P10: Yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: You just said something yeah he's in it. All right, just to break the ice a little bit more. Let me turn the page here for of my notes, I have also your diary hier next to me, so, um, I made some notes about what you, um, what you wrote and we are going to discuss those things -

P10: (overlap) Okay, all right (end of overlap).

Mattia Rainoldi: - in the course of the interviews, but just to warm up a little bit, I would like to ask you some general question about your life as a person that works digitally and the first question is very simple one, I hope, and is what his job your job title?

P10: I am, my job title is customer support representative.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm.

P10: That's (p) that's on my documents, how it said.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, customer support rep. Very good yeah and how would you describe your employment type?

P10: How would I describe my employment type as in which?

Mattia Rainoldi: Are you full-time part time or?

P10: (overlap) Oh yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: You are self employed, um?

P10: Yeah I got you well, I work on full-time.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: And I have both the ability to go work at my office and work from home.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. So who decides, if you go to work in the office or if you can work from from other places?

P10: Well, ah last year, when I first started my work and my company, um, it was just the Corona outbreak that was pretty much the same time that I started working. And they had this policy that everyone who can work from home, should work from home, only if you don't have the Internet connection or anything like (p) in technology-wise, if you don't have a technology on it, then it would be okay to work at the office just to be safe, you know Corona-wise.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes.

P10: And there was, um, we were supposed to get back to the office April this year but it seems like most people just decided that working from home is much better, just much more comfortable for them, and my company just the decided to keep whoever wants to stay at home at home.

Mattia Rainoldi: So you decide yourself if you want to stay at home or not?

P10: At this moment, yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: I can go work at the office, I just don't want to. I prefer staying at home and working.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm, why would you say so?

P10: Simply is more comfortable and more I, how can I say, (p) calm at my place then at the office, I mean it's a call center and there are many people if I'm at the office there are people that always talk, go around, speak, and this, to be honest, is kind of, does not help me at all with concentrating. I prefer having my own place to work at, alone, if possible. And this is the main main reason actually.

Mattia Rainoldi: So you could potentially work also from other places?

P10: Yeah yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, why are not working from other places?

P10: As in the office or other places like, um, -

Mattia Rainoldi: You're working from home and from the office, could you work also from somewhere else?

P10: More like now, because I need to have secure Internet connection, which is connected through the wire, not like WiFi.

Mattia Rainoldi: I see.

P10: And it kind of makes it difficult to work from somewhere else.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand yeah. Okay, and when do you work generally?

P10: I have just one shift every day, from Tuesday to Saturday, (p) and from 12 until 8.30.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: That's the shift.

Mattia Rainoldi: And then from 12 to?

P10: 8.30.

Mattia Rainoldi: And this is every day that you work?

P10: Yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: So can you decide when you're working or?

P10: I can decide if I mean I can change my shifts if I want to or the days off, but I believe this is the most comfortable, um, shift and days off for me.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so you depended upon the shift that you want to have and the day of that you want to have and you could potentially change it but in general they are fix.

P10: Yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay right, so, um, in your job, what is it that you do exactly?

P10: Well, what I do recently I mean I did a lot of stuff, um, they do have this thing about changing the agents' responsibilities over time. At first, I used to received calls, then I used to be on chat with customers. Um, then I was at with calls for a while again, but but lately ah, I write menus like manual restaurant menus something that our company's customer wants us to do. And if I don't do that I review other people's work, how they how they do if there any mistakes if they if they have mistakes I correct them and send them the review, so they can correct it.

Mattia Rainoldi: And you work all digitally?

P10: Yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. So, and outside your working hours, what is it that you enjoy doing?

P10: Hmm, well, I like going out having a breath of fresh air, you know. Um, I like spending time with my partner, reading and listening to music that's mostly what I do in my free time.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes, do some of your free time activities involve technologies?

P10: Well, if we count scrolling on social media and reading articles as as a part of this, yeah yeah yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. Great. Do you also take holidays, from time to time?

P10: Yeah I do.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, and when you are on holiday, do you also work a little?

P10: No, when I'm off work I usually never remember about work anything. I'm not disturb after hours or before hours about my work.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so I'll do you create this boundary?

P10: Well, I don't know I mean, I guess I, how do I create this. Well, I just log off that's all.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm.

P10: Yeah and I don't have this supervisor, team manager, however, however you'd like to call it to go 'oh you didn't finish your job or you need to work for more or how, why did this happen', like this after hours on on hours that I do not work. I'm not I'm not contacted by my supervisors it's a yeah, yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: It is your choice or it is a company policy?

P10: I think it's both the choice and our company policy. Um, we don't do I mean, what you what we work is that on work times I mean on on the shift we have, when we work off it's just we do work for the firm but at the level of agent, you know because there's agent and supervisor then operations manager and stuff I I guess I held the less responsibility so I'm not contacted by my superiors after work.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, I understand, yeah, that's good so and for doing the work which technologies to use?

P10: Well, I use my laptop, I have USB port that is given from my company when I login so I can log into work. I have an additional wait I forgot, um additional screen, so I can, like, I have two screens, I can work on, um, a mouse and headset, of course.

Mattia Rainoldi: Alright.

P10: Um, and we use actually we use Amazon workspace. I think I did not mention this if it's in any help, um, Amazon workplace is pretty much a, well, I just look in the Amazon work workspace and I get access to to our server pretty much.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand yeah. So how do you communicate with your colleagues?

P10: Mostly Slack.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: And Hangouts. This is the things that we use the most.

Mattia Rainoldi: Um, in your diary also mentioned Gmail if I'm not wrong.

P10: Yeah Gmail, yeah we use that mostly to receive, um, information from from our from our customer.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes.

P10: As, um, maybe I should explain it a little bit better (both laugh) because I'm not sure if I managed to explain it as as a company as a customer service company, we have customers that are, um, that want us to work for as their customer service. It's actually it's an outsourcing, you know that makes sense.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, yeah, I understand.

P10: And Gmail we use, so we can get information from that customer if there's any changes in the policies, um, mostly that's why we use it.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right.

P10: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: And what about your mobile phone to use it also for work?

P10: No, not really.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: Um, actually mobile phones are even forbidden at the office, like you're not supposed to keep your phone on your hand while you run the office, um, mostly for security reasons, because they're really cautious about, um, security breaches, information reaches, this is why we're not really allowed to to have our phones while we're working.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so in your diary you don't mention that you use Gmail also on your free time.

P10: Yeah that's my main email that I use at this moment.

Mattia Rainoldi: Is this a different email account from the one you use for work?

P10: Yeah I meant my personal account in Gmail.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so you divide basically your work emails from your personally.

P10: Yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: So, but could you potentially have your teammates on your mobile phone?

P10: No.

Mattia Rainoldi: No.

P10: No way.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand yeah. Great. Um, and what about your laptop can you use your laptop also for free time activities?

P10: While working? No.

Mattia Rainoldi: Or in general.

P10: In general yeah after I log off from my work, I can just, um, remove the USB that I'm that I used to connect to work, and I can easily work with my laptop but if I'm working there's absolutely no way I can use my laptop for my own. Um, even for my own searches because we have this, mhmm, when I tried to Google a link or something else, it just says 'this is not displayable at the moment', since it's for these links are forbidden from your company.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: That's that's very interesting to know, and how does it make you feel to have these strict separation of work and free time devices and technologies?

P10: Um, it's a little annoying to be honest, because yes I'm at work, but after I finished my work, and I still cannot log off from work, I still cannot use my laptop for my own own personal stuff, um, simply because I'm not allowed to and it's kind of annoying. But then again I do understand why they're doing it because, um, first of all, information breach is always number one from as an importance see like it's really important not to give away any information about our customers and stuff. Um, and yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: For you, are your person that prefer to keep your work and free time activities separated, or you would prefer a more how to say integrated approach?

P10: Mhmm. Well, I think, at this moment when I'm working from home they are kinda kinda integrated cuz if you've seen if you've read my diaries you will probably get the get the idea that I usually finished my my job I I, I do my tasks that I meant to do for the day and and I usually ask if there's something else I can do, but then I if I don't get an answer if they're like that's all for today I usually have from all those eight hours, I usually have at least two hours that I can do anything I want because I've worked from home except me using my laptop for personal use of course and in this time I can't go out because I have to be, um, here. So I can take a book and read, scroll, see what's going on on Instagram or Facebook, I can talk to my partner, so I believe it's more like integrated, um, at the moment, um, with this work with this work I have it's kind of difficult for me to separate those things work and leisure that makes sense yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes, it does yeah, so, at the moment, so what would you say, would you say that so if you reflect a little bit on the role of technologies and the relationship that you have between work and your free time, are there any advantages for yourself?

P10: Um, between my work and free time?

Mattia Rainoldi: So what advantages do technology creates for you at the moment, in managing your work in your free time activities?

P10: Well, I can definitely say that it makes my life more comfortable and makes me save time, because you know going to work and coming from work are also time consuming things where that's something I really don't like doing because I work like well it's not that far but it's at least half an hour going and coming back to my office. And then, when you're at work you do have some expenses as food, water, maybe the traveling is also in an expense, while when I working from home my biggest travel is from here to the fridge you know. And I can definitely say that this working from home thing with this technology we have is making my life much more comfortable and saves me time yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Do you see yourself any disadvantages?

P10: Yeah, I do. Number one probably would be isolation, because I do work with some people in the server I do I do talk to them, and I do have meetings through through what was it through Google, I think we use, but I don't know them, I don't I wouldn't recognize them if I see them on the on the street, for example, and (pause) yeah. I would say number one disadvantages is isolation, um, I do try to keep some contact with them, but still, um, what else (pause). Hmm. Well, I guess that's, the main thing that I can come up with.

Mattia Rainoldi: Alright. You were saying before, when you when you're done with your work task so you sometimes switch to to to leisure or other activities. And how does it make you feel so moving away from from work and and then in immersing in in free time activities, while you weren't supposed to be at work?

P10: Mhmm. Well, at first, I felt a bit guilty about it, if I can say that because I'm working I'm I'm being paid for this, because to stay here to work, but when you don't have anything to do, um, you just get bored like I can't just sit and wait and click on the emails I have and reread them until my shift ends, so I have to find something else that I that keeps my mind not bored. So that's why I just usually combine some chores at home or a book, as I mentioned earlier, or social media and after time I just got used to switching between work and leisure like I just finish the thing I have to do I, for example, I go for lunch break and then run to the other room do something there, come back and I'm ready to work again. I just need like five seconds to remember what I was doing and I'm good to go.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay that's interesting yeah. And when you decide to stop working, what happens with your technologies?

P10: Do you mean when I log off from work like when I'm finished with work?

Mattia Rainoldi: You said you were in the break, when you are in the break you need to log off?

P10: When I'm when I'm taking a break, we have this, we use Talk Desk, if it rings a bell, it's pretty much a software that connects to Zendesk that we use and it shows you how long you have been on, let's say, calls or chat or emails and then you have also statuses as break and lunch break, lunch and dinner. And I have to take my I just need to change my status to break, I have two breaks to 10 minute breaks throughout the day and 1.30 minutes bigger break for lunch and dinner. Oh, and I have a so called personal for eight minutes, which I can use while working. And yeah, I just have to change my status from let's say emails to break, so I can take my break and when I come back change it back to emails so I can continue working.

Mattia Rainoldi: So how is this process here makes you feel?

P10: Well, I need to be counting the minutes, so I don't get late to getting back to work. It's, at first it was a bit a little bit stressful because I just need to check the time all the time to get back to work let's say, but I get I get used to it like it's it's okay now, is it am I able to explain it or do you?

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes. So I want just to understand this feeling that you have so you said it's a little bit stressful so what you are trying to say, um, is the value of your free time different with the system in place?

P10: Well I'm saying it's stressful because those time breaks are usually closely watched so in terms of working hours in terms of lateness is and stuff. Otherwise, to be honest, I feel more comfortable walking getting up and walking to somewhere at my working time, than at my break, because if I'm in my break, I know I have like 10 minutes to do whatever I need to do, but if I'm if I'm not at the break I can be I can give myself time to do whatever I want and get get back and and pretty much no one would notice.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so what are you trying to say is that you take also breaks that are not scheduled in that system.

P10: Yeah yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so, and when you take those you feel a little bit more how would you say?

P10: A bit more relaxed.

Mattia Rainoldi: Oh, yeah, okay.

P10: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Because, because you don't have to. um?

P10: Run back to change my status, so they don't go 'Oh, where were you, your your break has been let's let's say for 12 minutes instead of 10 what's going on'.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so if you run late two minutes you will be notified that something is wrong?

P10: Yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: And who does that?

P10: We have, um, real time analysists, um, who take care of all agents actually to to see who is working where, for example, this agent works for me in the chat this agent is looking at emails, the third agent is taking calls, but the fourth agent is that break you know.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah. When you're taking your unofficial breaks, let's call it like that, what happens there so what what are you typing in in the system?

P10: I'm not typing anything, I'm just sitting on the same working status.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: And that's all.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so, for example, you're saying so I'm doing emails but you're not really doing emails.

P10: Yeah, pretty much. Mhmm.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah. Okay interesting yeah.

P10: Yeah I know it, it took me some time to get used to it yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Alright. So let's move to a couple of other questions here. Do you find yourself or did you find yourself in a situation in which you felt like the work was intruding your your free time due to the usage of digital technologies?

P10: Do you mean, as my work being?

Mattia Rainoldi: Intrusive in your free time.

P10: Not really. I, I do have free time at my work, but I never work in my free time if that makes sense.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes.

P10: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: So, can you give me some example of, um, you enjoy free time in your work time so you already said some?

P10: Yeah well let's say that in this work day, I have to make eight reviews of eight different agents for the work they have done previously, and I need to go through everything they have done, see what mistakes, they have made, reported to the superior quality assurance agent and and that's all. So I have eight people for eight hours, I usually am done with all those eight people within six or less hours, and then I have this two hours that I, I just have left. And it's not because I'm I'm not doing my job properly or um, I'm like lazy or, um, because I just finished them to I guess too fast, yet we have this one quote like you, you have this this amount of work for this amount of time, if you do it on time it's perfect if you can, if there is work left you can do it the next day, but they usually never leave work for tomorrow. And yeah those two hours let's say that there are two. I have to find something else to do because otherwise it's a waste of time.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah.

P10: And this is usually, when I just get up make something to eat or do some other chores at home or just simply watch videos or listen to music and yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: In this particular situations, um, how do you feel?

P10: I feel like I've done my job, and now I have some some extra time to do other stuff. I feel productive about this, I yeah productive is the the word, maybe.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so does it make you feel uncomfortable from time to time?

P10: It would, if I was not finishing my my duties first because I really, um, I don't mean to slack well um, when I'm working. I just do whatever I have to do and what time I've left, I do other things it's not because I'm not doing less work it's because they're given me not much work at all to fill my day. I believe it's a workload issue it's not my issue that I'm lazy.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah I totally understand, that's interesting to hear, so let's go through your diary for a second (pause). So this is maybe an example that is interesting you said here that you are looking for recipes and and that was in your working time I guess.

P10: Yes, that was that's what I was trying to explain like before I just finished my thing that I have to do at work, and then I just decided that well, it would be nice to know how to make hummus I think it was and I just started searching and got it written down.

Mattia Rainoldi: Where did you search?

P10: Well, at first, I tried I just gave it gave it a try to search it in my laptop while I'm working, at Google and the interesting thing is, I can see the Google images, but I cannot tap on the link to go to the link. So I was like looking through that, I liked one of the links, so I just decided to look it up in my phone yeah that's pretty much it.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay interesting yeah very good, yeah. Just let's see, mhmm yeah that's basically most of it. So is your day, do you feel that your day as you have it, right now, or your life is a balanced life?

P10: Um, can you please repeat I, um?

Mattia Rainoldi: So, if you think about your typical day.

P10: Work day or off day?

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah well yeah let's talk about both, let's take start talking about first the you're um, with one day, where you're working yeah.

P10: Uh huh.

Mattia Rainoldi: Do you feel that is a balance day, do you have a balanced life in those days?

P10: Hmm. Honestly, I would not say it's completely balanced because I have the feeling that I have more free time than work time you know all the things that we mentioned previously, you can see from the diaries. I am working, but not that much and it's not because I don't want to work, it's because I that's that's the workload I'm given at this moment of time. And I feel like I, I do have more free time that I'm working and to be honest to myself, I wouldn't say it's it's a balanced day, it's a balance life.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay.

P10: I mean, I can take more work, I can see that it would be okay with me.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay interesting yeah, so you would you take more work if they would give you more?

P10: If they well, if my salary goes up yeah (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: (laugh) Alright, fantastic, yeah. But, in general, how can I say. Do you prioritize, do you feel that you prioritize your work or your free time or the other way around?

P10: Oh, I definitely prioritize my free time more, yeah no need to think about it, I do not prioritize the work, I'm working at at this moment.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. So you're basically your free time choices have an influence on your work?

P10: It's more like my work influences my free time because I have a lot of it. And I do work in a in a company at a at a position that allows me to leave the work at work that was really important for me when I first started, I just wanted to have a job, but to leave the work when I when I'm off like when I when the day is finished the work days finished and I I did get that I did, I did receive this as a as a job, I really don't think about work when I'm off work.

Mattia Rainoldi: Alright. So for you getting off work is pulling that.

P10: Yes, pretty much that, I just close every tab and pull off my USP and I'm done, yeah that's why I'm saying it's a very comfortable position for me.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right. Very good. Um, last questions here.

P10: Okay.

Mattia Rainoldi: We have been discussing already quite a little bit about how you manage your work and, um, your free time and also what is the role of technology in it. Is there anything important to you that we didn't talk about?

P10: I think yeah, um, I don't know it was just it it's funny that just the week that I had to do those diary entries was, it happened, like that that they called me to work from the office and I hated it. I hated it so much, I hated it so much I just left earlier. And I decided that I don't I don't need to do this, I don't need to be at the office. I just like and I'm really used to working from home because so much more relaxed so much more calm, there are no people working around you, screaming, crying because I work at a call center at the end or no one that's looking after you like, what are you doing, are you working or not it's just my Home Office it's feels much more secure than my work office and and I just realized that if I had to buy go to go to work every day since I started my job, I would probably not last a year at this position, like no, no thanks. I like having a comfortable environment to work at yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, that's very interesting to hear. So that takes me then to our final questions here, so a little bit an outlook into the future, so how do you see yourself, so you are working digitally, so how do you see yourself working digitally in the next years?

P10: Well, I can be sure that the job I'm doing right now will probably not I will probably quit within a year, at least, because it's getting boring. I don't see much career options in this work and anything like that, and I do want to try other things. But I also can imagine that it working digitally will be the main source of income for me for the future. I just think that this would be the way I would take. I don't think I would go, I would decide to work at an office without the option to work at home.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm so and how would your ideal work day or life as a digital worker look like?

P10: Um well, first of all I my ideal would be to have a good technology, a strong WiFi, to have, I think, eight hours of fully, eight to six hours fully work day were I I do stuff like I work would be good for me, um, and yeah. At this moment and I would like my job to be interesting actually that.

Mattia Rainoldi: The changes that are coming up so what changes do you see in the way we are going to conduct our life and manage work in life and free time in the future.

Mattia Rainoldi: If you think about the changes that are coming up, what changes do you see in the way we are going to conduct our life and to manage work and life and free time in the future?

P10: I believe we we would be becoming well that's, the first thing that I'm thinking of and it's not the best thing that I'm thinking of but I think it would make us even more isolated because working digitally is really nice, I really like it, but I'm also starting to miss the emotional connection, the social connection with with colleagues with other people, um, it's really different to have someone to say hey I need some help in the office than to just text someone you haven't seen 'hey I need help, can you help', for example, you know.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah.

P10: But then again it's it's just, how can I say, it has its its blesses with also disadvantages. The advantages that you can basically work from ANYWHERE, as long as you have out electricity and Internet but the bad thing is that you get isolated.

Mattia Rainoldi: What about the anywhere, would you like to work anywhere?

P10: I think I would but the most important thing for me to work, um, productively is to have a quiet place. I do get really distracted from other people other noises and that's partly why I like to work at home, so I can get concentrated and do my thing as long as it's a calm place, I believe I would be good, it could be anywhere.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, great. So, final question is again a very open question so is there anything else related to the topics that we discussed that you might like to talk about?

P10: Um, give me a second to think, anything else that I would talk would like to talk about, well, I can't think of anything except that it would be great for me to hear, see what your future research results would be.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right.

P10: Because I'm really interested to see that as as a participant and a person that has interest in social psychology and psychology, I'm really interested to see what would your results be, how are we how are we adapting to this new type of work.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, yes. Wait, let's do it like that. I'm going to close the recording.

P10: Okay.

Mattia Rainoldi: We can talk out of the record, off the record a little bit.