**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Franchuk**

**Date: 1/27/2022**

**Participant #: 622**

Interviewer (Code in blue): Dr. Luning

Participant (Code in black): #622

**Dr. Luning:**

**So I always have a back up just in case.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So this is Celeste Raver Luning. I'm here with Participant 622. It is January 4, 2022 at 14:23. And, um, we're gonna start our interview. So first question is, what was your last BUD/S class?**

**622:**

**Uh, 350.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. And was that your first BUD/S class or were you in one before-**

**622:**

**Yes.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. And, um, what phase did you leave in?**

**622:**

**First phase.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What part?**

**622:**

**It was Thursday of week three, during-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... logs.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And then d- how many weeks ago was that? Was it recent?**

**622:**

**That was, uh, early September, I think.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. So you've been here hanging out for a while.**

**622:**

**Yeah. I'm on, uh, Lim Du right now.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. What's Lim Du?**

**622:**

**Uh, Limited Duty.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**So for six months I can't really- I'm not fit for full-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Got it.**

**622:**

**... 'cause I broke my femur so-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay, so you got injured.**

**622:**

**Yes.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Okay. That's a big injury.**

**622:**

**Yeah. Well I had a DOR though.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Yeah. 'Cause I went to medical and they were like ... Uh, I was like I can't walk. And they were like- did some things and they're like, you're fine, get back out there. I was like I can't walk-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**I was letting my team down. So-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah, yeah. And you had a broken femur.**

**622:**

**Yeah. Well, not complete. It was 80% broken.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Wow. Ouch.**

**622:**

**But I needed surgery on it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. [crosstalk 00:01:32] Okay. And so you're here for- until you get off Limited Duty?**

**622:**

**Yeah, yeah, which could be in July if I'm fit for full-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... hopefully.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Sounds good. So tell me a little bit about your childhood. Where'd you grow up? What kind of- did you have siblings? All that kinda good stuff.**

**622:**

**Uh, I grew up in Jericho, Vermont. I had two older sisters. Um, one five years older and one eight years older.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Oh wow. Much older, well, kinda much older.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**How- what was, uh, both parents at home? Or-**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**You always live in Vermont?**

**622:**

**Yup, my whole life.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Same, same house?**

**622:**

**Same house.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**How's it living in Vermont?**

**622:**

**Uh, it's boring. (laughs)**

**Dr. Luning:**

**By the way, do you wanna take off your mask? It's up to you. I'm vaccinated and boosted but-**

**622:**

**Yeah. Yeah, sure.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... if, if it makes you more comfortable, um, but you also don't have to.**

**622:**

**All right, yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um-**

**622:**

**Probably better audio recording-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah (laughing).**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So, um, Vermont your whole life.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Did you ski?**

**622:**

**I skied for a little bit but I was swimming so I had to stop skiing-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay, swimmer.**

**622:**

**Yup.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Awesome. I was a swimmer-**

**622:**

**Yeah. Really?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... and, uh, I actually ran a swim school out here in San Diego for 10 and a half years.**

**622:**

**Oh wow.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And, uh, we had multiple locations throughout Southern California.**

**622:**

**That's cool.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. So, uh, fond of swimming (laughs).**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Anything else about your child sports-**

**622:**

**I did cross country and swimming.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And swimming. What was your stroke?**

**622:**

**Uh, butterfly.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Yeah. I swam from when I was seven 'til sophomore year of college.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So did you do four years of college?**

**622:**

**No. I dropped out at the start of COVID.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And then joined the Navy?**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Well, it's always been something I wanted to do. Like even when I was- I joined a swim team 'cause I looked up how to be a Navy SEAL and-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... it said you have to be a good swimmer so-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. [crosstalk 00:03:19] So at seven-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... you- interesting.**

**622:**

**Yeah. And then, uh, I like got really into academics. I was really focused on that for a while.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And then when COVID hit, like that- I like- it like comes in waves.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Like the, the whole idea of this program, uh, my motivation for it and then it, like, reached like a fe- fever pitch at the beginning of COVID. Uh, and I didn't wanna be paying that money to do online class.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**So, like, finally I was just like all right, enough's enough. And I, like, literally was driving and I pulled over into a Dunkin Donuts and called a recruiter-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**(laughs) Yeah, that's great.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**W- uh, where were you going to school?**

**622:**

**Uh, RIT. Rochester Institute of Technology-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Okay. Where is that at-**

**622:**

**In Rochester, New York.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Um, my brother went there for a few years.**

**622:**

**Really?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So I'm like, I knew that (laughs).**

**622:**

**Yeah, yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, what were you studying?**

**622:**

**Uh, computational physics and data science-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Yeah. Uh, that's, that's the school for that stuff.**

**622:**

**Yeah, yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**(laughs)**

**622:**

**I really liked it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, so, uh, if you had to describe your personality, like, three traits, how would you describe it?**

**622:**

**Um, I think I'm pretty reserved but also really motivated. And motivated, hard working but reserved. I think I'm thoughtful. I put a lot of thought into the things I do.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Always been that way or-**

**622:**

**Yes, definitely.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, what about if you were to describe the last five years of your life? Walk me through what they were like, what you were doing. I know we kinda talked about some of it-**

**622:**

**Yeah. Uh, honestly, it was a little chaotic. Just like where I was at mentally. Like, uh, I don't know. I struggled with, like, anxiety and depression-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... things like that. And like I found that, like, working really hard and having, like, a really big challenge helped me get out of that-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**So, like, that was a big enticement for this too.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**[crosstalk 00:05:12]**

**622:**

**It's like I just wanted, like, the biggest challenge I could find.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Yeah. That's, uh, it makes sense from what we study. So all of ... Like what our whole research focuses around is, like, resilience and grit and-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... and hardiness and a lot of it is about, like, when you're feeling anxious or whatnot, but having that- something you're striving for is really-**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... beneficial.**

**622:**

**Yeah. I'm, I'm not ... A lot of- for a lot of people here too-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... and almost everyone I've met, they've like struggled with things like that. And, like, I mean, like, to put yourself through this program you have to be able to, like, handle it and-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Absolutely.**

**622:**

**So like something, like, has to be like a little different in your head to, like, wanna go through this.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Yeah. No. And that's- so with that, 'cause you brought it up, something has to be a little different in your head, what do you think it is that's, like, different?**

**622:**

**Um ... Well, obviously, like adverse to discomfort and pain.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**But like a lot of times if you go through, like, psychological trauma, like physical pain is nothing. Like you can handle it. Like I was like emotionally stable throughout, like, my time at BUD/S.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And like that was like nothing in comparison to, like, things I've gone through in the past.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Yeah. Makes sense. Um, if you, and this may go into what you were just saying, but if you had to talk about prior experiences, prior to BUD/S-**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... were there any that you would say were life shaping experiences?**

**622:**

**Um, not really. Things just like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**622:**

**... combinations of things where I'm at in life.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. So no big events, good or bad?**

**622:**

**No. Uh, well actually, I think one shape shifting thing was I was really focused on my academics-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... and I didn't get into my dream school.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What was your dream school?**

**622:**

**MIT.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Like I was gonna swim there.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah?**

**622:**

**Like I had done recruiting visits. The coach said he'd, like, could get me in and stuff.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And then I got wait listed and didn't get in.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Oh.**

**622:**

**Uh, so that was, like, that kinda threw- not like- it kinda like dis- disillusioned me-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... 'cause I thought I would be a good fit for that school. And they didn't want me. So I think that shifted me a little bit away from, like, okay, well I'm- couldn't do that. Like what's the next challenge I can do kind of thing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Well, I shouldn't say all this 'cause we- we're recording but as a person that also didn't get in their dream school who's much older than you-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... in her 40s, um, I wanted to go to Princeton.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Kind of same sort of story. Kind of had to figure out life a little bit in my 20s.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Just keep going.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Just- y- all this will get you eventually to somewhere that you, you're-**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... just keep pushing.**

**622:**

**Definitely. Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So anyway, side bar on that. Um, how did it- kind of your experiences in the last five years play into your training for, for BUD/S?**

**622:**

**Um, well definitely swimming. Like I saw, like, swimming and like working out as an outlet.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Uh, and then I just really enjoyed it. I enjoyed pushing myself as hard as I could. Uh, and then as my focus on, like, my physical strength and like the team aspect of the sport grew, uh, I thought it would be a better and better fit to- for this.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, how 'bout- what about your background that led you to wanna join the Navy? Anybody in your family in the Navy?**

**622:**

**Uh, no.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So it was just that, like, seven year old. How did you-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... hear about SEALS when you're-**

**622:**

**Uh, my mom's coworker's son, uh, went to BUD/S and then-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... when he left, I was like really interested in the military. I was just like a seven year old boy, like, playing in the-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... woods and stuff. (laughs) And then I liked the military. And he gave me all his BUD/S books and, like, class two, three, four documentary on VHS.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**And I watched all of that and I was like, that's what I wanna do. (laughs)**

**Dr. Luning:**

**That's great. Um, with, with the- any thought of any oth- other like Army, Air Force, or is it always Navy SEALS-**

**622:**

**Yeah, definitely. I mean, the aquatic aspect of it really-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... enticed me. So I, I don't think I'd wanna do anything that wasn't the SEALS.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Um, and, and nobody in your family Navy or military at all?**

**622:**

**No. They're very against it actually.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Really?**

**622:**

**Yeah. I joined without telling them. I-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... already had my contract before I told them that I was- like a month before I left for boot camp I told them.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**They found out through a friend, actually. Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. How, how are they feeling now?**

**622:**

**They're fine.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**They're supportive. Once-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Good.**

**622:**

**... but at first they were very, like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Shocked.**

**622:**

**... yeah, especially my dad.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**(laughing) Yeah.**

**622:**

**Yeah. Like he was not happy about me dropping out of college.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah, well-**

**622:**

**Yeah. (laughs)**

**Dr. Luning:**

**As a parent with three kids, I can understand that too.**

**622:**

**Yes.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**But, um ... Keep, keep pushing.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What, what about what motivates you on a daily basis?**

**622:**

**Um, just like getting stuff done, staying busy, not wasting away my time.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Uh, like, I don't know. You only have so many years here. Like I wanna be doing something that whole time.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**I wanna be like finished at the end of the day and feel like I accomplished something.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. How about here when you were at BUD/S. What, what motivated you then? Same things or-**

**622:**

**Yeah. I mean, there it's just like- it's not even motivation 'cause you lose motivation at BUD/S pretty fast.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**It's just like you're a zombie and you just gotta do it and grind it down and find, like, some of that inner strength.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Talk to me a little bit about that, that, like, being a zombie and just kinda grinding it out.**

**622:**

**Well, one, like the sleep deprivation-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... uh, that's one. Uh, another one is like your body's broken down. The proctors or the instructors are yelling at you. Uh, everyone's in a bad mood. No one's happy. So you just have to, like, find your own way to keep going.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Is it, um, when, when you're doing that, I mean, is it a solo, solo kind of journey or is it support from-**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... others?**

**622:**

**Uh, actually people talk a lot about this. Like, they say that, like I've spoke to people who have gone through class la- uh, previous classes. Like five to eight to 10 years ago-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And they say that nowadays it's a lot more individual than it was-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... like now it's like kinda eat the weak kind of idea.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**So, uh, I mean, I'm a proponent of that because I think that, like, if you can't do it on your own, then you don't wanna be, like, the weak link. Like when there's a team out there, there's a platoon out there and you're separated, you have to be strong on your own.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. So what's the saying? Eat the-**

**622:**

**Eat the weak.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Eat the weak. Okay. Got it. Eat the weak.**

**622:**

**Yeah. That's kinda like the vibe of classes nowadays. Like that would- we'd chant that, like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Really?**

**622:**

**Eat the weak or like the people that were like bringing the class down. The instructors would call out their names and then we'd chant their name for them to quit. And then I, I told myself if I was ever the weakest link that I'd be out. A- and when I went into it I was like I'm never gonna quit. I'm just gonna suck my way through it. And then, uh, uh, in previous classes that would've worked. But in, like, the climate it is now it's like, that's not really like an option. If you're-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... the weakest link, you're gonna hurt guys on your team, on your boat crew. And that's what happened to me. Like, I- my leg was screwed up. Like I couldn't perform at my standard. And before that, I was like top 10% of the class in all the metrics.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**But once my leg, like, kinda hit the- like started to, like, really hurt and was really screwed up, I was the weak link on my boat crew. And I was getting people hurt. Like the proctors were shark- what's called like shark attacking-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... when they all come around you and start screaming at you and like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**I've seen that.**

**622:**

**We were in- on the logs and literally we were just in the third world spot with it over our head-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... just holding it. And they're- I knew they were just gonna hold it until I quit.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**I mean, 'cause they- I was gonna- they did that. There's three iterations of logs.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And they did that, like, for the first two, basically nonstop. And that was-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... right before Hell Week. And I knew that, like, my leg was not gonna make it through Hell Week. And then I was just waiting to get, like ... And then finally they're like, if you DOR we'll secure them for the rest of the evolution for the last iteration.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Your team?**

**622:**

**Yeah. My- the crew.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Well, at first he was like, we'll secure them. And I was like if you secure them for the last iteration. Because I had a guy on my team who I DEP’d in with, uh, back in Rochester and was there all the way though. And he- like me and him were really good friends-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... and I looked at him and I was like I knew it was my time to go.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Yeah.**

**622:**

**And then so I stood up and then was like, if you secure them for the rest of the evolution. And then they did. So-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So they did?**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Is that normal? Like for them to kind of say something like that? Or is that-**

**622:**

**Oh yeah. Very normal.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**If they're like- which I think is interesting too because, like, I feel like self sacrifice should be like a, a trait that's, like, that they would want. Like a lot of times they're like if someone DORs we'll secure everybody-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Like in the pool that happens a lot. Surf torture it always happens. And then- well people do it who are on the cusp or, like, know it's their time, like me. And I feel like y- you- there's also that, that invites a lot of people to slip through the cracks.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**You know? Like people who wouldn't self sacrifice, you know? The guys they're looking for, the guys that are gonna jump on a grenade.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**You're gonna feel like some of those guys probably slipped through the cracks, like not making it through-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... by self sacrificing when they're the weak link.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Is there any thought of, like, everybody's just playing with me? Or is it more like-**

**622:**

**No.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Does that question make sense?**

**622:**

**I got on the kill list-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... and then when you're on the kill list the proctors don't want-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**They're just pushing?**

**622:**

**Yeah. They're like we don't want you to be our teammate.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And I was like, up to that point, up to basically that week I was, like, doing very well. I was like on the good side. And then just like slowly my performance drops-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. 'Cause your leg. (laughs)**

**622:**

**(laughs) Yeah, yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Makes sense. Um, so we talked a lot about this but, um, anything else about your experience at BUD/S? Like how would you describe it?**

**622:**

**Um, I mean, to be honest, it's kind of a blur. But I only see, like, good things coming from it. Like I remember like the fun things that we did. Not even the fun things-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... just like the, the good and the suck kind of. Like finding the best in everything. Like I remember, like, wading through, like, water to get to the cages for our gear tha- 'cause it would always flood.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**I remember that. I remember just like sitting in the pitch black at four in the morning having to get in the surf for surf ops and things like that. And it's like in the moment it was- it sucked but looking back I was like, wow, that was- that was cool.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah, yeah.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What- what do you, uh, what makes you think it's cool? Like what- what is it that is behind that, I guess?**

**622:**

**I don't know. 'Cause it's just like it's so shitty that, like-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**(laughs) Yeah. Yeah.**

**622:**

**It's- that was like, wow, that really sucked. But like, that's like, I don't know. I think that's cool-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... and I think it's like going through cool, shitty things is a good thing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. (laughs) I would agree with that statement.**

**622:**

**And definitely. Even like swimming now, like after like running with the boat, like I just, like, right when I got out I did like a two fly like as fast as I could.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**(laughs)**

**622:**

**And like normally it's like, yeah, it sucks, it hurts, especially if you haven't swam in a while.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**But I was like this is like nothing compared to the-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**This is so easy (laughs).**

**622:**

**... yeah, compared to the physical pain I was in last week.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. That's funny.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, how 'bout a- and again, we maybe have talked about this some. But if you talk to me about a time when you had to make a difficult decision at BUD/S, um-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... if you could talk through what went through your mind when you made that decision.**

**622:**

**Uh, definitely the, the DOR-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... was the hardest decision. Uh, because- probably the hardest decision of my life 'cause it was like basically how many- 12 years culminating up to that point-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... of, like, this being in the back of my mind. And that moment I had to, like, cross that off the list.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Like I can't do this anymore right now, I mean, like at least in that moment that my opportunity in that moment had been lost. But that was a very hard decision. 'Cause I went to ... It was right after med checks for Hell Week.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**And then I walked in there. I was like, I was like, oh whatever. I'm just gonna like get through it. And then I walked- I walked into the medical and then like told them that my leg was screwed up. And they said it was fine. So I like ... Oh no, they- I had like sipe, I had pneu- pneumonia the week before.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**And then I had sipe. And then they put me on SIQ. But then the proctors, or the instructors went back to medical and had everyone on SIQ. They took them all off.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Oh, okay.**

**622:**

**And then I couldn't, like, run.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**So they had a brown shirt buddy carry me to the O Course. And then immediately drop me. I was sleeping in bed, got a call, and then they were like, uh, report to the O Course. I walked outside and a brown shirt buddy carried me, put me on a log. And then did that for about an hour. And then my boat crew was just getting, like ... I mean, that's how I hurt my leg. It's-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... we had weak links on our boat crew.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And they wouldn't quit. And the proctor just kept hammering us and hammering us until finally I- it broke me.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**So I was like I'm not gonna let that happen to my boat crew.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And unfortunately all of that boat crew DOR'd. So (laughing)-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Really?**

**622:**

**Yeah, I guess it was for nothing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. When did they DOR?**

**622:**

**Uh, I think there's one guy on it. That day. I just like honestly grabbed, like, a random log with guys around my height.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**But I think in Hell Week. I think one of them was- one of them was pulled for something. I don't know what.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Like a failure to train or something like that.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. But everybody else in that boat crew DOR'd?**

**622:**

**I believe so. Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Is that- uh, it seems like, um ... So we started this study 2019 and, um, it seemed like it was sporadic by classes. Some- they'd have a lot of students kinda make it through-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Some, it was really, like, I don't know h- the percent. But it would be a very small percent that would make it through.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**And it seems like we've been hearing more and more, like more people aren't, aren't making it through.**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**It- any sense of- talk or sense of why that might be?**

**622:**

**Yeah. I was friends with a lot of the, uh, like petty officers in my class-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... that had been, like, previous BUD/S students.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And they said that, like, the whole climate of BUD/S is way different than it is now.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Yeah. It's a lot more, like that one, that eat the weak mentality but-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... class, um, like morale is a lot lower. It's not as, like, communal. It's not like us versus the proctors.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**It's like class leadership is on the side of the proctors, to be on their good side.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And secure their spot through. 'Cause that's a big thing. If the proctors like you then, like, that's very good for you.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**'Cause like ultimately, like, if they want you to quit, like, they'll either like force an injury on you or, like, just push you to your breaking point.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. That makes sense. How 'bout, um, anything that you would've done differently at BUD/S?**

**622:**

**At BUD/S? No. I don't think so.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Anything differently before?**

**622:**

**Yeah, probably. Probably just physical. I think my mental side was there. But physical training, I could've, uh, probably like just bulked up a little bit more.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Like I had a little bit more support on my legs [crosstalk 00:21:21] to, to prevent that injury.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Um, would you ever try to come back?**

**622:**

**That's a funny- funny you ask that. Because literally today I- they're putting me to work on Lim Du.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**And then, uh-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**What's-**

**622:**

**Oh sorry. Uh-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Limited Duty-**

**622:**

**... Lim- Lim Duty.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. That's right.**

**622:**

**On limited duty. Uh, and then I was gonna work for first phase-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**... doing something and then I got a call today. So I was like that's really cool. Like I really wanna do that. I think that would be a good opportunity, especially to come back. And he was like, "Do you wanna come back?"**

**622:**

**And I was like, "Absolutely yes."**

**622:**

**And he was like, "Then you can't work at first phase."**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Got it.**

**622:**

**And I was like, "It's ... " And then he was like, "It's either that or the mail room." And then I'm either in the mail room for a year, six months to a year, or working for first phase and I can't come back. So I asked him if I could call him back. And in, like, the next few days I have to decide, like, if this is worth coming back to.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Uh, I thought I had more time to make this decision. Uh, but- or going on to a new goal and pursuing my academic goals. Uh-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**We'll come back to that. We can talk about that after.**

**622:**

**So, can you repeat the question (laughs)?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Just, uh, well, whether you're interested in coming back, um-**

**622:**

**I, I am. I want to. Obviously I don't wanna have a goal go unfulfilled.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**But I have to decide if it's worth it. I wanna, like, my youth is crucial. Like these years are very formative in the rest of my life. So I have to set a track that I want. And I don't know if I'm willing to waste- not waste just, like, put it up to chance. Like what if I get another injury in two years?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And then I have another two year commitment after that. Like I don't know if I'm willing to put that up to chance.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Did- if you went to the mail room, is that like guarantee that you'll get back in? Or is it, like I know nothing's like guaranteed, but is that-**

**622:**

**To get back into BUD/S?**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Well, regardless, I have to wait two years after my-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Two years. Okay.**

**622:**

**... Lim Duty.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**Um, in the mail room I wouldn't have access to the people who could help me get back to BUD/S-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... so I don't think it would be really that worthwhile. Um, but I think that, like, I would get something out of working for first phase if I'm in contact with the instructors. But unfortunately, that's at the cost of not being able to come back-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. That takes away your-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... your ability to come back.**

**622:**

**I know.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, so any practices that you use to push through challenges, physical, mental, spiritual?**

**622:**

**Uh, definitely, definitely. Just like kinda- they call it going internal.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**So, uh, I'm pretty good at going internal. Like I know when you're doing a ... Like especially for like swimming. I'd find like you just like practice and practice and practice it until finally you get up to race. You dive in and you can kinda- your brain shuts down. You just swim it. Um, which is good for some things. But also other things you need to be extremely focused in-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... you gotta figure out how to perform while not going internal. Like perform at my best-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... while also keeping like my head on the swivel, observing my surroundings, having situational awareness. Um, so I think where- what I- where I really thrived was going internal in those times, like, surf torture. Like the cold never bothered me. I would just like bring my mind to somewhere else. But, um, I had to find new strategies to be- have situational awareness, more situational awareness. So I- I haven't really thought about this much but there's definitely things- tools I use. Like, like kind of having an inner dialogue in my head instead of just, like, letting your mind drift if you have a dialogue about the things you're seeing.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Another thing I did is, uh, like, have a critical eye on things. Like instead of just like looking at something to see if it's right, like going with the intention of finding something wrong.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**'Cause if you are like finding something wrong, then like, if like your goal is to find something wrong versus just looking at it, like you're gonna be a little bit more critical. So that helped me a lot.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**S- having that critical eye helped you a lot.**

**622:**

**Yeah, definitely.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So-**

**622:**

**Or developing it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**W- at what point did you realize, uh, 'cause this is interesting to me, like this realization of there's times you have to be kind of zoned out-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... and times you have to be hyper focused.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Like what point did you realize that?**

**622:**

**Uh, actually one of our, uh, instructors during BO said it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**I, I don't know. I don't remember what I was doing. But he was just like, don't go internal on this. And then I was like, I didn't really know what that meant. But then he like later explained it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**And, uh, that made- like it made a lot of sense. Like it's just like a term they use-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah. Okay. So that- that's kinda lingo here-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Um, and, a- maybe this is a little bit of an unfair question but do you- if you had to say, like, this percent I needed to be in that, like, flow zone place-**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... being kind of a- not hyper focused-**

**622:**

**Yeah.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**... and, and the hyper focused part. Like what, what would- percent towards each side?**

**622:**

**Uh, I think it depends. I think, like, eventually with enough practice you could be in that hyper focused fi- point. It- like have hyper focus in a flow state.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**But I just don't think I have that developed enough. And honestly, like, it's not like- it's BUD/S. Like we're- nobody's actually like trained in this.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**They're just not like operators that have been operating for 10 years.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**So like this is a very new skill for a lot of people. Uh, but I, I, I don't think I could put a percent on it. I think it's a mix of both.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Because obviously, like, if you had to look at this room for two hours, like, it's hard to stay hyper focused-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... so you have to make it, like, a flow state.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**You have to be in a flow state while being hyper focused. Versus like my flow state is like, my brain is like miles away-**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**... and I'm thinking about something like abstract. So I need to, like, that was something I worked on and I think I developed a lot during my time.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**So that actually leads to the next question is how does this experience change you as a person, if at all?**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative). Uh, well, like, uh, my previous answer. I think that, uh, it helped develop a lot of mental faculties that I didn't- or I had but, like, it helped me, like, sharpen them and find them. Uh, like that hyper focus. Uh, but it also, like, gave me reassurance that, like, my mentality, like, through that whole process there was never a point where I thought I couldn't do it.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Like I always thought I could, like, keep going. And like my reason for dropping out was because it was my team. I thought, like, in my head I was like, if it wasn't for my team, I would definitely just keep going. If it was an individual thing I would suck my way through it and just take the beatings and beatings. But I didn't wanna like risk somebody else's opportunity to achieve their goals because I was being selfish.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Yeah.**

**622:**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Anything I- else you think is important to share or that I didn't ask that might be-**

**622:**

**Um ... Not really. No.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay.**

**622:**

**I think I covered- I covered all the bases I think I can think of.**

**Dr. Luning:**

**Okay. Great. I'm gonna turn this- turn this off.**