**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Bondarowicz**

**Date: 1/26/2022**

**Participant #: 665**

**Interviewer (Code in blue): Dr. Deirdre Dixon**

**Participant (Code in black): #665**

**CDR Ledford: Do you mind if I record because I just can't keep notes as fast as you're going to talk to me.**

**665: Yeah, go for it.**

**CDR Ledford: So it's January 6th, 2022. This is Andrew Ledford I'm with number 665. Uh, what phase were you in when you left here**

**665: In First Phase**

**CDR Ledford: you were 351?**

**665: Yeah 351.**

**CDR Ledford: And was that your first class?**

**665: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: When did you leave First Phase? Was it like first week, second week, Hell Week week?**

**665: First Week**

**CDR Ledford: First week…**

**665: It was Thursday… Friday?**

**CDR Ledford: Thursday or Friday of the second we… or first week.**

**665: I remember it so yeah, end of the first week basically.**

**CDR Ledford: First week basically came about 10 weeks ago. Um a little bit about your background, your childhood, where you, did you move around a lot, your parents together siblings.**

**665: Yeah, parents together, didn't move around a lot. Had a pretty good childhood.**

**CDR Ledford: Didn't move. Um, siblings?**

**665: Yeah I have a older brother and a younger sister.**

**CDR Ledford: So you're middle child?**

**665: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: Play any sports?**

**665: Yeah, played soccer, basketball, baseball, football… I think that’s it.**

**CDR Ledford: That's it, no more sports in there?**

**665: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: Did you play 1 consistently like that…**

**665: Football and basketball.**

**CDR Ledford: Was your primary…OK so football and basketball?**

**665: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: And you play those all the way through high school.**

**665: Yeah, I didn't play any college.**

**CDR Ledford: Where did you go to school?**

**665: Well, actually I did triathlon during college.**

**CDR Ledford: Where did you go to school?**

**665: Uh, UCSD**

**CDR Ledford: Well, all four years you, graduated?**

**665: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: Well, what degree?**

**665: Physiology and neuroscience.**

**CDR Ledford: Neuroscience, okay. And so you did high school straight to UCSD and then from UCSD, straight to boot camp.**

**665: Yeah I took a couple years off after college and just worked. Was working for a medical research company.**

**CDR Ledford: What did you do for them?**

**665: I, I was a vivarium guys so I basically worked with like mice and testing things on my space....**

**CDR Ledford: That’s pretty cool, so you did that for about two years.**

**665: Yeah, I probably not sure exactly how long, but yeah, from college still boot camp.**

**CDR Ledford: OK.**

**665: And I was training…Uh maybe maybe three years.**

**CDR Ledford: Maybe three years?**

**665: But yeah, and I was like, yeah, training the whole time 'cause I was originally trying to get into um the SOAS. I was part of SOAS and didn’t make it through SOAS. Well I, I went there for COV… I didn't go cause COVID so I never actually went to SOAS but anyway**

**CDR Ledford: Trying to go to SOAS, I got it yeah.**

**665: So I actually did. I did SOAS**

**CDR Ledford: Oh, you did SOAS.**

**665: Yeah, an I went all the way through and wasn't selected, but I didn't actually go to SOAS if that makes sense, it wasn't in person because it was...**

**CDR Ledford: Oh, got it ok. So did SOAS, not in person.**

**665: So yeah, I did interviews and stuff online.**

**CDR Ledford: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: Um, from your previous life experiences, were there anything that molded you? As a like shaped you as a person like stuck out, there's something big.**

**665: That's a, it's a hard question to ask. You mean in terms of like making me tough or something along those lines or…?**

**CDR Ledford: Just you as a person who you are.**

**665: Well, I mean…**

**CDR Ledford: Something significant that happened, or anything?**

**665: No, I don't think there's anything one specific thing you know, I feel like everything that I've done so far maybe, but I don't feel like there's one big thing that made me who I am really.**

**CDR Ledford: If you are going to describe yourself with three personality traits, 3 traits in particular to describe who you are, what would they be?**

**665: Geez, maybe like focused, that’d be one. Um… (breaks out laughing)... You really threw that one on me**

**CDR Ledford: I got a whole bunch of curveballs for you.**

**665: Um, hmmm…I would say I'm easygoing. You know, um maybe athletic would be another one. I don’t know if that's a very good one, but.**

**CDR Ledford: Yeah, yeah.**

**665: Very much yeah, most of my life I've been doing sports, athletic things.**

**CDR Ledford: Describe your background that led you to join the Navy.**

**665: Oh OK, so I was in triathlon during college. And then I went to do research and I was like, you know, I'm like not doing anything, I really want to be doing something that I'm like, like something like this. Basically, you know. So uh I kind of re evaluated what I wanted to do pretty much, and I was like, hey, you know why don't I go try BUD/S, you know? Looks like it's something that I kind of would enjoy, you know?**

**CDR Ledford: Is there something that influenced you to go towards BUD/S rather than like Army Special Forces or Marine?**

**665: Hmmmmm, well, I was in San Diego so I knew a lot of guys that.**

**CDR Ledford: Got it, so you had that experience already.**

**665: You know, doin that and you know I knew some guys that were already Team guys. Yeah, yeah, just a lot of a lot of that around here, so yeah. I guess that's why. I didn't go, you know SF or anything like that instead.**

**CDR Ledford: That makes. What motivates you on a daily basis?**

**665: Hmm, I guess maybe like future plans would be one thing you know. What I want to do in the future? You know, planning that sort of stuff out so that that's one thing that motivates me.**

**CDR Ledford: OK. Yeah, how would you describe your experience at BUD/S?**

**665: (Laughs) I enjoyed it. I actually did I, you know, I think I learned from it it. You know? It it makes things seem a lot easier when you've gone through something that's just really difficult if that makes sense.**

**CDR Ledford: Yeah, yeah.**

**665: Oh, and BUD/S was very difficult, you know, obviously. Hmm, Let's see. I I really liked the guys around here. You know all of them like, just really really good guys to be honest. So like I just enjoyed spending time down. It's it's bummer that you know, obviously I didn't get through and most of them didn't make it through either so.**

**CDR Ledford: Yeah, yeah. Can you tell me about time you had to make a difficult decision during BUD/S?**

**665: Well, obviously quit.**

**CDR Ledford: Yeah, so what was going through your mind?**

**665: Uhm, I got sick right before First Phase. Uhm, and so I was yeah, yeah.**

**CDR Ledford: Like gastrointestinal or something.**

**665: Yeah, yeah. Um I was puking a lot and just not having a good time, you know.**

**CDR Ledford: So that's in BO, you're you're sick.**

**665: Uh, no. Pretty much the weekend before uh First Phase, so like right at being in First Phase and I had been sick a couple times like during Prep but it was mostly it wasn't like anything where I was puking, it was just like you know, coughing and things like that. So I was like, oh, you know, I'll just tough through it, you know. Its whatcha do at BUD/S, you know? And I got to, you know, for after a while I like couldn't stomach anything, so it's just not really eating and I was just kind of getting weak and I was just like, you know, I'm not gonna be able to do this. Got to a point where I was like um…**

**CDR Ledford: And that was the in the first several days of first phase?**

**665: Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: Still couldn’t stomach anything?**

**665:Yeah, so about Wednesday is when it was like really, really bad. Um, first couple of days. I was doing alright, you know, just kind of dealing with it and then by Wednesday I was like you know, I don't know if I could do this, you know? And then Thursday, you know, obviously I quit so.**

**CDR Ledford: And so physically, I mean that affected you, physically?**

**665: Yeah, I think yeah, if there was one reason why I quit, I think that would be the main reason to be honest. But you know, there's a lot of little things you know in BUD/S you know. You get beat up.**

**CDR Ledford: Yeah, yeah.**

**665: But and you know, you don't really want to drag anybody down, right? You know you don't want to drag your boat crew down, so. I saw something.**

**CDR Ledford: And did you feel that as well?**

**665: No, while I was there, I think I was putting out 100% and I was, you know, not dragging anybody down but… you know you don't want to do. That yeah, yeah I really liked all the guys that I was with and I was like I'm not gonna be that guy that you know sticks with it and then just fucks everybody up, you know?**

**CDR Ledford: Yup, yup. Is there anything that would, that you would have done differently.**

**665: Um, I I kind of wish I would have done BUD/S earlier when I was younger to be honest. Um, well, I don't know that's the thing you always hear about other classes that are easier and you know things that you know it's like, oh, back in the day it was, you know, everybody made it through and you know you don't really know cause I've only been in one class, right? So who knows, but I think I definitely should have done it earlier. I don't know. Um, yeah, I don't. I don't really have too many regrets in that regards to be honest. I just wish I would have done it earlier, yeah.**

**CDR Ledford: Um, Are you interested in coming back?**

**665: Um, The problem is is that I'm 26, right? So I have a chance of coming back, but it's I'm like kind of right on the line and you put a lot of investment into getting here kind of. If that makes sense, yeah? So I don't know if I want to spend, you know, four years or whatever trying to, you know, supposedly you can get back in two years, right? Yeah, but you know, from what I've heard, it never really happens. It's usually four years, and by that time I'd be almost right on line…**

**CDR Ledford: Of thirty…**

**665: I don't think I really want to invest another four years into doing this to be honest so yeah.**

**CDR Ledford: Ok. Um, were there any practices that you used like spiritual, mental, physical practices that used to push through any challenges?**

**665: Um, you mean in terms of physical challenges?**

**CDR Ledford: Like, uh, like visualization or disassociation or any kind of or spiritual, praying or…**

**665: I feel like I do that already you know, kind of naturally just because I've been training for this for so long, and I've, you know, for the last four years or so I've been doing stuff like this, so and you know sports and stuff like that so… I do a little bit of that. I wouldn't say I do it consciously.**

**CDR Ledford: What do you do?**

**665: I'd say I do it kind of like without thinking about it to be honest, yeah. You know, in terms of like when you're under boat or something like that, yeah, you just kind of. You know, just do it.**

**CDR Ledford: Is there one in particular that you do more often you think?**

**665: Um, I, I feel it's really hard to describe. But yeah, I I would I. I think that I do a little bit of that just in terms of like visualizing things before I do them, you know. But I think that's pretty natural, honestly, so. Yeah, sometimes I do it, you know, I'm actually thinking about it when I'm doing it. Other times I just do it, you know.**

**CDR Ledford: How’s this experience change you as a person?**

**665: I feel like again with what I said is, you know the the tougher things you go through the easier everything else seems kind of, so it kind of makes everything seem a lot easier in comparison, you know. And so and you know, I, I, I really enjoyed the time that I was here to be honest. I just really appreciate all the guys. And it's a bummer that, yeah, you know, it ended up the way it is. But I think I think I definitely learned a lot from it and. I don't necessarily have any regrets other than you know, now I'm going to be in the Navy for the next three years doing whatever you know. I don't really, not really what I. You know? Went in the Navy to do right, which doesn't mean anything bad. It's just it's kind of unknown. If that makes sense, yeah?**

**CDR Ledford: In, in your opinion what made others who did make it what made them successful?**

**665: Um, well, that's a hard question. There are some really good guys that made it. I knew quite a few of them. I mean, obviously it's a small world in a class. Some of them had experience already come into BUD/S like Blanco. There's a guy in Marco. I don't know if you want me to name names or anything.**

**CDR Ledford: Doesn't matter.**

**665: Yeah, I mean he's a great guy. He's already been to BUD/S before he made it to Third phase and then came back. So obviously he had experience doing it already, knew what he was getting into. I think that definitely helped him. There's another guy, aw crap, trying to remember his name now.**

**CDR Ledford: It didn't matter, yeah.**

**665: Anyway, he ran, uh I ran with him a lot because he was, you know, really fast at running. And and he had already done like air Air Rescue, I think so I think he had experience doing that. Other than that, I think, maybe they just wanted it a little bit more than you know whoever quit? I think there's a little bit of luck that goes into it, obviously. Uh, probably probably not that much, but I think there's a little bit that goes into it. You know, in terms of not getting injured and things like that, but I think it's mostly just whether or not you really, really want it. Pretty much. Yeah**

**CDR Ledford: Awesome. Alright, I'm going to stop it here.**