**TRANSCRIBER NAME: Nico Sbrocco**

**Date: 21 JAN 2020**

**Participant #: 93**

**Interviewer: Dr. Deirdre Dixon**

Interviewer (Code in Blue)

Participant (Code in black)

Interviewer: Ok, so what’s your number?

#93: 93

Interviewer: And then, is it OK if I record?

#93: Yes.

Interviewer: So, just tell me about how many siblings you have and like what’s your birth order?

#93: I have three siblings. I’m the oldest of them all. Uh, I have two younger sisters and a younger brother.

Interviewer: And then, think about your life experiences, and what do you, what would you describe as a crucible event, or something that really shaped your life?

#93: Probably uhh, my parents being divorced, uh kinda led to uh I had to uh I that uh live with my mom and I wasn’t too fond of that idea because I was really close to my dad, and I eventually got the age where I was able to choose which house I wanted to go to and I went to my dads and it was really good for me because my dads side of the family is really just uhm, really close and really family oriented, and all their values and morals just like got uh passed on to me and I was just uh really grateful for them. My grandparents were very supportive and involved in my life, along with my sister. It was really good, you know.

Interviewer: So, how do you think those experiences factored into your experience at BUD/S?

#93: Just coming from a, coming from a good background, I guess uhm I grew up in church and I would always fall back on God when things got really uh difficult, and uhm just like being raised up that household and my grandmother is a prayer warrior. She is like my number one supporter and anything I ever did she would just like, supported me no matter what it was and I just didn’t want to let anyone down. So I think that kinda like was a driving force behind me.

Interviewer: So tell me about how you think your personality helped you through BUD/S. Is there anything about your personality that you think made you successful?

#93: I don’t know, maybe being, being quiet and reserved. If I had to pick anything, uhm I’m kinda quiet. It takes me a while to warm up to some people. But when I do, its uhm, I open up a lot and get really close with some of the guys in, but the first, going through first phase and basic orientation, I was just knda to myself alot, and kinda watched things happen, uhm I just kinda like formed my opinion and took things as they came at me.

Interviewer: So what motivated you to push through? Like did you feel supported by the group? Even though you weren’t close? Or what?

#93: Somewhat, yeah . Whenever we’d do you know just really hard evolutions, the boat crew would just come together and uhm you know drive one another and motivate each other. Something that’s a really cool aspect about it, is guys you barely know, you get put through this crucible, and it somehow brings you closer, because you all are all uh experiencing and feeling the same kind of effects and pain. Uhm there’s just kinda no way around it.

Interviewer: Uhm, what would you say, what practices, helped you get through, push through, like spiritual, mental, physical? What did you do? Did you have anything specific that you did when it was a really hard time?

#93: I would say a little prayer in my head, uhm, that think that, looking back on it, and in the moment, it really helped me. As far as mental things go, I just tried to take, take things as they came and like, you know one evolution at a time, and I didnt think too far ahead, I just kinda went with the flow of things and I tried not to overthink a lot of it and that really helped keep a level head.

Interviewer: And then, can you think of a time when you had a difficult decision to make during training and what went through your mind during that decision?

#93: A difficult decision? Uhm.

Interviewer: And if you can’t think of anything that’s fine. Not everybody has decisions they have to make.

#93: Uhm, nothing really comes to mind.

Interviewer: Why do you think that you were successful in completing BUD/s? There’s a lot of people that started with your class, and you're making it here, you made it, you got your trident, you know what made you successful?

#93: Uhm, I don’t know I guess just like living it day by day and just like I was saying earlier, not, not thinking too far ahead, not overthinking things, just tried to remain calm whenever things were chaotic, and I just knew that there was a lot of talk and I knew it wasn’t always gonna suck, for lack of a better word.

Interviewer: Ok so let me ask you this, did you notice anything different about the people that didn’t make it? Like what made someone quit and you were able to stick it out?

#93: Not believing in themselves. If I had to give anybody any advice, who quit and wanted to come back or somebody who wanted to try the program out, I’d say just to believe in themselves because there was a lot of times where I doubted myself, even prior to coming, I was really nervous about it, and it gave me butterflies I just couldn’t get rid of, but it just all came back to believing in yourself and believing in what you're doing and just believing that this is what I truly wanted to come here and do. And, I think that helped me and the guys that had doubts.

Interviewer: Ok what about, what, what, part of your background led you to even being a SEAL in the first place?

#93: Like made me want to do this?

Interviewer: Yeah what made you want to do it?

#93: Uhm, like I was a little kid, and I had this game system, the Playstation One, and there was this game called the SOCOM US Navy SEALs. It kinda planted this seed. I always grew up uhh living like the outdoors lifestyle, hunting, fishing, and shooting guns. The idea of being in the military appealed to me, and even more so like being in special ops and stuff. Uhh and as I got older, I got more interested in it and did my research and always came back to the navy and the navy seals. Yeah i just really liked the idea of it being considered one of the hardest things to do.

Interviewer: What about your childhood like when you did something wrong at home, how did your parents discipline you? And it might have been different for your mom and your dad if you lived in two different houses. How did that work? Like if you did something wrong, what did your mom do? What did your dad do?

#93: Typically get a whooping.

Interviewer: Ok.

#93: My mom didn’t really like to do that all too much. I mean neither of my parents you know enjoyed discipling a child in that way you know but when it came to it and I needed it.

Interviewer: A lot of people do that, so what about when you were a teenager, like anything big like did you move around, did you play any sports? Like what kinda formed you?

#93: I grew up playing baseball for a lot of my youth and I moved around a few times when I lived with my mom and once I finally got the choice of moving in with my dad I kinda grounded in one spot and stayed in the same school for the entirety of my uhh time as a student going through high school and middle school and I ran a couple years of cross country and uh cross country and track in high school.

Interviewer: Tell me about those team oriented things. What did you think about that? Did you feel like it was a tight community? Was it everyone for themselves?

#93: It was uhh, our team was very tight. An uh, it was just because our coach was just like absolutely phenomenal. He devoted so much time and effort and multiple hours before work and after work just to our team and making sure everything was taken care of and uh he made sure that there was no animosity between different players, or uh teammates on the team.

Interviewer: And then, how bout, so what was your life like in the past five years before you came to BUD/S? Did you go to high school then go straight to boot camp? Like what was your sequence?

#93: Umm I went to high school. Graduated in 2018. I spent those four years kinda figuring out what I wanted to do with my life and I was kinda bouncing back and forth between going to school and doing a trade and coming to the military and finally boiled it down to joining the Navy. Now, that’s part of the reason why I joined uh cross country, was to get in shape, get in good shape, and it’s led to even greater things. I got really close and tight with the boys on the team and I still keep in touch with a lot of them. My best friend, uh was on the, was on the team and he continued on with his career running into college and uhh yeah that was.

Interviewer: So, did you join the Navy specifically to be a SEAL?

#93: Yes ma’am.

Interviewer: So did you go straight from boot camp, do they call it that in the navy? Boot camp?

#93: Yes ma’am.

Interviewer: Ok, so did you go straight from boot camp to come here?

#93: I did. So I went straight to boot camp, and after two months of that, I went to BUD/S prep which is like uhh, a preparatory school for, for BUD/S, uhm swimming, running, and lifting. Stuff like that. And then I came straight here. So it was like a pretty straight forward process.

Interviewer: So what motivates you on a daily basis?

#93: Uhm just being a part of this community, and my family.

Interviewer: Think about your hardest day at BUD/S. What was the most challenging part? And then, uhm what was that? And then, uh what motivated you to keep going?

#93: There’s been a lot of lows. Uhm I don’t think I have one specific day in mind, but there’s a few moments during hellweek that were like really, really hard to like uhh push past that mental barrier of just like realizing that I had a few more days left of this kind of treatment and uhm, like I said before, it’s just like saying a little prayer in my head and just knowing that it will be over eventually just really helped me during those hard times. Even throughout BUD/S, not just hellweek specifically.

Interviewer: Uhm, how did the whole experience of BUD/S change you as a person?

#93: Thats a good question, uhm.

Interviewer: Or did it?

#93: It did. It did. Uhm, to be more confident in myself and to believe I’m, I’m capable of what I think I’m not capable of, and.

Interviewer: Ok.

#93: I try to yeah, that’s a hard question.

Interviewer: It is.

#93: I’d have to sit on that for a little bit to uh.

Interviewer: Ok well I got one more for you. What, so we’re asking this on behalf of SOCOM, to help the next group. What should I have asked you that would have given me, that I didn’t ask you, that might help me give more insight to people who want to come to BUD/S. Anything you can think of?

#93: The question of like why, “what made you want to do this?”

Interviewer: Mhmm.

#93: Because, I think you need a really, you need a really good reason to come here and take on this training. It can’t just be because you know, cause it’s cool, or cause uh, I don’t know. You have to have something to always fall back on. Because, when things get really hard and you don’t have like a solid reason of why you want to do this, it’d just be as easy as, just as easy as that to just quit.

Interviewer: Well, that’s all I have, congratulations. I really appreciate your staying here and talking to me.

#93: Thank you for taking the time.

Interviewer: No, it’s awesome.