**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Taylor**

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**Participant #: 648**

Interviewer (Code in blue): Patti

Participant (Code in black): #648

So as we begin the survey, can you please tell me what your number is?

Three, four or a 6 4 8 6 4 8.

Okay, perfect. All right. So the first question that I want to ask you is, um, can you just tell me a little bit about your life growing up more? Not right before budge, but like, you know, you're kind of growing up who your parents were, siblings, did you move around house, blah, blah, blah.

Uh, growing up had. One brother, one sister, uh, same age as me and then

Wait, you're a triplet

Yeah

That's unique.

Yeah. Thank you. And then, um, parents were divorced when we were pretty young, so, wow. Yup. And so there's a bro that you have a brother and a sister. You were all born. Same time, same time.

Yep. And then when did your parents get divorced? Like when we were one or two. And to you're mostly growing up with which one?

Uh, I would say mom, mostly growing up with mom, but, but dad was there, uh, not really in the picture, but, um, we'd seen every now and again.

Okay. And then did you, did your mom have any other people in her life, like a new husband or a boyfriend or something like that?

Uh, we lived with our grandma and her aunt as well. So mom's sister and mom. Oh, okay. So she moved back home or sort of backwards, whatever. Okay. And where did you grow up? Uh, suburbs of Chicago.

Oh, okay. Yep. All right. And, um, so did you stay there the whole, your whole growing up life, you grew up with your mom and your aunt and your grandmother, your whole life. You didn't ever leave that house?

Yep.

Okay. That's interesting. Okay. And so then if you're. If you were someone else and you were going to describe you. W how would you describe, you know, like your personality traits or whatever? That's a tough question. I know no one likes this.

I don't know. I like, I just like to work a lot of jobs growing up.

So like, uh, I think the less free time you have the better. So if you're just working nonstop by like, And, um, I mean, I'm, I like do enjoy hanging out with friends and things like that, but I would definitely say hardworking.

Right. Right. And then what about, like, in terms of like, are you outgoing or are you not outgoing or you would make friends easy?

Do not. I'm pretty outgoing with, uh, like my friends that I have, but I'm not very outgoing with people. I don't know exactly what I am.

Okay. And, um, so before, so, and so what it says here is what have you done in the last five years prior to train? So I, you know, like before you came to buds, what were you doing those five years?

So I did, um, like two years of community school, and then I decided I wanted to do this. And so that was. Worked at like several different restaurants and bartending and whatnot. And then while I was training for this, and then that was pretty much it.

So you graduated from high school in what year?

2017.

And then you went to community college for two years. So now we're 2019. And then you I'm working until I'm working until you came and you came here in 2021.

Yes.

So you came like in the spring, I guess.

Oh, I got here in may and started, uh, buds in June.

Okay. And so did you go first to bootcamp? Yeah, did bootcamp?

I did that in, uh, February.

Okay. And then you did you have to do the little training thing after bootcamp

Prep, uh, did that, and that was in great lakes in great lakes.

Okay. And then you came here. And which class were you with?

349, 349.

Okay. All right. And so then how far did you make it through the program and budge?

Uh, I got dropped in a second phase.

Oh, wow. Yeah. You made it all the way through first phase.

Yeah.

And what happened? Why did you get dropped?

Uh, I failed a evolution of a pool comp or OC8, so, uh, it's just a challenging.

And you didn't, you can't like redo it, or I had three at times and, uh, unfortunately I fell about three and then, um, I went to a few boards and I could either get rolled or dropped and the board just didn't go my way. So, yeah.

I'm sorry. So where you at the pool thing is just the full thing where you have to tread water with your hands behind your back.

And that's in first phase.

Okay.

Pool competency is basically testing, uh, like resiliency under the water. And, um, you have like, uh, scuba tanks on and it's a 20 minute test. Um, they'll make, go and do like a stressful situation and oh right where they take away your oxygen and see if you can do the procedures while being stressed.

And where did you struggle with that?

Um, I would say more of like a. Uh, more than procedural. Um, and just being able to think clearly, uh, like under duress pretty much. Yeah. So that's probably what ultimately got me on the test.

Yeah. Well, it seems like it's really hard to maintain your control, you know, air these crazy people trying to take you down. Yeah. Wow. I could see that only hard. Okay. So. So just the personality, if I, um, what, what made you join the Navy?

Like what, what is it like is something I've always wanted to, uh, do, like, since I was little, like, I originally wanted to be a Marine and then once I learned about like the seals, um, kind of caught my eye and I just became obsessed with it.

And, uh, Like, I would say like a father figure in my life, he served, uh, in the Navy and Marine, Corey did eight and the Marines and then 20 and the Navy. So quite a long time. And, uh, he's like a huge influence. And he helped like train me and stuff like that.

And who was this person?

Um, like my buddy's dad and so my best friend's dad.

So like I spent a lot of. Like at their house and stuff growing up, then you kind of became like a father figure for me. And so, yeah, he helps me a lot along the way.

Did his, did your friend do the seals?

No. No, no. Oh yeah. We played football together, but he, uh, I mean, he could use a physical, a stud in his own.

Right. But you just never had the drive to come out here. Wow. So you said you played football. Tell me about your sports.

School or before, you know, coming here, uh, growing up, uh, like all types of sports, basketball, baseball, soccer, like, whatever everyone plays growing up and then high school. Um, I just wanted to stick to football, um, and do that, like focus that all my energy into that.

So then did you play football in college?

Um, no. Never ended up playing in college.

All right. Okay. So then, um, now when you think about, um, your life, like what kind of motivates you each day to get up and go live your best life each day?

Um, well, I'm not always motivated. Like I think motivation is like fickle.

Like, you can't really rely on like motivations, like discipline is what, like, I get motivated. Like you I'll have sparks and motivation. And then like that wears off and it's like, okay. I'm like, what drives me more as like discipline over motivation. I would say now that is an insightful comment. And it's really, that's a really very interesting, yeah, because you're right.

Motivation is kind of like motivated, but now. But if you're always disciplined to do what you're supposed to do each day, then you can really stick with an awesome that's really good point.

So, um, in that same vein, did you have any practices that you did while you were here? I mean, you were here for a while. Did you like meditate? Read the Bible?

I don't know. To jumping Jack something to kind of get your mind during first phase or second, we'll just end it at any time that kind of helped you get through the long swims or help you get through it being freezing cold or, um, I didn't really have any like practices because like, or at least for first phase, I mean, it was just, yeah, it was tough.

And there were times where it sucks, but like, it was so much fun. Like I want to come back. It's like, when I. And like I had my best friends, uh, with me. So, um, wow. It was just so much fun, but in second phase it got more challenging when you have to get, you know, in first phase, you're just doing physical stuff.

Like anyone can do that all day long, a run, swim, whatever, of course like that. You're not really doing high level training. You're not like you're just working out like in second phase, in my opinion, when you have to do more procedural things, And it gets more attention to detail. I think that's what was harder for me.

And, uh, and some of the pool evolutions, I would, uh, try and like focus on breathing, like get my heart rate low. So then when I started the test, I could, I'm starting from like a position of like being calm instead of my heart rates everywhere in my mind. And the breathing helped you get to yeah. Huh obstacle.

Yeah, for sure. Okay. So then, um, so your experience at buds, I mean, I think you've kind of explained it, right? I mean, you made it to what week in the second phase where you, what is this OC8 thing?

I think it was the third week. So each phase is 60 days long. Is that right? So each phase is six, eight weeks, seven weeks.

Eight weeks. Okay. So you made it to the third week or something of the second pace. So, so you were like halfway. Oh, wow. All right. So while you were at buds, did you have to make any difficult decisions that, you know, you kind of struggled with and you ultimately decided to do this instead of that? Um, lots of times people talk about like boat when they're doing the boat cruise stuff or the logs and kind of how one person maybe wasn't as good or something that like the decision, that kind of thing, but it could be anything I'm just, I never really know what I'm talking about when I say that.

So. Um, I guess, uh, there is like, there is a part of you that, uh, like if you're on a, you're doing boat crew races and there's someone in the boat that's not performing like to, uh, meet the standard. And the rest of the book crew is, and you're going to, you still need to win. You still need to, uh, like move on.

So sometimes you can, it can get pretty ugly. Um, and you know, sometimes you have to make decisions too, you know, when at the cost of maybe a boat crew member, but I mean, that's the game.

Yeah. Right, right. Now, did you personally have to be involved in any of that and make the decision for someone.

Whatever, push them out or I make them, I mean, yes. However that works. I don't know. Yeah. So yeah, definitely say it was part of that.

And was that difficult for you initially?

Uh, like you're thinking like, oh, you know, maybe I should just tell this guy to hang on, but, um, you know, you do that. You can only do that so many times. Like you can push them on and you know, you want them to, you don't want them to quit or see them go, but at the same time, You know, this is not, um, a community that is like forgiving, so right.

Yeah.

It's not Disneyland, right?

Yeah. Yeah. So, okay. So, um, if you, would you consider coming back, it sounds a hundred percent you would definitely consider coming back. Okay. So then if you went back in time and you could change something about what you have done. While you were here. What would you change anything or do anything differently?

Yes. Um, I wouldn't really change any of my training for first phase, um, physically, um, for second phase on OC8, like what caused me to like panic. I would, uh, change the way I practice for that test. So, um, how, like one person. And like some candidates in the class might practice that test. Like I would tell myself and other candidates coming through just because other people are practicing a certain way.

You need to cater to like your, your weaknesses and strengths, um, like focus on your weakness and, uh, like hammer that out. So like, I would personally make like dirt diving for, uh, that test more strict. Uh, in practice that way, when you take the actual text, you're more accustomed to it.

What is dirt diving?

Uh, dirt diving is just practicing for any of the pool evolutions and the second phase. So you have like a mock-up tank set and you're just practicing on land for what you're going to do underwater in a stressful situation.

Oh, I see. I see. I see. Right. So you would be more focused on what you knew you weren't good at that.

Yeah. Yeah, for sure.

So now what will you do in the Navy?

Um, I'm not sure. I just got my, a job sheet. Um, so whatever the next job, you know, just take that and try and be the best at that. And then when that contract is up, hopefully I can. They tried to come back here and come back. Yeah, we get the last couple of guys I've talked to are going off to be rescue swimmers or something like that.

So I don't know. I don't know if that seems like that'd be good practice for back here either. So I don't know if that's on your job sheet or whatever. Um, now I don't know.

Maybe I asked you this, but I did. I did. Right. Did you have any practices, the mental, physical, right? We talked about that some you said.

Yeah.

Okay. And then. Do you think that this experience being here buds has changed you as a person?

Um, not really. Um, I feel like I'm the same person that I am before I came in. I just, I've done more things, you know, I've tested myself. I have more like tested confidence. Um, yeah, but I don't think as a. No, I think, I do think I'm the same person as before.

Right, right, right. So what do you think is different about the people that actually made it versus the people who didn't make it?

Yeah. Um, like through first phase or second phase. Yeah. Well, the people that are still there, I guess now, well, um, a lot of, uh, a lot of like my buddies, uh, police game through first phase, like they just didn't care.

Like if, uh, like physically, I mean, like, they all loved being there every day and, uh, it just doesn't matter, like what the instructors say, like, you know, go run up a berm or go do this. Like, okay. Like you're just in, uh, yeah. You want to win and do the best you can, but you're in a like, react mode. You're just kind of doing like, anyone can do that.

Like, but like there, um, And second phase kind of seeing like the guys kind of separate from themselves from like me and like people who have failed, like they're really able to get like, just remain calm, like, and like just follow the procedures and do, you know, keep moving forward. But yeah, like ability to disconnect from the stressful situation that they're in and just engage in what they're doing.

Yeah. Yeah.

I don't know how you train for that, but yeah, I think that's an important skill, right? I mean a hundred percent right. Disconnect you from the yeah.

Right. Okay. And then my last question is, um, is there any thing that you think I should have asked you that I didn't ask you that might help explain stuff better in regards to. Yeah, all the stuff I'm talking about, you know, like w why do people, some people make it and some people don't, I mean, you know, we're trying to understand that better. So is there a question that might help us?

Yeah, I guess, uh, I mean, a lot of guys, um, you know, they see like, you know, the movies or whatever, and the podcasts, and, you know, I mean, they had guys that are like physical studs that quit.

But like, it's easy to say you want to do this. And then, you know, you're sitting down on a couch, like all the guys that I know that, uh, secured how we can, the, I secured with like, they were never sitting around like playing video games or like, um, you know, doing that. They had jobs and they worked out before work or, and then they went to their work.

They worked all day and they come back and they work out again, you know, they're on their feet all day. They're not just working out for two hours and then, you know, going, hang out with your friends at least.

Right. And this is all before coming here, right?

Yeah. They're always going, always pushing.

Right.

I don't know. And how you asked that? So like, did you sit around and play video games before you came here or not? You know what I mean? Like, I don't know, but yes, that's important. Right? Cause they're always going to have the stamina, right? Yeah. I bet a lot of people don't have that kind of stamina. Right.

You know, so, okay. So I think we asked all the right questions.