Mattia Rainoldi: Great so let's start with a couple of very basic question about your person just to break a little bit the ice. How would you describe your employment type?

P22: Full-time.

Mattia Rainoldi: So you're a full-time employed. So done that. A couple of question about how would you describe your typical day?

P22: So my typical workday and what of the recent let's say the last year, where most work has been from home, I would wake up at seven o'clock. I would then kind of ready myself to go to work in the garden office and my commute would be 30 seconds. And yes, with with within that time I will have had breakfast, I'll have done some very light stretching, I do both eight to 10 minutes of form of power yoga very light just to get myself started for the day and I'll have toast and tea and then I'll go and start work I I follow a kind of a regime somewhat inspired by digital minimalism in terms of how to manage my time. Um. So you know I'll have like three things I'm grateful for that I'll note down three things that I'd like to get done the large rocks of work that day, I will time block my day according to that and then I'll go about my work for for that period, but then I you know, usually I'll have lunch around 12, 12.30 and normally I try to be finished for just after four o'clock, um, having started earlier and and it's not necessarily always just fixed as that um, but yeah I will have probably have consumed social media first thing in the morning, um, a little bit of news as well. And throughout the day I'll check in on those things so although I aspire to be a digital minimalist, I'm I'm by it's very much aspirational in the way that you know, a a recreational runner looks, you see I'm bald (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah I understand yeah. So your leisure activities then find also some place after and before work, is?

P22: Yeah so I suppose the stretching I don't really not sure I would classify that as leisure for me it's more medicinal really and the leisure activities, usually I might have a walk during my daytime at some point, but not every day. I try to get some exercise in or if the surfs good you know I live near the beach, so I would I would I would go for a surf and depending on the surf really to be honest but you know that could be you know once or twice a week, certainly at least once on the weekend, and you know if surf is there. Sometimes during a working week but usually in the evening, and then I suppose the other recreations that I have I play golf um, and I live right beside a golf course so you know I play that once or twice a week as well, sometimes in a competition on a Saturday, and then I also, I suppose, for my leisure time with coach football with my kids. I don't know whether you classify that as leisure or not, but I I yeah I enjoy it and um, yeah it's a lot of work, but I would rather you know give my kids good time by supporting through that then stand on the sideline and just watch.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm, yeah I understand yeah, so basically all of your leisure activities fine place around work, is what you're trying to say?

P22: Yes, yes, that would be that would be yeah so as we go into the the the more sort of fixed um, appointment of my role in September and semester one, certainly, you know my my diary for leisure activities would have to facilitate very much around my my working activities, my work would be my priority I'm the suppose the primary income earner in her family, and so you know my work day is commensurate with that in terms of of the hours that I need to put in both as a course director, as a lecturer and all of the prep and development, and as a researcher in kind of co-authoring articles or or presentations or conferences and so on, so those will be my priorities of work, the leisure would fit around that yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah so and in terms of days, so do you have days that you reserve to leisure activities and?

P22: I suppose yeah the the weekend would be my my main time for leisure activities, the majority of my leisure would be in the weekend periods or in the evenings you know of the week, I can have hope to reserve some time in those periods mostly um, and every now and then I will have walks or do surf during a working day, but only if I can create that opportunity by either starting a little earlier or finishing a little later.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right. And during your weekends, do you do also some work?

P22: Sometimes yeah I mean I suppose it depends really on so, for example, if there's a paper that that requires attention and it's a deadline and sometimes I might do some work on that or I might do some strategic work, you know, maybe considering what I need to do in the next quarter or semester, um, and you know planning sort of work that can can be sort of just by starting to the mind that would be ongoing at weekends, sometimes as well.

Mattia Rainoldi: And how does it make you feel when you work on basically on your days that you reserve for yourself or your family and your leisure?

P22: So it depends on whether that work is as a result of my choice (laugh) or if it's a result of you know, um, you know, someone you know some other choices that have impacted me. Um, I would probably more more likely resent the later, you know because I don't resent having to do work that I choose to do to develop my role and and improve you know my career opportunities, if you like um, during weekends, you know so that sort of strategic work, you might do on research or on on developing new ideas or opportunities. Um, I would, I wouldn't feel as bad about that, I do try to keep it to a minimum and to keep it to a period of time where it's not impacting on you know my family's time, you know as much as I can, but there are times where that's not possible.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. And what about holidays?

P22: Yeah I mean so again, I think that what I find is I, so in my recent holidays in the summer, um, I did do writing in July, um, specifically on a on a paper and topic that was slightly, um, you know slightly tangential to my normal work, and therefore it didn't quite feel you know as much of a chore in the sense that you know, it was hard work very much because it was a new topic, but it, but it wasn't um, it will be smaller hours focused on it, it wasn't full days I was doing you know a few hours in the morning, maybe on the number of days in the week and I felt okay, about that because you know my my family didn't really need me the rest of the time and I'm just one of those people that prefers I'm not so good at just sitting down and and and kind of you know just watching TV idly or things like that I try I try only to do a small amount of that. I just like to be productive if I'm honest.

Mattia Rainoldi: So, and in terms, so we talked about about the timing of your work and leisure, what about the place where you work, the place where you enjoy doing your leisure activities?

P22: Yeah well both of those I'm very fortunate, where I live, I live in a very nice area for leisure and recreation by the sea near a golf course, close to close, nice walks, near a harbor you know for water sports activities and all within walking distance, so you know I I suppose I'm I'm very fortunate in that regard, um, and so my my work at the minute is mostly online and from home, but we are pivoting back to a more face to face teaching approach so that will probably go back to what was my previous norm, but my previous norm was a sort of an unofficial norm and that my my management were happy for me not to be in my office on days that I didn't have contact hours or didn't have particular you know, meetings and things they would rather I was at home being productive not traveling, um, so I assume that that will be going back to that model of working for this new semester.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. And so how do you perceive it so working from a place that is not the office?

P22: Um, I mean I just perceive my rules and my tasks and my actions and I don't react can be quite transient but I like to have two screens (laugh). Okay, I, like my laptop and I like a second screen. So, for example, you're interviewing me at the minute at my son's room, he has a desk and I've been working here for quite a lot of today this afternoon, because my wife and I share a kind of a garden office, um, she teaches harp and I obviously when she's not doing that I use the space um, for my work. Um, I also use the downstairs bedroom in my house, so there are multiple places that I work from but I perceive my my workspace to have laptop, second screen, preferably, you know my diary, my phone and my glasses and hopefully a cup of coffee.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right (laugh), it's very simple in this way, so what I would like to discuss now a little bit, how digital technology is having something to do in the way that you organize your work and your leisure activities so from what I saw in in your diary, you use couple of devices and also several applications of different nature, so would you like to take me a little bit into how you use them and what they impact that they have for you on managing work and leisure?

P22: Certainly, so a primary kind of tool would be Microsoft Outlook and I would use that both on my laptop and on my phone, um, nearly all communications for my university work go through that um, and you know I also use it for its calendar and scheduling of meetings and various other tasks and activities um, and, interestingly, the little feature that lets you know, on a daily basis what spare time you have, sometimes I have a look at that too little assistant that Microsoft has but I think also I use, you know I use and flag emails and tasks and and give them a dates and times to to maybe come back to them to check on them to make sure that they've been dealt with and try I've tried to have a systematic approach to and trying to use, to be honest, as few tools as possible to sort of manage my communications for my university job. But the very minimum that I can use really are probably Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Teams, Skype for business and you know the obviously the online Blackboard environment for teaching and Blackboard collaborate for engagements with students online. And I use other tools of engagement, such as Nearpod for in the class, and you know activities as well. So, so those would be my primary kind of tools of this job along, obviously with use Google Chrome for for this meeting and Zoom, for example, but also for, for you know all sort of cloud based applications are opened in that as well, and all of my all of our universities data I can explore through our university portal, which opens up in Chrome as well, so I think um, those would be the sort of the main tools that I would use from a work perspective, um, would do you want me to talk about the leisure stuff with that or?

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes, you can go ahead.

P22: Okay, I mean, and so, in terms of leisure, I spoke I'm going to be using things like the BBC weather APP. And to see what you know, the conditions of the day, look like for either with certainly for golf or for any kind of activities that I'm going to be excited for a while, I would also use um, if I'm interested in in the surf I'll use an APP called Magic Seaweed and I'll be able to find out the tide times. The predicted wind direction and that helps me, maybe to plan ahead to think if there's a better time of day to go and enjoy a surf, for example I use Apps like there's one called BRS golf that our golf club users to be able to book a tee time and to manage that tee time and I use WhatsApp a lot for communications, I suppose you would classify lots of those communications as a blend of leisure and work, to be honest, there are some that are research groups, there are some that are to do with my job coaching football for Port Rush, there are some to do with managing my son's teams and supporting you know their efforts. And you know friend, scripts and maybe meeting for males are going for drinks and things so what's that would be a quite an annoying platform that they have to use in some respects, for those types of communications is quite an even though I teach whichever than off, it can be quite disruptive and like yeah I'm just trying to think of other, I think that's the majority really of the of the of the maybe use Twitter and Facebook and Messenger a little as well during the day, and obviously checking on the news.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right, um, so few this application that you mentioned are by default dedicated to accomplish something in one domain, or the other, so for work or or for leisure yeah, and and this is clear to me, what is interesting to me is to learn a little bit more about those applications like WhatsApp that you mentioned the tab a multiple use for for both purposes and I guess also the devices that you're using please comment on that um, they are both used for different purposes for for leisure purposes and for work purposes, so I'm interested to know how you draw boundaries between work and leisure by using the using these devices and these applications.

P22: Yeah um, boundary is an interesting word really with modern work isn't it and WhatsApp is probably the least boundary or a boundary-less kind of application, you know, without without having to do significant work and it's difficult to manage the various channels on WhatsApp in a way that you won't have work and leisure information colliding at times, um, WhatsApp I don't tend to use it very much for work, but I do get messages from colleagues, at times, maybe, where they can't reach me in other ways. So, you know as as a kind of a work till it's probably more leisure than work, WhatsApp, but it is definitely use from time to time to with colleagues that maybe you would have a stronger relationship with maybe a higher trust relationship, potentially, and so you know as as a as a kind of a tool that spans both work and leisure, I would say it's probably 95% later on a smaller percent on work if you look at it in totality. In terms of I mean you know Microsoft Outlook, you know I have, I have a number of different emails. I have my my work email, I have my Gmail account. And these to some degree, you know, can be used to span work and leisure, because I get emails into my work account related to the goal for example that's the email address so they put dying whether I should have or not I don't know, but you know if I book some golf it pops up on my phone to say so. And you will get some you know sort of not not spam, but you know less solicited email related to those leisure activities coming through from time to time, also related to my leisure time with my kids in their sports so, so I think that the email applications and WhatsApp would probably, um, I suppose sometimes you know enter mentally work between leisure and work and but the predominance tends to be one or the other, with a slight um, you know sort of leakage, if you like, you know.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. What was the reason for you to by using your own words to permitting this leakage?

P22: Yeah I suppose, it's a very interesting one really you know those those those people who were contact me certainly on WhatsApp the majority, you know you you feel some level of duty towards maybe, so I might get calls from as a coach of my son's team, or one of my son's teams, you know I get calls and and message from other parents that I feel somewhat duty-bound to can answer but that doesn't mean that I'm particularly happy about getting those messages. I just haven't maybe come up with the best solution to manage those yet, and I think in terms of my work colleagues contacted me, for example on WhatsApp. Again, you know they're usually doing it in a way, that I'm I'm okay with you know, because the people that I trust you know I probably not WhatsApping. And I'm not WhatsApping lots of people and work if I'm honest um, but those those those that maybe are communicating with me that way it's more in a somewhat social somewhat kind of work related way I wouldn't I wouldn't say that it was I don't know work that they were they maybe just wanted to communicate on channels that weren't work related for a moment.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm.

P22: Maybe for their own privacy or although the irony of talking about privacy on WhatsApp but um, yeah in terms of just or maybe it's just their habits, you know they just don't really see a big they don't see it, a clear delineation themselves between those platforms and their work and their leisure and and their colleagues, you know. I couldn't really -

Mattia Rainoldi: (overlap) Mhmm and what about yourself? (end of overlap)

P22: Me personally?

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, how do you see it?

P22: Yeah no that's a that's a great question, I think that I think that I try to communicate as little as possible via you know, social media channels directly to colleagues because there's too much noise there there's too much potential of stuff getting messed. I just don't think that the right platforms either really to conduct obviously work related stuff or or or even an anything outside of work it's it's difficult (sigh) to you know that the if you know someone, and you have a friendship with them and it's more than you know just that you know them through work well, of course, that's fine you know because you're you're maybe meeting up to play golf or to go for a walk or do something unrelated of course that's fine, but I suppose what I'm saying is my general tendency would be to communicate with colleagues through work channels email, and you know Skype unless so through the others because I suppose I feel that I'm already kind of overwhelmed with the number of channels of communication. And I'm trying to reduce that um, you know I aspire to be a more melanomas person, digitally I just feel (laugh) you know but that doesn't stop me aspiring.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right. So for you owning two devices, so your laptop or your phone um, and using them for both purposes for work and leisure purposes, is it because you are aiming to be a minimalist and just reducing the number of devices or there are other reasons?

P22: Um, I mean I use. So if I was trying to be a minimalist I probably wouldn't have a phone you know I would probably try to do everything through my laptop because that would cut down the phone is is the bigger challenge really you know, in terms of managing um, work and leisure and the separation and the biggest challenge. I mean I've tried it, the, the main reason that I haven't been able to get rid of a phone is WhatsApp to be able to kind of like stay in touch with communications for my kids and for those sorts of things. And that was you know quite challenging for me, I was, I tried to get it set up on an on an iPad just another device so that but because on a laptop you can't really use WhatsApp you know it's not the Channel. So you know you're kind of locked in with WhatsApp to some degree to more than two to a smartphone or or or, at least at the very least you know, a tablet which is kind of disappointing really.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. Okay, is there any particular reason for you not to have so purpose dedicated device? So to say a phone for work and the phone for leisure or other personal activities?

P22: Yes, um well, I think, so my my so our work doesn't supply a phone per se, Okay, a low in saying that I've used my my research budget to get one recently and that's the first time that they've realized that but my reasons for having this are that I teach digital marketing, I feel that I need a device that can allow me to show how you can actually create content and and you know manage social media and various things so I'm sort of locked in to some degree with my rule of course you can teach it without the smartphone and, of course, you don't you know necessarily need these things, but it does make your job, a little easier sometimes to have to have them separate. I just don't really want to have too many devices it's just more stuff to manage isn't that so my aim would be the reduce and continue to try and reduce but you know I've not been successful at that I have my laptop I have my smartphone that's probably the least number of devices I have used, you know ever really and I do have an iPad but I've given that to my wife, who uses it to teach and you know who uses it also to educate our kids. She she sometimes has some very educative kind of Apps that teach math mathematics and English and so on, and she allows the children to use those from time to time, and she uses it to manage her own work as well. So yeah um, I'm not sure if that answered your question.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yes, somehow (laugh).

P22: Somebody (laugh) there's just yeah it's all good information.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. So, from what I was able to understand so um, your phone is also is in multiple ways also for work beyond just um, be used for WhatsApp communication that way, but also for what was it the for emails and in order for teaching?

P22: Yes, I was so the I suppose the teaching side is you know I can take screenshots very easily and of social media or of other stuff and those can then be I can you know crop them and do stuff with them and email them to myself, you know I can see interesting articles, and I can just send it as an email to myself and it finds it away and notes for me so that I can go and return to that at a later point um, it's it's a very kind of like it's a sort of a an organizing tool for me at some levels for for for obviously for both work and leisure, but in the work context, certainly um, you know, being able to use it for content creation for digital marketing and being able to understand moves up to the how the technology as experienced um, and how that can change your experience personalization. You know, is also an area of significant interest me in my research and certainly my older research on on event experiences and so on, and but yeah be beyond that you know, it is a critical tool for certain aspects of planning leisure and contacts and and say stay in touch it's not absolutely necessary for them, because you know I could ring up or I could just go on to the laptop and do it, but it's so much easier it's the ease. And the the proximity and the efficiency and the the opportunity really um, that mobile provides and particularly now with the the quality of signal. You know you're getting kind of like at least 4G you know pretty much everywhere, and I, and you know if you're not starting to head towards 5G in Belfast and places, so you know you can consume a lot of content and which means that you can be entertained or you can you know be exploring topics of work or you can be developing in lots of different ways.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. At the beginning of our conversation you were also saying that the at the beginning of your day, so you're scheduling what is going to happen during this day. Does technology get involved in that, or how you managed that?

P22: Yes, so that's a great question so that scheduling I manage with a diary okay I'm just going to show you here briefly I'll show you one, you know that that just look for one that maybe I didn't fill in at some point, to give you an idea. Well, look I'll just show you kind of like one or not to the very top of it, but I don't know if you can see, you can see the yeah the page there, so I will write up here it'll have its DW, A, and M, so DW is deep work if I do any work on papers or stuff like that I add some numbers here in ours admin is whatever admin added in the day and then M is for meetings I might have another one for marking or whatever your tasks are, the box for shop down here for the end of the day, I have a little thing that I fill out after I've gone to work just grateful for whatever the three things are that I'm grateful for that morning. And then I list three key tasks and align that to how many sort of half hours that that will take me to complete those tasks so that's me then I go in and and I use my device now to work out what I've got on my schedule for the day so I'll write those in to have this written down here, you know with the bottom on the on the kind of the side margin, and so this is kind of loosely based off of you know Carl Newport's kind of work on you know, managing your calendar and so on, um, and so yeah that the technology is specifically 'okay at three o'clock so actually 3.33 to 4 you know I know that I'm at an interview okay'. That was the only specific thing in the diary, if you like, but it meant that I could plan my activities around. So yes, the technology helps me quickly write down what what my needs are for that day, and then I can time block around that.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. So basically your appointments and activities are scheduled in well your digital calendar and then you transfer that information to the physical diary?

P22: Yeah to to be strategic around that time.

Mattia Rainoldi: I see.

P22: You know the better to better manage my work and leisure really you know -.

Mattia Rainoldi: (overlap) That's very interesting (end of overlap).

P22: It's a good it's a good practice, um, I don't do it, as well as I could, you know I still sometimes find myself, you know sitting thinking I'm because I'm just setting, but I think the best way to do this work is to say right 'okay if it takes, I will I will do six of these blocks and no more on this topic today and off you go'. I'm not disciplined enough sometimes I probably need to lose I've just written my interview there I probably need to go on to that and just put in the block saying I'm doing this part and I I'm doing this part, before speaking them and then that's me I'm finished for the day you know, I probably have one or two more steps I need to fully commit to to get the best out of the system, but generally, I still get the work done.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay interesting yeah. Alright. Um. I would like now to move a little bit more deeper into your use of digital technology managing those boundaries between work and leisure and my first question there is, if, in your daily routines so you are a person that um, generally prefers to have more separated approach to managing work and leisure or, if you are a person that general prefers to have a more integrated approach to that?

P22: Hmm. And I think I think I like the structure of the two being separate mostly, but I do take advantage, sometimes of you know my my calendar is never like okay so during semester time it fills up more okay but you know I will, if there is a gap and time and I've I've worked hard that day and I've I've achieved um, you know I will take advantage of that time you know for a walk you know or for some very quick leisure or whatever, and then just have a quick lunch, you know so I do like the separation of the two, but if there is time that can be taken advantage of in the day and and I kind of have I feel like I've earned that right from having delivered um, on my other tasks, then I will try to take advantage of it, the percentage of times that I do that it's probably quite low, but you know it's it's I could probably take advantage of more of that really and don't and, but I think even just the thought of having that control makes me very happy in my work life balance.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right. And what about the process of transmitting from for work pleasure, pleasure to work is, is technology involved in that for you sometimes in different situations does it help you to do that?

P22: I suppose one of the times that it helps me to do that as there's a there's a shutdown routine as part of my diary that a try to do every day okay. Um. And I do it at different levels and different depths, but the idea is that you kind of finalize your day and your process, you know what you've done and what you need to do. And you know, this could be five minutes or or or 15 minutes really dependent on the complexity of the things that you've been dealing with but ultimately there's a little square on my my diary a little box and I just put put a X for shut down and it's it's nearly the same as when I close the laptop you know it's kind of like okay that's that part done, you know it helps you then to go 'okay well that time's now my own', you know so that's shut down routine on both paper and on the laptop itself would be a trigger to that bridge between work and leisure, and again I think you know that kind of planning in the morning on paper before then opening the laptop and then starting to open up you know, whatever kind of browser windows and a tab open or not, you know if it's just a paper I'm working on just open up nothing else and just start working on it um, so yeah technology would be very key parts of those rituals of starting the day and finishing the day to work capacity.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm.

P22: That's, not to say that the devices won't be used again, you know I often have opened the laptop up again, not necessarily to look at work stuff but just because it's easier device to to use um, to book, you know certain things sometimes mobile doesn't give you the full range of of actions that you need to be able to do on a website and so on and so yeah. But, but it is a threshold moment opening and closing the laptop on a daily basis would be a threshold moment between work and leisure.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. Just taking a note here. P22 if it's possible can you tell me more about the practice this practice of shutting down or the practice of turning on is it just closing the laptop or there is more involved.

P22: Yeah I mean, I suppose, realistically so for talking about the, the shutting down ritual, if you like, a routine and what, what is involved there, is it, you're kind of basically positioning yourself, your mind, your day's activities and your future activities in sync to some, to some degree, you know, you're, you're at a point where you're, you're, there's somewhat of an equilibrium in your mind as to here is where I am, here's where I'm going to be now, and this is the point for me to stop, and I suppose step away, recharge with your family or, you know, actually expand more energy on your family dependent on the task that you have to do with them, you know. But yeah the theme would be that there is separation because you're not really there with your kids fully if you're checking your email or your on your phone. You know it's they know what they and I fall fail you know all the time, but my aim is to reduce and minimize that because I do think that that is a major issue for, not just for work life balance of the individual, but for the family and the family unit, you know well being as a very broad thing, and if your family is suffering because your habits are bad and then then really your well being suffering because you're not.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah so does your routine also involve um, some manipulation of your technologies?

P22: Um. In terms of the shutting down and and um, I suppose the only manipulation is maybe to try not to look at work emails you know, like so the phone. It just goes in your pocket, you know, are you, you said you know somewhere in the house, maybe not out of reach okay, because you'll probably be using it for other things, but you're trying not to allow it to to draw you into unresolved emails or or other issues related to work if possible, it's a last resort activity. And that's to protect the time as much as possible, and you know, for your family.

Mattia Rainoldi: So that does basically mean that after your shutdown teams, there is still the possibility of work, getting to your time with your family or the time that you are using for leisure activities, is that correct?

P22: It is possible, yes, it is possible. Um. Because, so you could maybe get a phone call or you know, some other form of notification although, I have most of my notifications off because I like to have that control, and you know to to not be driven by notifications (laugh). But yeah it certainly is possible, that it will interrupt your evening. And I try to minimize as much as possible those opportunities by going through a routine that makes me comfortable that that can be dealt with tomorrow. And that you know everything is where it needs to be at that particular point.

Mattia Rainoldi: I see. Um. You were mentioning that most of your notification are turned off. What what do you mean exactly we can you explain it?

P22: Sure sure. So for example if if you sent a Messenger message or WhatsApp message my phone won't buzz you know won't make any noise I'll be unaware, unless I go take it up and look at it, that there's any communication for me. So, whether you're communicating with me on Twitter on WhatsApp and you know, on Facebook I don't have the Facebook APP or on Facebook on the browser and you know, unless I go and look, you know I still see that there's a number on the APP so I'll know save WhatsApp has a one there at the minute so someone has sent me a message. When I go into it, there are two channels open one is you know my football coach and the other is my my family group WhatsApp group, you know so there's there's constantly information, but I, unless I go and seek it I don't see it.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. Interesting. Great so we have been talking quite a lot about work playing a role in in time, that is not dedicated to it. I would liked to play the to discuss the opposite scenario so if your leisure time or so leisure activities that you do that, you engage with outside work can potentially get into your work through the use of technology.

P22: Mhmm. Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: You already mentioned the example of some emails from the golf course and so on, there might be other examples.

P22: Yeah so certainly the the predominant ones will be yes activities that I'm involved in particularly, I think the coaching sport that's probably the one that you know I could be I could I could get quite a lot of traffic through WhatsApp and through messenger, for example, and that could be parents, it could be other coaches, it could be people looking for friendly games, you know. But yeah there's a lot of a lot of activity and it doesn't you know sort of stop when you're in your work day in fact. Um. If anything that's maybe when people were doing lots of their communicating you know they they don't see any any issue or barrier to when they send you messages. So yes, there is a potential there again, you know that you could get drawn into you know more personal or leisure time activities DURING your workday so again that's one of the reasons why I have notifications off. So that I'm less distracted by those sorts of technologies during the day, the the challenge of, that is, for example, I'm co-authoring a paper at the minute. And I assume the other author, you know doesn't have their notification switched off and say their Twitter. Because they communicate with me through that as if, as if I would get it immediately and I, I really usually miss it for at least a half a day. I don't even know that there's any communication there and there's sort of expected me to be really available. Um. So you know both platforms, whether they're used from a leisure perspective or a work perspective because of my chosen, you know management of it with notifications off, um, means that I'm less available.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right and on a personal level how does that make you feel?

P22: Hmm. So I think generally I'm I'm okay with that. I think it's where really we should be going. I just don't know how I'm sometimes I'm just confused a little by you know why certain people might use certain platforms, like, for example, that that co-author, you know I don't understand why they would continue, you know, to use that platform to try and communicate with me when I really it's clear that I'm not getting back to them as quickly on it. So I suppose I have sometimes confusion over you know why people use certain platforms and when they use certain platforms. I feel that there are definitely very much protocols missing you know societal agreements really (laugh) it's just a free for all people can do whatever they like, and do, and really they don't necessarily have any thought for the how other people use these channels, you know they they just use them as they use them with the net impact that much communication is missed or the value and the quality of that communication is reduced and or there's miscommunication because you know they think you've got information when you haven't. Um. So yeah. It could make me feel frustrated at times, but you know I choose to kind of forgive myself 100% for trying to reduce um, the deluge of of of information technologies and particularly social media that are trying to grab my attention every minute.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, I understand yeah. Okay. So let's see. Is there also for you P22, some kind of rule for you that you have in place and how to use and how not to use technology related to the topics that we've been discussing?

P22: Some yes okay. Well, yes, I mean, I do have rules on you know, how I how, as I said to you in terms of trying to reduce the volume of usage of you know, the Outlook APP for example out of hours of work, you know, during hours of work I don't mind so much checking it because it allows me to maybe have some freedom of movement, but I can still be aware that there's an issue that I need to start to plan for because it can check in during my work day on anywhere. Whether that's just in my house, while I'm having my lunch or whether it's kind of like go for a walk or I tend to not take things out for walks and stuff but I suppose. You know I would have I would have a rule of yet I mean I'm quite happy check my Outlook during my working day and in any context really but outside of that I would try, as a rule, not to check it too much or or if at all. In terms of um, WhatsApp and things again I try to minimize my my use of that during the working day because again it's just usually distracting stuff and I tried to minimize and you know some of the rules I've started to apply are not needlessly adding a thumb or a or a like or click, for you know all it does is just create another thing for someone else to look at. And so, hopefully by my own behaviors of doing that you know that might also change others you never know. So yeah I would have I would certainly have have some rules that I tried to apply in my management of my work and my leisure through technology.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. Have you found yourself already in situation where, through through technology was it difficult for you well, where we felt very difficult to distinguish between work and leisure?

P22: Yeah I mean, so there are definitely times, where you know, you can be in in a what feels like quite a leisure situation, particularly knowledge work okay, you know I could be having a meeting with a colleague in a lovely coffee shop somewhere okay. And they could be buying the coffee right which is great and and they are also, though providing ideas insights support for taking certain approaches, you know growing the network to develop a better you know delivery of form of pedagogy in your classroom. And you know you're you're enjoying the company and you're checking your emails at the same time, and so are they and everything's good. So that that sometimes though those moments when you're working with colleagues like that that's a strange kind of work leisure collision. Um, you know where you're working with people that you, you enjoy working with because they they share your interests, I can also attribute then so, so those are sort of like when when you know where work is actually benefiting you know your corporate places benefiting as well as you enter way okay and there, there are other kind of instances where maybe you're literally out playing golf with your child or your you know um, doing some sort of activity and you're very able to shoot off a quick email to a colleague or a person who's really stuck on something and it allows them to progress, and you know you've delivered very high value to them in a very key point. And you've still been just in the moment done in a moment, when your kid has kicked the ball over the fence and they have to go and get anyway. You see what I mean it's like so those to me would be like optimal sort of dynamic work leisure collisions.

Mattia Rainoldi: And related to that, um, so are there any advantages that you perceiving using technology as a mediator between work and leisure?

P22: Yes, at times I think I think if you've got the right systems and mindset in place you know, I think that the approach that that the Carl Newport talks about Digital Minimalism and there are different forms of this, um, I think, can help you deliver higher value and higher quality kind of work in in shorter time because of less distraction um, and then helps you manage you know where you do have to do that sort of lower value and talk about lower value in terms of you know, an a work context. Some of these lower value things in a work context could be higher value for you in a social context, but even those can probably be done with with less need to take up too much of your time, you know, there are certain you know, like scoring you know social media every day, as opposed to maybe just ignoring it and ringing a really good friend and catching up with them, you know could be much higher value. So yes, I do, I believe, if you've got the right philosophy um, to manage this um, work leisure kind of boundary. And the the requirements of work and leisure um, if you've got the right philosophy in place, then yes, it can it can be done successfully, um, technology can be used to mediate and improve aspects of it. I gave you the example of again, you know recent book by Carl Newport I like his stuff you probably picked that up, but you know he's talking about you know the the scourge of email. You know how it just creates back needless back and forth really a lot of times will better forms of technology that we could maybe apply for task management for clear handover of you know, a course issue, so that we don't necessarily need to go back and read through your train of emails and try and work out where we're at you know if we had a better software to help us project manage nearly to some degree, and you know issues that we deal with this course directors his lectures as whatever else. Yes, I do I 100% believe that there, there are, and will develop even better solutions for this, but at the minute what what do Newport would classify as the high mind the email is winning out, I think, in the future, though, you know we will get a better that I think we'll have hybrid systems that maybe you know, allow us to to manage our working life usage you're better.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. Do you see also any disadvantages that technology brings in the way that you manage and organize work and leisure?

P22: Yeah so definitely there are disadvantages and and they they they are creeping and numerous. I think the major ones, are you know the the the the choices or or approaches that people individuals adopt to use platforms to communicate with people like WhatsApp or you know Messenger or whatever else you know things that people are using that the there may be using in contexts that are going against really someone who's trying to minimize their use of them, you know, so I think I think there was negotiated kind of uses of technology and there has to be some way of of being able to flag up the actually look I don't really use this platform, or I don't really want to use this sort of thing you know I think that's that's what you would you would want to see.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. Great, um. Last question to this section here is, overall, if you think, or if we talk about the importance of how, what importance would you describe to technologies in the way that you manage um, work and leisure?

P22: Hmm. Well it's it's it's certainly critical to to work now, you know technology without it because all of my information for my job is in the cloud, um, there's no physical kind of record now. And my access to that, as is critical to you know answering the you know the what 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 emails that I've committed since we've started to talk the whole you know, there are the sorts of emails that require you know a little bit of digging to get the information it to, I suppose, put it together and add value to it and send it back out to them um, I wouldn't be able to do that efficiently without technology you will be back to having to sit in an office with people and records around you so it's it's it's absolutely critical to how we work now and in terms of leisure, I don't necessarily I look, if I had to go back to looking out the window and kind of guessing you know from the wind and and and remembering and knowing the tides. You know, for for the number of leisure activities, I have I could quite happily book to some degree without technology but you know the goal, for example, I mean you can't book it unless you either a goal for physically to the golf club and ask somebody to type it in for you know, or you have the APP so so many of your leisure presets are and I trapped in technology to some degree, you know, not all but certainly some. And then add on the layer of Covid and Covid tracing and all of that as well yeah (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. I'm now going to go through your diary and made some notes here.

P22: Okay.

Mattia Rainoldi: Of things, the more interesting to me I might need a few clarifications. Some things we already discussed and are clear to me. Yeah that is also something interesting yeah. You're saying here that you were in the free time and it took you quite a while. So what does it mean for you?

P22: So what's that about? I'm in my free time.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah you're in your free time.

P22: Oh, for my holidays?

Mattia Rainoldi: And it took you quite a while to disconnect. So what is connecting for you?

P22: Yeah I suppose you know the the the systems of email and communication from from my work and they don't cease you know they don't stop just because I've taken time off, you know our systems aren't very good yet at acknowledging, you know that time is your own you know so um, it it just took me a while to not to look and there were some tasks that just I felt that I just needed to keep an eye on whether that was the yeah probably wasn't the right thing, so I didn't fully disconnect, meaning that I didn't fully start working really in my free time you know which is a an issue really it's not it's not how things should be, um, I don't know whether it's just because of the nature of the year that we've been in. But yeah that's what I meant by not being able to disconnect quickly, I was still in work in some way in my mind.

Mattia Rainoldi: So do you do you ever disconnect?

P22: (laugh) It's a great question. Yet, probably in quite a long time since I've disconnected fully, or even partially realistically from from what I do and it has been quite I suppose. I suppose I've always been quite an intense person really with my work, you know I had a startup business, you know I put everything into that I started a teaching put a lot into that you know, at the same time I started another paddleboard business for the low end of that you know, so these were concurrent things and then I went to do a PhD running the paddleboard business, put a lot into that you know so we're supposed to ever disconnect really you know when you look at the the nature of I think I can disconnect for periods of time, you know and just enjoy where I am and what I'm doing, but the amount of time that I do, that is probably much, much reduced.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. That takes me to the next note that I made here and one day here you were saying that you enjoy reading leisure time at lunch where basically you left your technology and went for a walk with with with your wife.

P22: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Can you can you explain me more a little bit is the leaving technology behind what does it mean for you?

P22: Well, and those instances the leaving the technology behind it means that there's there's zero chance of my my work or my coaching roles or other duties or any of those things interrupting that period of time, you know that just it can it can only happen if someone we bump into someone who's somewhat related to those things so it's not likely. So I think that that's what I mean there is that really the, the only way to guarantee (laugh) complete freedom from the potential distraction of either work or other commitments of a social nature is to just be device-less.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right. For you leaving devices behind was a way to your own words 'be rejuvenated and undistracted'?

P22: Yeah yeah yeah I would agree with that yeah I think that there's a there's a mist that surrounds you when when when you're attached to your device, you know when it's in your pocket it's it definitely has the potential of changing the urgency of aspects of your day, whereas if it's not on, yet you know if you're not if you're not in possession of your devices. Then, the only challenges are are those that you have in your own mind, no, no one else can kind of disrupt your time, you know, for that period, and in terms of rejuvenation I think that that those times are increasingly more important to create and to enjoy. And it's something that I need to to, I think, to develop more of my own life but yeah that's why I would see them as as as having that impact at times. I mean there are times that I could maybe be listening to an audiobook that's a really good audiobook and it could also maybe rejuvenate me and make me um, interested and excited about something not always because at the end of the day, not all books are great you know. But, but certainly there have been times, where I've had one or two books that I've really looked forward to listening to you and the device has been my means to do that and it's been very enriching so you know it's there's a dichotomy there with devices, you know they can give them, they can take away.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah yeah definitely. So for you the leaving technology behind or being device-less, as you said, is that a strategy of yours, for creating a separation between different aspects of you life?

P22: It is a strategy for for creating complete uninterrupted leisure time you know or thinking time you know, because it can work equally well for work, you know if you're trying to think strategically, you cannot allow other distractions to creep in because the quality and value of your work will will will reduce significantly and so reducing distractions for either leisure or for work it's definitely in your interests where you're very much present in particular things that those particular times. And there are times we're in transition between those things. Um, and it may be less important than and maybe that's when you allow yourself to catch up on certain things and and and you can do that, but I think that generally, I think that probably having less um, sort of hyper connected technology it's going to result in you, having you know, a better well being and a higher productivity and your work if I'm honest and I'm talking about the higher values, activities and things. I'm not talking about the the little admin type things that you need to do.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. You say yes, this is a strategy that you have or how would you describe it?

P22: Yeah. Great question um I probably don't adopt it anywhere near as much as I should but I do I do I do see its value and you know I will set my phone up out of the way and because the notifications aren't on the only thing that would distract me as maybe a call from family. You know that's, the only thing that would ring through which you can you know you kind of need to have those things available. So there are times, though, that you could completely just just take all of that away from you, because they know physically where you are, and if they want you, they could come and get you so yeah I mean the next day job, the next way to protect those you know couple of hours in the day when you're going to do really high value work might be just to review remove yourself from any form of device, maybe, except that that you need to do your actual work on, but the sort of communications device side of it you know the phone. You might take yourself away from that.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, I understand. Right let's move to the next one, so you told me already about your team, this is checked. And maybe the last one here um. Well there's two different two very interesting things. And this one is you're saying you were enjoying listening to an audiobook and at the same time watching TV?

P22: That was in a, what? So I said that I was enjoying listening to an audiobook and watching TV?

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah.

P22: Well, that maybe I must have meant that I was doing them like either one after the other or or else.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. Alright.

P22: Yeah I don't imagine it would be doing at the same time. So I probably written that down wrong.

Mattia Rainoldi: Oh yeah all right.

P22: Or just confused how I wrote it.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. Okay, so you were saying.

P22: Unless family, family could have been watching TV and I was listening to the audiobook, so we're still present with them, you know.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. The last one here is, you were watching TV without much worry about your work, although you did check emails.

P22: Mhmm. Mhmm.

Mattia Rainoldi: So if you were not worrying too much about it, why why did you check emails?

P22: Yeah just bad habits, just bad habits. It's as simple as that you know, knowing, as I said to you, you know I I aspire, you know to be more of a minimalist in in what to do, but you know (laugh) in the same way as someone who, maybe has a difficulties with alcohol might aspire, you know to be much better in their management of certain things, or you know, a smoker or you know, there are certain addictive qualities around what we do with technology and being on top of your work or just there's it's a fidget, it's just a thing to do, and your body has followed those cues, to the point that it doesn't even recognize that there's no return for doing that you know. So there are times when I when I check it when there's absolutely no reason that I should, really, and it's literally just a bad habit at that point, in my opinion.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand. Okay, let me just take a last look at it, yeah this is another thing that you already explained to check emails on a number of occasion while waiting that your son finished the football training so yeah.

P22: And again just yeah I mean there's no particular reason why you know, we would need to be checking work email there, I mean, I do have my Gmail account, which might sometimes give me information about you know my kids football or whatever, but not that much really you know so must have been my work email that was checking. Um, and I was probably just you know this feeling that maybe you could get a little ahead of things you know this is dying time but it's okay, why not, you know it's just not managing that downtime appropriately really you know, maybe having having something better, to think about, for example, or you know reading a book or you know, listening to a book or whatever and or just being and just being happy just being you know but yeah sometimes I just have that nervous fidget that technology has probably created and me if I'm honest you don't have a load it I have allowed it to become a part of my my activities subconsciously nearly.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, fantastic, yeah. So we are coming to an end, and before we wrap everything up, I wanted to ask if there is still something that, in your opinion, is important to mention that we didn't talk about about these technologies and their involvement in shaping the way that you organize work and leisure and how you transfer or switch from one area to the other.

P22: Yeah I think the only thing that maybe we didn't talk about which I think is critical or or is moving and nudging us to certain behaviors would be obviously, because of cybersecurity and you know offense you know the authenticator APP for for Microsoft. We are now required as a staff to have an authenticator APP on a phone now that doesn't necessarily like the work aren't providing this phone okay so we're putting this on to our private phone. Um, but it's specifically to allow us to open work related accounts so, even if I wanted to be a digital minimalist and have no phone you know how, how can I still do my job, and I think that's that's a significant an escalating issue, in my opinion, for how technology is being used in the workplace and I'm surprised that there hasn't been more pushback on that um, from certain quarters in work, for example, unions, but that maybe tells its own story that we're all just already you know happily on that little wheel.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. This is very interesting observation of yours and I never it never came across across this this thinking.

P22: Yeah well, I mean I don't know if that's happening in your work or not, but it's just I just I just picked up and I thought you know that's a significant you know stepping stone where you go from yeah work might ask for your mobile number to contact you, okay, but you know your technology your own technology now is being requested to authenticate you, which means now that you need a smartphone which has implications and cost, and you know and management going forward and availability, which is a critical one for me in terms of of kind of better habits digital habits going forward, um, and so you know that that's the only other thing I thought that might be interesting to bring up to your attention from my own experience.

Mattia Rainoldi: Very interesting aspect, as I said, I never heard from other participants, and they also didn't considering that way that that you are portraying it now so it is very, very, very interesting and thank you for for putting in forward.

P22: Not all, hopefully some of its useful for you at all.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah I'm sure it is. If I make the final final question before closing up so if you would have an outlook in the future. How do you see yourself managing work and leisure with with technologies in the future yeah?

P22: Yeah I think I think you know my my my first step would be to try and find the right philosophy to for the technology use. I think it's important to ground myself in a philosophy of technology to only to always work towards trying to ensure that you're doing high value work or leisure, you know um, and to try not to allow technology to subjugate those opportunities. So my so first and foremost, a philosophy of technology, use and digital minimalism is a good one to aim for I think because yeah and increases the value of the work that we do and it still celebrates good use of technology, you know, like the Amish don't use new technology stuff that really they they can't find in any other way that that really brings good value to the community so, for example those. And then beyond that it's actually the hardest thing for me is not understanding, you know the potential and the opportunity and the philosophy it's actually applying it, you know it's it's having the fortitude commitment and and yeah um, focus really to maintain better habits, so that that would be my hope going forward for myself anyway.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay great. So, if there isn't anything more to add from your side.

P22: Can't think of anything, no.

Mattia Rainoldi: So then, what remains to be said, is thank you.

P22: You're more than welcome.

Mattia Rainoldi: For taking the time to discuss this topic with me and I'm going to stop the recording here.