make sense, you know?**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. And then, the last thing is, so we're trying to write these articles to help other people who wanna come to BUD/S.**

**640:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**What should I have asked you that would prepare, would have prepared you better or your, your former self of a year ago, what would you wish you would have known?**

**640:**

**Uh, what I wish I would have knows was, in terms of training, I wish I would have known, uh, to be more on the endurance side versus, strength side. 'Cause I was like, everyone says, you know, you gotta be a fast runner. But, and we really prepared you for like, the am- the endurance that you have to...**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**The eight miles.**

**640:**

**Yeah. Like, the, the endurance that you have to have on your legs with, you know, between the finning, the rain on the sand. And then, um, just the transiting everywhere. So that and, um, probably the other thing would be, to be able like, in the process of getting up to BUD/S, they'll definitely teach you the tools on getting ready on how to do like, the water stuff. Like, you shouldn't have to definitely, be a good swimmer but don't lose your mind about like, the not tying or the drown proofing type of stuff or any diving stuff. 'Cause they'll definitely teach you that stuff on like, there.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Okay, that's helpful. Anything else?**

**640:**

**Um, if possible, talk to somebody that's already like, not through BUD/S but actually in the teams, you know. Somebody that in there and then, get their [inaudible 00:23:53] on, is this the right time to go or is this not the right time to go? Because we could be a time of peace and then, you know, you're gonna get through it and not do anything for a long time.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative), mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**640:**

**Versus, spending your time somewhere else for the better and then, come into it.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**Sure.**

**640:**

**You know, 'cause timing, I feel like timing with stuff is pretty big.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**I would agree with that. Okay, thanks. Let me stop this.**