**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Daniel McDonald**

**Date: 17 AUG 2020**

**Participant #: 553**

**Length of the Interview: 10:08**

Interviewer (Code in Blue):

Participant (Code in black):

**Interview Guide**

**Is this your first BUDS experience and when did you start?**

**Yes started with class 337**

**And then you went to 338 or you went to \*unintelligible\***

**Uhhh 338 then 329**

**Ok and just starting with your personal life, how many siblings do you have? Are they older, younger, girls, boys?**

**I’m oldest of three siblings, 2 boys 1 girl. Uhh Girl is the youngest, she is nineteen. I am the oldest. I’m 24**

**Okay and then where your parents married, separated or divorced?**

**Married the whole time**

**And what is your relationship with them?**

**Uhhh it’s good, really good. Good household.**

**Do you have any life changing events that happened to you before buds?**

**Uh No**

**Okay**

**What do you think your personality contributed to your success at buds?**

**Um just keep going um**

**Ok ok and then describe to me the background that made you want to be a seal. Like did you know anyone that was a seal, were your parents military, did you watch a movie, play a video game?**

**Uhh I just kind of knew about it. I couldn’t tell you one thing or another. Just when I was young um I knew it was out there and I grew up with, with doing sports and uh I liked the idea of serving.**

**Okay, Okay I am going to ask you more about that in a minute but tell me about your childhood. Like When your parents disciplined you, did they put you in a time out, did they spank you, did they take away stuff? What was the norm?**

**Umm just time outs I guess.**

**okay**

**Lectures like any other parents would**

**Yeah**

**\*unintelligible\***

**Did you move around a lot when you were little?**

**Nope, same house**

**So tell me about your teenage years. Did you play sports? Did you have a tight knit community like boy scouts, were you religious?**

**I’m an eagle scout**

**Oh that’s excellent**

**Eagle scouts**

**Congrats**

**I did that**

**Thank you. Definitely uh one of my bigger accomplishments I’ve ever done. Um three sports. Football, lacrosse and wrestling. And then I am also a volunteer firefighter so I did that and I am still currently in the program. But I obviously participate in the community**

**So which one of these where these all very tight knit communities?**

**All very tight knit umm obviously I am sure you already know about the boy scouts. I hold that organization very high. I was in a very good troop. The town I grew up in, good town, nothing really bad happens there so sports are good. Uma and then obviously the fire department is kind of similar to this service community, all that good stuff.**

**What did you do in the last five years of your life prior to BUDS? Like did you go to high school-**

**Um I’ve been in the navy so-**

**Okay so**

**For six years in May**

**So it star- after- so did you go to high school?**

**Mhmm mm**

**Did you graduate from high school?**

**Yes I graduated from high school**

**And then you enlisted?**

**Yeah like six months off and then got my contract and joined the navy um I went in to be a rescue swimmer. Flying helicopters.**

**Okay**

**That’s what I wanted to do**

**So you flew the helicopters or on helicopters?**

**No I was on helicopters. Where the crew is.**

**Um Okay and would you consider yourself impulsive? Like do you binge drink, do you have tattoos…?**

**No**

**No? ok**

**And then what, what was, think of who taught you the most challenging day at buds. What was that and what motivated you to get through it?**

**Uh I wouldn’t say any day was more challenging or less challenging than any of the others, just**

**Really? You’re not gonna tell me log PT or hell week after the nap or**

**It’s like anything**

**Ok**

**I don’t know um**

**Okay**

**One day at a time**

**So what motivated you to push through when you were going through any of those difficult times?**

**Uh just it’s going to end eventually. It’s not going to stop**

**Okay**

**Do you have any things that you practice that helped you like uh spirituality or mental things or physical things uh uh meditating anything that you do?**

**Not really**

**Um did you have any difficult decisions that you had to go through at BUDS? Like thinking that you had to help run someone out or turn someone in for cheating or anything like that?**

**Uh nah alright someone**

**I’ve heard a lot of examples so**

**Alright so I was the LPO of 3 7. Um we had one dude who got caught cheating on the O course and that kinda got blown up and uh I kinda had to do the role of the LPO thing and take care of that appropriately so that was a uh little bit of a fiasco**

**So, so what did you, what was going through your mind when you did that? What, what was uh what helped you make that decision? One way or another**

**Uh obviously my moral values kinda from growing up in all those different organizations and how I was raised from my parents um what’s what’s right and what’s wrong and how something like that should be handled**

**Mhmm and why do you think you were successful in completing buds?**

**Um I didn’t stop. Just kept going. Made the timelines for the evolutions and woke up every day and put my uniform on**

**Let me ask this a different way- what did you notice about the people who left? Where there any differences where you could say “yeah I knew that guy was going to leave”?**

**No**

**Really?**

**Yeah. Yeah I mean some people yeah, other people no. It’s hard to say um I mean I worked with a lot of, uh they are called buds duds, guys who don’t make it and go to other programs right. So my last job as a rescue swimmer, a lot of rescue swimmers are guys from this program. All good- most of them are good guys. Um I would say some better, some not. But say the same thing about guys in the class**

**Mhmm**

**It’s hard to say um I mean they are all doing a job. I’m sure those guys will put their lives on the line for other people just like these guys who will**

**Do you think this experience changed you as a person? Going through BUDS?**

**Yes and no. Um I don’t ever think I am ever any different than who I was when I came here uh but I would say I am a better person I guess for going through this, experiencing this**

**How how how are you better?**

**Uh just learning more. Every day you learn more stuff, learn more about yourself. I wouldn’t say thought that’s just because of this program. It’s just struggles. Hardships.**

**Okay**

**Everyone can go through struggles and hardships different parts of life**

**So the Navy hired us to try to get a good feel for what makes people good candidates to go through buds so that it’s not so hard to find people who fit in. What should I have asked you that would help you, help us understand more about BUDS? Like is there something that were missing that were not even asking and you say “oh my god if you looked for the people with whatever, that’s easy to see they are not going to make it”**

**Um I think background have to do a lot of it. Kinda like those questions of what you did growing up and who you are kind of as a person before you even get here right like you want to probably try and attract guys with good moral compasses, good past experiences, um who have already been through some sort of struggle and hardship**

**Okay**

**Um**

**But you said you didn’t really go through it any hardships before you came here**

**Well you got all those different things I did right? So like eight years**

**Firefighter**

**Trying to become an eagle scout, fire fighter, sports**

**But would you say they were hardships?**

**Um I would say growing up not being that smart in school and having a learning disability so that could be a hardship or**

**Yeah**

**Or just working with different people. Um I wouldn’t say like it’s any crazy kind of hardship but**

**But I it’s interesting that you say good moral compass. How do you think we can tell if someone has a good moral compass?**

**Um**

**I I think that’s a good thought**

**Getting to know who they are without necessarily talking to the person because somebody could tell you what you want to hear. Even like now right? Like you only you only know who I am from what im telling you**

**Exactly**

**You wanna kind of \*unintelligible\* maybe your friends. Kinda like**

**Like what do your scout master type in**

**Yeah kinda like**

**Fire station**

**Look at how they do for security clearances, I know that’s probably not feasible but that’s probably the best way to really get to know who somebody is.**

**Yeah this all what we call “Self report”. You’re telling me everything you want me to know, you could**

**Yeah**

**Make up something totally**

**Like you have no idea if any of this is true or not**

**Yeah, right**

**So**

**And we are not go verify anything**

**Exactly**

**Either so I’m going by what you tell me because I’m hoping that you have the altruisticness that you want to help other people**

**You’re hoping I have those characteristics already**

**Yes**

**Of those \*unintelligible\* that we talked about**

**Yes, absolutely**

**I would say you know it’s kind of like um what they are starting to do with the program is look for people like that and kinda**

**Yup**

**Put that at the top rank because you could teach, it’s easy to get someone to run faster or jump or swim um you know it’s kind of hard though to reengineer 18 years of being \*unintelligible\* so to say**

**Yeah**

**I mean a guy that would pick up trash you know as a 13 year old boy scout, you know what I mean**

**Yeah I do. Thank you so much**

**No problem**

**I really appreciate this. That’s very help.**