**TRANSCRIBER NAME: ENS Bondarowicz**

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**Participant #: 668**

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

**Participant (Code in black): #668**

**Dr. Dixon: OK, this is Deirdre Dixon from the University of Tampa. It's 6th of January and I'm speaking with…**

**668: Sorry James, er… sorry**

**Dr. Dixon:: Number no no no it's OK. OK, this is Deirdre Dixon from the University of Tampa. It's the 6th of January. And what's your number?**

**668: 668**

**Dr. Dixon: Do you mind if I record?**

**668: I do not.**

**Dr. Dixon: Know OK great. We'll just go ahead and get started. Uh, what phase did you leave?**

**668: Uh, First page.**

**Dr. Dixon: First phase and how many weeks ago was that?**

**668: Uhhhhh… oh I don't know. 8 weeks maybe?**

**Dr. Dixon: OK, no, no worries. And so how far along the, what day were you on when you left?**

**668: Uh, so it was on Wednesday of the 1st week.**

**Dr. Dixon: So Wednesday the first week OK. Perfect, can you take a minute and tell me a little bit about your childhood. In other words, are you an only child or your parents still together? Or did you move around a lot? Where did you grow up?**

**668: Uh, so I’m from Saint Louis. Um, my parents were divorced. They were in a good relationship though, they only lived about 10 minutes apart. So we bounced back and forth, but I had a older sister's a year older than me. Uh, and uh, I have a younger brother now, but he wasn't born till I was 17 so. But yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon: Okay. If you had to describe your personality in three traits, what would you say?**

**668: Um, uh, I’d say I'm observant, Pretty pretty, reserved. Um, like aggressive at the same time.**

**Dr. Dixon: OK, that works. Um, what did you do in the past five years prior to BUD/S?**

**668: Uhm, so I went to college, uh I played baseball in college.**

**Dr. Dixon: Where did you go to college?**

**668: I went to um, a community college first, went to Maplewoods Community College, played baseball there for a year and a half. I had uh gone, uh I went to 3 colleges. I went to Southeast Missouri State. Um, for a year, then I went to a junior college and then back to a four year. It’s all baseball related, transferring that kind of thing. Um, graduated decided that I was going to go to BUD/S. started training for uh, for it. Spent about been about a year and a half, almost two by the time, like I got through the processing of the Navy and all that before I was at boot camp.**

**Dr. Dixon: OK, So what were you doing while you were training for BUD/S?**

**668: Um, I was coaching baseball doing lessons. Um, working with you know mainly high school, middle age, middle school kids. Um, yeah, just giving mainly private lessons and that kind of thing, yeah.**

**Dr. Dixon:**

**If you had to think about all your prior experiences prior to BUD/S, can you think of anything that were like, really like shaping experiences or things that changed you?**

**668: As far as things. I don't know. I don’t know. I was a catcher. So I mean, I don't know if there was like 1 instance or something like that that was so life changing but, just kind of the grind of that position and I did, I did from time I was six years old, I pretty much was only a catcher. Its a tough position, and I think you, you get some resilience and stuff like that. I did that all the way through college. And I didn't really have any other like skills relative to swimming or running or anything like that, but I was like, oh, you know, I could, you know it was like something I want to do, but. Yeah, I don't know if there's one thing that shaped me.**

**Dr. Dixon: OK.**

**668: But I would say if, just the that experience as a whole that process.**

**Dr. Dixon Yeah, OK. Uhm, did being a catcher impact your training then, prior to BUD/S or anything?**

**668: Um, I mean. As far as like skills and that kind of thing that you know as far as running swimming, calisthenics really don't do any of that as a catcher, but, there's the grind of it I. I had to prepare specifically in that time window for the things specific to BUD/S , there wasn't anything I didn't. I didn't grow up also swimming or, you know, on the cross country team. I, I did some grappling a little bit, a little bit of jujitsu in those years as well. Um, That was something I had maybe wish I did longer but I really loved that. Um, that really kind of fit my personality as well, but. You know, what did you ask again?**

**Dr. Dixon: Well, that's OK, that's good. How did those experiences impact your training? Tell me about your background that led you to even join the Navy.**

**668: Um, yeah, I don't have any family um in the military at all. I had an uncle that's a Marine I guess. But I, I don’t know I just always just wanted for some reason as a young kid just, I saw it somewhere.**

**Dr. Dixon: Like in a book or a movie or and you're talking about Navy in general, or SEAL specific?**

**668: Yeah, there's special operations in general. I mean, I eventually zeroed in on the SEAL pipeline just because by the time I was like OK, I'm actually going to do it, it was the most streamlined and um, you know there was no waiting several years of doing this first it was, you could pretty much come right up the street.**

**Dr. Dixon: So your contract was specifically for NSW?**

**668: Yeah, yeah**

**Dr. Dixon: Yeah OK awesome OK, what do you think motivates you on a daily basis?**

**668: Um, I don't know. I think just constantly wanting to improve. Um, I, you know, in anything and everything. I just I get fulfilment in progress, you know. I, I, I don't know exactly what, what drives my interest or doing, I don't know whether I'm weight lifting or whatever. Why I choose those things necessarily, but I just like to be able. to measure progress.**

**Dr. Dixon: OK, that makes sense. Uh, can you describe your experience at BUD/S, like what happened?**

**668: Um, so well. We did Prep, so we were the last class in Great Lakes.**

**Dr. Dixon: Cause you were at 351?**

**668: I was in 351. And so we went to Great Lakes for seven weeks before we came out here to Coronado. Um and it was, I don't know it's kind of wrapping up because they're moving, they moved all that out here and. I don't know we, we worked out. We got back in shape after bootcamp cause we kind of got out of shape there. And so you start to get to know at least some of the guys that graduated boot camp same time as you. Some of the fleet returnees and that kind of thing on the enlisted side were out there as well. So you're sort of kind of getting to know those guys and you know, it's a pretty pretty good, close group of guys that I went through boot camp with. Then I had some friends that had gone through in different divisions and um, you know, we kind of all… I kind of felt like I had a pretty good solid group of guys that we trusted. And you know, you worked hard and we're and we're just, you know, guys, you want to go go through BUD/S with. Uhm we got the Coronado. Did BO for I guess like three weeks or whatever. Um and that's why I'm like we met a lot more like rollbacks and stuff, guys who've been out here already. Um, and it was just kind of gradually increased in its intensity. Um you know, we we had several evolutions a day, and you know, BO wasn’t you know the end of the world, it was. It was tough, you know you're working out or whatever and doing circuits and all that stuff. But, I mean, I think as far as experience like we were just trying to get to know guys and and and just kind of see, you know, kind of feeling the waters. Um, you know there is, I don't know it was. For me personally, like I wasn't super nervous about any like specific evolution. I mean, I didn't really have much of a water background, so you know you're trying to scramble. We didn't really do any of those evolutions in, like in Great Lakes, cause I think because um of just the transfer over here. Um, so I mean, if those were, those are the things maybe I was like more nervous about. But you know, those aren't the evolutions that tend to to break guys. If you will. So I knew like oh, maybe if I, if I don't get this skill down like I might have a rough day in the water. Maybe I black out or whatever and that sucks, but like you know it's not the end of the world. And uh honestly, at that point, like I would say, we were all pretty kind of naive to what Phase was going to bring and dumb. I mean, I only made it like 3 days into Phase and uh, you know it was tough. I think the first the first night we did like surf OPS, which is like you gotta go wade out in the water and measured the waves, I just another opportunity they can kind of get you wet but it was one of those things where it was like we were in the water at like midnight and we had we didn't start a four mile time run till like, breakout was at like 3:30 or 4. Do four mile time run. Then it was grinder PT up to chow and then it was honestly, I mean it was, it was tough, but it wasn't anything we hadn't been prepared for at that point. And honestly, I feel like first day we did logs for till, till, chow, until launch came back. Get a little bit more logs. Um They're having fun with logs that day. And then we just did like IBS, I think. Uhm till dinner time and we just basically doing sprints but put the boat on your head and just bunch of different relay races and I don't spend that much time out in the water actually but. Um, yeah, I mean it was a tough day the First Day, but you know, and I was, it was pretty fatigued and that kind of thing at chow, but at no point was I like going to quit anytime soon. Um and the second day. We did some pool stuff. I think we did the 50 meter underwater. It was one of those things I was nervous about, but again, like once you get there, you do it, smash it. You're like alright, like one thing, another thing you're checking off the list. Yeah, OK, good past that. Um, did some knot time practice. That was a little… I didn't do so good on that because we had again another one of those things we hadn't practiced a ton and a 50 meter underwater. You just just go. It's pretty straightforward. I think we did the O-Course I think with me the O-Course, it was close. I almost got dropped because of the O-Course in Bo cause we got like kind of put like 10 of us got put in this. Group it was just basically a bunch of miscommunication between like our officers and the instructor staff about like I don't know they we have to go to a board and then we had, like, somebody finally spoke up and said. they know like we passed this this many times and that and then they didn’t drop us and so we had like kind of rush to get into phase. But so I knew the O-Course was I needed to pass it. And I fell off the. Was that the spider wall? I had a good run. I would have had a passing time...**

**Dr. Dixon: That was at the very end right?**

**668: Yeah very and very last thing and my grip my my my hand like the fingertip, like a skin on my fingertips like ripped and I just fell off the wall and I was like just jeez man, I get that sucked. But again, it's one of those things like, OK, it doesn't matter like you fail.**

**Move on, you know it'll buff, you'll get it. Next time. I didn't worry about it and then we started. It was like remediation for that for a little while then, we started a Land Portage and that Land Portage was was pretty eventful. My boat crew did. I think we were doing really, really well out of the gate. First couple checkpoints was strong. And then I got. I got pushed into like another boat crew with a bunch of like there was a boat who was kind of like falling apart. Um, like they only have like 4 guys under their boat and they just basically like some Instructor right up to me was like you're the tallest guy in your boat crew. Go to this boat crew and they were just a shitshow. Um, and like there was a bunch of different height discrepancies and I don't know what had been going on and they weren't communicating. Our OIC was under that boat too. And it was just, it's just really toxic under that boat. Um, I know at one point, like we were just yelling at each other, everybody, it was just it was, it was atrocious. Um, and you know the one thing with land portages that's both on heads like you can you can duck the boat and you know, for me and I found out later that like a lot of guys dropped on this particular. I mean there's guys dropping left and right, but this particular Land Portage got a ton of people and I just kind of found out that there was a lot more of a game to BUD/S. The least that I was unaware of, you know, we just came out a Great Lakes. I I didn't know. There is there is, there was a tac... I mean cause you can. I mean, I think you can put out everybody can can put out and everybody can succeed. But there's sort of a prisoner's dilemma, which is like if one person doesn't, then everybody almost is a sucker for taking their weight, and then it becomes this kind of silly game and the boat crew I was originally was under was was really good and everybody was, you know, doing their share and then you get under one and. Guy, right, ahead of you clearly, his head is not on the boat, you know, and you know I don't know like this to me that so the Instructor would come up and yell and I don't know what the tactic was there, but it seemed like they were yelling at other guys that were putting out and it wanted us to weed out. I don't know it was. It was very bizarre, um but it was just kind of chaos and you're you're full sprinting through soft sand anyways and it's it's madness, and that was one of those evolutions was just like you make another 10 feet, make another 10 feet, make it like, have a certain point um and got through that. Um went to chow, whatever was good and. Where I dropped was the the next morning. And it was it was hard getting out of bed I guess after just that much intensity and you know, by the time I finished that Land Po um I was still in good spirits but it was. It was about as close physically as I could continue to push. I mean. There was guys next to me on that boat that were just but fall flat, just falling on their face like trying to push their body as hard as they can. They're trying to run and run around, but it is a certain point like your body kind of shuts down and I could see guys like that was rattling people that like they could go as hard as they possibly could throttle as much as they could and they couldn't they just couldn't go any harder. And I just wonder, like you know, this guys ducking boat that guys ducking boat like and then this guys trying to do his best and and and that that night I don't know like a lot of guys like I found out a lot of guys that dropped. And the next morning we had the surface, the surf immersion. Surf torture, we call it and. It was it was a cold morning and we um I don’t know we were out I don't know probably 30-40, maybe an hour before we actually got in the water just stripped down. It was cold, even just not being in the water. And I don't know how long we once we actually got in the water it was quite a while we did 3 or 4 iterations and it was felt like forever. And I basically, I don’t know I felt terrible by the end of it. Um it was sort of uh, I mentioned I DORed in this evolution. I made it through the surf immersion too like I got out of the water, but it was like as I I was like running back over the berm that, like I realized, like like I wasn't doing well. And I was just basically like last kinda thing I remember about the whole thing, was I was trying to put my clothes back on and I was just like for whatever reason like just so so cold that like I couldn't. I'd like to have fine motor skills to like put my my clothes on and uh I just it was just one of those things where, like the class for whatever reason everybody else was for the most part, doing OK, you know they're getting their stuff on, and people were trying to help me out. I think I managed with the help of a buddy or two hit like my pants and like uh one boot on, but then it was just kind of those things where like everybody was running off the beach and I was like, wow, I couldn't figure out like why couldn't keep up and you know I was like why am I handling this so poorly? And at that point I just kind of like, well, like I just got left behind here, you know, and I didn't like one of my buddies offers like carry me off this I was like not gonna like was not let you carrying me off this thing I, I don't know. I was like but I didn't want… I just kind of felt like. It was just checkmate, you know, and then the Instructor kinda walked over and shook his hand and it's like I got to get warm and I was basically it, mineralized, kind of what had happened to I don't I probably shouldn't have, I stood shower probably for like an hour trying to get warm before I kind of realized like what the hell just happened. Um, and yeah, I mean basically, I realized like, oh crap, like almost all my buddies, a bunch more people were in the dorm at that time too, and they they either quit on that Land Po that night that I didn't know about that they dropped or sometime in that morning too. And um that was pretty much my BUD/S experience. Kind of get out, got dressed or whatever at some point that day. Gear exchange, whatever that was it. And then it was basically at that point we were. Every day it would just be another batch of dudes with the story and they're moving in next to you and figuring out what the hell happened with them. And this guy had SIPE whatever you know he was doing good. But then you know he got ran out of his boat crew for whatever reason and they no longer wanted him to you know, it just seemed like a mind in this class. Um, it didn't really matter at certain point if they liked you, didn't like you for whatever reason. It just got to be like a you know? If you couldn't put out, didn't matter if it was something serious like you had, you know, SIPE or whatever they did they eventually just didn't want to, they didn't want to help you. They don't, they just they couldn't afford to help you is how they felt like. Um, and and maybe I don't know, maybe. You know, I I noticed, it seemed like groups of guys dropped and I couldn't figure out like, well, you know you're trying o make sense of it, as you're sitting over there. And I don't know no one ever like I never thought for one second not one second before I dropped that I was gonna call it… I know I never was once thinking about it and you know, it's just this very bizarre experience because you're so determined and then, like in an instant you're like where did that come from? Like what the hell just happened. But guys hit these walls basically. And they never… and they’re naive to it that that can happen. But it does, and it's, it's interesting, I don't know, I don't know what to make of it.**

**Dr. Dixon: Do you think the leadership of your team made a difference?**

**668: Um, yeah, I, I think. If I had to really guess that you know, most of us come in and we think that… we can all take a great deal of suffering or whatever, as long as it's for a reason, and I think you attach that to the bodies around you like I'm doing it for my close friends who went to camp with or whatever. And then as that starts to fall apart you kind of I don't know, just. It becomes almost like the same level of you know, like I don't know what you would call it, but drive just dissipates. And it's like you start to feel it like way more. I don't know. I don't know, but it it and I think. The um, as far as a leadership I think you can you can cultivate that or you can orDiminish that and it seemed I, I felt like there was clear like distinctions in our class between officers, fleet returnees, rollbacks like there was and I don't know if it was we were just as a class like sandwich together so quickly. Um, but it never like we never really all got to know each other. I I would say some people did more than others, but it wasn't. It was like a a mix of a bunch of different groups. And it wasn't like we all came through from the same place at the same time and went through the same stuff. It was all so fast it was like, you know, three weeks and we're boom like in it together. And the guys that had came from Great Lakes that that group had got pretty close, I think as a whole, but then that was merging with everybody that was already out here in Coronado, which was a bunch of rollbacks and officers. And uh, I don't know for whatever reason, it just didn't mold. Uhm, and there was, there was tensions. You know, a lot of people didn't like our OIC, didn't like this officer, didn't like this guy. You know, you know it was just constantly, everybody was grading each other about you know, and and I guess you gotta do that to some degree, but yeah, I didn't. I didn't, you know. Personally, I was just more worried about the guys closest to me and whatever, and it was sort of like, well, we'll deal with. That later, like cause there's so much you can control and you know my position. Uhm, and so I just try not to worry about things that I didn't have influence over. Um, I just if you know it was up to me and my close buddies and it was, you know, I I was going to look out for them and I wasn't going to do anything to, you know, hurt anybody else, even if I don't know them that well or whatever. And then my whole thing was like don't, just do it the right way, and hopefully it'll work out. You know, don't duck a boat it. Don't do, don't you know if it's. You know I I feel like the first day was rock paper scissors, for who goes in the water and I won the rock paper scissor, but then the other guy didn’t want to go in the water and I was like you know, screw it, like this is what we're here for like go be cold, you know, and I guess in hindsight you know you're going to get a lot of people, they're like, well, is that it's not even a good way to do it, just tactically speaking, like I said, like if you want to make it through, I think that's that's the problem. If I, if I had to put it, down, it's like you, you want everybody to be that way. And if one person is that way and one person not that way you're just going to get a bunch of turmoil. And I think that's kind of what was happening was there was discrepancies between like how well people understood the game. And I think they were… the people that you know maybe maybe some officers, not all of them, yaybe some rollbacks, not all of them, they had advantages because they understood the little details about BUD/S and they were, they weren't necessarily going to like help every single guy because, tt was, you know. I think maybe there's uh, there's only so many of us are going to make it. I don't know, you know. They say everybody can make it, but you know you want… I don't know how it works, you know? And um so there was just there was just differences there and like what people understood and maybe that was just from other classes, hat that influence it like only so many you know, or it's going to be a certain way. I always kind of thought that was up to us. You know, that's what we've been told. But you know, then, when again, you start to realize like this is essentially, uh, I, I keep saying it, but some prisoners dilemma is really what it is and like then you have like an ethical choice and I think a lot of the guys there, especially they drop really early like. They paid the price. And I think it was unfortunate and. Theres good guys have made it really far too. And you know most of the guys that I think did did you know unethical things got weeded out anyways? But I think it just it caused a lot more collateral damage then maybe needed to. Yeah, and it just is what it is, but. That, that was kind of my. Take on it.**

**Dr. Dixon: No, thank you, that's that's super helpful.**

**668: That's what I saw.**

**Dr. Dixon: Was there a time during training during BUD/S that you had to make a difficult decision and what went through your mind as you made that decision? And can you give me an example?**

**668: Um, difficult decision. I mean I think, I can't think of 1 instance where like I had to make like some really big pivotal decision to affect it, like a ton of people other than maybe all of the decisions you make. But as far as how I made decisions was like I said, kind of I, I**

**didn't wanna…I did everything I could, how I wished everybody would make the decision. If everybody did it that way, then we don't make it and I figured if I make setting example for two people that saw that or whatever, that maybe would spread. And if you know cause, I just again like as as for me, I wasn't the top performer. I wasn't the fastest guy, you know. I was on the stronger side, but as far as anything else was concerned, like I'd have any super advantages, so I figured my best case scenario is we all need to work together. Um like I'm not going to just one man army this situation and so I figured well like I have to set that example then and I don't. I can't think of a specific example for you but.**

**Dr. Dixon: No, that's fine. That's that's perfect. That's what I was trying to get to. Is there anything you would have done differently during BUD/S?**

**668: Yeah, I mean, I've I've thought about that a lot. Um, and I think. I mean, selfishly, like I think if you were in a class like that um unfortunately, what you have to do to make it through that class with a high percentage is you have to not attach yourself to other people. You'd have to be selfish and I think you'd have to, you'd have to play that, like a sociopath like that. Um and I don't think I would do that, frankly. I, I wouldn't want to come back to a BUD/S class like that. I didn't… I hope it would be. Exactly the opposite of that.**

**Dr. Dixon: So you think your Class 351? I think you said was different than possibly other classes?**

**668: I think it possibly was. It was different from the classes that you know obviously you you're going into this you're going to do some research, and there's plenty of information about BUD/S out there. And I think the ideals and the ethics that we all a lot of us. Gravitated towards, which was team, you know, like I, I when it comes to baseball and that kind of thing like I realized that I really just liked it for the team, you know. And I came here hoping to just basically do that forever, you know. Um, so when when you get here and it's like the opposite of that, it's sort of tragic, um but that is just the nature of things sometimes. I don't think I would change that. I think I'm trying to. Look forward somewhere. Else you know or come back and hope but, you know that has to work itself out.**

**Dr. Dixon: So if they gave you the opportunity to come back. Would you do it?**

**668: Um, I I'm I'm just going to try to stay in contact with people who are around it. I mean, I'm sure I'm going to know people that make it through. And I I'm if if the opportunity comes around, depending on what I'm doing, I'll put feelers out there, see what is it like right now, you know, cause I think I've talked to some guys and they said, you know, this has kind of been a thing a little bit here and there. Um, so you know if I'm looking to come back, I mean I still have interest in doing it, but you know, there's only it's, it's one of those things, you gotta prepare a lot for it… It's, it's risky. Uhm, and it takes a lot of time and you know, I'm on the older side, having gone through college and that kind of thing and you know, it's like if, I can't keep waiting necessarily for it to be the right time. And you know, there's you know. There's other things out there and I'm going to go explore that in the meantime. And then if I hear you know, like hey, you know you could go back to BUD/S and I could put in a package or whatever and that seems, I’m fired up and do that again, but. I don't know, I just.**

**Dr. Dixon: Don't know, OK? No, that's fair, thank you. Did you have any practices that you used to push through challenges like physical, mental, spiritual stuff that you did that helped you?**

**668: I, I just eventually I feel like. You know the first few things you do. I don't know. Sort of build. Up a lot of things in your head. Whether it's a four mile run that you've done a million times but when you actually do it yeah, I think it gives you a little bit more nerves than normal. And I think as you start to, you just do it. And I think the more you just force yourself through it you get a confidence to know that, like it's going to work out. And then I think over time like so I don't know if it was any, maybe just a self talk kind of thing, I don't know. Um, like I just I don't know, but you do a lot. I think there's plenty of things that get your, uh your nerves up in BUD/S. Everything is important everything for the most part, pass or fail. I I don't know exactly what I did. Other than just try to frame it in a way um you know a.**

**Dr. Dixon: No, that's helpful, yeah.**

**668: It's it's a. Yeah, it's a. It's a. It's quicker than you think. Is it, you know. It's, uh, you know? You build it up, but it usually doesn't exceed the hype.**

**Dr. Dixon: How do you think this experience changed you as a person?**

**668:**

**Uhm, I think. I mean I think 1, like you do, whether you make it or not, I think, probably you push yourself a lot harder than any other place, so there's a confidence there that you know you can push yourself. I think also on the other flip side of that, or at least just with how this how I felt about this particular experience. There's a naivete, that's you know like you know nothing is perfect. You can build up something, but whether it's professional baseball or college baseball or Navy SEAL training like nothing is perfect, um like there's going to be things, and I think that's important to understand. It was an important lesson. Um, so yeah, I think just the confidence and the maturity.**

**Dr. Dixon: That works. So what event did you struggle with the most?**

**668: Um… uh… I think on paper I might have failed the O Course more than anything. I wouldn't say that was like because I wasn't… I don’t think was physically the hardest thing for me. I think there's kind of a lot of goofiness with just the amount of practice we had for it, and then just some sort of, you know. You know? Abnormal situations, you know you're just going to slip something. Something like that can happen. Um, I don't know. I, I'd say the water was probably where I was weakest, but it never really actually cost me so. I, I, I think… but you know, the cold was the I would say if there's anything about that, because that is where I basically broke, um I underestimated it like I just thought I. Just used to be cold like I have to focus on Land Portage I gotta focus on like these are the ones where you got to be locked in and I learn you gotta be locked in on that kind of stuff to. That pretty much anything have BUD/S, you never know where a challenge is coming that you better be. You could be in Proctor time and who knows what the hell? It's going to happen so anything can be challenging and it just you gotta be, you gotta be on on the ball all the time but as far as particular evolutions, I think mentally the water. Physically the O- Course.**

**Dr. Dixon: OK, that makes sense. Do you think your class liked you?**

**668: I would say as a whole, I wasn't like a super well known guy in my class. So was I super popular no, but I think amongst the guys that I actually hung around. With, yeah**

**Dr. Dixon: Ok. And then do you think what was different about those who made it?**

**668: (sign). In general, I think they were more, they were more familiar with the game of BUD/S. I think more of them were officers, more of them were either fleet returnees or rollbacks. I think there was only a couple guys that were straight out at Great Lakes like myself. Um, I don't know too too well those other guys that came out of Great Lakes with me. One of them I knew em pretty well. If there was anything about him, he just he, just he just didn't care about anything like he almost just didn't worry about anything. But that that's not everybody. Honestly, I I I don't know I don't.**

**Dr. Dixon: OK.**

**668: I, I think.**

**Dr. Dixon: No no, that's fine.**

**668: Maybe you just step in the right place at the. Right time and. It's really I don't you under the right ball, er boat with the right people and the rights… I don't know.**

**Dr. Dixon: So we're trying to write this article to help people who want to go to BUD/S and who want to learn about BUD/S? What else should I have asked you or what do you wish you would have known a year ago before you started?**

**668: Um, I, I wish I would have known that it would it that that we might not work together that much and that how important that really is. I, I don't. I don't know what I would do with that knowledge, but. I think I would have liked to known that there was a chance that you could wind up in a class that it just eat each other alive I, I think. I think I would…I wish I would have known that was like a thing that happened I. I don't know done with that. I just I think when I when I look at a lot of the guys that come here, there's uh there's a naviti in an and and you know there's they say this, but like you just see so much like blissful ignorance and excitement, which is which is cool and you want that with this place. But uh it's serious, you know, it really is serious. It can get really ugly. I mean guys will get in fights. I mean it it it gets nasty and you guys get you know really beat up. Um, I don't know. What you do about that, I don't know. What kind of question? What how you phrase that you approach that? I would like everybody to come in and have the idea that they're going to work. I think if you know that. If you know that it that they can be like that, it actually makes people understand like how important like working as a team actually is. So I think if there was one thing that like you could put out there its that like bad classes are real and you know there's situations. Or like do they threaten me not threaten, but you know, they they joke and they jab and no we we can have five people graduate. You know this and that. You you hear horror stories and that's just that there's so much rumors, um when you're coming through the pipeline and there's so much information out there, and you think that like oh, that's all up to date, and that's all good and you know it's really when you come here, it's just like, you just have to see it for yourself, but, I think really stressing the importance that like, there is like… You can push yourself like super hard and that that really works. But if you have a bad class when we're together then like I've seen guys who are just beyond perfect candidates. Great guys, strong, fast we can, the whole gambit team players, team workers. But when the class doesn't work together like those guys will break down physically to the point where it doesn't matter how mentally tough you are. How will, how much will you have like if you say you're gonna just fly, you, it's not just physically, that's impossible. You know what I mean, and I think unfortunately that's what happens to guys, there's like collateral because of that. Like you know, they tell you like good guys you know won't make it if you don't work together and that kind of thing I don't think. I don't think that's hammered home enough, I think um like there's so much. Stuff about the SEAL world that's like supposed to be motivational. And I think frankly. If you can make it through, especially around the COVID time like everybody was auto qual in PST's, everybody was physically who is motivated like that's a given. What reality you that you need to be not naive to like that it it doesn't matter like you, you're not Superman. Be Superman like we want everybody to be Superman here like when everybody be the best but you also have to like have some like humility and that like if everybody is a one man army here like, it's just going to be like a lottery pick who makes it, and that's that's not what any of us want. You know, yeah. It's good for nobody.**

**Dr. Dixon: No, that's true. OK, I'm going to turn this off.**