Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. P3 welcome to this interview. So, as we were just saying we are here to discuss your practice of living as a digital worker and I have prepared a couple of warm up questions for you. The first one is exactly what is your job title?

P3: I'm a freelance interpreter and translator.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah okay very good. And you said you are a freelancer so, how would you describe your employment type?

P3: So basically I work for translation agencies or companies who have international guests or organize an event and need to overcome their language barriers so in my case, German, Italian, the English and so basically it's free market.

Mattia Rainoldi: Do you have free, um, fixed contracts?

P3: Um, just with a couple of TV networks in Milan, Italy, um, because they need it to be there when needed and you cannot say no to them because it's TV, um, so that's the reason why they wanted me to sign a contract, but normally, normally I don't have fixed contracts.

Mattia Rainoldi: So do you live in Milan?

P3: Um, there is no simple question to wear answer to the question where I live, because for my job, and for my private life, I am sometimes in Milan and sometimes in Tuscany my hometown Pistoia. So I need to switch between the two quite often and have a house, both in Milan and in Tuscany, so that already made me kind of a nomad even before the pandemic (laugh), because (laugh) I had to travel very often on my own.

Mattia Rainoldi: I see. So basically do you work only from Milan, also from Tuscany as well?

P3: From Tuscany as well, because I have some of my clients in Tuscany too.

Mattia Rainoldi: I see, yeah. Are there, so when you are in Milan or when you are in Tuscany, do you have any case where you work from generally?

P3: Well before the pandemic I didn't need to have any specific equipment, because 90% of my job was on site with a client so in the insurance company or somewhere else, and I didn't have to work from home. But then everything changed over the last 18 months or so, and so I had to organize, um, sorts of a recording studio almost, um, both in Milan and in Tuscany, in order to be able to do simultaneous interpreting with proper headset or proper environment which is not the one that I have right now, of course, um, in order to guarantee high audio quality and sound quality, um, both places.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah. And, um, when do you work in general?

P3: Well, that's another tough question for me, because it really depends on when my clients call me and what time of the year it is. I may be very busy morning, afternoon and even during the night, if I have American clients will be in different time zones, so there may be that sometimes I need to work like 17 or 18 hours, and then the next day I'm off. Um, in some other cases maybe it just worked for two or three hours for a small task as most translation and then I have the rest of my day for for myself, so it really depends. I don't have a workout routine, to be honest.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. So, how does it make you feel not having fix working routine?

P3: Well, um, it makes me feel free and it can be great because I have time for everything, I want to do for my hobbies, for my friends, for my family, I can find time for for everything I need to do, but of course it is also stressful because you never know when you're going to work, when the phone is going to ring and so it's difficult to plan, um, for example, my holidays or plan anything in the long term, because I can never know where I will be or what I will be doing in one month. I have an idea about next week, and maybe the next two weeks, but then it's just a question mark, so it's also stressful sometimes. There are pros and cons, as I guess in any kind of job.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so when you take holidays, do still take work holes or do some work?

P3: Um, I tend not to when they have really a couple of weeks off. I tend to say no, thank you, I will be available in the coming week or so, but it depends on the client depends on the fee to be honest sometimes. I had to work remotely with my computer, even if I was on holiday, I had to take a few hours for, for important jobs, but to be honest, it happened only a couple of times.

Mattia Rainoldi: And why did you make it happen?

P3: Um. Well, I have to be honest, because of the fee and I didn't want to renounce to that amount of money and I thought well it's worth to lose half a day or one full day of my holidays and this case it will be an exception, but in this case it's worth it that's what I thought, and so I did.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand. And in general, what do you do in your free time?

P3: I love traveling when traveling is permitted. Um, over the last one and a half year I spent a lot of time reading, I spent a lot of time playing video games again after months and months staying at home, I really discovered after a few years I rediscovered the joy of video gaming and, I never really watched a movie or TV series that much which is probably one of the most common answers that people give to this question, but nothing, it's not my thing and do some sports, but again when it's possible to play football or go somewhere with friends and maybe do some sports. Now, for example, it's possible once again and I'm really happy to do that and yeah that's it more or less.

Mattia Rainoldi: Do you think that your work choices influence your free time choices?

P3: Absolutely, yes, because my friends, my girlfriend, my family, they all know that when, um, they organize something with me a day off or something I can know, I can never be 100% sure that I will be there because it may be that they before we meet I say 'oh I'm sorry tomorrow I cannot be there because I have to work'. And that's the stressful part of my freelancing activity, that is so difficult to to plan. So sometimes I yeah, I, of course, still try to, to meet other people and organize all the things that I want to do, but there is always a question mark in the end, because I can never be 100% sure okay.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. And do you think that your free time choices also influence your word choices?

P3: Um, only in the case of a real holiday like in the example I gave before that I do not work, apart from a couple of exceptions and sometimes I had to say no to a few jobs because I really was on holiday, I was abroad, I didn't have my computer with me sometimes but that's only the case of a proper holiday if it's just my free time, it happened to me that, for a last minute job kind of call me 'P3 please can you come as soon as possible, um, the other interpreter is sick, the other interpreter had a car accident', which really happened to me, 'so please be here in 30 minutes'. So, no matter what I was doing, maybe I was having fun, doing something with friends or family, I just took my car leave.

Mattia Rainoldi: And how did that make you feel?

P3: Um, very bad when that happens (laugh), because everyone around me is looking at me like oh yeah sure he's only thinking about his job and not caring about the rest. That's sometimes the perception that other people have even if that's not true, but if I try to walk in their shoes, I can imagine that this is kind of the feeling that you get but that's what I need to do if I want to pay my rent, pay my bills and all the rest (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: So, um, what is more important for you work or, or your free time, your leisure time?

P3: For this pandemic, I started to think that maybe my work is not so important, and I was giving too much importance to my freelancing activity, being an interpreter, which is a beautiful job I love it. Um, but you know, during the last few months, I had a lot of time to reflect about everything, about life, about what is really important, and so on. So I'm now slowly starting to focus on everything else that is not work and maybe I'm starting to put it in the first place, instead of the second place of my list. So everything is changing, to be honest, in this moment. We'll see what happens when the pandemic is really over, how my work is going to be and it's hard to predict. But I'm leaning towards the free time and private life side.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah. Then, at this point I would like quickly to move to discuss the role of technology in your life, um, so I saw your diaries you use few different technologies and especially your PC and your mobile phone they've been mentioned few times so, can you tell me what is their role in your life? Why you use them, for what reason you use them?

P3: So basically, um, my computers, because I have two of them. It's necessary sometimes, um, are necessary for my remote interpreting assignments, which means that I'm doing simultaneous interpreting, but instead of being, um, on sides with the audience and everyone else and the other technicians, I just do it from home because of the Covid restrictions, this is something that started basically last year with Covid, and so I had to learn how to use the proper equipment, how to make my voice sound better and sorry if I don't have the super high quality in this conversation, but I didn't take my headset and all the different settings that are normally necessary for simultaneous interpreting, but that is you know much more difficult than a conversation like our conversation, because you have so many things going on in your brain when you do a real time translation. And basically I had to start using much more technology over the last 18 months or so, which wasn't necessary at all before before Covid and, and, of course, different headsets. Um, my mobile phone sometimes is necessary in order to, um, you know interpreters normally working couples, so you always have a colleague working with me during an event. And sometimes the easiest way to listen to each other is through a phone call, so sometimes what happens is that I have two devices in front of me with simultaneous interpretation through Zoom, for example, one computer and maybe dictionaries and interpreting tools, on the other, computer, so two devices, and then the third device is my mobile phone and I just use different headset and listen to my colleague when he or she is speaking. So, I have three devices and it's kind of complicated, um, it really is complicated, but after a lot of you, um, you get used to it and it's just what I need to do if I want to, to work regardless of travel restrictions, because basically, um, interpreters are travelers and always work in different cities, different companies. I used to take I don't know, maybe 10 or 12 trains per month to reach different locations and then everything changed and became more technological due to Covid.

Mattia Rainoldi: Great. Do you, um, use the same technologies or different technologies in your free time?

P3: Um, sometimes, um you know, there are different platforms where I translate, um, more professional ones or just a Zoom call and sometimes it just work in Zoom, but I also use it to talk with my distant friends, friends who live abroad and so on, sometimes I use Zoom in my free time, but in the case of all the other platforms, um, they are just for for my work and I never used them and during my, my free time and then of course my, my mobile phone is also parts of my private life, because whatever I need to send a text to friends or family that's the tool that it's necessary, so there is no clear separation between work time and leisure time when it comes to my mobile phone, because all the application, all the things are on the same device and, um just using Whatsapp, for example, for texting can be with a friend, but it can be with a client because clients sometimes send me a Whatsapp, so I just open it and maybe both things working and messaging with friends.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, So how do you manage that?

P3: Um, I just accept that there is no clear separation when it comes to my mobile phone and it's something I thought about quite often because I will, I will probably like to have more separation between the two, but it's hard to tell the clients 'please don't send me a text on Whatsapp just send me an email or call me', um, it's hard to switch to more formal contacts, because they enjoying having an informal contact with me. It's part of the collaboration, sometimes, and they feel that they can send me a text whenever they want, even if that's not actually the case because I would not reply to a work message at 11pm, for example. Um, but they love to do it, my clients, so I just accept that Whatsapp and other applications are used both for my free time and for my work. I, you don't find a solution, to be honest, to this thing.

Mattia Rainoldi: What other platforms are there you said Whatsapp and others? So what are the others?

P3: Unfortunately Telegram because I have clients or colleagues who have worked for me, sometimes you know colleagues can contact you and say I need a second interpreter a second translator for this task and they send me a text on Telegram which is not very professional either, in my opinion, but, um, currently I'm one of the few people thinking this, and most of the other colleagues and clients easily use Whatsapp or Telegram, um, or work. I would prefer an email, but I cannot impose it to other people.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right, so, and regarding emails, do you have, how many emails account do you have?

P3: Um, I have two email accounts, actually three now because I just created a new one, for an association of interpreters so I'm currently having, I'm currently using three different accounts.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right. And use them for different purposes?

P3: Um, Yes, because one is mainly for my teaching activity, I forgot to mention that I am also teaching, English and German here in Italy, and, um, basically the second email account was created just for teaching activities, but sometimes I need a second account for my interpretation and translation activity. Um, when you need to have a backup or when you need to have a second line that is sometimes required, and so you must have two different accounts basically on Google, for example, you must have two of them, because sometimes, um, clients want you to be available, even if there is a problem if there is a glitch with the one thing you use the second computer and the second account and make sure that you can still be there, and so I started to use the teaching account for translations as well.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, do you -

P3: (overlap) And the third one (end of overlap) is very new so I cannot really say something about the third account (laugh) because I just created it and we'll see how this is going to fit with with the rest.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. Do you have a private email account?

P3: Um, not really, my main account, which is my gmail account, I use it, both for my private life and for work.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. And why is the reason for it?

P3: Well, I already started to use it, um, when I was a student and back then I wasn't really thinking about this issue. I was just using my single email for everything. When I started to work that was my email. So my first clients started to either emails on this account, and then it was too late to change this thing because they are used to contact you in a certain way, and it may seem odd but I realized that, just like in the case of Whatsapp, talking to your clients and saying, 'well, we should use this platform, instead of the other platform' and so on seems very difficult for some reasons and they either forget about it, or they don't contact you because they don't know where to, where to do it, um, so I just left my private, um, email account as it was, and I kept on using it for my job as well.

Mattia Rainoldi: So how does it make you feel to have both work and free time in the same place?

P3: Again it's, it's difficult but, um, when you receive many emails in one single day it's definitely tough to separate, even if I use different folders and try to separate private life and professional life on the Gmail account, you can never really do it, I mean it's still in the same place and I think I slowly started to, to accept the fact that I don't have a clear separation between the two, and I know that, of course, there are difficulties coming with that it's more stressful and so on, but I guess it's part of my lifestyle as a freelancer and I can't expect to have a clear separation between private life and professional life, just like people working in an office, leaving at 6pm and then it's done, and no one is going to say anything to them until the next morning. Um, I guess that I, I kind of have it as a freelancer. Um, so I just accept that it's the way it is even if, to be honest, I would like to have a bit more separation, other than time preparation, but a bit more will be I think easier to manage.

Mattia Rainoldi: So what are you trying to say is that this is a disadvantage?

P3: Definitely, it is a disadvantage, even if I accepted it, um, definitely is a disadvantage to a mix between your own life and your professional life, yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: What would you say so?

P3: Because it comes with more stress, of course, because you're doing something else, all of a sudden, you need to switch and you're doing it on the same platform, you're not really thinking about just enjoying your free time because you are on your Whatsapp when your email, and you know that anytime you may receive a message that is urgent and you need to reply to that first, even if you are having a great conversation with a friend or family member, um, you just need to interrupt it all of a sudden, because you know the client wants to receive a reply soon as possible and sometimes that means that, um, you're always kind of ready to fight instead of relaxing if you know what I mean. And that's not pleasant feeling when you have it every day.

Mattia Rainoldi: Do you believe there are advantages?

P3: Well, the advantage is all of the free time that I, that I have as a freelancer. So it may be that I received this message that it's urgent, but it could also be that I have an entire afternoon for myself, and that is a joy that normally, um, people in my age, focusing on their careers and so on, is something that 90% of the people don't have this free time, the opportunity to just go out for a walk or take a nap at 3pm, for example, it's something that I really appreciate, because I realize, when I look at my colleagues, my friends, I see that none of them has this freedom to be honest, apart from the other freelancers, of course, the other freelancers, have the same, um, freedom, so there are advantages as well, absolutely. And I can take care of my family when there is, um, difficulty and when you have to be there for my family. My work leaves me the time to take care of my parents, which has become important recently. And if I had a different job I wouldn't be able to do that. If it has to work in an office every day for eight hours without ever moving I would have had to leave my parents on the road, which would have been bad.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah. So, would you generally say that you prefer to keep your work and leisure activities more separated or more integrated?

P3: I would have,I would liked to have a bit more of a separation between the two in order, um, to avoid the stress of, you know, being always ready, as I said, and I think I can integrate them very well when necessary and switch from one to the other one easily, so I think there is no need for further integration it's probably the opposite.

Mattia Rainoldi: So when you think about, um, having some, some technology with you that you're working with or you're using it for your leisure purposes, your free time purposes. Could you describe some ways that you have or that you some ways in which you separate work and leisure from each other?

P3: I don't have many solutions like this, but, um, in the evening, if I am out with friends or even if I'm just sitting, um, on my couch watching TV, I just got rid of my phone, don't watch it, um, just leave it in another room for hours because I don't expect to be working in the evening or at night and that gives me more separation, because I know that whatever comes, um, can wait for at least a few hours for at least late in the evening or the early morning next day, and if I'm just out with my friends or if I'm just, um, watching TV, I can just do that without having, um, a part of my brain focusing on other things I can just be entirely there and enjoy what I'm doing now, instead of thinking about what could come.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. Would you describe it as a ritual for you?

P3: As a? I'm sorry.

Mattia Rainoldi: As a ritual?

P3: Yes, kind of a ritual. I tend to do it quite often, to be honest, yes, to get rid of my phone and I normally close my computer as well in the evening, but then, if there is an emergency I'm always ready to open my laptop again and do something when it's really a must. If it's not a must, I just leave it there until the next morning.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah. So do you have any other kind of rituals or rules that you set for yourself, or that someone else set for you? Um, that you're following saying okay, this is work time or, um, workspace or other things?

P3: Um, I started to have, um, a morning routine. I started to meditate every day, um, do some stretching every every day in the morning and a few other things for myself and in total that last for like 20 minutes and I do it before I even start to open my laptop or look at my notifications on my mobile phone because I need those 20 minutes to start my day. And so that's probably another small separation between myself and the things that I have to do, it's just for a few minutes per day, but it's I think it's good for my mental health, to be honest, to have, um, a few moments just for me and it really made a difference. I started to do it during the pandemic and it really works, so I'm happy about this routine and I'm thinking about other things that can help me or giving me more separation between the two things but I don't have any other example in mind at the moment, maybe there are other things, but look later I don't know.

Mattia Rainoldi: Sure. Know maybe I would like to discuss with you, we have been already touching quite a lot about this relationship between, between technology and managing boundaries, um, I would like to go to your diary and, um, ask you to comment a little bit more in detail on on some of the things that you have, um, you have written. So you were saying here my free time was in the morning, which is strange.

P3: Yes (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: Why do you say so?

P3: Because normally, my my clients, my colleagues who contact me for a job and all the other people normally give me a busy morning, that's what normally happens, so it's strange when you have a morning where nothing happens, you know that you have a meeting in the afternoon and before 2pm or 3pm you really don't have much to do. Um, and it was strange because normally the morning is the time when I have to be there, and do stuff but that doesn't depend on me, it's just something that depends on when other people, clients and so on decide to call me.

Mattia Rainoldi: Mhmm. So do you have any expectation in that day?

P3: I was expecting to receive something during the morning, an email or other projects, but it didn't happen, Anyway, I stayed home and enjoy free time from home as I think I wrote in the day of my diary. I don't remember exactly what I wrote.

Mattia Rainoldi: So and, how did it make you feel that situation.

P3: As I said, I was in the mood of ready to fight but not fighting really so, um, again, I tried to make the most of my free time and I'm becoming a little bit better at, um, enjoying my free time activities, even if I'm ready to start to work, but still, you can never do it 100% because parts of your brain will always be somewhere else, and will always be thinking about jobs to come. So I'm improving it, but you cannot really enjoy your free time entirely in this cases, I think.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand, yeah. And that's very interesting and is kind of related to another thing that you, that you wrote, so you said here 'my workout activities were really difficult today, which means I couldn't afford to stretching such as looking at notification on my phone'. So what kind of notification were you expecting there or did you, did you got there?

P3: Well, in that specific case I really think I didn't take a single look at my phone during those hours because I was very busy with my laptop and I think was, um, simultaneous interpreting in that moment, so, as I said earlier on, you have so many things going on in your brain, you're thinking, translating, speaking, listening and in those moments, um, even if I've been doing this for a few years, you cannot have further distractions. Maybe if it's something that it's quite easy for me or a topic that I've been translating several times, even if I'm interpreting simultaneously, I can still take a look at my phone and maybe read a message, even if I shouldn't be doing it, I'm fully aware of this, um, in that case, it was a difficult job, it was really difficult, so it required 100% of my concentration and of my abilities and to be honest, that was a good feeling, because I was just doing one thing I was entirely focused on that, I wanted to do a great job, and the fact that I didn't care about my mobile phone was a good thing.

Mattia Rainoldi: That, even though it was, as you said, a very difficult task, you still allowed notifications to come in, why was it?

P3: Um, you mean why I didn't turn off all notifications?

Mattia Rainoldi: For example.

P3: Um, yes, I could have could have done that, you're right. But, in general, I have very few notifications because I only receive notifications from Whatsapp and emails, and Telegram sometimes because that's where clients could contact me, but all the other platforms and social media and all the other things are switched off. They never send me any notification, so they are a few, to be honest, but still Whatsapp just for family, friends and then a few clients it's already a large quantity notifications, even from just one APP and again, I never decided, I never turned off notifications from these applications because that's where clients could contact me. If it's just a social media platform, I don't care, I can reply, the next day it's just a social media platform. But if it's messaging or emails, I need to see them, but of course if I'm, I'm going to our company, you know I'm the accountant and the interpreter, I'm the marketing expert (laugh), um, I'm seven or eight different people in one, um, so if I'm just focusing on my simultaneous interpreting tasks, and another client has sent me an email, fine this time I will reply later, I will reply after a few hours, maybe. And that's fine, even if it happens once, then I send a text or an email and say 'I'm sorry but I was working and I couldn't really look at my emails'. And sometimes they understand, sometimes (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, I understand. In the same situation then you wrote I was definitely happy when I close my PC?

P3: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: So why does it make you feel happy closing your PC? What does that -

P3: (overlap) Give me (end of overlap)

Mattia Rainoldi: (overlap) - what does end for you?

P3: The end of that difficult interpreting job. It was over, I was quite happy with my performance, um, interpreters, by the way, tend to judge themselves all the time and worry about every single mistake, and so we are very hard on ourselves normally, but in that case I thought, well, I did a good job, I was happy with that and, and then the sense of freedom, you know that you've done the most important thing of the day, maybe, yes, you will have a couple of emails but that's not rocket science, so you just close your laptop and you know.

Mattia Rainoldi: What is freedom for you? You said sense of freedom?

P3: Well, freedom is when I did, for example, this difficult job, which was a couple of hours. And it, um, it was well paid, um, still left me some free time during the day, of course, I had to prepare terminology and study the presentations in two different languages in days before, so it took a lot of a lot of time before the meeting, but then the meeting was a couple of hours and was my main job for that day, which gives me a lot of time, um, and I can do whatever I want during the rest of the day, and that gives me the sense of freedom because maybe it's, I think on that day was in the afternoon so probably I was done by 4pm and the rest of the afternoon was for myself, or for other people, I wanted to hang out with.

Mattia Rainoldi: So does closing your PC give you always this feeling or was just -

P3: (overlap) almost, almost

Mattia Rainoldi: (overlap) - that particular (end of overlap) situation?

P3: Well, maybe I feel more relieved and feel better after a difficult job, maybe it was because of the difficulty, of, of what I have done, because otherwise I don't, I don't feel this way, yeah you're right. So it's not something that happens every day.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. Let me see what else I've found here. (pause). So here it says 'working on a Saturday always means a more relaxed atmosphere, because no one called or sent emails'.

P3: Exactly. Um, as it said I don't really have control over my working shifts, it depends. Sometimes I need to work during the weekend a lot and I have nothing to do on Monday. And it's just beyond my control, and I started to realize that actually focusing on an urgent translation or interpretation task during the weekend is more relaxing because I have nothing else to do. All the companies, translation agencies are closed, all of them, which means that it's very unlikely to receive an important email basically it's almost impossible to receive another email, another tasks on that day. So I can just forget about that and, as I said earlier around, just focus on one single thing be present and just give 100% of myself to what I have in front of me that moment to the job that I'm doing in that moment. And that's a good feeling.

Mattia Rainoldi: So, be present is also something that is important for you when you're off work?

P3: Yes, absolutely. It's it's even more important, I would say, because I really want to enjoy my, my free time, my holidays when I'm on holiday and I want to make the most of it, maybe I've been waiting for it for, for months when it comes, I really want to to enjoy it, so I try to forget about the rest and normally I contact all of my clients beforehand and say 'hi I will not be there at the end of July, beginning of August, if you have any project coming, please let me know I will be ready to help you before my holidays, otherwise I'll see you at the end of August', for example, which is what I have been doing right now in order to avoid problems during my incoming holidays.

Mattia Rainoldi: I understand yeah, you're in the same situation, so you said, um, so you want to be present, um, but here you say 'whether I always with have my phone with me and check emails, LinkedIn regularly'.

P3: Sometimes they need to check also LinkedIn regularly because I find new clients on there. It's platform that I use for direct contacts with new leads, possible new clients and it's very bad when you don't reply for too many hours and they are waiting for an important answer. I, I started to use it almost as often as my email account, almost, because I realized that LinkedIn is important to few, if you want to happen, your clients and if you know how to use it, which is not that easy I had to learn how to use the platform properly, and while it really, it really depends on the task, because if it's a written translation, so if I'm writing a documents in a different language, I'm already typing on my computer and to just switch on LinkedIn or my emails it's not such a big thing. And I'm not talking, speaking, listening at the same time, just like in the case of interpreting tasks so, maybe in this case I guess, I'm not sure, but in this case I was doing a written translation, which means that I'm already in front of my computer, my Internet is already there and they have a few pages already opened and it's not a big thing to just dedicate one minute to, to LinkedIn when it's necessary, and then after one minute you just go back to the sentence that you are translating.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah but here you said you were free in the afternoon and you were doing that. So what effects does it have on you being present in your free time.

P3: Um, did I write that I started to work, even if I actually had free time in the afternoon what was that? I don't remember. So I was -

Mattia Rainoldi: (overlap) It was Saturday.

P3: (overlap) planning to have (end of overlap). Oh, okay. Um. That's a week ago.

Mattia Rainoldi: Well, I read the full sentence then coming after, after this one.

P3: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: So you said 'however, I was', um, sorry,'whether I always have my phone with me and check my emails, LinkedIn regularly, is switched off completely after 6pm and I even, even look at my phone for several hours in the evening, which made me feel', um, 'free and more present when I was with other people'.

P3: Yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Before completely getting away from your phone, you said you were in your free time but checking emails, LinkedIn regularly, so what effects does this have on your feeling of being present in the situation?

P3: Well, I wasn't that present during the free time of the afternoon because, even if I didn't have any task in that moment, it was still an afternoon, so I was still ready to start, um, up until 6pm but then it was during the weekend, and it was in the evening, so I decided that's it, I gave enough availability to my possible clients and so on that's it for today and I just switched off. And in that case, sometimes I use the, you know this is probably interesting for you, I have digital well being application on my phone. And if you put it on concentration mode basically it switch, it switches everything off. So it's like, um, you can still receive messages from people that you selected that you consider to be urgent, so in that case, those messages will come, but otherwise there is a filter and, sometimes they use it, um, when I really want to be, um, free, but still I have my phone with me, um, I just use these application to have a bit more of a separation between the time and work time.

Mattia Rainoldi: How often do you use that application?

P3: Um, twice per week, three times per week and when I have a moment, um, that is important for my private life and I really want to be there and say 'okay I'm just taking this time for important things for me'. But maybe, as I said, it's a Wednesday afternoon, so of course clients could still call me, I cannot expect everyone to be silent and respectful of my free time if it's a Wednesday, um, and that's one of the cases where where I could use it or in that case, it was on a weekend it's strange, normally I don't use it on a weekend day. But I guess I just felt like doing just last Saturday. I don't remember exactly the reason why I used this, this filter, let's call it a filter. Maybe, maybe I was just stressed, maybe I did it because I was stressed by the, the rest of the day and I needed a bit of help in this sense.

Mattia Rainoldi: That's very interesting. So what do you mean with I needed a little bit of help?

P3: In a way to help my mind to you know forget about my work, forget about the email that could possibly come, the client that you know reply or maybe is going to reply now, I just need to let it go, sometimes, because in that case it was evening in the weekend. So even if my instinct would bring me to reply to that email, I know that it's not healthy, I mean it's a weekend and, um, maybe it's not even that urgent. I should forget about that and just reply on Monday. But sometimes as a freelancer you know you're probably understood that there is no clear separation between different things and I just need to force myself to do it sometimes because it's good to have a separation. I'm fully aware of it.

Mattia Rainoldi: So in this case you're trying to say that this technology helped you or made it more easy for you to draw boundaries?

P3: Exactly, yes, this application is about putting a boundaries, boundaries between, yes.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, so do you think that technologies or the technologies that you use help you to draw boundaries in other ways?

P3: Um, I think that's the only application that I used to limit the rest of the technology. Um, yeah mainly it's, um, that's the only thing I guess, yeah.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay, very good. Let's see a few other things here. (pause). Yeah that is again a similar thing that you were describing but I read it again, um, 'I didn't', wait a second, 'I didn't have much to work to do in the afternoon, so I decided to play video games, but they checked my email several times, and I was ready to start working again in any moment'.

P3: Perfect example of what we have been saying (laugh) earlier on, yes, free time but ready to fight.

Mattia Rainoldi: Okay. (pause). Yes, the other things, um, we already discussed about them already. Great. Then let's come to our final questions here before we move on to another set of questions, are, is there anything, um, that we didn't talk about, but that you feel it is important to talk about, about this this topic, about the relationship between digital technology, um, or can be leisure boundaries that we've been discussing.

P3: Well, the main problem that I have is that my my job, my career totally changed over the last 18 months or so due to Covid-19, so I still I'm still struggling with all these things, because everything changed. The quantity of technology that I need has changed, and the way I use it has changed, so I'm still adapting. The reason why I still don't have a solution to some of the problems that I mentioned, the separation that I would like to have, but I still don't have it's probably because I'm still adapting and it's very uncertain because maybe everything will go back to normal, maybe not, maybe I will always and that's the most likely scenario, I will keep on working from my computer from home because I will have clients in the US or clients in Australia, that will just say you know 'I'm not coming to Italy, if I can do it online' and that's the case of one of my clients, for example, who said now that I have another solution, I don't have to travel, maybe 18 hours or 20 hours from Australia, I'll just seize the opportunity and we'll just have our meeting with the interpreter online. So, I guess I'll need to, to keep on adapting to this new reality and make it work better, I know that they didn't work perfectly over the last year, but you know everything changed quite rapidly so I'm sure it will work better in the future, and that I'll find new ways to have a separation between work time and leisure time.

Mattia Rainoldi: For you right now, um, how do you feel it, how important it is for to have technologies for managing your boundaries?

P3: Yeah, technologies are the problem, but they can also be the solution, I guess, so, maybe I can find something similar to this application, the filter that I mentioned, maybe I can find something similar for my phone, um, sorry for my computer and avoid distractions on my computer too or, or maybe the solution will not be different tools, maybe the solution will be to just work in a different way, I mean made clear to clients and colleagues that I'm not available after 6pm. Of course I will not say to Americans but for all the European clients, I will just say if it's 6 or 7pm that's it, I'll just stop replying and be there or maybe saying them to them that I just don't reply to Whatsapp messages because Whatsapp it's a just for my private life, and I will just force my clients to send an email, even if they don't feel like doing it. I didn't do that yet, but that is also a boundary like the boundary you put with other people by agreeing on the way our conversation is going to work and you know as a freelancer you always try to make your client happy, so that the client comes back you don't want to give another problem to to the client you want to solve the problems of your clients. But if it's you know about my life quality, maybe I'll start doing this and I'll start saying 'stop sending me texts on Telegram and on Whatsapp because I prefer to be contacted by email'.

Mattia Rainoldi: Right, so you were discussing ways of, new ways of working. So how do you see your future as a digital worker being?

P3: Well, if, if, if, if this is the future if this is what I'm going to do for the next decades, working with my computer instead of being necessarily in Milan or necessarily in Tuscany at the clients headquarters, if that is not going to be necessary, then I can probably start to think about a life as a digital nomads and just work from the places that I choose with my Internet connection, with my devices, maybe not all the time, because I know that, for example, I mentioned the TV networks that I work for, they will always need me to be there physically, but maybe doing January and during August during times of the year, where I know that they don't need me at all, I can just use this month to try this different lifestyle and maybe live as a digital nomad and I'm already checking a few possibilities. Um, co-working spaces places abroad, where it's really cheap to to live and stay as digital nomads because some parts of the world are encouraging people to go there and work digitally, so I'm really thinking about these opportunities, but at the same time, I have to be flexible, because maybe in September, all of a sudden, I will have a lot of clients going back to normal, to the old normal before Covid and maybe all of this will not be possible, up until Christmas time I don't know or maybe I'll just be 90% of the time online and so maybe I can leave as a digital nomad for a couple of months in a row. It's, I'm trying to stay flexible and see where my job is going because it's kind of unpredictable to me.

Mattia Rainoldi: And personally for you, what would be the motivation to live as a digital nomad because that is what I haven't understood so far?

P3: One of the key words of this conversation I think is freedom, I think I talked about freedom a few times and I think that's the key word again here. Um, I love traveling which is probably one of the main reasons why I started to study foreign languages, and then I became an interpreter and a translator, traveling is one of the main aspects of this, so if I will have to be more presence online, if I have to become a digital interpreter let's say, which was totally unexpected, but if this is what happens I'll just make the most out of it and do something that I considered impossible because, if we had this conversation in 2019 I would have said that digital nomads are like totally crazy they're doing something impossible they're not really working, I didn't believe in that but now I'm seeing new opportunities coming because my work has totally changed totally. So now I have more problems definitely. Um, but I have more opportunities as well. And it can be a beautiful life, I mean if you start working in Greece, for one month, without spending too much money, I mean with the same amount of money that you would have used normally and then you switch you decide to go to Croatia, which is even cheaper and then you come back to Italy for a while, but then you will again. That's very cool to me.

Mattia Rainoldi: Great P3, that is an interesting vision that you have. So we are coming to a conclusion here. Um, last question, would you like to provide any other information related to the topic that we have been discussing in this interview that you believe is still important and we still even match up on it?

P3: Um, thinking about it. (pause). No, I think we talked about the all the main aspects and, um, I could go into further details about how simultaneous interpreting works digitally or physically when you work with your clients directly but I don't want to bore you with technical details about my job, but I think that we touched the main points of how it works and how it changed during the pandemic I guess.

Mattia Rainoldi: Great. Do you have any other question related to the interview or the research project?

P3: I'm curious about the research project in general about you know the timing more or less, when it's going to be published, because I would be of course curious to to read it and in general, um, the kind of people they are selecting. I'm curious to ask this question so what kind of people are participating in your part.

Mattia Rainoldi: I can (laugh) definitely answer to that. Results published, it would probably take a year from now. I'm now collecting the data from from different participants and, um, I plan to finish collecting data, probably by the end of summer, so I hope, and then you will take several months to analyze the data and write it up and submit the final thesis. So it should take around the year. It might be that in the meantime I do some small publications out of it, um, but is probably not going happen like, um, like very quickly, so approximately a year. Your second question was who I'm selecting?

P3: Exactly. I'm just curious just out of curiosity.

Mattia Rainoldi: Um, well, this project didn't start few months ago, it started a couple of years back, and then of course the pandemic came in, also for me, um, so the idea, the original idea was to go to these digital nomad hubs and do to observe how they work, how they combine leisure and work with digital technology in all of these things and do these interviews, of course face to face so until we realize ups, it is going to be very hard and university wasn't going to give me permission to do so by any means, um, so what is the alternative. So, then, I told myself well the pandemic is there, but it's not affecting all the country of the same on the same way in, um, at the same time. So there are countries that are pretty much Covid free others that are not, so my idea was let's have a look on social media, different platforms. And let's target those hashtags related to the topic, so digital work, digital nomads or work from anywhere, I don't, I don't think, or, or to see people that are sharing something about it, are discussing these topics online and, um, let's try to contact them and, um, so I found you (laugh).

P3: (laugh) I'm happy to be there.

Mattia Rainoldi: That's, that's the strategy. So generally I'm looking for, I'm always monitoring different social media platforms, from LinkedIn, Facebook, um, to instagram. These are the three that I'm monitoring and trying to have a look at the hashtags, and the discussion that is that is going on and, um, I try my luck, I'm not always, but most of the time I'm not, but yeah probably 1 out of 10 people that I'm contacting replies to me. And even fewer then agreed to do this study, of course, but I wasn't expecting anything different, so I'm not worried about the low response rate but it is a lot of work for me, um, much more than going to a digital nomad place and enjoying my time as well, so but anyway.

P3: Yeah would have been a kind of a holiday as well for one day (laugh).

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah it was the plan (laugh).

P3: And if you need, um, a couple more contact of people who are already living as digital nomads, I can put in contact with at least with one friend of mine who is really traveling around the world as a digital nomad and I think he would be happy to join the conversation.

Mattia Rainoldi: Yeah, if you could do so I will be happy.

P3: Okay, I will, I will send him a text and let you know, but I think that he will be interested in this project. Just kind of an advocate for digital nomad lives, so I think it could be interesting.

Mattia Rainoldi: P3, I say I'm going to stop the recording now and we can continue chatting.