The 1st comp climb

Gabriela Hernandez: This is a simulated recall interview. The point is to dive deeper into some of the ideas we talked about last time, and for me to gain clarification on certain concepts, as we covered a lot. Let's see where this takes us. So, for the first climb, let's focus on the competition route. Talk to me about what you remember about that climb, anything from route reading to planning, to your experience on the wall.

chad: I remember we got a video of it the night before. The guys and I played it on a TV. I stood really close, and all the holds looked pretty juggy and simple. We didn't have to discuss beta or footwork much. The holds were big; there was no problem-solving, really, just some sequencing that was going to happen

Gabriela Hernandez: What sequencing had to happen then?

chad: Like, right hand, undercling, followed by a left-hand cross to a down pull, followed by a left-hand undercling, followed by a right-hand forward up-reach. Because there were so many holds on the climb, there were multiple options. She thought it'd be most efficient for me to follow that sequence instead of doing my own thing, as there were too many possibilities.

Gabriela Hernandez: So what happens when you see too many possibilities?

chad: That's what we discussed earlier about being efficient. She uses her problem-solving skills to determine the best possible outcome for me to get through a section efficiently. I could reach super far and pull super hard, or I could move my hands 10 times. But it's best to move efficiently. I could have moved all over the place, but it was best to stick to the sequence she suggested.

Gabriela Hernandez: So the first route had too many options for movement. The point was efficiency, learning how to grab those holds optimally and how to move through them. So you get there, and this is all before you even get on the wall.

chad: I was thinking arrogantly, You're thinking this is going to be a jug haul, and I'm going to get to the top because all these holds are massive. But I wasn't taking into consideration the angle of the wall. Y**ou get out there, you start climbing, and it was going well. And then it wasn't, cause then the pump set in. I then tried to find a good rest.**

Gabriela Hernandez: I remember you made a move right near the end, right before you fell, and then you backed off. Yeah, why did you back off?

chad: Because I was on a good hold going to bad hold, and I thought maybe I could rest there a little and get some back, but it was just getting worse and worse. How can i explain that idea better? Yeah, I can have the biggest no-hands rest, but at that point, there's no saving it. So I went back thinking I could get some recovery, and it was just an insanely hard move because I had like seconds left on the wall. So yeah, I came to the conclusion that there's no coming back from this.

Gabriela Hernandez: Do you find yourself backing off a lot? Would you say that's one of your strategies?

chad: *nods no*

Gabriela Hernandez: Okay, interesting. But you did. On this climb

chad: Twice!

Gabriela Hernandez:… I find myself backing off all the time. But that's more of a fear thing, I'm like, "Oh, that hold really sucks! Let me rest here for a minute before moving forward." But you don't find yourself doing that. Why?

chad: Like we were talking about yesterday, I just react to the moment. And I feel that I don't normally have time to analyze things. It's am handed this, now I will make it work

Gabriela Hernandez: What about this climb made you want to back off, though?

chad: In some instances, that if I grab this, I go much further.: So I thought, and I've been trying to be better at resting.: So I thought for myself, I grabbed it. I knew I had one, maybe two more moves to go. I thought, let's go back, let's regroup, let's see if we can get our act together,And then when I went back, my grip was getting worse and worse. And that's when, as I was saying that, Jaz said to me, "Forget that next hold, go to the next one."And that's one reason I need to battle back, too. And then I was like, "I can't hold that hold." She then jumped for the orange thing, and I jumped for the orange thing, and I touched it, and I fell. And the only reason I got a 38 plus, I remember, was because of her; otherwise, I would have gone back to what I already had. So, if she didn't communicate that to me, I wouldn't have been fine. And she, the whole time, can see the pump setting in. And she said she's actually crazy. She's like, "I can watch the pump happening."

Gabriela Hernandez: Okay. So when it came to planning this route, it was more just specific sequencing. All the holds were going to be jugs. But at the end of the day, the route was too steep to sustain it.

chad: out of all the routes, it was the least favorite route I have climbed at a comp due to the lack of technicality. It was a very commercial route. I mean, it basically was left, right, left, right. And yeah. And where it comes down to is I just couldn't explore the angles to see for myself, inclined and sustained, on a route like that.

Gabriela Hernandez: I was trying to take the weight off my hands and push into my feet. My hands were failing. I tried to transfer weight off my hands onto my feet. And then, were there any external factors, such as the route setting or environmental conditions, that affected your climbing experience?Like, were you tired this day? How were you feeling emotionally?

chad: Oh, exhausted, physically, and mentally, but i was super stoked

Gabriela Hernandez: And that was the climb where you were able to get feedback from the crowd, right? Like people were able to encourage you. And do you feel like that helps you? I felt like it's so strange that we're not allowed to support you while you're climbing.

chad: But I was so pumped on that climb from the get-go that I didn't have a chance to notice.

The 2nd comp climb

Gabriela Hernandez: Okay, let's talk about the second climb. I really didn't get to watch much of it because you just started climbing so fast, and I didn't even realize what happened. So, as I said, like, for **the beginning, we reviewed it really well.**

chad: Which, same thing, pretty darn juggy in the beginning and then it got techy. it was orange first, then yellow and blue, and she said all yellow holds are handholds It basically was like monkey barring my way through it. but: because it was the steepest part of the climb, it was also very … didn't really need much beta. And she had said it's basically left or right hand. That was established before i climbed.

Gabriela Hernandez: And then what about the rest of the climb?

chad: She explained the sequencing and describe where on the volumes to grab the holds. And she'd even say, like, "This is a crimp,but you can wrap your thumb around it and turn it into a pinch." It was going extremely well. And then the pump started very quickly, just like that. So I did not back off.I kept going. I got sort of panicking, but could feel the pump setting in, and once again, it came on so hard that I there was no coming back. Which sucks cause I Was climbing so well. I just did not rest well enough. And then, like, technical. And it went to like small holds. They were good, but small.It went from like big jugs to crimps on volumes.

Gabriela Hernandez: Would you say that those routes require more precise movement?

chad: They did. Yeah. I fell off cause I couldn't see where I needed to grab the precise hold. If I wasn't so tired, then I would have been able to correct myself.

Gabriela Hernandez: What were your expectations going into this climb? Because I know for the first one, you were like, "It's juggy, I just need to fight the pump." What about this one?

chad My expectations were that I was going to be able to get more rest and show off my technical climbing abilities.

Gabriela Hernandez: Did you find rests?

chad: I found one. Me and jaz planned it.

Gabriela Hernandez: So, I guess that's my question. When you're looking at these routes, likewhat is Jazz's process like when you look at a climb, like the video the night before? Is she breaking it down in terms of rest?

chad: It's always from the bottom and then she will say something like “I think you can get a good rest here.” at the very bottom, it is always a very simple description. Then you find a rest, then we talk about the next sequence.

Gabriela Hernandez: okay

chad: So on the first climb, I found a rest that she didn’t tell me . it's actually sick. . Yeah, she said to me, "Maybe they're going to be able to sit on it." The night before, she's like, "I can't tell how big it is. You might be able to: sit on that hold. But she was like, but how will you get off. And then when i got there, it was a bomber rest, but I was still so pumped.

Gabriela Hernandez: Okay, okay, what were you thinking? We knew when you watched that climb?

chad: I was thinking, I'm climbing very well, very efficiently, slow and calm. Then i can tell the pump hit, and it hit hard. Then i went from being calm and collected to moving faster and faster. I stopped breathing as well I should be.

Gabriela Hernandez: And then so what were you focusing on when you started to crux out

chad: Moving quickly

The 3rd comp climb

Gabriela Hernandez: Okay, let's talk about the last clim. This is your final route.
So yeah, just tell me a little bit about it

chad: going into it, I know I wasn't going to do super well. When I was warming up, i got super pumped right away. They walked us out so we could look at it, and I thought it looked super cool. We walked out, we looked at the routes, i looked at the beginning holds, she read the route for three minutes, she then said she knew the path he needed to go. She thought the route looked cool which excited me. She described round dishes with holds on them, and moved my hands to talk about how to grab the specific holds. Then we went over my reminders of breathing, climbing straight armed, stay relaxed, be calm and be patient. . If I move before I get a command, I have to to back off and go backwards before i can go forward.

Gabriela Hernandez: So like when you're climbing, you're literally waiting for her command like a hundred percent?

chad: 95 percent.

Gabriela Hernandez: What's that? At 5%?

chad: Because I remember the sequence that we discussed on the ground. And I'm like, if I'm confident, I remember what she had said, and I'll move without the command.

Gabriela Hernandez: okay, so 95% of go ahead commands. Okay? So then, now, you're climbing. What's going on?

chad: um, I'm listening to her…. *then watches the video* *expresses frustrated grunt*

Gabriela Hernandez: Alright! Talk to me. What are you? What are you thinking as you watch the climb?

chad: I'm weak, and also, Now I see that I did back off here. I was feeling really good, and then the pump sank in, and she had told me to go to this move. which is kind of powerful. and I then questioned it. I was just like. I don't know if I have the power to grab it like that And then I said to her, Is there another option? She said, no, you need your left hand there… I didn't want to do that. And then I didn't listen to her. I was just like I'm gonna try right hand. And then she's like you need your left hand there. so then I was like I need to move my feet around. So then I guess that is where I did some problem-solving. I eventually fell off cause I was too tired.

Gabriela Hernandez: What were you focusing on during the moment that you started to crux out?

chad: I can't believe I am this pumped this soon, i thought i was gonna make it so much farther. I was disappointed, but also laughing at how weak i am. Going into the climb, after reviewing it, i was kinda

stoked cause i thought this was where my rock climbing skill could shine, cause in the first climb, there was no skill, it's just who has more endurance.

Gabriela Hernandez: so, but how were you feeling? So you were stoked because you felt that it could highlight like your abilities, it could potentially highlight your abilities. But then, how are you feeling like emotionally like we know that emotions play a huge role in our problem Solving skills right?

chad: I was happy. I was just like, fuck. Yeah, this thing looks sick. Jazz is saying how cool it looks I was, which had made me happy that I was gonna get to climb a really fun climb. The movement sounded cool the way she was describing it…. I was emotionally and physically exhausted from everything going on but I'm like "shhhhh!" to my body.

Gabriela Hernandez: So, broadly speaking, is there anything else you want to say about this climb?

chad: Like, I guess, the route setters did a good job of making me have to problem solve. It wasn't just a left, right, left, right. That move I fell on was an underhand cross, and i had no clue to where to put my feet, Because once you go to that, you're gonna have to walk over and then bump your left hand again your feet were over here. Well, then, I'm gonna be like this.

How did you PS on the 3rd climb?

Gabriela Hernandez: So what was your definition of problem solve like when you're saying like the routes did a really good job at making me problem solve. How are you defining problem solving in this?

chad: Because I had to know where to put my… how to place my body for the moves to be done, let alone feel efficient or less strenuous. If i didnt move my left foot over, i could have still reached those holds, but it was not efficient. So the Problem solving, the problem being barn dooring, i had to move my left foot over and sink into it allowing my hands to move which made the move less strenuous

Gabriela Hernandez: And this is a specific example of your broader definition of problem solving a few days ago. So like, How do you overcome an obstacle efficiently is very broad. How do you explain that to a kid, for instance?

chad: And what is super cool is you can see the moment where my core just let go. I can watch every part of my body fail. It was like a stack of cards, a chain reaction.

What are you proud of in the comp?

Gabriela Hernandez: looking back on the competition? And you're climbing like, how do you what aspects do you feel proud of with your climbing?

chad: I'm proud that I didn't get mad. I am disappointed, but not mad, but I used to! I see growth there, i mean i laughed when I came off.

Gabriela Hernandez: that's basically, is there anything else you want to say about the climb or problem solving, or anything that you've been thinking about these last few days?

The importance of rest

chad: Nah, I just can't stop thinking about How I should have rested more beforehand.
I mean that is part of the problem, the problem is rest!

Gabriela Hernandez: what's the like your definition of problem solving, let's go back to that. And let's put it in this context. So your definition is finding a solution to an obstacle.

chad: My obstacle is being okay with rest, because my mind tells me if I'm sitting here doing nothing. I need to learn that resting is training. And being okay with that.

Gabriela Hernandez: So you're trying to. But it's like, I think, that it's leaning into the resting and allowing your mind to rest while you're resting like I think that's what it comes down to.

chad: It does, cause While I'm sitting there, being Still. My mind is still moving. Why do i not like resting? because , not necessarily bad thoughts, i just like moving! But i need to rest my brain too.

Curiosity

Gabriela Hernandez: And okay, I have one more question. I feel like something that's coming up in my data is like curiosity. And like a huge part of problem solving is curiosity, like we can be exposed to all kinds of things, and I can try to overcome an obstacle, and I can do it efficiently. Gabriela Hernandez: But I feel like for me, and like talking to Gavin and Tanner. This theme that keeps coming up is like, are you

curious in the way that you're approaching it like, are you curious in the way that you tackle problems, or the way that you move through the world?

chad: YES! Well if you are not curious about it, if you're not curious about finding out the other solutions or the other ways, then how could you find a more efficient solution? I will not find a better way to do things, the best way.

Gabriela: How are you defining best?

chad: Efficiency. Especially, being blind, everything is so hard, you only have so many spoons, I want to save my spoons and use them for as many things as possible. So curiosity helps me with efficiency because it helps me conserve energy and helps me to do more. So today I am gonna waste my time and energy doing something three ways, I will now know the best way of the three, so tomorrow when I do it, I use less energy. And even just talking to people, I am always asking people how to do things. It opens my mind, and maybe they solve problems in a different way. I mean, we are looking at the world through a different lens, therefore solving problems in different ways.

Gabriela Hernandez: Okay, so yeah, basically, curiosity does contribute to efficiency, which is the key to problem-solving for you because it allows you to explore multiple solution paths. And if you're not curious, you're like, well, I just figured out how to open this door. That's good enough for me, but is it, the most efficient way. so how do you think that your disability has made you more curious.

chad: *without a beat* because the way i used to do things doesn't work any more.
and even it turns out like we use my toothpaste thing as an example. As a sighted person, you should still squirt it in your mouth! because you're wasting a little bit of energy and time having to look. It is so much easier and efficient to just squeeze it in your mouth

Activist affordances= energy conservation

Gabriela Hernandez: So you're coming up with more viable solutions, with your disability that could apply to every day like to able body people. What else?

chad: like reading a book, I mean, I now read books, listening to listening to them at 2 times Speed. An able bodied person doesn't read that fast. am now ingesting the information twice as fast.

Gabriela Hernandez: Are you actually ingesting it?

chad: Great Question, but i think so. My comprehension has improved.

Open-minded

Gabriela Hernandez: I think the curiosity is really important for problem solving. I think that you can approach anything and not be curious about it. And you're not gonna learn anything. I think curiosity is what induces learning.

chad: I think curious just means having an open mind.

Gabriela: So how has your disability made you open?

chad: it didn't make me open, I chose to be open.

Gabriela Hernandez: So specifically, how did you use your disability as: momentum for open mindedness, that fuel curiosity, that therefore fueled creative problem solving strategies that therefore fueled you to learn and move through the world in a different and creative way.

chad: Very interesting. I agree with *all* of that. because I did have the choice. What made me choose that way? I guess… hm…I could have lived at my parents house and not do anything.

Creativity

Gabriela Hernandez: And so do you think that your disability has made you more creative?

chad: *fuck yeah.* I guess, before I was an average dude, you know, a mechanic when things had to be fixed a certain way. I mean, there were ways around things, but for the most part, when your brakes need to be replaced, it's not like i'm figuring out a novel way to do it. This has to go on this way it's built to go in one way .can't go in any other way. It doesn't work. So there's no creativity there… but there were things you could do to be more efficient, which required creativity.

Gabriela Hernandez: was efficiency a priority for you before your disabilty?

chad: yes, Because of being a mechanic--- it's money driven.

Gabriela Hernandez: Hmm. okay back to the question, So how did your disability make you more creative?

chad: I wanted to be able to do things. I had figure out how to do them differently. I couldn't do things the same I used to.: so my choices were, don't do them.or get creative and figure out how to do it.

PS strategies

chad: and that could be as simple as trial, error; Asking someone.

Gabriela Hernandez: I mean, those are problem solving strategies, trial and error is absolutely something we see in math all the time asking, someone is also a problem solving strategy. What else do you think? Do you reverse engineer things ?

chad: Not as much. I don't think. I would say trial and error works best for me.

Gabriela Hernandez: is trial and error. Efficient though?

chad: *nods no*

Gabriela Hernandez: But trial and error may ultimately contribute to a more sustainable, efficient solution.

chad: Yeah, the trial and error in the moment is not efficient but leads to efficient solutions. You may lose time at the beginning, but ultimately can contribute to saving a ton of time, especially when I was a mechanic.

Gabriela Hernandez: So it seems like for you, problem solving strategy is is very practical.
Gabriela Hernandez: like you're not like just in it, like I do math sometimes, just for fun. I'm never, ever, ever, ever, ever going to use anything that I'm doing in math my day to day life. But for you, every time you're talking about you're saying I'm gonna do it 20 times. I'm gonna do it 30 times. I'm gonna do it for the rest of my life. So I better figure out the most efficient way to do it, because it's practical. It's rooted in your lived experience.

chad: I wouldn't waste my time to PS something just for the fun of it at this stage in my life. I don't need to entertain my brain with sudoku-- my life is sudoku. I am doing that shit just day to day.