**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Andrew Malick**

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**Length of the Interview: 19:43**

Interviewer (Code in Blue): Alex Dietrich

Participant (Code in black):

**Interview Guide**

**It looks like it's going, OK, and I'll ask you again is it ok if I record?**

**That’s fine.**

**And would you please tell us your participant I.D. number?**

**Five five seven.**

**Awesome. OK. So when did you start your BUD/S class?**

**My original class was 334. We got here October 1st, 2018. Been in the program for a little while now then. And then uhh**

**And is this your first time going through BUD/S?**

**Yes.**

**Standard Interviewer Question (SIO): So let's go back to your family. Are you an only child, do you have siblings?**

**I have four siblings.**

**Wow, ok.**

**Yeah. Older brother is 24, then me, just turned 22. I have a younger brother who’s twenty. Then two sisters, they’re 18 and 14.**

**And are your parents married, seperated, divorced?**

**Yes. Married.**

**How long have they been married?**

**Probably pretty close to 26 years.**

**What was your relationship like with them?**

**I have a great relationship with my parents.**

**And your siblings as well?**

**With my siblings, yes. We all get along.**

**SIO: SO Have there been any life changing events happened in your life prior to BUD/s?**

**My dad was homeschooled all the way up until sophomore year of high school, and I went to high school for three years, graduated and I went to college for two years. I knew when I was in high school that I wanted to come to this. But my cross country coach at the time, I was very close with and who was kind of like a mentor to me. I wanted to kind of find out more about this training and about the demographic of guys who do well. So he contacted one of the NSW Scouts and found out that typically the guys who succeed are like in their young 20s. High schoolers don't normally do so hot. So. So he suggested to me, you know, maybe hold off, don't enlist right out of high school, maybe get a couple of years of life experience or not. Get a little stronger, a little more mentally, more resilient. So I took that advice on board and did a couple of years of community college just to stay busy. And then over those summers, I would go and kind of do something out of my comfort zone. So one summer, I went and worked at the summer camp in Yosemite. So going into that, I didn't know anyone there, had never been to that part of California before, but thought it would be a fun experience. And I thought it kind of pushed me to be better at adapting to new environments.**

**So, and do you think that was effective?**

**SIO: So, How did those experiences factor into, or that experience factor into your experience now?**

**I think it was effective. I think, I think, I *changed a bit,* most people do those couple years after high school. And I think that I think that I did better as a result. I don't know for sure what would've happened if I want to come here as 19 year old, but I'm glad that I made that*-***

**-more mature and getting comfortable?**

**Yeah. Yeah. And then just learning independence and making my own decisions, being away from home.**

**SIO: Uhm, How do you think your personality contributed to your progression through BUD/S?**

**Personality meaning…?**

**So, yeah, are those traits that are unique to you, and are predictable behavior, so it could be openness to ideas, conscientiousness, extroversions or introversion, you know what I mean? And agreeableness,**

**Right.**

**Like how you deal with stress, or anxiety.**

**I think I'm definitely introverted. So... You know, sometimes it's a bit of a grind being around all these dudes, especially, you know, things like on the island were together all the time. There's no getting away from them. But but I tend to also be pretty agreeable. I don't get angry very easily. And maybe as a result of growing up with so many siblings, pretty patient. Yes. And you can kind of take things in stride. So I don't think I really have any enemies in the class… I haven't gone off on too many people*-***

**-Even keel.**

**Right. I like to be calm and get along with others as much as possible.**

**SIO: So, Describe your background to becoming part of the SEAL community do you have any family or friends?**

**No, not really. My uncle was in the Air Force for a little while and my grandfathers were both in the Navy long time ago. But yes, I think since I was a kid, I wanted to go to the military. It's just interesting to me. But I didn't know what I knew I wanted to pursue. I didn't know anything about the SEALs until I was in high school. I watched the movie Lone Survivor. So I was I was very influential to me. I watched it with my best friend at the time. And then after the movie ended, I watched it and I told them I'm going to do that. And he started laughing. He was like, are you crazy? Like everyone in that movie died, like, that was very unpleasant. And uh, But I knew. I knew pretty much since I saw that later, some research I did. I was really drawn to the unity that I saw in the guys that were in that movie, how they were facing an incredibly negative circumstances like, you know, overwhelming force. They all kind of knew what was going to happen. And yet they didn't turn on one another. They didn't go every man for himself, they stayed together. They fought till the end and, I knew I knew I wanted to go to the military. And I knew that I wanted to be part of a brotherhood like that where it didn't matter what was happening. Guys were there for each other. So that was kind of what first turned me on to this program. Then quite a bit of research on my own, and eventually I ended up going for it.**

**biological father?**

**Stepfather**

**Stepfather?**

**Yeah...and uh that introverted side of me has always, I’ve always longed for a community.**

**Are you enlisted or officer?**

**I’m Enlisted**

**Enlisted.**

**SIO: So going back to your family, and. childhood, we're interested if you could describe your parents like their parenting style so uh, discipline, were you spanked as a little kid uh, free range parenting?**

**I've spanked as a kid, but my parents would always sit me down afterwards and let me know why. So it was never you know, there's never any ambiguity about it. I always knew what the reason for my punishment was. So, you know, typically when I was making decisions, I knew whether I was going to be disciplined for it. Other than that, though, my parents were fairly hands off, especially, you know, my mom would kind of.. she wasn't like helicopter parent. Like, I remember we'd go to the playground and all the other kids or moms would be like, hey, you know, be careful on that piece of equipment. Like, don't walk on top of the monkey bars. That type of thing from my mom was never like that. Yeah. She's like, if you walk on top of the monkey bars and you fall, you know, you're going to get hurt. And you know exactly what's going to happen. So if you do that and you get hurt, I'm not going to feel bad for you. So she would, you know, just just let us go and do the things we wanted to do.**

**Fail in a safe environment?**

***[00:08:35]* Yeah. She knew we weren't going to die falling off the monkey bars, but we decided to do that and got hurt. That's our fault. So, yeah, it's just kind of maintain that attitude. And even now here she said she doesn't worry about me because she knows that I made the decision to come here and I'm aware of the risks involved.**

**SIO: Did you move around in your childhood?**

**No, not at all. I was born in a house that I grew up in. So like a home birth. And I live there. All the way up until grade school-**

**-So you were homeschooled?**

**No, not at all. I was born in a house that I grew up in. So like a home birth. And I live there. All the way up until grade school. Homeschooled up until sophomore year of high school. And then that was, you know, even when I would take off over the summers, I still came back to that house. And that's. I was until I left the group camp in May of 2018.**

**SIO: And so, did you see any team sports or activities?**

**In highschool, did track and cross country. So people that I met on those teams and my coach were really positive. And uh, I love doing sports.**

**SIO: What have you done in the last five years prior to coming to BUD/s you mentioned, what was it, two years of community college?**

**Yes two years of Community college. And also, at that time, I was working as a server at a restaurant, and then *o*ver the summer, one summer, I went to summer camp and worked there, and then other summer I worked at San Diego County Fair. I got an aunt who lives. in Encinita so I stayed at her house over the summer.**

**SIO: Would you consider yourself impulsive?**

**Ummm, generally, no.**

**Ok, so do you have any tattoos you got on a whim, speeding tickets, big purchases?**

**Not really. I like to like to typically be pretty informed about the choices I'm going to make. And I like to do my research beforehand. I don't really make any impulse purchases or make any permanent decisions without thinking about it beforehand.**

**SIO: So, thinking about BUD/S, what was the most challenging part of BUD/S? So, a day, event, or it could be just a theme like, logs, or water?**

**All that stuff's challenging, certainly. But I think for me, so I was, uh, originally three, four, and then I got rolled in hell week, for a couple of injuries... and I think kind of making the decision to stay mentally in the game and come back with the class that I ended up coming back with three three seven. That was a very difficult decision because I'd been pretty much all the way through first phase, gone through, you know, a really challenging selection and realizing that I was going to have to start back. They won and no one cared about what I had already finished. That was really hard. Already having seen behind the curtain knowing that all that was coming.**

**SIO: What kept you going through that challenge?**

**I think just the resolution I had already made that this is where I wanted to be and what I wanted to do. I was I was still willing to do whatever I had to do to make it. But it was not an easy thing to accept.**

**So you had made a commitment?**

**Yes.**

**To yourself?**

**Yes, myself and I told my family I was doing this. My reputation is really important. I didn't want to be telling my parents saying, you know, it's too hard.**

**OK**

**SIO: So now we're getting the internal motivation and external factors. Did you feel supported by the group?**

**Yes. Yes. I had some friends, both in a previous class and my classes ahead of me two that were really encouraging and helped me... Sort of deal with the challenge of having to come back. A couple of guys who are in this class now, actually, who had already been rolled from 334, for injuries or whatever, that they had sustained during first phase. I knew I was going to be classing up with them. So it was good to have them around during the time that I was rolled.**

**SIO: Did you have any practices like physical, mental or spiritual, that you used to push through the challenges?**

**Yes, I'm a strong Christian, so I pray quite a bit. And also kind of a weird little saying, but, uh something that would just help me stay focused. As I would just say, this is what I'm doing right now. You know, no matter what was going on, if my mind started to wander and I started to wonder, like, hey, you know, it's pretty sweet if I weren't out here in the search zone right now. I would just repeat myself, "this is what I'm doing right now". It doesn't matter what I could be doing. This is what I am doing. Just help me calm, stay grounded in the present moment*.***

**SIO: When you made a difficult decision during training, what went through your mind as you made that decision? Can you give me an example of a decision that you really struggled with during BUD/S? So, for example, running a classmate out, or turning them in for cheating?**

**Yeah, there's a couple couple of difficult points... There's a good friend of mine and first phase who we ran out of our boat. Really liked him as a person. But uh, you know, wasn't... wasn't able to keep up and other guys in the boat was saying some really negative things to him. And I didn't feel like the words they were saying were really reflective of who he was and what he had shown us about himself, up until that point. But the fact of the matter is, he was born this way. So I didn't personally say anything negative to him, but it was really difficult to see him take that negativity from the other guys in the crew.**

**So what got you through the decision to say, he’s got to go, we got to take action?**

**There's a performance standard and at a certain- most of the time we'll try to help one another. You know, you're lacking in one area, but at a certain point, you see a guy give up on himself. And if you can't help him bring himself to the standard and he's given up on himself and he's done up here, we recognize that in him. And I can see that he was he was out.**

**So that's... Kind of, what’s the greater good of the team?**

**You have to recognize that everyone else in the boat is pulling their weight.So you don’t want them to get hurt.**

**Best for the team.**

**SIO: Why do you think you were successful in completing BUD/S?**

**I think I probably some guys have mentioned sense of humor is important. I think that's a small part of a bigger strategy. I think the reason that I'm still here is just the ability to segment and compartmentalize my mind. I don't think that there's really any evolution in doing this program that every guy who shows up to Coronado could complete. I think, I think everyone who has gotten a contract and made it here could do every evolution from the program. But it's when you start to overwhelm yourself with, "I'm doing this, which sucks". And then after this, I know what I'm doing and I know that's hard. And then we have a night evolution, so I'm not going get much sleep tonight. And then tomorrow is a really challenging thing. And you start to just stretch what your mind run away. And those guys end up just quitting on something that, you know, they could easily finish. So I think uh-**

**So, they talked themselves out of it before they even started?**

**So I think I'm still here just because you take things one day at a time and kind of make light of present circumstances.**

**SIO: Is there anything, uh actually, has this experience changed you?**

**Absolutely. I think the biggest thing is perspective on what it means to suffer. I feel I feel a lot older than I am just because when I'm in an area with peers, you know, you know, we go downtown or something and you're around, the 20 year old year olds instantly recognize that they have no idea what it means for the way that we have and they have no idea what they're capable of. We've kind of gotten a glimpse of that through some of the things we've been put through. We realize that our potential is incredible, but there's people out there no idea how much they can accomplish. No idea how hard it can rise. So I think the biggest thing that's changed about me is my weirdness of what you can do when you really set your mind to something. What's possible.**

**Okay. Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think would be helpful to our study investigating this idea of resilience, heartiness, and mindfulness?**

**No, I don’t think so, I think you’re off to a great several questions.**

**OK, so stop.**