**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Goldman**

**Date: 1/24/2022**

**Participant #: 605**

Interviewer (Code in blue): Dr. Luning

Participant (Code in black): #605

**Dr. Luning:**

**I always have one for back up.**

**605:**

**(coughs).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So today is January 4, 2020, and I am here with number 605, and we are going to start our interview. And it is 10:32. So first, first question, easy question, is, uh, what phase did you leave BUD/S?**

**605:**

**Um, first phase.**

**Dr. Luning:**

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

**605:**

**Mm. Probably like two or three months ago, so like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**... Nine weeks.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. So like, October-ish? November-ish?**

**605:**

**Yeah. October.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Okay. Um, tell me a little bit about your childhood. Where you're from, what it was like growing up-**

**605:**

**Um. I grew up with split parents.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**My mom lived at, over in California. My dad lived in Florida.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**Moved over with my mom, and then she was having more problems with her new marriage, so she didn't really know where she was gonna live. So, I moved out to pursue... Like, I was a really big wrestler, growing up.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**And I went down there to pursue wrestling more, 'cause there was really good schools down in Florida.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And that's... Then I, from Florida, I came out here.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. So did you come here straight out of high school?**

**605:**

**I went to one year of college.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Where? One year of college.**

**605:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Where, where'd you go to college?**

**605:**

**Uh, some community college in Tallahassee.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. And where in California were you before you moved to Florida?**

**605:**

**Um. Ventura.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Yep. I spent, uh, 11 years here in San Diego. So I know Southern California pretty well. What else... So you were a wrestler. Um, brothers? Sisters?**

**605:**

**I have two brothers on my mom's side and one on my dad's.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Older or younger?**

**605:**

**I'm the oldest.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Um, are you close with siblings, or?**

**605:**

**Yeah. I'm not as close to the one on my dad's side, but that's just communication things. Like, I never did leave my dad's on a good foot.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And I'm close to my mom's, though. I see them all the time. Like, I was just there.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Did you get to spend a holiday break, or?**

**605:**

**I went for, like, Christmas. 'Cause I didn't take leave. I just drove up there and um, I saw them.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. What about if you were to describe your personality, kind of three traits about it. How would you describe it?**

**605:**

**That's a hard question. Um, I usually like to think I'm like easy-going, like, things like... I don't really get bothered by things very much.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Um... Like it will take... It takes a lot for me to get bothered. Um. I tend to think of myself as a hard worker. Sometimes it seems differently. But, like, everything, I've, I've always been... Like, and even in wrestling. I was the first one in to practice. I usually stayed late, 'cause I like... I don't know, I like being good at what I'm doing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah?**

**605:**

**And, um, like I don't really like losing. Um. And another one would be, I mean I guess you could say, caring is a personal-, personality trait, correct?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Like, like I care for other people's wellbeing, like my parents, my friends. I care. Like, I usually put them before me type of deal.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**'Cause like, I'm not that big of a deal in the big scheme of things. There's a lot of other people out there.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What about, um... I mean, I guess you came straight out of high school, but I'll ask the question anyway. What have you done in the last five years prior to training, prior to coming to BUD/S?**

**605:**

**High school and just... wrestling. I kind of screwed off in college a little bit.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Did you wrestle in college?**

**605:**

**No.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**They didn't have any wrestling in the state of Florida. I had a couple offers to go wrestle-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... other places. But. Like, I tried coming here straight out of high school, but my mom didn't let me because my parents had like a... Or, my grandparents had like a pre-pay, for me to go go to college-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... And they said that I have to go. So.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So you went to college first? Okay.**

**605:**

**And then waited for them to say I could come here?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So anything in your childhood, or even just prior to coming to, enlisting in the Navy... Um, that you, uh, you would say is life-shaping experiences?**

**605:**

**Um. Moving down to Florida.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. How old were you, when you moved?**

**605:**

**Um, I was like seven-, or s-, yeah. End of sixth grade.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Okay.**

**605:**

**Changing all my friends, things like that, just switching over was kind of a big deal.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And you'd been in California your whole life at that point?**

**605:**

**Pretty much. Like, since I was like four.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Like when my parents split, there was a... There was a huge divorce thing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Huge. And I was in and out of courthouses all.. till I was like five. Which I don't even really remember.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**But, and then I just was, moved to California. Dad came out to see me. And then, in seventh grade was when my mom... I, I didn't get along with my stepdad at all. I.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Ever. I still don't, to this day. And, um, so (coughs). That caused a feud between my mom and him, which I feel awful for. Still to th-, like... It bothers me but I just don't get along with him. Me and him do not see eye to eye on, like, anything.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And, um... So, that caused a feud between them and I kinda, like, put my mom before me, 'cause I didn't want my little brothers to go through what I went through when I was younger. And I told my mom I would go live with my dad. So, I moved down there. That was kind of a, a life-shaping thing, but that was over five years ago, so.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Well, that's okay. (laughs). That's a pretty big deal.**

**605:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, how about, uh... You had said you went to community college for a year. I mean, did you intend to stay longer, or was it like, just get this year done, and?**

**605:**

**It was just get this year done. I have like... After every semester, I asked, "Can I leave?"**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Can I leave? Like, I did not want to go to school.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**I don't really have any... I've always... I never really. Growing... Even growing up I didn't think I was gonna be doing like a, like a nine to five job, really ever.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**I wanted to go... Like, my dad's a firefighter.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**Uncle's a cop. Like, I... All that type of stuff.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**That's where I see myself being and I found this and... Decided to go to this.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Makes sense. So, I know this leads into the next question, but describe why the Navy. Why did you decide to join the Navy and not some other military [crosstalk].**

**605:**

**Um. I saw some movie... Well, I'm really big into water.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**605:**

**Growing up in Florida-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**So free-diving-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... swimming. All that type of stuff. And, um, I decided... I saw some movie when I was younger. I mean, I always thought being like that commando-type guy was super cool.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And saw some movie when I was younger, and then I thought that that was awesome. Me and my dad watched it. And then... Then we were driving up north in Florida one day, and driving past Fort Pearson, there was a Navy SEAL museum and I'm like. We we went in and it was like, we saw all these guys diving. I literally just got my diver's license a couple weeks before that. Saw a guy that's diving, and shooting, and jumping out of airplanes and stuff and I just thought that was really cool. And I knew that all the other raids didn't do as much diving stuff. Like, I'm a really, really big water guy.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Like, that's been a part of my life forever. Fishing, diving, just swimming in general has really been a big part of my life. So, I decided to do that instead of go, like, Army and stuff, or things like that.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, when did you go to the SEAL museum?**

**605:**

**Sh. When I was... I decided I wanted to be a SEAL when I was like 11 years old.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**11, 12 years old.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. What about... What do you think motivates you on a daily basis?**

**605:**

**Becoming a Navy SEAL.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Still, even... Even getting out... 'Cause I didn't quit, I got dropped.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah, okay.**

**605:**

**So I still think, like I'm... This, I just got this job sheet today and I asked them, what's the fastest way to come back here?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Great.**

**605:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Great. And we... I mean, just... I know Commander Ledford mentioned it, but we've seen it, over and over and over in this study.**

**605:**

**My buddy just graduated SQT and he, um... There was like five, six guys in his class that got dropped or quit, and came back and-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... Finished. So, that's the main goal. Obviously, it can't be obtained right now, at this moment in time, but that's still the main goal.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Well, good. I, I think, you know, that's a good goal to have. And, and I know you have people... We've seen it. We've actually seen the norm is not to go straight through BUD/S. I mean, you've probably lived it, obviously, but... Between all the different ways. Rolling, being dropped, coming back, I mean, that's the norm, so. So, uh, I think that's a good thing. What about, could you describe your experience here at BUD/S?**

**605:**

**I enjoyed it. I... So like, growing up watching all that stuff... reading about it, all that stuff, I, every day I fantasized, going over to BUD/S.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Oh, wow.**

**605:**

**Like, coming here, stepping on the grinder for the first time, I had like the biggest smile on my face.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Like it was.. It was kind of like a surreal thing. Sitting there, like, about to get in the surf, with all your buddies. I thought it was super cool. Like, obviously, when it's in the act, it's like, oh, this is pretty crappy.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**But at the end of the day and stuff, you're like, that was pretty cool. Like, not many people can say they've done that and things like that, so. I think it's... I, I enjoyed it. There was things I didn't like obviously, but.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What do you think the hardest part was?**

**605:**

**Uh, I'm not the best runner (laughs).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. (laughs).**

**605:**

**So, like, running boat kinda sucked.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**But, other than that... All the water stuff for me was easy. Um, drown proofing, things like that. Swims were easy. I passed all my runs, for-, but it was like... Like, I really had to push on those runs. But running boat was definitely, hardest thing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Especially in hell week. That was not fun. But other than that, it's... it's definitely doable.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Do you mind my asking what you... You said you were performance-dropped, what you were dropped for?**

**605:**

**Uh, so in hell week, I, um... Everyone has their, like, injury story-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yep.**

**605:**

**... I'm sure you hear it. I, um, messed up my hip pretty bad leading up to hell week. And I, uh, I just couldn't keep up.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And they just dropped me.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**So, I went, um... I went over to medical, after. Found out I had some messed up hip, but like it was too late.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Yeah.**

**605:**

**Couldn't really do anything. So now I'm just recovering it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And, um, finding a way to get back here.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Good. Good. What about when you had to make a difficult decision during BUD/S? Or, was there a time you had to make a difficult decision?**

**605:**

**Um, I just... In BUD/S, honestly, I just tried to turn my brain off.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Every day I just kind of tried to... Just, "Oh, you tell me to do this? Okay," sort of deal. Like not really... I never really, like had to make decisions. I always felt if if I just lived day to day, didn't really think-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... It eventually would be over. It's gonna finish.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yep.**

**605:**

**It's eventually gonna be done, and then. Then in, like, second phase and things like that, is when you kinda have to turn your brain back on.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah....**

**605:**

**... And actually remember procedures and things like that. But first phase, you do not need-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah?**

**605:**

**Like, you could live like a dog. Just meal to meal.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Just to get through?**

**605:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Do you think-**

**605:**

**So, yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Was that something you came in cognizant that you should do?**

**605:**

**Yeah. Or, I... So, I was rolled in 49. I had a performance roll in 49. I, I got really sick, first week. And then, failed a swim by a minute. Which, for me is ridiculous.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**Like, if you told me, coming into BUD/S, that I would fail a swim, I would laugh. Like. And then, second week, they paired me with some swim buddy that didn't fail the first one, and he was sick as a dog, and I literally... The only reason I didn't get dropped there, is 'cause the instructor saw me towing him.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**He's on my wet belt and I'm having to tow him in. So that's why I failed. Like, if I had my original swim buddy, who knows where I would have been, 'cause he's right now, on the island.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**So. But, things like... I don't... I forgot where I was going with this. I forgot. Oh. Being cognizant of, um, like just shutting off your brain. I found that out more my second time. Like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**After going. Like obviously you kinda know by reading books and talking to SEALS, and things like that. But once you go through a lot of it... Like, I got rolled, it was end of third week. I was about to go into hell week.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And then, second one, was hell week. So I didn't really know about the true turning off your brain thing and like, just not even using your head, until I went through the first time. And then the second time, I just, "Okay, dude, that's..." Same thing. Just flip the switch. There's nothing really you can do.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**But just stick through it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What about, um... Anything you would have done differently?**

**605:**

**Preparation.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And, what... How would you have prepped differently?**

**605:**

**Train harder. I kinda... Like, even coming in, I got minimal PS-, PST scores. I would... I'm not the best performer. Everyone I've been in class with, I'm just, like... Says like... I'm just kind of like a hard earn guy. Like I got every remediation, everything. I got destroyed.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**But I just would stick to it. Like, I'm not gonna.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And, um... So that's kinda. I would just just prep harder. Like for next time, I've literally... I've already on the programs for next [inaudible]. So it's simply just train a little harder.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. How about, how about practices? Any physical, mental, spiritual practices you do to push through challenges? Whether it's here... Or whether it was while you were here, or?**

**605:**

**I'd pray. Like if something's really shitty, I'll, like, pray and things like that. I find, myself, that that helps a little bit. And the quick... Like, a quick thing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**And then... If it's a quick thing, like everyone... Everyone says, oh. I guarantee... I'm sure you've heard guys say, like, "Oh, I've never thought about quitting." I, I find that hard to believe. I think everyone-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... finds himself, at least once or twice, thinking about it. And (coughs). It's in that quick thing, I've found myself just saying... I would like pray or something, and it would just go away. Like, your brain would... My brain would just, kinda just, oh, and think about something else-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... quick. Which is what I found helpful. I prayed... I was big into praying. Every night I prayed. Every morning I prayed. Um, like I grew up in a a... I went to Catholic private high school.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Right.**

**605:**

**I grew up in, in the church, things like that. So, I, I found that helpful.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. How about... How has this experience at BUD/S changed you as a person, if at all?**

**605:**

**Uh, that there's nothing I can't do. Like, I came in here obviously really excited, but extremely worried-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**605:**

**... 'Cause hearing all these stories. Oh, this is the hardest place. After finish... After I finished my first week, my, in my first class, I knew that there was, there was really nothing I can't do. I finished... I ran over 90, something miles that week, like.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah?**

**605:**

**That was a big feat, and... I just realized that, no matter what, if I really want it, and really set my mind to it, it's gonna be done.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. That's... okay. Anything I should have asked you, that you think would be worth sharing? Okay. Well, I'll stop, uh, pestering you with questions.**

**605:**

**You're good. (laughs).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**(laughs). I'll turn these off.**