**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Wyatt Long**

**Date: 1/29/2022**

**Participant #: 623**

Interviewer (Code in blue): Dr Patti Miles

Participant (Code in black): #623

**Interview Guide**

**Dr Miles: Okay. So I'm here today with... What's your number?**

**623: 623.**

**Dr Miles: 623. Okay. So [Lynch 00:00:09] is your name? What's your first name?**

**623: Parker.**

**Dr Miles: Parker. Parker Lynch. So what I'm gonna... I'm gonna ask you just these kind of... they're gonna seem random, but, you know, we'll go with them and see what... see what you say. So what... In what phase did you leave or what happened or-**

**623: Uh, I left in hell week. And I just got, like, this horrible pain in my left knee that's kind of been bothering me up... like, I had to just push through it [inaudible 00:00:31] second, and it kind of went away towards the end of the third week 'cause I got some extra time to recover.**

**Dr Miles: Uh-uh (affirmative).**

**623: 'Cause, like- like, they, like, crushed us, like, the first three days of... or third week and then kind of lightened it up. But it really go re-aggravated on a transit run from chow to the O course where we were doing buddy carries and buddy squats. And I had to do it with a guy much bigger than me. I, like, could not do it.**

**623: And I was just (laughs) getting destroyed by the instructors.**

**Dr Miles: Wow.**

**623: So, uh... So... Yeah. After that, they... like, we went straight to [inaudible 00:01:04], but I was, like... in my head I was like, "Like, I'm just going to destroy my boat crew." Like, "My boat crew's gonna get destroyed 'cause of me." 'Cause I- I could not keep up. So-**

**Dr Miles: Oh. 'Cause you were afraid of holding them back.**

**623: Yeah. I mean, there was a bunch of really good guys at boat crew, a bunch of guys who... it was their very last shot. Like, our LPO is 29, past the age limit. [crosstalk 00:01:25]-**

**Dr Miles: [inaudible 00:01:25]. Wow.**

**623: So... Yeah. There was a lot of people much better than me in my boat crew I feel like should've made it. I mean, honestly, in hindsight, I would've just kept going 'cause everyone just gets injured in hell week. So-**

**Dr Miles: I know. That's pretty selfless. You know?**

**623: Yeah. So-**

**That's pretty... So how long ago was that?**

**Uh, November 1st I think was when I [DOR-ed 00:01:47].**

**Okay. And you- you DOR-ed so you made the choice.**

**Yeah.**

**And what's wrong with your knee, just out of curiosity?**

**I don't know what it was. It's gone away. But, uh, it happened in... a little bit in the first week. I would just get this horrible pain on the outside of my knee. And, uh, most of the time, adrenaline would kind of just cancel it out. Like, I would be able to do evolutions during first phase, just- just with a lot of adrenaline. But to... Like, whenever, like, the evolutions would end then you would go be, like, in transit runs, it would come back. My adrenaline would go down. But in hell week, it just did... it didn't matter.**

**Well, yeah, because [crosstalk 00:02:28]-**

**I think your adrenaline kind of gets, like... like, in first phase, your adrenaline is, like... it spikes up and goes down because you're in a evolution, your heart rate's up and whatever. But in hell week, you're always doing stuff.**

**(laughs)**

**So your adrenaline is just, like, level-**

**Wears out (laughs)?**

**Yeah. So then the pain... Yeah.**

**Wow. Wow. But now it's gone?**

**Yeah, it is. I feel... I don't know. I don't know what it was. I don't know what caused it.**

**Wow. That's crazy. That's crazy. Yeah. And then it's kind of a big deal-**

**Yeah.**

**... that it chose to do that when it did (laughs).**

**Yeah. It was quite unfortunate [crosstalk 00:03:00].**

**Yeah. Absolutely. So, um... All right. So now let's take a step back and talk about your childhood.**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**So, like, where are you from? How many kids in your family? Do you live with both parents? You know, what's the whole story?**

**Yeah. I was, uh... I was born and raised in Houston, Texas.**

**Oh, okay.**

**Uh, I did football my entire life. Really wanted to do that 'cause I wanted to be, like, a freshman football player.**

**(laughs)**

**But I just was not, like... not that level. So I saw this video of Admiral McRaven talking about making your bed, and I was like, "I wanna be a SEAL." So I trained for, like... I trained pretty hard. I trained, like, pretty well. Like, I felt like I was well-prepared. But you can't prepare for injury.**

**No.**

**So-**

**I don't think you can prepare for hell week, really.**

**Yeah. No. You really can't. Um, so I... Then I stopped football. Did the... joined the swim team with another buddy of mine who is-**

**Really?**

**... who is in-**

**In high school?**

**Yeah.**

**You quit playing football and joined the swim team-**

**Yeah. And then-**

**... so you could become a good swimmer to be a SEAL?**

**Yeah. I did that and I did water- water polo and then, uh, did that for about two years. And then out of high school, I trained for about another year, working various jobs-**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**... and then, uh, enlisted.**

**To become a SEAL. Wow. That's quite a story. Okay. And so, like, in your family, um, did you have... did you grow up with your mom and your dad? Do you have siblings?**

**Yeah. Both my mom and dad were in the life. My brother... we just... like, we have a pretty big age gap. So, like, he's 12 years older than me, so he wasn't really around that much. He was kind of doing his own thing-**

**Right.**

**... being an adult while I was still a kid. So-**

**So you're kind of a only [crosstalk 00:04:33]... like, an only child.**

**For the most part. Yeah.**

**Yeah. And- And both your mom and dad lived in Houston. Okay. And so you didn't go to college because you were study... you were practicing to [crosstalk 00:04:41]. Right?**

**Yeah.**

**Okay. Um, so you talked a little bit about this, so maybe you don't have... maybe you just wanna add something. But in the last five years prior to coming to BUD/S, you know, what do you think, um, you know, your major shaping experiences were that, like, made you decide, like, "This is what I wanna do,"?**

**Yeah. So just... I mean, not being at football and wanting to be good at football and then wanting to something big with myself. So-**

**Something about Admiral McRaven's-**

**Yeah.**

**Was it a... Was it the book, Make Your Bed? Or [crosstalk 00:05:14] listen to him speak?**

**No. It was just the graduation speech.**

**The graduation speech? Yeah.**

**Yeah.**

**He's a pretty powerful speaker, that's for sure.**

**Yeah.**

**Yeah. Um, then is there anything that happened in your life that, you know, they call it a crucible event. So, like, something that happened that was, like, a big thing that kind of changed your way of thinking about life that might've made you more inclined to go to the SEALs rather than playing football or-**

**Uh, maybe just, like, the community. Like, the community... Right now, in the NFL, I would not wanna be in the NFL.**

**Oh, yeah (laughs).**

**Like, the people in there, like, suck (laughs). Maybe not suck but, like-**

**I know. I hear you.**

**Just... Everything's so political there. I don't wanna be there.**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**I would not wanna be there at all. So I just wanna be part of a community with people like me.**

**Right. That care about the bigger picture and stuff. Yeah.**

**Yeah.**

**So then when you think about, like, day-to-day... So you were in BUD/S for four weeks. I mean, plus [Bow 00:06:09]. Right?**

**Yeah. So-**

**Isn't- Isn't Bow, like, another four weeks or something?**

**Bow's, like, a... about three weeks.**

**So you... So you were doing this for seven weeks. So what... You know, what motivated you to get out of bed and go out there and do it and not just say, "Oh. Forget this. This is ridiculous."**

**Well, I just invested so much time and effort into this. So I'm, like, "If I invested so much time and effort into this, why would I just DOR right now?"**

**Yeah. Right. So was that a hard decision for you?**

**Yeah. It definitely was. I mean, the on... Like, just... It was just, like, I was destroying my boat crew 'cause I was so injured. I wouldn't so I was so injured, but I was definitely not being able to keep up with the pace that they were doing. So-**

**But- But would you have an option? I'm not second-guessing your decision at all. Please, don't think that. But I'm just curious. Is there an option to be, like, on sick call or- or whatever they call that in the Navy?**

**No.**

**No? You- You can't just say, "I hurt- "**

**Well, I mean, you can but not in hell week. No.**

**Not in hell week?**

**Not in [inaudible 00:07:03] (laughs).**

**So after you finished hell week, you could?**

**Oh, yeah. That's where people get... That's where people are just broken and they'll get rolled.**

**Yeah. Right. It seems like they just beat you to death. I mean, it's crazy.**

**Yeah.**

**Yeah. Wow. Okay. Um, so while you were in BUD/S, and I think you've already talked about this a little bit, did you have any difficult decisions that you had to make that, you know, you really kind of wrestled with and, ultimately, you decided whatever? Um-**

**I mean, throughout... up until that point, I was feeling pretty... I mean, obviously, I had that pain in my knee, but I could kind of get over that with the adrenaline.**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**But besides that, I was feeling pretty good. I was... I didn't fail a single thing. So that was-**

**That's impressive. Good for you. Um, but did you have any... Did you have to make any difficult decisions? Like, you know, I don't know. Other people have told me stories of, like, where they had to decide that somebody, um, wasn't making it on the boat crew and they had to kind of [crosstalk 00:07:57] them out.**

**Yeah. I tried to not be that guy. I mean, unless a guy was just absolutely just, like, a dirt bag, then, no.**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**I tried to be the guy... 'cause, like, [inaudible 00:08:08] understand, like, if you get injured or sick, you cannot perform to the standard.**

**No.**

**So I tried to not be that guy. I don't think I ever really was, unless a guy was just a... just a real dirt bag that was just terrible (laughs).**

**Right. Well, so then when you made your decision, that seems like that it would've been difficult. Like, what- what went through your mind? And how did you ultimately come to the decision?**

**Well, mainly just 'cause the guys I care about... mainly, my boat crew, there was some guys who I was, like... take a bullet for those guys any day. So, I mean, I was just like-**

**Yeah.**

**You know?**

**And you were just like, "I- I can't."**

**Well, I mean... Yeah. I physically could not keep up with them. So-**

**And so how many days into hell week were you?**

**It was Monday night. So we broke out Sunday evening.**

**Okay. So about 24 hours?**

**Yeah.**

**Yeah. And you had, like, at least four more days to go.**

**Yeah.**

**Yeah. Right. Okay. So then, um, is there anything that you would've done differently at BUD/S, knowing what you know now, if you could have? What would-**

**Besides not DOR-ING, probably not. I mean-**

**Yeah. But it doesn't really sound like you had a choice on the DOR-ing.**

**Yeah. But, I mean, I could've... I feel like you could've still just, like... I feel like my boat crew would've understood I wouldn't done the same for them if they were injured. I would've just taken the beating a little more. So-**

**Yeah. Yeah.**

**Plus, when you get, like, down to 35 guys, or however... We were probably down to, like, 20-something when I-**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**So, like, we're all pretty... really close. So, I mean, they probably would've understood.**

**Right. Right. Yeah. Yeah. So you might not have made that decision?**

**Yeah.**

**Okay. And then would you consider coming back to BUD/S?**

**I mean, not right now. Probably no because I'm going to EOD. So-**

**Oh. So that's cool. Right. Isn't that some... sort of similar?**

**Yeah. I mean, it's pretty much gonna be doing what I wanna do anyways. So-**

**That's, like, under... Is it underwater explosives, or just explosives?**

**It's explosives and underwater explosives.**

**Oh, okay. So [crosstalk 00:10:08].**

**Just all kinds of ordinance. So-**

**So you'll go from here to EOD school?**

**I'll go from here to Great Lakes, go [inaudible 00:10:15], like, a little selection.**

**Okay.**

**From what I've heard, maybe, like... I don't know if it's just rumors, but that if you made it to hell week, you don't even have to go through the selection. But who knows?**

**I'm sure they're gonna be happy to have you.**

**So... Yeah. They would, um... I go through... So once you go through three weeks of Great Lakes for, like, [inaudible 00:10:31] selection and then go to Florida for dive... EOD dive training. And then I'm gonna go to EOD school and I think another city in Florida for, like, 42 weeks, learning all about [inaudible 00:10:43] classwork.**

**Wow.**

**And then I go to, uh, like, small arms training here, and then I go to Fort Benning and do skydiving.**

**Oh. 'Cause you do HALO.**

**Yeah.**

**Oh. What about just plain airborne stuff? They don't do that?**

**I'm not sure about that.**

**Oh. That's cool.**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative).**

**That doesn't sound too bad.**

**Yeah. I'm pretty much gonna be able to jump out of airplanes, blow stuff up, and shoot- shoot things. So-**

**Well, there you go. That's what you wanna do anyway. So you're gonna be okay.**

**Yeah.**

**Yeah. That's good. So you wouldn't necessarily consider coming back if this all works out with EOD? And that'll be-**

**Yeah.**

**You'll be good with that. Okay. And then while you were doing... while you were in BUD/S, did you, um, have any practices that you did that kind of helped get you in the mindset, you know, [inaudible 00:11:26]... you know, spiritual, you know, mental, meditating? You know, I don't know. Whatever.**

**Like, during BUD/S? Um... No. I wouldn't say I did any meditating or [crosstalk 00:11:39].**

**Like, when you're out there in the surf and you're freezing, like, how did you... what did you tell your mind, like, to deal with that?**

**Um, it's all gonna be worth it in the end. And, usually, I would have a buddy next to me who I liked, so I would just be, like, just in the suck with him.**

**And then, like, you guys would just commiserate together? Or-**

**Yeah.**

**Oh my god. This is crazy. Whatever. Okay. And then, um, do you think that going to BUD/S, it changed you as a person at all? Or-**

**No.**

**No?**

**No.**

**You're the same guy-**

**Yeah.**

**... as when you walked in here?**

**I think I have a little more confidence in myself that I can do stuff. But-**

**Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. Well, that's for sure. I mean, it's amazing. Um, and then this is a question you have to think a little bit about. But... So we're asking all of these questions. We think these are good questions and they pull out, you know, good information. But we think you guys probably have a better handle on what we ought to be asking than us since you're going through this. So do you have any thoughts on... that... of questions that we- we maybe could ask that we would learn something better than we're currently doing?**

**Um... Maybe ask, like, about the people around them, 'cause that's kind of, like, a big thing, is, like, a lot of people just end up... The whole reason why I even DOR-ed, if I didn't care about those guys, I wouldn't have DOR-ed.**

**Right. Right.**

**I would've just, like, made them suffer (laughs). But I actually really care about them. So if it's... maybe ask stuff, like, about the people around them or people in the boat crew, specifically. Maybe, who knows, their boat crew ran them out. I don't know.**

**Right. Right. Well, what do you think is different about the people that did make it than you?**

**Um... I don't know. I'd probably just... don't get sick, don't get injured, and, uh-**

**(laughs)**

**... don't quit.**

**Wave your magic wand (laughs).**

**I mean... Yeah.**

**Yeah. Don't get sick, don't get injured.**

**I mean, 'cause if you already made... I already made up my mind I wasn't... And I was talking with another dude who DOR-ed and I thought he was gonna make it for sure, but he got sick as well. He got SIPE. So he was like... There's, like, comes a point where you... you're not gonna... you know you're not gonna quit-**

**Right.**

**... unless if you just are destroying... Like, there's something- something different about just destroying your boat crew. Even if your boat crew... like, mine wasn't telling me to quit. Mine was just kind of, like, trying to, like, build a... build, uh... [build 00:14:07] with me, I guess, like, trying to, like, just slow down the boat or whatever.**

**Right.**

**But I was just like, "I'm just destroying this boat crew."**

**Yeah.**

**I'm just putting more damage on their legs.**

**Yeah. I guess. But I don't know. I just feel like it's such a selfless thing you did, you know, to [crosstalk 00:14:26].**

**I mean, [inaudible 00:14:27]... I know a lot more people... I [inaudible 00:14:29] a lot better people in my BUD/S class than me, like, hands-down. People who made it and people who didn't make it are much better than me and much more selfless than me. So-**

**Yeah. Selfish or selfless?**

**Selfless. Sorry.**

**Yeah. Really. Yeah. I don't know. I think it's impressive, but... Okay. I'm gonna stop this.**