**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Quinn Barber**

**Date: 17AUG20**

**Participant #: 247**

**Length of the Interview: 20:19**

**Interviewer:** Record this.

**Participant:** No, not at all.

**Interviewer:** And then what’s your number?

**Participant:** 247.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so when did you start BUD/S and is this your first BUD/S experience?

**Participant:** This is my first BUD/S experience. Uh I started uhm Bo was August 6th or August 8th of 2019 uhm.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** Actual BUD/S itself was the beginning September of 2019 as well.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so I’m going to ask you some background questions.

**Participant:** Okay.

**Interviewer:** How many siblings do you have? Like older brother, older sister?

**Participant:** I’m an only child.

**Interviewer**: Okay, that’s easy.

**Participant:** Yep.

**Interviewer:** Were your parents married, separated, divorced?

**Participant:** Divorced when I was 4.

**Interviewer:** Are you close with them?

**Participant:** Absolutely. But I wouldn’t say as much so as like I guess some other people. I am close with them but I, I feel like there’s people that are a lot closer with their parents like are best friends with their parents and call ‘em every day. I mean, I probably call my parents like maybe I don’t know twice a month.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** Something like that. Nothing, nothing crazy they’re there and they support me but.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so what would you say any, did you have any life changing events before you came to BUD/S? And whatever you think is life changing is life changing cause there’s not, some people have three things and some people have none.

**Participant:** Uhm, I didn’t have a whole lot so I would say in highschool I wouldn’t say I guess, ya know, life changing is big maybe it's a little bit smaller than that but I, uhm, my mom got married to uhm a guy that lived in Florida and uhm so I kind had lived in uhm Wheaton Illinois its in the Chicago land area, uhm, for my uh entire life up until I was uhm 14 and uhm ended up moving with my mom and uh kinda having to uhm not see my dad anymore kinda had to pick sides between my parents uhm which kinda sucked and uhm there was a whole uh process in Illinois to get that approved with divorced parents and stuff so I had to uhm go through that I actually had my own lawyer and everything.

**Interviewer:** Wow.

**Participant:** And uhm, had to like go in and talk to the judge and he had to grant uhm, ya know my mom the ability to take me down to Florida. Ended up going to school down there for a year and it was like freshman year of highschool so uhm it was kind of a different adjustment I, I would say Florida the culture is a little bit different and just the kids are different and uhm, eh I went from being like pretty suburban uhm to being really rural uhm so it's just, it was just different uhm but I think it I think I gained a lot from it just being more of a people person and more of ya know could get along with anyone and I think that’s super important just in anything you do.

**Interviewer:** So that specifically from your experience helped you in BUD/S being able to be a people person.

**Participant:** Uhm yeah, yeah because that was the first time I mean uhm Wheaton, Illinois there are like, it's like the most churches per square mile in the US. Super conservative town, I don’t know if you’ve heard of like Billy Graham Wheaton ...

**Interviewer:** Yep, yeah.

**Participant:** College uhm so super uhm Christian town and noth, nothing’s wrong with that but uhm you kinda I think people in the town kinda grow up in their little bubble and there’s a lot of kids that they end up going to Wheaton College to find their spouse and then they end up getting married at 22 and uhm that wasn’t anything that ever really appealed to me uhm but yeah so I, I think getting away from that bubble and kinda getting out of my comfort zone that was big and then uhm college did that a lot for me too uhm before coming here you're able to work with other people from kinda different backgrounds and stuff and I think that’s huge, that’s huge.

**Interviewer:** So, what about your personality has contributed to your progression in BUD/S?

**Participant:** Uhm, so I think I’m uh pretty hard on myself and pretty self-aware and I think that’s uhm big so I think uh kinda a lot of guys uh don’t they aren’t necessarily like quick learners when it comes to like hey I did this wrong I cant screw that up again kinda thing like everybody here everyone of these guys screwed up at some point uhm and I think it's kinda how you bounce back from that so uh whether it's you not doing well in an evolution or you failing something or uhm even you just not getting along with uhm your peers here or making the wrong call when it came to uhm how we were going to do this or that and just kinda learning and changing from that I think is huge.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** Uhm, I think that’s something and uh ya know I’ve, I’ve always kinda realized that this and just anything you’re going to do in life isn’t going to happen overnight uhm and I think that’s really hard for especially the younger guys you see coming in here through the pipeline like 18, 19, right out of highschool, uhm it's hard for those guys to uhm realize that, ya know, we’re not going to wake up tomorrow morning and, and have tridents on our chests so, uhm yeah so I guess those two things.

**Interviewer:** That’s very mature, yeah.

**Participant:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Uhm tell me why did you even want to become a SEAL, like did you have someone in the family that was military?

**Participant:** So.

**Interviewer:** Did you read a book, see a movie, play a video game?

**Participant:** Uhm, yeah so, I watched a movie Tears of the Sun, it’s a terrible movie. Uhm and uh, I think I was like 8. And I asked my, I was watching with my Dad, I remember. Uhm in our family living room and I asked him what are Navy SEALs and he, he said that they were like the toughest of the tough and tha... I remember him using the phrase that they spit bullets. And I uh, I said, I was 8 years old and I said spittin bullets sounds pretty, pretty frickin’ cool. Uhm, I wanna do that. And uhm, it was just something that culminated and I, I think you get asked that question a thousand times and you can give a thousand different answers, but uhm, at the end of the day at least for me (sigh) like I think there, like the reason, there’s tons of different reasons that I’m here and where I at, ya know, I wanted to be here but I just always felt right man, I was like this is where I’m meant to be this is what I’m meant to do, uhm, I’m a huge believer in God. Uh, I don’t know, I think, I think you kinda have to believe in something uhm, to get through this pipeline. And, and I kinda prayed about it a bunch and uhm just always felt like this is kinda what I was gonna pursue and this is what I was gonna do and ya know this is ultimately what I was gonna, going to do. (Unintelligible, what I was meant to do maybe?)

**Interviewer:** Okay, tell me a little about your childhood. Like how did your parents discipline you? Did you, did you get spanked? Did you get a timeout? Did you have to do physical things?

**Participant:** Uhm, so I got spanked, I think my Dad pulled the belt out a couple times. Uhm, I don’t know, nothing out of the ordinary.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Participant:** Uhm, yeah, I was uh I was, for the most part like I said I was born in that Wheaton bubble. So I think I was uh, pretty, pretty sheltered as a kid, uhm so I, I didn’t get into a ton of trouble or anything uhm. Ya know I didn’t, I think there’s some, some kids here, that uhm, some of the guys that, ya know, that grew up in really rough homes. I, for the most part I was super fortunate. Uhm, and thank God for that. Uhm.

**Interviewer:** Tell me about...

**Participant:** So.

**Interviewer:** your highschool years. Did you, were you on a team sport? Did you have a real close knit community in something that you did? And I know you moved but…

**Participant:** So...

**Interviewer:** even middle school.

**Participant:** Yeah, so, I did uh I always did boy scouts. Uh which was, that was huge for me growing up. You’re just kinda, get, ya know keeps you busy. And, and I think that’s one of the reasons that I stayed out of a lot of trouble was that I was busy doing stuff all the time. I did cross country, I did hockey, I did indoor track, and I did outdoor track. Uhm.

**Interviewer:** Wow.

**Participant:** So I was, I was runnin’ or skatin’ most of the time. Uhm I mean there was, there was nights in highschool uhm where like Monday night I would have cross country practice and then I’d go home and get my uniform because we had boy scouts that night. And then Tuesday I would have cross country practice and then I would go home for 2 hours, do homework, eat dinner, and then I had hockey practice for 2 hours. And, and then the same thing was Wednesday night. And like Thursday and Friday I would get a break. But I think towards my senior year that changed because that’s when I got a job, so I was like workin’ those two nights, so it was just like I was always super busy like I didn’t have time to turn to drugs or whatever kids are doin’ nowadays to get in trouble.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Participant:** So.

**Interviewer:** What about the last 5 years of your life prior to BUD/S? So, you said you didn’t come straight out of highschool or straight out of college, what’d you?

**Participant:** I came straight out of college.

**Interviewer:** Straight out of college?

**Participant:** Yes, yeah, I went…

**Interviewer:** So you went from highschool to college to?

**Participant:** Uhm.

**Interviewer:** enlist?

**Participant:** Yes, yes, uh no, well I’m an officer, so

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** I, I was in the uhm, uh the ROTC program at Ole Miss.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** So, yeah, I uh went there uhm tried to get into the Naval Academy, didn’t get in, uhm hindsight glad I didn’t because I enjoyed my college years. Uhm I went to visit Ole Miss and I think I was gonna visit UMaine and couple other colleges. Uh went to Ole Miss and was like game day and uh all the girls were really hot so that was ultimately...

**Interviewer:** (Laughter).

**Participant:** like why I chose to go there. Kind of a dumb reason, but uhm, my mom was askin’ me. And we got a tour and they were like most Miss America’s of any university in like the U.S. And I was like…

**Interviewer:** I’m in. (Laughter).

**Participant:** Sold! I’m here. That’s an easy decision.

**Interviewer:** That’s alright, I hear a lot of people pick for, because the food that they have.

**Participant:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Or the coffee.

**Participant:** Yeah, exactly.

**Interviewer:** They have starbucks.

**Participant:** Yeah, (unintelligible).

**Interviewer:** I’ve heard of worse things so. Okay, so would you consider yourself impulsive? I see you have a tattoo. Is that an impulse or did you think about it or?

**Participant:** Uhm, no. Uh it’s Saint Michael, uhm.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** We’re really Catholic, so.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** Uhm, no that was not, not impulsive. Something I’ve thought about. I don’t know, I, I feel like I can’t get any more because I’m an officer and it’s like looked down on, I’m not sure whether I’m gonna uhm gonna listen to that or follow those kinda unsaid, unsaid rules, but uh yeah, no I wouldn't, I wouldn’t consider myself impulsive.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So what was the most, think of the most challenging day you’ve had here at BUD/S and what motivated you to push through?

**Participant:** So it was Monday of the 3rd week, of 1st phase so the 3rd week...

**Interviewer:** Is that Hell Week?

**Participant:** Uh no, no.

**Interviewer:** Oh.

**Participant:** No, that’s the 4th week. So the 3rd week uhm, it’s kinda known as, and I think things are changing now, but it, it has been known as like a taper week. So they do like, you have like 2 or 3 days of like normal BUD/S days and then they kind of taper in before you start Hell Week obviously. And uhm, that Monday we had a log PT and we just did count off lunges for days. It was just like and uhm, I was like called out early on, singled out by the instructors for uhm kinda not doin’ well on the lunges and the ends of the log are known as the harder parts and I was, the instructor was like Brynce, you’re gonna stay at the end of the log the entire time. And I said okay, roger that, and uhm and so I was, I was at the end for the rest of the log pt. And they’re, they do them in 3 parts. They’re like half hour incre, ya know, iterations I guess is the right. So, this is like 15 minutes into the first iteration, so I know I’ve got like another hour comin’ at me I’m, I’ma be on the end of that log. Uhm, and I, that was the hardest I’ve ever been worked my entire life like...

**Interviewer:** Mhm.

**Participant:** physically. And I was just.

**Interviewer:** So, what helped you get through that?

**Participant:** Uhm.

**Interviewer:** Especially knowing that it wasn’t just like half an hour it was gonna be like the whole…

**Participant:** So, uhm, in the moment I don’t think I really thought about it, I wasn’t like, I didn’t I don’t know, it’s just. I guess guys have that like aha moment where they like think about quitting, I didn’t, like, I was like I’m gonna be here. Like, it doesn’t, they’re gonna drag me away. Like I, I don’t, I don’t know, maybe, probably sounds like super uh I don’t know like...

**Interviewer:** No, no.

**Participant:** tough of me. But yeah I just, I never thought about that. Uhm.

**Interviewer:** So what practices helped you get through mental, spiritual, you said you’re Catholic.

**Participant:** Yeah, so, uhm.

**Interviewer:** Did you say a lot of prayers?

**Participant:** That night I prayered, I prayed a bunch and then I talked to my buddy who’s a couple of classes in front of me. We actually went to college together uhm and we were really good friends, trained all throughout college. He’s in SQT now, uhm, and I called him and he kinda gave me reassurance, uhm. He bas, there was uh, another kid in his class that kinda same sort of thing had happened and he made it through uhm. And he was like I said in the same situation and he was like dude I know you I know you would, uhm, I know you’re not gonna, ya know, you’re aren’t going anywhere kinda thing just like keep your head down and keep pushin’ and… so that kinda is what I did and ya know, uh, next day’s a new day kinda woke up with a positive attitude and uhm things got a little bit better. Ya know, you’re, you’re kinda so far down at some point you’re like oh it’s gotta get better at some point, so

**Interviewer:** (Laughter)

**Participant:** And then it did, uhm, and like I said uhm, thank God for him and ya know, thank God for these guys supporting me too. Even these dudes that were on my log they knew uh that I was like strugglin’ and, and because of that they, ya know, picked up the slack. So, and it’s ya know everybody’s gotta bad day, ya know? Even the, even the strongest dude in here had a bad day.

**Interviewer:** Absolutely.

**Participant:** So.

**Interviewer:** What about you had to make, I’m gonna ask you more about mental things now, if ya had to make a tough decision as an officer, uh, anything any decision that you struggled with. Like turning in a classmate or running someone out because they really shouldn’t be here. What did you think about? What, thr, went through your mind when you made that decision and could you give me an example?

**Participant:** Uhm.

**Interviewer:** And I’ve probably heard of about everything that you’re thinking about right now.

**Participant:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Probably already heard of them.

**Participant:** You probably, uhm, so we ran three kids out. One, uh one of the land portages we had. We actually ended up runnin’ the boat with four guys, uhm which kinda sucked, ya know, ya jus, ya know, ya jus, you’re like oh I have seven well now I have four uhm.

**Interviewer:** But, so, what made ya think of, it was okay ...

**Participant:** Uhm, so.

**Interviewer:** or that you needed to that person out?

**Participant:** So, yeah, so, so some guys are a little different, uhm some officers, they’re all a little different, there’s one guy, like there’s a couple guys in here and it’s like and they knew immediately if that guy wasn’t performing they’re gone. For every dude that I ran out or uhm kinda our boat crew had chose to run out it was normally a guy that was like a, a repeated poor performer, uhm, and was, at, at some point you have to have the realization that like this dude’s gonna get someone hurt if, if he’s here.

**Interviewer:** Right.

**Participant:** Ya know? Uhm and it’s uhm it’s a hard decision, but I think at the end of the day like I don’t have any regrets about runnin’ those guys out and I think, hopefully they’re better for it now and hopefully they realize kinda the uhm the decision because I know if I wasn’t performing and it was consistently a problem like I wouldn’t wanna get someone hurt like I wouldn’t wanna be...

**Interviewer:** Sure.

**Participant:** That’s just selfish, and that’s...

**Interviewer:** Right.

**Participant:** Everybody and anybody in this room uhm ya know knows that’s not okay, so.

**Interviewer:** So why do you think you were successful in completing BUD/S? You’re on that path to be successful.

**Participant:** Uhm. I think that the guys around you make you successful. Uh, I think that speaks ta kinda who you’ve put yourself around (unintelligible).

**Interviewer:** Okay, so let me ask you opposite. What made, did you notice things that were different about the kids who quit, who left? What made them different than you and the people who are still here?

**Participant:** Uhm, so I noticed a couple things. So one was, uhm, you would see guys kinda get uhm like it wouldn’t, they would get stuck in like they’re uhm, rock climbers call it your three foot zone or whatever. They’re like only worry about you’re three foot zone, only worry about like what’s right in front of you, what can affect you in like that second. And I think guys, you’d see them with that like thousand foot stare, and they’d just like they would just be completely out of it, they wouldn’t, they wouldn’t be thinking straight, they’re like thinking like oh, like it’s almost like in a Hell Week, like you’re thinking about that minute you’re in. Like if I’m in the push up position I’m in the push up position. If I’m going to hit the surf I’m going to hit the surf. Where these kids would be like holy shit it’s Monday like we’ve got like three, four more days of this. Like in my mind I was just like ya know I just have to get to the meal or I just have to get through this exercise ya know? It was never, so guys thinkin’ too far ahead and kinda havin’ that thousand foot stare and then uhm you would uh. You would definitely see uhm a guy like start to get, start to get super quiet and stuff and it was when he was uhm kinda comin’ to that realization that this wasn’t for him, uhm whether it be because he wasn’t performing or he wasn’t fittin’ in for, with the guys or guys were kinda pushin’ him out uhm, especially in our class, we’re kinda, we’re known as the class that kinda like ate our own young. Like dudes would be like if you’re not supposed to be...

**Interviewer:** You had trouble with your leadership right?

**Participant:** Yeah, our leadership quit right off the bat like …

**Interviewer:** I heard that.

**Participant:** Yeah, and in Hell Week so, but it was like dudes were really hard on each other. Uhm and I don’t know if that’s the way it’s supposed to be or, or anything. But ya know ultimately like that weeded out a lot of individuals, so.

**Interviewer:** And ultimately how do you think this whole experience at mud, at BUD/S has changed you as a person?

**Participant:** Uhm, I think I have a better idea of like what’s, what’s possible and what uhm myself and these group of guys are kinda capable of and I think that’s really cool uhm. And I think I’m uh I don’t know just a better person from it. I’ve, I’ve grown a ton uhm I am a lot more grateful for little things (laughter).

**Interviewer:** Hot water.

**Participant:** Yeah, yeah little things like that. Uhm, good food. Uhm, not eatin’ the galley which is (chuckle). Yeah good food, grateful just for little things man, you’ll be like sittin’ at home like playin’ video games and you’re warm and you’re not runnin’ and you’re ju, I don’t know, you’re just ...

**Interviewer:** Mhm.

**Participant:** like I’m so much more content with that than I used to be. Uhm which is kinda, I think is, is huge. I think that’s awesome, even as like from a faith based stand point as well so.

**Interviewer:** Anything that I should’ve asked you? So the Navy’s askin’ us to do this to try to help them be able to pick better candidates to come through BUD/S.

**Participant:** (Unintelligible).

**Interviewer:** Is there anything I should’ve asked you that would maybe help illustrate that? That I didn’t ask you?

**Participant:** Uhm, I don’t know, that’s kind of a tough ans, or question to answer on the spot. I would kinda ask uhm about uhm just make sure every dude you find is like the, the most selfless dude in the world. Because those are the, those are the guys that are the difference makers. Those are the guys that uhm I, ya know, myself likes to be around and that’s who, who I strive to be to and I think that’s so important man.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Participant:** Uh, the teams that (unintelligible). Just, uhm, some of these guys come out here and uhm ya know they’re the first to be inside and showerin’ at the end of the day and they’re the, ya know the last person to help out to kinda look for work and stuff and uhm that’s bullshit man.

**Interviewer:** You can tell?

**Participant:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Okay, that was very help...