**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Kacor**

**Date: 1/26/2022**

**Participant #: 658**

Interviewer (Code in blue): Dr. Deirdre Dixon

Participant (Code in black): #658

**Interview Guide**

**Okay, can I ask you your number please?**

**658.**

**And then I, uh, do you mind if I record?**

**No, I don't mind.**

**Okay, great. Thank you. Um, so what phase did you leave in?**

**Uh, I left in first phase.**

**And what class were you in?**

**Uh, I was in 34,4, 346. 348. and 351**

**Wow. 344, 346**

**348**

**348**

**And 351**

**351. Okay, cool. I'll ask you about that in a minute, but how many weeks have you been here? Like when did you leave?**

**How many weeks have I been out of the first phase?**

**Yeah**

**um, I left in October.**

**Okay.**

**So about three Months now.**

**Okay. That makes sense. Uh, so take a minute and tell me about your childhood. Like, did you move around a lot? Are you the first of five kids? Are your parents still together? You know, that kind of thing?**

**Uh, No, My parents were married for 20 some years. We lived in the same house my entire childhood. Um, I was the youngest of three brothers, three boys. Um, I just come from a very small town, little farm in town. I worked on my grandpa's farm growing up.**

**Did you, Did you play sports?**

**Yeah, I played a football and wrestling.**

**mm-hmm**

**and then, uh, a little bit of baseball**

**Okay. A little bit of everything.**

**Yeah.**

**Um, if you had to describe your personality in three traits, what would you say?**

**Um, I'd say outgoing, um, um, very positive and, um, I'm a hard worker, I guess.**

**Okay. No, that's perfect. Okay. Thank you. Um, and what did you, what have you done the last five years prior to starting, uh, training?**

**Uh, I had my own little like snow removal and landscaping business. So kind of like branch off from my grandpa's farm**

**Mm-hmm, so you went to high school, you finished that and then you started this business?**

**Uh, yeah, cause I mean, in my head I was just gonna work the rest of my life. And then, uh, I don't know. I just, I just felt like I needed more**

**mm-hmm**

**and I, my grandpa, uh, he was in Vietnam. He did three tours in Vietnam as a Marine and a tour in Korea. And I always looked up to him so highly and then my brother was in the army. So I don't know, my family's always kind of been in the service, so it was either I stay in work or I go in travel and.**

**So, after you graduated from high school, how long did you work before you joined the Navy?**

**Uh, five years.**

**Okay. So five years, those about five years. So, um, what made you all of a sudden join the Navy? I'm saying all of a sudden, I don't know if it was all of a sudden, but I know you said your grandpa.**

**Yeah, well that, and I'm also a, uh, I'm a very religious guy. I, uh, I hold dear to the Lord and I try to like listen to what he says or what I'm, where I need to go with my sense of direction, and there's a lot of events that happen in my life. Um, I had the seed of trying to be a Navy seal, playing my mind at a very young age, uh, from my grandpa who told me Vietnam stories about him and everything.**

**Mm-hmm**

**and I was like, that's I want, I wanna be the guy that my grandpa talked about, you know, that's, that was my goal.**

**Mm-hmm**

**that still is my goal. Um, but I, there were some books, I talked to some people and all arrows would point me in this direction and then the way everything started working out with boot camp and like the recruiting office and how smoothly everything started going, I knew I was going the right way.**

**Mm-hmm. Would you say you, you talked about this just a little bit. Did you have any big experiences in your life that you were like that were like shaping you to be the person that you are? Would you say?**

**Um, like I said, that came, like I came from a family that seemed kind of typical from the outside, you know, my parents growing up or parents high school sweethearts married and then my two older brothers, but like, I'm very thankful that, uh, I had my grandma, she really like, kind of gave me the mindset that I have, you know, like, don't be quick to anger., don't be, you know, quick to judge, kind of, just be observant and think through perspective**

**Mm-hmm**

**but my parents would fight a lot. Uh, my brothers got in trouble a lot and I've, I've never even gotten a ticket, you know, so I always kind of watched them and I always told myself, it's like, I'm not gonna do that. You know. So that kind of, it kind of, the only thing that I did do that my brother is done is join the service**

**mm-hmm**

**so, and I don't regret it, so.**

**Okay. Well, thank you. Um, what do you think motivates you on a daily basis?**

**Just trying to be the best version of myself I can be, you know, not, I’m not settling for mediocracy.**

**Great. So tell me what happened with your experience at buds?**

**Well, I, uh, I've always been in really good shape, I was a really strong runner for some reason. I just always been that, uh, never really practiced it that much, but, uh, I've always been a smaller guy too. So running was always nice. And when I got out here, the water was a hard part for me, cause I never swam. Like I swam in ponds and lakes and stuff, but never like swam laps or miles, you know, I've never done that. Uh, but so far, like the performance wise and everything, it was, it was good. Like I did, I felt fine. I felt really good about everything. It's just, my body would, like my first class, I got pulled because I had this strange infection in my intestines.**

**Mm-hmm**

**that like caused me to have internal bleeding.**

**Wow.**

**Yeah. I, it was, it was a mess, and then that was an automatic roll.**

**That was 334 to 336.**

**Yeah. So that was 3-344**

**Oh, 344**

**to 346. And then I got rolled into recover and I recovered from that. I had to get on medication and rest and get the bleeding under control and all that. And then I went into 346 and on the very first day we were in our wetsuits doing some something on the beach, you know, and I ended up getting testic contorsion. So I, yeah, it just, it was unfortunate. So then I got rolled again and then I went into class 348, and I finally made it to hell week and I was feeling good. I was, I secured the ruck, I secured the swim. I was, I was feeling good. You know, and that night we were starting the longest mile on, uh, Monday night, Tuesday morning. And I just, there was a bunch of wash up on the beach and I stepped on seaweed, and completely blew out, like I just slid, my foot caught the sand and I tore my, uh, MCL, meniscus, and my vasus medialus.**

**Ah**

**And then I was in a brace for a while and took a lot of rehab and stuff; took like six months. And then I**

**mm-hmm**

**went into 351. Um, and then by that time I had, I was, I was running on E, I didn't have very much, didn't have very much drive or just, it was just awful.**

**Cause you'd been here so long, right?**

**Yeah, it was. I mean, I was here for over a year as a white shirt and I mean, it just took a toll on me, you know, like I have no doubt in my mind that if I go away, come back, you know, do something else for a minute. Let my body heal.**

**Mm-hmm**

**and come back in couple, three years. I'll be okay. And that's my plan.**

**Wow. Can you tell me a time when you had to make a difficult decision during training at BUD/S and what went through your mind and gimme an example?**

**Uh, uh, I think it's the first time I drown on the, the underwater knot tying test. I, uh, I woke up on the side of the pool deck and it was, that was the first time I failed cause I mean, I woke up getting slapped. I'm had no clue where else was at and it’s like Peter Mcfailed and I like**

**Haha**

**but that was a, that was the first time through the whole pipeline or up to that point where I was like, that was, that I had failed something and it, then it really made me think like, man, am I at the right spot here? Like I just passed out, I was sleeping in the pool and I wake up on the edge and now I'm just like, man, I, and I, I remember like I went internal for a little while. Like I was really in my own head space and then we had a con run right after that we had to run over to the beach and the instructor just took off, and I mean, I had that, like that mental choice, you know, do I just keep sulkin about it or do I just attack what I'm about to do? And I chose to attack and I was one of like 12 or 15 guys that secured that conditioning run, so I just got the stretch after, and that was the, that was huge because it took me out of that mile head space and it's like, oh, you're, you're fine. You know, you're like, I was good. Like I'm I'm okay.**

**How did you do that? How did you, cause it sounds like you were wavering between the two things and you decided to attack, how, what was your thought process for that?**

**Um, honestly, it's just, that was always kind of like kind of like, it's kind of always like my own little like mindset coming from wrestling, you know, like even though you've been trying to cut weight, you're exhausted and everything, you need to, you just always have to be the attacker or else you're gonna, you’re not, you're gonna lose if you, if you're not aggressive and you go out there and you're just like going through the motions, you're gonna get destroyed, and I couldn't thank my little wrestling coach for that, but it was like, that's kind of like what came into my head there, you know, it was like, am I just gonna let this beat me? Absolutely not. You know? So I just**

**mm-hmm**

**and I was mad too. Just ran as hard as I could. Haha**

**Good for you. Um, so looking back on your whole experience, is there anything you would've done differently if, if uh, you had it to do over again?**

**Uh, I would've taken care of my body more the, in my first, my first class, I mean, that's, that's about it. Cause the reason I passed out in the pool was cause I had a double ear infection, you know, if I would've cleaned out my ears more, took the time to like took that 15, 20 minutes at night, you know, you only get a couple hours of sleep anyways, but it doesn't matter. Like those 15, 20 minutes are gonna benefit that much, but taking care of your body, would've, you know, I, like your body's a temple and you have to take care of it. And that's one of the things I've learned since being here. I, that's what I would do differently. I'd take care of my body more.**

**Okay. And as I think CDR Ledford said this, but we've interviewed a lot of successful SEAL graduates too, and I was really shocked honestly, at how many people tried BUD/S, then left and then came back like one or two years later. Would you ever consider that an option?**

**Oh yeah. I plan on coming back.**

**Wait, you do?**

**Yeah. I'm yes, A hundred percent. I'm just, I'm just kind of taking a break right now. I'm gonna go do something else, achieve it, get the body, get the body back a hundred percent and then, come back.**

**Okay, what practices like spiritually, mentally, physically, did you, you to push through any challenges that you were presented with at buds?**

**Um, I prayed a lot. Uh, I'm a Christian. I mean, honestly like during like surf tortures, like the two mile swims. They're not, they're not pleasant. I mean they're not bad, but you're just, it's just mentally taxing, and I, uh, I just kind of go off in my own head space, kind of start praying about something, pray about it, pray about whatever it was. Pray about the family.**

**Mm-hmm**

**do something like that. Take your, take your mind away. Just go into autopilot. Uh, but then like during like logs or boats, you know, you got your, you got your teammates with you. Um, just putting out for them, that was like, when you're there, you gotta be there in that moment. You can't go on autopilot for that, you gotta be there and you gotta be present. So those times you gotta rely, you gotta, worry about the guys next, you**

**mm-hmm**

**I think that's what got me through a lot of it, you know, just trying to be a good to trying to be a good guy, be a good friend, teammate.**

**How do you think this experience has changed you as a person?**

**I, uh, life is not bad. Ha. no matter where you're at, you're there for a reason, you know, life not bad at all. Um, I think that's just about it. Like I’m definitely tougher mentally, uh, tougher physically, but it's given me a whole new perspective on just like regular day to day life I should say.**

**Good. That's great. And then what event, if you had to pick one single event that you struggled with the most, what would you say it was?**

**Uh, mine was drown proofing.**

**Okay.**

**That was the hardest thing for me cause I'm a very dense person, I don't have a lot of body fat. I'm like 4%, 5% body fat, so I sink like a rock.**

**Wow.**

**Yeah, so I, I would just sink and so whenever we’d do the float, it was tough, but it actually became one of the easiest things, like easier things I could do in training. So it was, it was nice, and then the second to that is probably surf torture. Those are, that's just being cold. haha**

**Did you think your class liked you?**

**Yes.**

**Would you say? Okay. And then what do you think was different about those that made it all the way through?**

**Um, when their opportunity, when, uh, their training and opportunity met that little percent chance that it would work out for 'em it did then for me it did not.**

**Okay.**

**You know, like, uh, we both, we all had the same training, but when the opportunity came, I mean some made it some didn’t. I mean, that's just the way it is.**

**Yeah.**

**You know?**

**And it depends on your body and your health.**

**Yeah. Like I'm, I don't know. It was, uh, I mean it's tough seeing them all go on, but I mean, there's a reason for everything and**

**Mm-hmm, and then last thing. So we're gonna write these articles. Um, what should I have asked you about the training that I didn't ask you? Or what would you wish you would've known coming into this training a year and a half ago?**

**Not sure. I'm not sure. I, uh… yeah, I don't really, I think you did. I think you did, I think you did dood.**

**That's fine. No, super, some people have a suggestions, some don't**