

**Switching Off: A Qualitative Study on Hybrid Workers' Experience of Disconnecting
from Work Across Different Workspaces**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore hybrid workers' experience of disconnecting from work across different workspaces during the week. Disconnecting at the end of the day is an important element of work recovery, critical for employee well-being and performance. Despite research on recovery from work and strategies for navigating work-life boundaries, there is a lack of focus on how workers experience the process of disconnecting from work. In particular, research on recovery and detaching from work has not considered the complexity of hybrid work environments. To fill this gap, this study utilizes a qualitative methodology through 10 semi-structured participant generated photo elicitation interviews. The findings show that hybrid workers use several methods to disconnect amongst the variability of working in differing spaces, as well as the conditions facilitating and inhibiting the experience of disconnection across spaces. Most insightfully, it reveals the personal nature of disconnection, unveiling deeper meanings behind the process. This study aims to contribute to research in this area by providing lived experiences that better inform how the process of disconnection may unfold in a hybrid setting. This can help inform and support employee work recovery and well-being in today's dynamic world of work.

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted the traditional view of work, with employees now seeking more flexibility (Chafi et al., 2022). As a result, ways of working have been altered, affecting work patterns and challenging boundaries between work and home life (Izak et al., 2023). McKinsey Global Institute (2023) reported that after the pandemic, 56% of office workers were still working hybrid. Hybrid models provide a flexible means of working. However, this involves an element of working from home which may blur work-life boundaries (Fukumura et al., 2021). Amidst these challenges, the importance of disconnecting from work at the end of the day becomes increasingly important to understand the experiences of individuals and their work recovery. Post-work recovery is key for employee performance and well-being (Sonnentag et al., 2022). Disconnecting from work can be understood as the act of “switching off” from work mode. This idea is connected to psychological detachment which involves turning one’s mind off from work-related matters (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005). Psychological detachment has been found to be a main factor in employee well-being (Baktash & Pütz, 2025). However, a Royal Society for Public Health (2021) survey revealed that 56% of people had difficulty “switching off” when working remotely. So, hybrid work presents an interesting context in which individuals work in-office and at home, raising questions on what implications this may have on how they disconnect and recover from work.

While most research has looked at the outcomes of work recovery (see review: Sonnentag et al., 2017) and ways to manage work-home boundaries (Kreiner et al., 2009; Fonner & Stache, 2012; Basile & Beauregard, 2016), there appears to be a lack of qualitative focus on the lived experiences of individuals when it comes to the process of disconnecting. Understanding the lived experiences of these individuals would help advance work recovery

theory by exploring the various contextual, emotional, or individual elements that may shape detachment beyond purely quantitative means on whether someone switches off from work and what outcome it may have. In particular, there is still limited research on the lived experiences of hybrid workers post the pandemic and it is crucial to explore to adequately understand their well-being (McClean et al., 2024). Therefore, this study aims to explore the personal experiences of hybrid employees in disconnecting from work across workspaces, utilizing photo elicitation as a unique means to prompt and surface richer accounts. Ultimately, this study helps to understand how individuals experience disconnecting, providing a deeper understanding of this process in a hybrid context which is important to support overall employee well-being and work recovery in the current and future world of work in which hybrid models are the new norm.

Literature Review

The Nature of Hybrid Work

The Covid-19 pandemic transformed when, where, and how people work, challenging previous assumptions and norms (Izak et al., 2023). It was a catalyst for changing people's mindset regarding the nature of work, with individuals reassessing the role it plays in their lives (Gibson et al., 2023). Over time, the concept of work has become disjointed from spatial and temporal factors, reframing work as something that can be done across spaces and at various times (Izak et al., 2023). Increased digitalization has also led to more remote and hybrid work models, challenging the view of the traditional workplace as being "place dependent" (Kangas et al., 2023). Now, hybrid work has become the new "norm" around the world (Allen et al., 2024). In this paper, hybrid work can be defined as working across multiple locations such as in the office and at home (Halford, 2005).

While the pandemic ramped up remote and hybrid work, the idea of telecommuting has been around for some time. Telecommuting was first coined by Jack Nilles (1975), describing elements of telecommunications that allow employees to work nearby offices, rather than being in the offices themselves. Now, the topic of telecommuting is often referred to as remote work or working from home (Eng et al., 2024). Remote work increased during the Covid-19 pandemic, and after, many companies transitioned to a hybrid schedule. Hybrid work presents a unique situation in which boundaries change from being more physical in the office to more symbolic when working from home (Eng et al., 2024). Thus, hybrid work flexibility has challenged traditional views of the "spatial, temporal, and behavioral boundaries between work and non-work" (Ashforth et al., 2000, as cited by Izak et al., 2023, p. 375). Furthermore, the switch between different workspaces that accompanies hybrid work models may lead to differing

stressors (Chu & Chou, 2024). These challenges associated with hybrid work may be important avenues to explore to understand how individuals navigate them and what implications it has on their work recovery.

Despite the rise in research on hybrid work post the pandemic, there is an inconsistent conceptualization of the topic (Lauring & Jonasson, 2025). Nonetheless, the rise in remote and hybrid environments has led to research on how this may impact employees and shape the future world of work. Despite previous research focusing solely on remote workers which suggested working from home had negative impacts on productivity, new research on hybrid work has found that it decreases attrition and performance is largely unaffected (Bloom et al., 2024). Hybrid work also seems to positively impact employees' work-life balance (Eng et al., 2024). However, while changing between different work environments provides flexibility, it may also lead to "increased variation and uncertainty" (Eng et al., 2024). Therefore, this creates an interesting gap in understanding how hybrid workers switch between these different workspaces during the week and what implications it may have on their ability to recover from work.

Recovery from Work and Psychological Detachment

With the added complexities of hybrid work schedules, employees' ability to recover from job demands and stressors has become increasingly important. In organizational literature, recovery from work is the process in which individuals revert to the state they were in prior to experiencing something stressful (Meijman & Mulder, 1998; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). The Effort Recovery Model provides a theoretical framework to understand work demands and recovery which says effort used up during work leads to "load reactions" including fatigue and stress which ultimately leads to the need for recovery (Meijman & Mulder, 1998; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). In addition, the Conservation of Resources Theory is another theoretical framework

attached to recovery which suggests that individuals want to gather and keep their resources (Hobfoll, 1998; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). These resources can be both internal and external. Internal resources, such as employee energy levels, may be affected during work, consequently leading to the need for recovery (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Furthermore, interpersonal stressors individuals may experience while working can cause employee burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). However, an increase in recovery experiences is correlated with a decrease in indicators of weakened well-being including burnout (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Therefore, employee recovery from work is critical for maintaining employee well-being, especially in the current world of work in which work is becoming more fluid which may bring new stressors.

The process of recovering from work involves both recovery activities and recovery experiences. While recovery activities are what individuals do when they are not working, recovery experiences are the fundamental psychological processes underlying recovery from work (Sonnentag et al., 2022). While these two are distinct, they are largely interconnected as taking part in activities may facilitate recovery experiences, making both critical in understanding employee disconnection. However, while individuals may differ on what activities may help them recover, the four foundational experiences of psychological detachment, relaxation, mastery and control, are shared by individuals when recovering from work, making them better at measuring the process of recovery (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Recovery from work may take place at different times including after work (Sonnentag et al., 2008) or even during daily work breaks (Troughakos et al., 2008). However, this research primarily focuses on recovery that occurs in the evenings. This is because recovery after work is important for individual well-being and employee performance (Sonnentag, 2003).

Psychological detachment, or the process of physically removing oneself from work and no longer thinking or doing things related to work, may be the most pertinent recovery experience as it is strongly associated with employee well-being (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). The term detachment can be traced back to the work of Etzion et al., (1998) who first defined it as an “individual’s sense of being away from the work situation” (p. 579). This definition is central for this research that aims to understand how hybrid employees detach from work. Research also shows that psychological detachment promotes work-life balance (Althammer et al., 2021). Thus, psychological detachment presents a key conceptual lens for understanding how individuals disconnect from work, which this study aims to explore.

As discussed above, recovery from work involves a combination of taking part in activities that facilitate recovery experiences. In particular, individuals can switch off from work by engaging in things that distract them from dwelling on work related things during their non-work time (Newman et al., 2014). Low effort, social or physical leisure activities increase psychological detachment (Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). So, individuals take part in a plethora of activities after work which can promote certain recovery experiences, overall helping employees’ well-being. Furthermore, research suggests that autonomy is an important factor involved in leisure time (Newman et al., 2014). In particular, control increases work recovery during non-work time and may particularly relate to individuals being able to choose what activities to take part in after work, which may increase their recovery (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

While engaging in activities after work increases detachment and recovery from work, other individual and contextual factors inhibit detachment. Certain contextual factors relating to work impact people’s ability to recover such as high workloads (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005),

increased work technology usage post work hours (Derks et al., 2014), and job stressors (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Furthermore, fatigue, caused by expending energy at work, leads individuals to feel a need to recover (Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Thus, contextual factors impact an employee's ability to detach and recover from work. This is especially interesting in hybrid work settings with quantitative research finding that recovery experiences differ depending on location worked in (Larsen, 2024) and from one day to another (Sonnentag, 2003). Another study found that remote workers found it more difficult to disconnect compared to in-office workers (Nakamura & Kobayashi, 2024). However, there is a lack of qualitative research on psychological detachment, specifically what self-initiated strategies are most effective for individuals to detach (Pensar & Mäkelä, 2023). Exploring this in a hybrid context may be beneficial to understand how individuals detach across workspaces and whether they support or challenge the previous findings.

Boundary Theory and Role Transitions

One factor that has been tied to psychological detachment during non-work time is the boundary between work and home life (Sonnentag et al., 2010; Ashforth et al., 2000). While office environments present strong physical boundaries, working from home may lead to weak physical boundaries which consequently blurs this boundary between work and home life, leading to low psychological detachment (Sonnentag et al., 2010). However, a different quantitative study suggested that working in different places was not related to psychological detachment (Mellner et al., 2016). Despite this disagreement, the role of boundaries should be explored further to help understand how hybrid workers disconnect from work across spaces.

Boundary work is the process by which the mental realms of home and work become separate through physical acts (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Specifically, boundary work can be

evaluated on a range from high on segmentation to high on integration where integration involves no clear distinction between work and home, while segmentation refers to the idea of having work and home as separate areas of life (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Individual preference plays a role in the level of integration or segmentation an individual employs when it comes to managing the boundaries between personal life and work time (Kreiner et al., 2009). Boundary theory, defined as how people construct and preserve the boundaries to order their environment (Ashforth et al., 2000), builds upon these ideas. These boundaries are identified and acted on, making them real (Weick, 1979; Ashforth et al., 2000). Thus, boundary theory provides a proper framework to understand the boundaries and experiences of hybrid workers who work across different spaces in a week.

Firstly, it is critical to evaluate the literature surrounding boundary management and tactics used to construct and maintain the boundaries between work and home life. Boundary management has been understood as including both individual and contextual elements (Daniel & Sonnentag, 2016). Boundary setting strategies help individuals manage the boundaries between work and home life. One study identified behavioral, communicative, technological, and physical tactics as four ways in which individuals set and maintain boundaries (Kreiner et al., 2009). For example, behavioral boundaries include interacting with others and using technology, and physical tactics can include forming a physical barrier or establishing physical separation (Kreiner et al., 2009). The use of boundary strategies has also been connected to employee recovery from work. Increased flexibility in work schedules may enable work recovery (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). However, as previously discussed, increased flexibility may also blur boundaries between work and home life, leading to new challenges in employee recovery. Thus, hybrid work may challenge existing knowledge on boundary tactics as workers

may navigate differing boundaries during the week. In particular, blurred boundaries between work and home seem to especially impact recovery experiences of psychological detachment and control over leisure time (Kinnunen et al., 2016; Haun et al., 2022). Nonetheless, setting boundaries can help individuals psychologically detach from work (Ashforth et al., 2000; Haun et al., 2022). Therefore, setting boundaries may be an important factor in promoting recovery especially in hybrid work environments, which challenge traditional work-home boundaries. Insight on how employees experience these two workspaces using boundary theory as a theoretical framework can extend the understanding of work-home boundary literature and its connection to recovery from work in a week of hybrid work.

Furthermore, Ashforth et al. 's (2000) research on micro-role transitions provides a clear understanding of the psychological aspects underpinning role transitions that workers experience daily through analyzing concepts of boundary theory and role identities. Role boundary refers to the limits individuals place on their different life roles to establish a sense of order, and crossing role boundaries may include micro role transitions, or transitions that occur frequently (Ashforth et al., 2000). The term “rites of passage” refers to rituals that help initiate the transition from one role to another (Van Gennep, 1960; Ashforth et al., 2000). Furthermore, exiting one role to then enter another is prompted by “rites of separation” which are actions or cues that mark the end of one role and help enable the transition into another role (Ashforth et al., 2000). One study found differing rituals and cues used by teleworkers to transition from work to non-work roles (Fonner & Stache, 2012). Once exiting a role has been prompted through these rituals, “rites of transition” involve the physical and psychological movement that occurs between these two roles (Ashforth et al., 2000). One example of a rite of transition is a worker’s commute, which provides a “liminal space in which commuters are neither fully engaged with work or home

thoughts and behaviors” (McAlpine & Piszczek, 2023, p. 156). Furthermore, the literature suggests that it may be hard to mentally disengage from the identity tied to one role and re-engage to a different role identity (Ashforth et al., 2000). Therefore, these micro-role transitions in which individuals are going from their work to non-work selves, may not just be a physical process, but one involving a mental shift in identity, which is an interesting insight to explore in a hybrid context.

The Current Study

Given the review of literature above, it is apparent that while recovery experiences and boundary management have been explored in traditional workspaces and in remote settings, few studies have looked at the experiences of hybrid employees. Given the complex nature of hybrid work, it is important to understand how these individuals disconnect from work to properly recover from work demands. The research also responds to the need to understand the process of detachment and strategies of recovery across differing locations and periods of time (Sonnentag et al., 2022; Agolli & Holtz, 2023). Furthermore, a review of the literature shows mainly quantitative studies on recovery experiences (see: Sonnentag et al., 2022). So, there is a lack of qualitative research on the subjective experiences of workers, especially hybrid employees whose circumstances are unique considering they work across differing workspaces which may blur the boundaries between work and home life. While shaped by this literature, the study focused on disconnection more broadly to not limit the experiences of individuals and how they may understand or discuss them. Thus, this research aims to fill the gap in the literature by taking a qualitative approach to explore the lived experiences of hybrid workers and how they disconnect from work as they transition between working in different spaces during the week.

This approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of employee recovery in hybrid work contexts. Therefore, this research aims to explore the following research question:

How do hybrid workers experience disconnecting from work as they work across different workspaces during the week?

Methodology

Research Design

A qualitative approach was utilized to explore hybrid workers' lived experiences of disconnecting from work across different workspaces during the week. Specifically, semi-structured photo elicitation interviews using participant generated photos were the chosen form of data collection. First introduced by John Collier (1957), photo elicitation simply refers to interviews that incorporate photographs (Harper, 2002). Disconnecting from work is a lived experience that may involve subjective components such as psychological detachment, a mental process that involves not thinking about work related matters or job activities (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Thus, photo elicitation was chosen as a unique means to surface deeper thoughts related to disconnecting from work that verbal interviews alone may not uncover. For example, photo elicitation can provide unique insights into people's consciousness (Harper, 2002). This would help participants speak on the subjective nature of disconnecting from work. This approach provides a unique means for exploring and understanding the physical and mental experiences of hybrid workers by drawing from other studies which have utilized photo elicitation interviews to explore topics such as mental illness (Padgett et al., 2013) and physical outdoor experiences (Loeffler, 2004).

In the context of hybrid work, verbal interviews alone may not express the physical or structural transitions of hybrid work (McClean et al, 2024). So, using visual methods may be advantageous in flexible work environments to gain a deeper understanding of those experiencing fluid boundaries between work and home life (Izak et al., 2023). In photo elicitation, images are used to evoke richer dialogue on what is being studied (Frith & Harcourt, 2007; Bates et al., 2017). Therefore, given the dynamic nature of hybrid work, photos would

allow for deeper reflection on this topic. Interviews are particularly advantageous by providing a profound understanding of the experiences of individuals (Knott et al., 2022). While other methods such as focus groups may be useful to understand interactions among individuals and how they compare their thoughts (Morgan, 1996), this research was more focused on the individual experiences of hybrid employees. Thus, semi-structured interviews were better suited, and the inclusion of photo elicitation led to deeper understandings of participant lived experiences. The use of photos during interviews can be done to stimulate conversation on a given topic (Epstein et al., 2006). Thus, the photos were used as starting points to unfold meaningful conversations and tap into participant accounts of the physical, temporal, mental, and emotional factors they may experience while working in and disconnecting from different spaces during the work week.

Instruments

Data was collected through semi-structured participant driven photo elicitation interviews which follow the same intention of semi-structured interviews (Bates et al., 2017). Semi-structured interviews allow for the ability to explore the experience of individuals in a deeper way than quantitative methods alone could provide (Knott et al., 2022). The semi-structured nature of the interview was chosen to explore certain topics, starting broadly through discussing photos, followed by more specific questions covering topics of interest including experiences of disconnecting from work and transitioning between workspaces. Open-ended questions were used to deeply explore the experiences of hybrid workers and their ability to disconnect from work.

A topic guide was created with three sections centering around the photos provided by participants, one section comparing the photos of the participants' workspaces, and one section

expanding on general experiences that were not directly linked to photos. The order of the topic guide was set up intentionally to explore topics of interest while also maintaining flexibility (Knott et al., 2022). The topic guide did deviate from traditional photo elicitation semi-structured interviews by adding a section of questions not directly related to photos. This was done to ensure general experiences related to disconnection and transitioning between workspaces were adequately explored.

Participants and Sampling

The participants for this study included 10 full-time hybrid workers. The focus on hybrid workers is due to the need for more research on their lived experiences in the post pandemic era (McClean et al., 2024). Recent statistics show that on average people work from home 1.27 days a week (Aksoy et al., 2025). Considering this, and to maintain flexibility to obtain sufficient participants, hybrid working was defined as working remotely at least one day a week. In this study, full-time employment involved engaging in 35 or more hours of work a week (Douglas-Hall & Chau, 2007). Hybrid employees also have a unique experience in that they work in different spaces throughout the week, which may lead to different boundaries. Recovery literature calls for further exploration of recovery amidst these changing boundaries between work and home life (Sonnentag et al., 2022). Thus, hybrid workers who worked full-time were of interest to fill this gap in qualitatively understanding the experiences of these individuals of disconnecting from work.

Sampling for the study included a mixture of purposive, convenience, and snowball sampling. Due to interest in hybrid workers, purposive sampling was used. Initial recruitment began through posting a recruitment message with details of the study on LinkedIn. Due to limited interaction with the post and time constraints, the researcher also utilized convenience

sampling through the use of their professional network and personal referrals. Lastly, snowball sampling was used as one participant referred another. Interested participants were contacted via email and WhatsApp.

Procedure

Prior to being interviewed, interested participants received an information sheet containing details of the study and a consent form. Once the signed consent form was received, online interviews were scheduled. In the information sheet and initial participant interest email, participants were instructed to provide three photographs 1-2 days in advance of the interview. These three photographs included a photo of their in-person workspace, of their remote workspace, and of a space or object that helps them disconnect from work. The use of these types of photos aligned with previous research that used photos of places, spaces, or objects as a means to explore subjective experiences (Reavey, 2011). The photos were chosen to align with the study's aim of understanding how hybrid workers experience the disconnection from work across different workspaces each week. The photos of the workspaces opened the conversation to the routines and experiences of these individuals in that particular space and then how they consequently disconnected. Furthermore, the space or object that helps disconnect from work was chosen to explore the participant's experience of disconnecting from work in a more detailed and nuanced way, allowing them the flexibility to choose what image to share and how it helps them disconnect. These photos were used to evoke deeper participant narratives regarding their daily experiences (Frith & Harcourt, 2007). Therefore, these three specific types of photos were chosen to provide rich and focused interviews by helping the participants reflect on their experiences, routines, and feelings. Due to organizational policy or personal reasons, participants were also given the option to draw a sketch of their in-person workspace and submit that in place

of a photo. Only one participant did this. Nonetheless, this is still aligned with photo elicitation interviews which does not only have to include photographs but may use any type of visuals (Harper, 2002). Despite only needing to provide one of each photo, some participants provided several, and all 44 total collected photos were used during the interviews.

Following the collection of the photos, participants took part in an online interview. All ten interviews were conducted online via Microsoft Teams and lasted between 41 minutes to 1 hour 46 minutes. The recordings were then re-watched, and interview transcripts were tweaked to ensure that transcripts were verbatim to the interview. During the interview process, a diary was kept and used to jot down initial notes and ideas that arose during interviews. Prior to the interview, participant photos were organized into slides using Microsoft PowerPoint to provide an easy means of presenting and accessing the photos during the interview. The photos were organized on four slides in the following order: photos of the remote workspace, photos of the in-office workspace, workspace photos side to side for comparison, and photos of the space or object that helps disconnect from work. During the interview, participants were asked to talk about each photo and further questions were asked to expand on their experiences. Interviews were audio and video recorded to capture both the conversation and the photos (Loeffler, 2004).

Method of Analysis

Following the approach taken by Walton and Niblett (2013), the photos were not used as visual data collected for analysis, but as a tool to stimulate rich insights from participants. Consistent with their approach, this analysis focused on the verbal conversation in the transcripts prompted by the photos, rather than the photos themselves. The photos were then used alongside participant quotes in the findings section to contextualize their insights. This aligns with a dialogic approach of analyzing photo elicitation interviews which focuses on analyzing the

verbal data of interviews through approaches such as thematic analysis, using photos for “illustration purposes” (Cleland & MacLeod, 2021). The presentation of photos in the findings section followed a similar format as Bailey et al. (2021), which used photos alongside participant quotes when discussing their findings.

Thematic analysis was chosen to analyze the transcript data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis was chosen for its flexibility and ability to produce a rich understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To begin analysis, transcripts were read all the way through to become familiar with the data, and initial notes were made in a notebook of emerging ideas. After re-reading the transcripts a few times, initial codes were generated using an inductive approach first in Microsoft Word and then using NVivo 15. This was done to stay close to the data and avoid preconceptions, with all aspects of data given “full and equal attention” (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Initial codes were then compared within and across the ten interviews, and initial themes were developed. The themes were then reviewed across two levels with coded data extracts being reviewed first and then re-reading the transcripts to ensure that the themes correctly encompassed what the data was saying regarding the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Theme names and descriptions were adjusted during the process. Ultimately, three “organizing themes” were generated with accompanying codes. No global theme was developed as it risked limiting the scope of the participant’s lived experiences.

Ethical Considerations and Reflexivity

Ethical approval was granted by the LSE Department of Psychological and Behavioral Science before starting data collection. The study followed procedural ethics through the evaluation of potential risks, assurance of confidentiality and anonymity, and distribution of consent forms prior to interviews being conducted (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Consent forms

included information regarding confidentiality and anonymity so that participants could be adequately informed on how these matters would be handled and the implications of participating (Wiles, 2012). Consent forms also ensured anonymity and confidentiality of photographs shared, since consent needs to be extended to any "participant owned data" (Wiles, 2012). Therefore, all aspects of photos were doubly anonymized, blurring out necessary features. This follows qualitative guidelines on how visuals can be altered in a way that conceals identifiable elements (Wiles, 2012). Furthermore, each participant was given a participant number, and any identifiable information including their name and organization were anonymized. All interview recordings, transcripts, and photos were stored securely on LSE OneDrive.

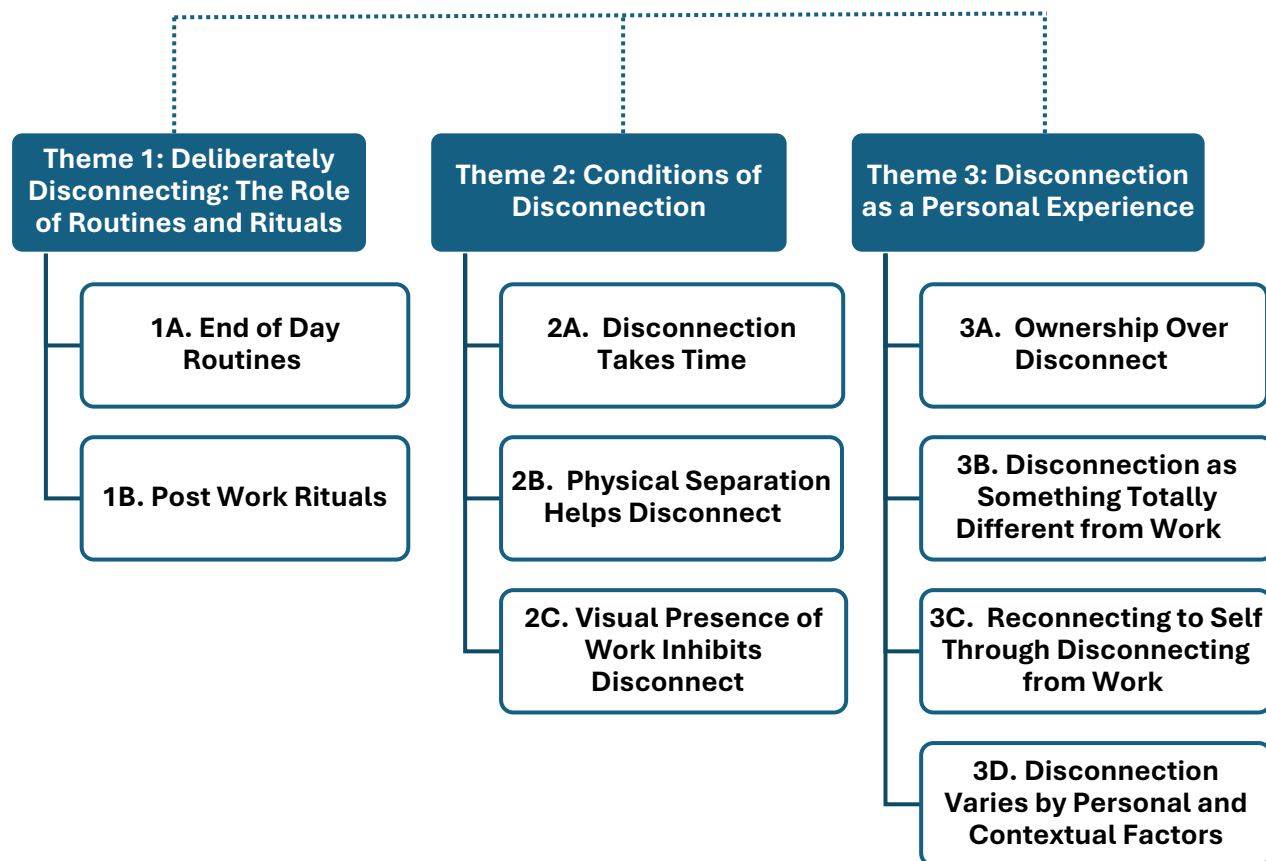
In addition to participant ethical concerns, reflexivity was considered as well. Reflexivity includes awareness of being in the role of the researcher, critically assessing the possible influences the researcher has in the research process (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Thus, as an individual who has experienced working hybrid through a past internship, the researcher's positionality was taken into consideration. Reflexivity involves analyzing one's positionality, which is critical since the person and their individual experiences may influence how research is done and what approach is taken (Dean, 2017). Thus, throughout the research process, the researcher was aware of their positionality and utilized neutral questions focused on the experience of hybrid employees.

Findings

Overall, the use of photographs in a semi-structured interview prompted rich conversations of participants' experiences of disconnecting from work across different workspaces. Using thematic analysis, the data was organized into three themes, illustrated in Figure 1, which encapsulated the experiences of hybrid workers. These themes, alongside participant photos used to contextualize their experiences, are explored below.

Figure 1

Thematic Map



Theme 1: Deliberately Disconnecting: The Role of Routines and Rituals

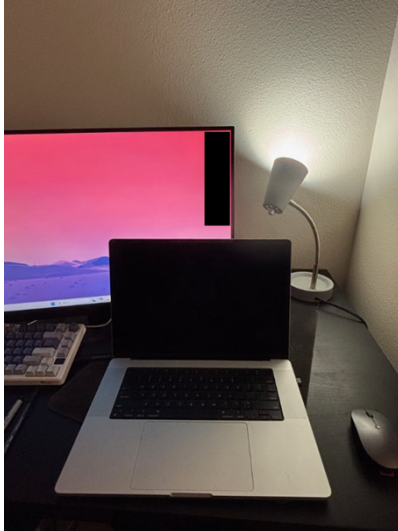
Despite working across different workspaces during the week, which may be accompanied by different experiences and boundaries, what emerged among participant

accounts were the use of deliberate processes based on self-developed routines and rituals to disconnect from work and transition into personal time. This provides an interesting insight revealing that disconnecting while working hybrid may not necessarily be as inherently tied to spaces only, but rather, that it is also linked to other elements that allow workers to find stability in disconnecting through self-constructed routines and post-work rituals.

1A. End of Day Routines

While there were varied accounts as to whether the physical workspace worked in for the day made it easier or harder to disconnect, what became evident was that even across spaces, participants seemed to use routines to signal to themselves the end of the workday and to begin to disconnect. In particular, the physical shutdown of the workspace was recalled as the main way of ending the workday and beginning to disconnect as it was done in both in-office and at-home workspaces. When discussing their remote workspace image (Figure 2) a participant said:

“...and so that like three-step process of like unplug headphones, close laptop, turn off the mouse like I feel like it, it's a direct signal to my brain of like, all right, we're done.I don't wanna jump ahead to a different question if you have it, but I kind of repeat the same routine at work like at my physical work because I bring this laptop to, to and from work. So in both scenarios I, I'm doing this. So I'm doing this every single day. So my brain has really gotten to the point of like, if I'm like, shutting my laptop and doing all this stuff, it's, the work day is over. Creates a nice separation” (P3).

Figure 2*P3 Remote Workspace*

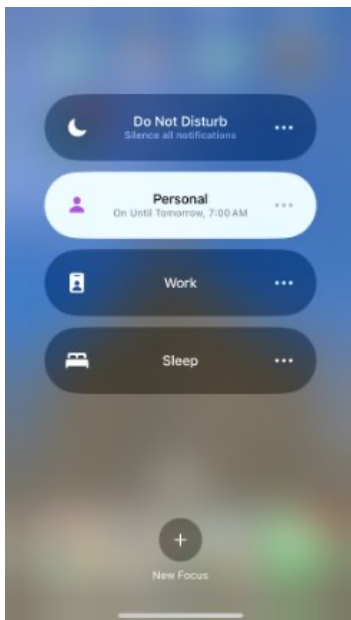
This physical shutdown process acts as a “rite of separation” involving external or internal cues that drive physical and psychological disconnection from work (Ashforth et al., 2000). When describing their ability to disconnect depending on the workspace worked in for the day, a participant described, *“...I guess it's not really connected to the workspace as much as my like my physical laptop. It really is about the shutting down of the computer and that's, that's the end”* (P6). While research shows teleworkers use technology cues for initiating role transitions such as closing down work equipment (Fonner & Stache, 2012), these findings suggest that this is not only done on remote days but is also important when working in-office.

Besides the shutdown process, other personal actions were used to signal the end of the workday and facilitate disconnection. When discussing how they disconnect from their remote workspace (Figure 3) a participant said:

“So usually at the end of the day, I'll write down like whatever I did that day and whatever I need to do the next day. So then it's not like sitting in my brain and then I close that too, and I'm done” (P9).

Figure 3*P9 Remote Workspace*

Furthermore, one individual shared an image of their do not disturb screen on their phone (Figure 4). When asked why they chose this specific image they said, *“I think it's because it's the closest thing I have to a routine with disconnection that it feels like every day”* (P10).

Figure 4*Do Not Disturb as Disconnection Routine*

This exhibits a behavioral means of setting a boundary between work and home time through the use of technology (Kreiner et al., 2009). Thus, hybrid workers' experience of disconnection is shaped by routines used on both in-office and at-home workdays, even though specific routines can vary depending on whether they are at the office or at home. Overall, the point of disconnecting from work is a personal thing based on an individual's own self-determined mechanisms. This highlights how hybrid workers experience disconnection as a deliberate process shaped by self-initiated end of day routines.

1B. Post Work Rituals

Following the routines of ending the workday, participants also recalled how rituals, or personal activities done after work, help them transition out of work mode and into their personal time. On in-office days, some post work rituals were done during the commute: *"I often put on a podcast and similar to the being on my phone thing I will just kind of turn my brain off a little bit and stop trying to like actively make myself think about things"* (P10). This participant's account of "turning the brain off" indicates that these post work rituals may facilitate psychological detachment which involves no longer thinking of work-related things (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). This participant also noted that they use the same phone routine on their remote days. Therefore, these post work rituals may transcend spaces worked in.

Another participant mentioned how interacting with their family helps transition into personal time. While the form of interaction may be different depending on the workspace for the day, the essence of this ritual remains the same:

"I think it's pretty similar because here I have the physical presence of my family right away and at home...at work I'm calling and you know, connecting with them right away"

so that that's the same signal that I'm switching from, you know, work sphere to domestic sphere” (P6).

This post work ritual acts as a “rite of passage” that helps the individual transition between roles (Ashforth et al., 2000).

When discussing their experience transitioning into personal time on remote days one participant mentioned, *“I'll frequently change clothes. I like to exercise after work generally, so I will change clothes into something more fitting for that activity” (P1).* Similarly, when asked the same question when discussing their in-office days and how they transition into personal time they also responded with, *“Take off my belt, my badge, my keys. Those are all things that hang and jingle and jangle, and I'll usually change clothes” (P1).*

Thus, hybrid workers also partake in post work rituals, or simple activities or actions done after work that are unique to them, to transition into their personal time and disconnect. This aligns with previous research on how taking part in low effort, physical and social activities can facilitate psychological detachment (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005). The variability in where hybrid employees work during the week makes these post work rituals important in that they may help create consistency in disconnecting from work. Overall, these rituals specifically done after work creates this transitional period in which individuals say they are able to disconnect from work, suggesting that disconnection is a deliberate process experienced and shaped through these practices.

Theme 2: Conditions of Disconnection

This section showcases the dynamic nature of disconnection in hybrid work conditions which may have different spatial, temporal and visual elements that interact with the experience of detachment, highlighting the conditions that ultimately facilitate or hinder disconnection

from work. It also builds upon the deliberate nature of disconnection by analyzing the specific boundaries hybrid workers use across spaces to effectively detach from work.

2A. Disconnection Takes Time

When hybrid workers disconnect from work, there appears to be a temporal element. However, participants' accounts express great variation in how individuals perceive this time. While some said their commute itself was the disconnect time, others mentioned that they do not feel they can disconnect until they arrive home. Nonetheless, both highlight that disconnection takes time. While many did not like or felt indifferent about their commute, in-office days seemed to provide a structured transitional period: *"It's not because I enjoy the commute. It's just because the commute is like a transitory period, where it's just my thoughts"* (P2). There is an interesting distinction in that the transitional period of commuting allows people to decompress but may not be when they feel really disconnected from work. It is only upon arriving home and entering this new space in which they feel as if they can truly disconnect. This partially aligns with previous research which suggests that commutes may act as a "liminal space" (McAlpine & Piszczek, 2023).

Furthermore, the experience of disconnect may feel quicker on the days when working from home with one participant saying:

"And I have to disconnect more quickly at home because um I'm working just as long and I'm still working until 4:35, but then I immediately have to go you know, quickly throw something in the oven and quickly run to get the girls" (P4).

The lack of a structured transitional period and closer proximity to being at home may explain why hybrid workers feel the transition into home life is quicker on remote workdays. Working from home may blur the temporal boundaries between work and personal life (Haun et

al., 2022). These blurred boundaries that occur when working inside the home causes individuals to experience a lack of “liminal space” (McAlpine & Piszczek, 2023).

Nonetheless, even on remote workdays hybrid workers detail how this transition time is important for them to disconnect from work and reconnect to their personal time: *“Generally after a remote workday, I’m away from my desk for at least an hour before I do anything personal at the desk”* (P8). Therefore, while this experience of time may slightly differ depending on the workspace worked in for the day, what unifies these accounts is that disconnection is a process interlinked with time.

2B. Physical Separation Helps Disconnect

Hybrid workers also seem to need physical separation from work to disconnect. For this reason, some participants found it easier to disconnect on in-office days. Using the photos of their in-office workspace (Figure 5) a participant highlighted: *“Having a completely distinct physical space for me is much better as far as...only and I mean only, only insofar as it makes it easier to detach from work”* (P1).

Figure 5

P1 In Office Workspace



Another participant agreed that physical separation was helpful in detaching saying, “*So I think moving away from the, the coded work, like the really serious work environment is helpful*” (P6). Setting up physical boundaries may include physically creating space between work and personal life (Kreiner et al., 2009).

Nonetheless, this also is seen in individuals on days when working from home:

“I think just leaving the area in general (Figure 6). It helps that once I leave, I try to leave my bedroom in, in, in general when trying to transition from work to now personal hours because I’ve just been sitting here all day” (P5).

Figure 6

P5 Remote Workspace



Remote workers may create boundaries between work and home life through applying the same boundary related routines such as “leaving the office” at home as they do in-office (Eng et al., 2024). This is especially important for individuals whose remote workspace is in a larger living space with one individual detailing:

"But after that I will, actually, I tend to leave my room, to kind of enable that transition of this space being a workspace back into it being a personal space. So I don't stay at my desk after...at least... I don't like sit at my desk and play on my phone after work. I will like almost immediately get up and like move around" (P8).

Physically leaving the space connected to work can help teleworkers transition out of their work roles (Fonner & Stache, 2012).

Thus, by exiting the workspace, whichever one it is, individuals are creating physical boundaries as a means to disconnect from work. Remaining in their at-home workspace after hours may inhibit their ability to disconnect: *"I never stay at this desk (Figure 7) after work because if I'm sitting here, I'm thinking about work and when I'm not sitting here, it's easier to disconnect" (P7).*

Figure 7

P7 Remote Workspace



Therefore, physical disconnection is a useful strategy to help psychologically detach from work (Pensar & Mäkelä, 2023). While this experience comes more naturally on in-office days, it seems to shape how individuals separate themselves from their workspace on remote days to maintain this sense of separation and enhance their ability to disconnect from work. Thus, disconnection is a dynamic and actively constructed process shaped by the creation of physical separation in both workspaces, demonstrating the relationship between physical separation and mental disconnection.

2C. Visual Presence of Work Inhibits Disconnect

Disconnecting from work may not only involve physical separation and the time involved in doing so but may also include eliminating visual reminders of work which seem to inhibit the ability to disconnect from work. This seemed especially important when participants worked remotely. The visual presence and easy accessibility of work setups at home may pressure individuals to work more (Haun et al., 2022). Having a dedicated workspace at home (Figure 8) may help individuals disconnect because it keeps work separate and “out of sight”:

“So, it's not like I ever see it even physically when I'm in the house. So I can essentially close the door. I don't have a door, but it's the same feeling. So, it's out of sight, out of mind in many ways” (P4).

Therefore, hybrid workers seem to want to have the same experience of not having work related things around at home similar to their days working in the office.

Figure 8*P4 Remote Workspace*

When describing what their ideal set up would be to successfully disconnect from work every day an individual shared:

“I think for me like having...like it doesn't matter as much like if I'm in office or not um...especially if I have like an office space in my home that like I can like shut the door to. So I think just having some sort of, I guess, literal door is helpful, to kind of like put it ‘out of out of sight out of mind’ almost” (P9).

Those who do not have a physically separate workspace at home (Figure 9) seem to emphasize the need to put work items away to disconnect, or how leaving work items out may actually inhibit them from disconnecting from the workday, with an individual saying, *“It's most effective when I also unplug the laptop and put it in my backpack, so that it's out of sight” (P1).*

Figure 9*P1 Remote Workspace*

In-office days include leaving the workspace completely and having work related things put away, so hybrid employees appear to maintain the same experience on remote days by either closing off their designated workspace or keeping work related items out of sight. By setting these boundaries of keeping work related items out of view at home, hybrid workers create space between them and work to help disconnect.

Theme 3: Disconnection as a Personal Experience

Lastly, hybrid workers seem to experience disconnecting from work in a very personal way. When asked to share a space or object that helps them disconnect from work, participants shared a variety of photos, talking about how these helped disconnect, giving rich insight into how they experience this process. Through the use of these objects or spaces, what is revealed is how people feel disconnection, what meaning it has for them, and how it is unique and varies across individuals. Thus, the experience of disconnection among hybrid workers is a deeply personal experience.

3A. Ownership Over Disconnect

The experience of disconnecting from work seems to be tied to expressions of autonomy by the individual. People describe the ability to disconnect and what helps them in a very personal way, anchored in asserting ownership over certain things that help them disconnect from work. When describing how the object in their photo helps them detach from work (Figure 10), one participant mentioned, *“It's my thing, my space, my, my coffee machine, that kind of thing, if that makes sense”* (P7).

Figure 10

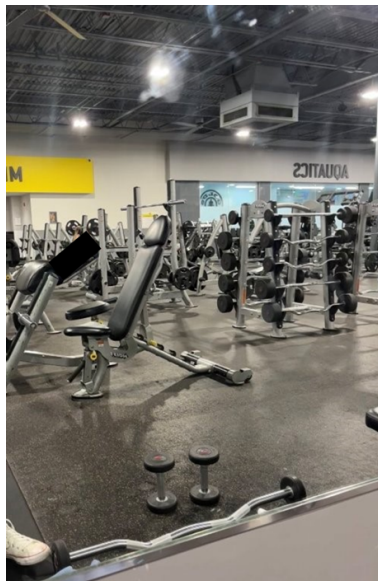
Coffee Machine as Object that Helps Disconnect



The deeper meaning behind this object is that it helps disconnect from work because it gives the individual a sense of autonomy. Furthermore, when reflecting on their photo (Figure 11), another individual expressed: *“It's my space. You know, it's the space that I've made as comfortable as I can for myself”* (P1).

Figure 11*Bedroom as Disconnect Space*

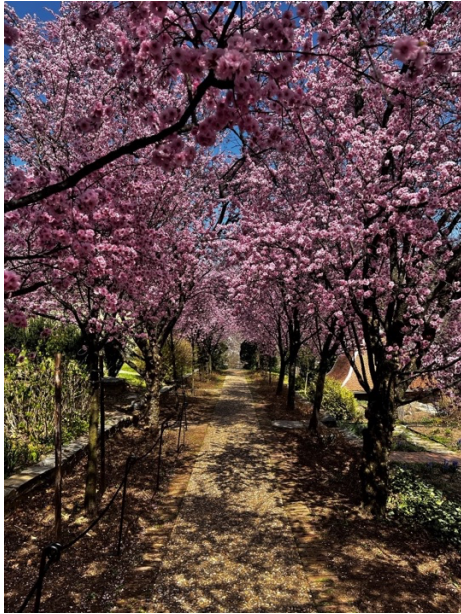
The autonomy associated with being able to construct this space and make it one that helps them feel comfortable, seemed to promote disconnection from work. Another individual shared a photo of the gym (Figure 12) as what helps them disconnect from work saying, “*I think for a long time it's just been, for me, it's been really easy to disconnect and disassociate while I'm in the gym 'cause it's my own time, you know, like I'm focusing on my health.*” (P5).

Figure 12*Gym as Disconnect Space*

Through the use of terms like “my space” and “my health” participants reveal that they feel a sense of ownership over how they disconnect from work. Experiences of control over leisure time strengthen well-being by helping individuals feel more capable of themselves (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). This ability to choose how they disconnect and what helps them disconnect is something personal and controlled by them. Despite differences in objects and spaces, what unites these is that participants talk about them in a way that highlights the feeling of ownership over disconnection. Therefore, disconnecting in a hybrid context with fluid boundaries may not so much be about how people leave work behind, but how they reclaim autonomy over their non-work time, revealing that disconnection is a deeply personal experience.

3B. Disconnection as Something Totally Different from Work

Furthermore, when discussing their disconnection images, individuals emphasized that these spaces and objects are completely different from work. This aligns with psychological detachment literature which suggests that taking part in non-work related activities can help detach (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005). One participant recalls their volunteer experience saying, *“And I think like doing the volunteer work and stuff is helpful for me because it's like something else that I'm doing away from work, like it's totally separate”* (P9). Furthermore, another individual describes a desire to get away from everything: *“But when I'm outside I...there's...I can't...I'm not with a computer. Not with anything. I'm usually not...I don't have a book. I'm just...just me and the trees (Figure 13)”* (P6).

Figure 13*Garden as Disconnect Space*

This distinction of this space not containing anything related to work is what seems to give meaning to these objects and spaces people use to disconnect. One individual even mentioned this when discussing the photo of their bedroom and how it helps them disconnect: “...it's the center of a lot of my life that does not have to do with work.” (P1). Therefore, this analysis not only brings to light the experience of disconnection from work, but specifically the meaning it has for individuals. It goes beyond explaining what these things are that help detach, but why they help disconnect is because it is completely different from work. Therefore, the experience of disconnection from work is deeply personal, with people defining it through intentional contrast with work.

3C. Reconnecting to Self Through Disconnecting from Work

Disconnection was also talked about in very personal terms, as a way for individuals to reconnect with themselves. When asked how they mentally disconnect from work one

individual replied, *“For me, it's less about mentally disconnecting from work because I'm once I'm out of the office, I am disconnected. It is more so how I can...reconnect with uh, with myself”* (P1). Thus, disconnecting from work may be something that extends beyond the idea of just leaving work behind, instead focusing on how people connect with who they are outside of work. This may challenge previous literature on psychological detachment which has largely focused on how individuals mentally detach from work related matters (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). This unveils a deeply personal and new lens to detachment and work recovery.

Furthermore, one participant shared an image of the outdoors (Figure 14) saying, *“Just calming and um...if, if I'm looking that way, I can't see anything but that water and the plants. So it's a physical disconnection, but it's also a mental and...mental and emotional reconnection with things that make me happy personally”* (P4).

Figure 14

Outdoors as Disconnect Space



This brings a sense of motivation as to why individuals may make an effort to detach from work. Disconnecting from work may also bring the focus back on oneself: *“Um, it's just*

time for myself, you know, time for me to work on myself. Reflect on anything and become a stronger version of myself” (P5). Therefore, this process involves a transition between identities (Ashforth et al., 2000), where individuals are transitioning from their work to non-work identities. How individuals speak about disconnection as a means of reconnecting to themselves outside of work provides a unique perspective as to why these individuals deliberately detach from work and set boundaries to reconnect with themselves. Thus, the experience of disconnecting is personal and may actually be deeper than the classic idea of just “leaving work behind.”

3D. Disconnection Varies by Personal and Contextual Factors

Participants discussed how their experience of disconnection varies and is shaped by their emotional and physical states, highlighting the individualized nature of disconnection. Hybrid employees work across differing spaces during the week which may come with various experiences and personal feelings arising after the workday. This became prevalent when participants spoke of how they felt at the end of the day and in their disconnect process:

“If I was running slow, just tired or something, even the shutdown is hard to do because I'm just feeling, you know, maybe disappointed in my performance for the day, or, you know, my feeling about what I accomplished, definitely affects the shutdown and affects the transition to personal life” (P4).

Participants' energy levels may be another individual factor that impacts their experience of disconnection. When describing their in-office days, one individual said:

“Again the days that I'm in the office when I come home, it's more like I'm like, I'm so tired kind of thing that I'm like it...it's so I mean, I'm, I'm begging to disconnect at that point. I'm like, I don't wanna think about work at all when I'm at home” (P2).

While several participants spoke of feeling naturally more tired on in-office days, it appears that it may affect some people's experience of disconnection more. Thus, while the workspace may provide context as to how individuals feel during and at the end of the day, it is ultimately shaped by the person's individual experience of these things.

Furthermore, one participant recalled how workload impacted when and how they disconnected from work: *"I guess it all depends on what my workload is looking like, where it would be harder to disconnect because if I have a deadline coming up, you know I'm gonna want to prioritize that..."* (P5). The impact of workload on disconnection aligns with previous quantitative findings suggesting that detaching from work may be impeded by high workloads (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005). Overall, people's experience of disconnection seems to vary depending on individual and contextual factors, suggesting that the experience of disconnection is very personal.

Discussion

This study aimed to understand how hybrid workers experience disconnecting from work across different workspaces during the week. The findings highlight hybrid workers' experience of disconnecting from work as a deliberate, dynamic, and deeply personal process. In particular, the use of participant photos helped to elicit rich conversation, allowing participants to reflect closely on their experiences of disconnection, painting a full picture of hybrid workers' disconnection process involving strategies used, conditions shaping it, and underlying meanings. While the research utilized the term "disconnection from work" participants described both physical and mental ways of disconnecting which align with the concept of psychological detachment (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). The findings find support for the use of "rites of passage" and "rites of separation" (Ashforth et al., 2000) through the use of end of day routines and post work rituals as a beneficial means to signal the end of the workday and transition into personal time, especially when working across different workspaces throughout the week. This use of routines also aligns with previous qualitative findings suggesting that "shut-down routines" help separate work and home time (Cho et al., 2022).

Furthermore, this research supports previous findings on the importance of boundary setting strategies such as physical separation (Pensar & Mäkelä, 2023). However, it showcases how hybrid workers may utilize similar boundaries across spaces to facilitate consistent disconnection. Hybrid workers' need to physically and visually separate work from home supports prior findings suggesting that teleworkers use certain tactics to recreate boundaries that are seen in office settings (Basile and Beauregard, 2016). Employing strategies including rituals and cues to segment their roles between work and home may indicate teleworkers' struggle of "grappling with the tension for the desire of flexibility and the need for structure" (Fonner &

Stache, 2012, p.253). This study builds upon this, suggesting that while working across differing workspaces during the week, hybrid workers maintain consistent boundaries and use self-initiated means to end the workday and transition into personal life as a way to create structure amidst the variability in hybrid work.

This research also further supports previous findings suggesting that the degree to which individuals detach from work differs between people (Sonnentag, 2012). This was evident given people's differing accounts, indicating that the experience of disconnecting from work is personal. Since this research found that individual and contextual factors impact disconnection, future research should explore these findings further specifically focusing on the impact of age, familial responsibilities, or certain jobs. While most recovery research has focused on the recuperation of employees from work stressors (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007), employees seem to experience disconnection from work as a "reconnection to self." This provides a new angle to employee recovery differing from the traditional view of activities and underlying factors, highlighting personal meanings that may also shape recovery from work. This also aligns with research on role transitions and how individuals exit one role and reconnect to another, specifically with the identity associated with that role (Ashforth et al., 2000). Thus, future research could further explore this element of "reconnecting to self" and identity in hybrid workers, focusing specifically on whether working in different spaces has implications on their role identity.

Overall, this research can help inform organizational policies regarding employee recovery, specifically highlighting that well-being policies should not be a "one size fits all" since these findings suggest that the experience of disconnection is personal. This research can also inform the implementation of organizational training on the physical, temporal, and visual

tactics that help separate work and home life, promoting employee recovery from work in hybrid contexts. Such training could bring attention to the topic and encourage employees who may struggle to disconnect to develop their own end of day routines and post work rituals to effectively disconnect from work across workspaces.

Limitations

Although this study presented rich insights, there are a few limitations that should be noted. While this study focused on the lived experiences of hybrid employees while working across different workspaces during the week, it neglected the potential of their experiences changing over time, which may be better explored in a longitudinal approach. Another limitation may be related to the inclusion criteria. Due to the scope of the research, inclusion criteria considered hybrid as working remotely at least one day a week. Thus, participants varied in their hybrid schedules, which may have increased the variability in their accounts. Nonetheless, participants did seem to have similar elements to their experiences that focused more on working in different spaces during the week rather than exploring whether a certain amount of days in office or at home impacted this experience.

Conclusion

Overall, through qualitatively studying the lived experiences of hybrid workers utilizing photo elicitation, this study is one of the first to gain first-hand accounts of how people experience the process of disconnection, especially in a work environment known for its dynamic nature. What people do to mechanically disconnect, which factors help or inhibit this, and the personal nature of the disconnection experience are all elements shaping an individual's ability to disconnect in a hybrid context. This research provides a nuanced understanding of the dynamic nature of disconnection through employees' experience in a week in which their

workspaces shift. Thus, while hybrid contexts interact with disconnection from work, it is ultimately shaped by people's own feelings and experiences. Despite variability in workspace, individuals find ways to detach, and this research unveils the deeper meanings behind what actually helps disconnect. Therefore, understanding the lived experiences of hybrid workers on disconnecting from work is a critical step in furthering employee recovery literature and promoting well-being in a constantly changing world of work.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Topic Guide

- **Introduction:**
 - Welcome and thank participant for taking part in the interview.
 - Inform participant that they are not obligated to answer any questions they do not want to. Also, inform them that they can pause or stop the interview at any point.
 - Remind participant that their name and any personal/identifiable information about them will remain completely anonymous.
 - Ask if they have any questions before beginning.
- **Introduction Questions:**
 - Please tell me a bit about yourself and your employment history.
 - Probe: For example, can you tell me about the roles you have had, how long you have been working, and whether any of these roles were hybrid?
 - Please tell me about your current job role.
 - Tell me about your current hybrid work schedule.
 - Probe: How is your hybrid schedule decided?
- **Remote Workspace Image:**
 - Tell me about this photo.
 - How do you feel working in this space?
 - Tell me about how you spend a typical working day.
 - How do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?
 - Probe: How effective is this for you?
 - How would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?
 - Describe the end of your workday in this space
 - Probe: How do you transition from “work mode” into your personal time in this space?
 - Probe: How do you mentally disconnect from work?
 - What objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain separation between your work and home life?
 - What challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?
- **In-Office Workspace Image:**
 - Tell me about this photo.
 - How do you feel working in this space?
 - Tell me about how you spend a typical working day.
 - How do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?
 - Probe: How effective is this for you?
 - How would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?
 - Describe the end of your workday in this space?
 - Probe: How do you transition from “work mode” into your personal time in this space?
 - Probe: How do you mentally disconnect from work?
 - What challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?
- **Comparison Between Workspaces:**
 - How does your in-office workspace compare to your remote workspace?

- How would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?
- How does your ability to disconnect from work when in the office compare with working from home?
- Do you feel that it is easier or harder to detach from work in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?
 - Probe: If so, how?
- Of the two pictures you shared, which feels more like a workplace to you?
- **Switch Off Object/Space Image:**
 - Tell me about this photo.
 - Probe: Why did you choose this object/space?
 - Probe: What meaning does this object/space have for you?
 - How does this space or object help you mentally disconnect from work?
 - Probe: Does this depend on whether you are working from home or in the office?
- **Experience of Switching Between Workspaces:**
 - Are there certain times of the day or week in which it is easier or harder to disconnect?
 - Describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week.
 - Probe: How does this commute or transition make you feel?
 - Do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?
 - If so, how?
 - How does the movement between these spaces influence your ability to disconnect from work?
 - In your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace you are in for that day?
 - Probe: Can you give me an example?
 - What would your ideal arrangements in and out of the office be to disconnect from work at the end of the day?
- **Concluding Question:**
 - Is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to share regarding your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or your ability to disconnect from work?

Appendix B: Participant Recruitment Message

🔍 Are you a hybrid worker who works remotely at least one day a week? Do you regularly shift between working from home, the office, or in third spaces during your work week?

As part of my MSc in Organisational and Social Psychology at the LSE, I am looking to speak with hybrid employees for my dissertation research. I am exploring how hybrid employees experience different workspaces throughout the week, and am interested in how transitioning between these spaces may shape their ability to disconnect from work.

When: 1st - 31st May 2025

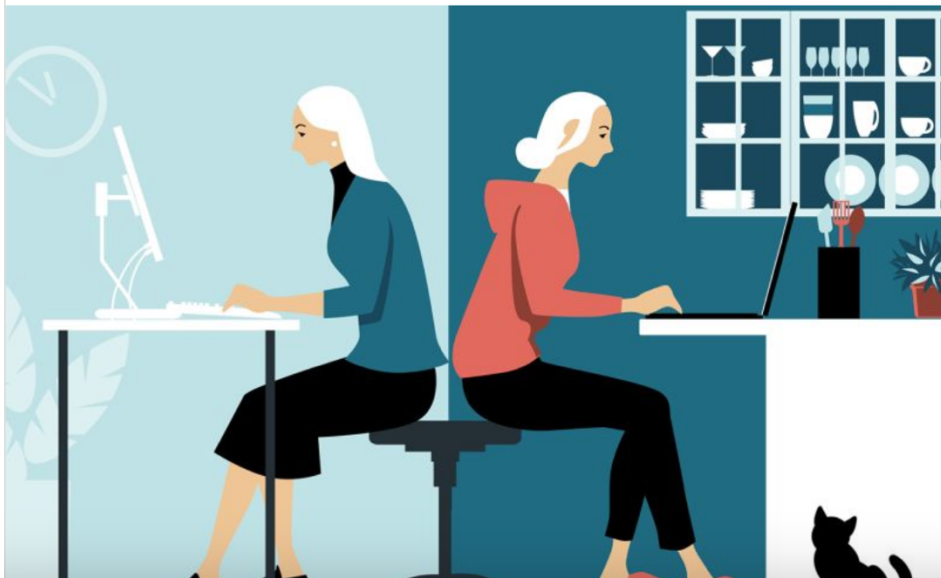
Where: Zoom or Microsoft Teams

Duration: 45 minutes - 60 minutes

If you or anyone you know is interested in participating, please reach out to me via LinkedIn.

Please feel free to reach out with any further questions.

Thank you! 🙏



Appendix C: Information Sheet

A Qualitative Approach to Understanding Psychological Detachment in Hybrid Workers as They Transition Between Workspaces (*Tentative Title*)

[Researcher name extracted]

Department of Psychological and Behavioural Science, LSE

Information for participants

Thank you for considering participating in this study which will take place April to June 2025. This information sheet outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant, if you agree to take part.

1. What is the research about?

The aim of this project is to explore the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work, and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces play a role in this. To explore this, the project will use participant-provided photographs of their workspaces and of an object or space that helps to disconnect from work, which will be talked about during interviews.

2. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. You do not have to take part if you do not want to. If you do decide to take part, I will ask you to sign a consent form which you can sign and return in advance of the interview meeting.

3. What will my involvement be?

You will be asked to take pictures of your at-home and in-person workspace and of an object or space that helps you mentally switch off from work and email these photographs to me prior to the interview. You will then be asked to take part in an online interview about your experience as a hybrid worker and discuss the photographs you provided. The interview will be audio and video recorded and conducted over a video chatting platform such as Zoom and/or Microsoft Teams. The interview should take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. If any questions during the interview make you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to answer them.

4. How do I withdraw from the study?

You can withdraw from the study without having to give a reason. Withdrawing from the study will have no effect on you. You can withdraw at any point up to 14 days after data have been collected. If you withdraw from the study, I will not retain the information you have given thus far, unless you are happy for me to do so. After 14 days, the information collected may not be able to be erased and may be used in the project analysis.

5. What will my information be used for?

I will use the collected information for my master's dissertation.

6. Will my taking part and my data be kept confidential? Will it be anonymized?

The records from this study will be kept as confidential as possible. Only myself and my supervisor, and the examiners of my dissertation will have access to the files and any audio or video recordings. Your data will be anonymized – your name and all other identifying information will not be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. All digital files, photographs, transcripts and summaries will be given codes and stored separately from any names or other direct identification of participants. All aspects of photographs will be anonymized, including doubly anonymizing identifiable objects within them such as

desktop family photos. All research information will be stored digitally under encryption on LSE OneDrive.

Limits to confidentiality: confidentiality will be maintained as far as it is possible, unless you tell us something which implies that you or someone you mention might be in significant danger of harm and unable to act for themselves; in this case, we may have to inform the relevant agencies of this, but we would discuss this with you first.

7. Who has reviewed this study?

This study has undergone ethics review in accordance with the LSE Research Ethics Policy and Procedure.

8. Data Protection Privacy Notice

The LSE Research Privacy Policy can be found at:

https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Secretarys-Division/Assets/Documents/Information-Records-Management/Privacy-Notice-for-Research-v1.2.pdf?from_serp=1

The legal basis used to process your personal data will be legitimate interests. The legal basis used to process special category personal data (e.g. data that reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, health, sex life or sexual orientation, genetic or biometric data) will be for scientific and historical research or statistical purposes.

To request a copy of the data held about you please contact: glpd.info.rights@lse.ac.uk

9. What if I have a question or complaint?

If you have any questions regarding this study please contact the researcher, [researcher name and contact details extracted].

If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the LSE Research Governance Manager via research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

If you are happy to take part in this study, please sign the consent sheet attached/below.

Appendix D: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

A Qualitative Approach to Understanding Psychological Detachment in Hybrid Workers as They Transition Between Workspaces (*Tentative Title*)

[Researcher name extracted]

PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY IS VOLUNTARY

I have read and understood the study information dated [DD/MM/YY], or it has been read to me.	YES / NO
I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.	YES / NO
I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.	YES / NO
I understand that I can refuse to answer questions and that I can withdraw my data and participation completely from the study at any time up to 14 days after data has been collected, without having to give a reason.	YES / NO
I understand that should I withdraw after 14 days of the interview, then the information collected so far cannot be erased and that this information may still be used in the project analysis.	YES / NO
I agree to the interview being audio-recorded.	YES / NO
I agree to the interview being video recorded.	YES / NO
I agree to maintain the confidentiality of the interview discussion, including the researcher.	YES / NO
I consent to the anonymized photographs I provide being reproduced in this research.	YES / NO
I understand that the information I provide will be used for [researcher name extracted] dissertation and that the information (the recordings, photographs, and transcripts) will be anonymized.	YES / NO
I understand that the data I provide including recordings, photographs, and transcripts will be stored securely on a password-protected computer and stored digitally under encryption on LSE OneDrive.	YES / NO
I understand that personal information that can identify me – such as my name, address, location, and any other identifying information, will be kept confidential and only the researcher, supervisor, and examiners will be able to access the raw data.	YES / NO
I consent to my recorded data being transcribed by AI-enabled software tools	YES / NO
I give permission for the anonymized information I provide to be stored securely so that it may be used for future research.	YES / NO

Please retain a copy of this consent form.

Participant name:

Signature: _____ Date _____

Interviewer name:

Signature: _____ Date _____

For information please contact: [Researcher name and contact details extracted]

Appendix E: Thematic Codebook

Research Question: How do hybrid workers experience disconnecting from work as they work across different workspaces during the week?			
Theme	Code	Description	Example
Theme 1: Deliberately Disconnecting: The Role of Routines and Rituals	Code 1A: End of Day Routines	Despite working in different workspaces during the week, hybrid workers' experience of disconnection relies on individual routines that signal the end of the workday and begin the process of disconnecting from work.	<p>P3: "To me the, the, the most signifying thing is when I actually like shut my laptop. Like, I'm like, all right, I'm, I'm done. I shut my laptop and even more so a lot of the times these headphones that I'm wearing I'll have plugged into the laptop to take my meetings, so it's a whole physical routine of like I unplug my headphones, close my laptop and then the mouse that you see pictured I like turn it off so the battery doesn't die and so that like three-step process of like unplug headphones, close laptop, turn off the mouse like I feel like it, it's a direct signal to my brain of like, all right, we're done."</p> <p>P3: "And so, I've...I don't wanna jump ahead to a different question if you have it, but I kind of repeat the same routine at work like at my physical work because I bring this laptop to, to and from work. So in both scenarios I, I'm doing this. So I'm doing this every single day. So my brain has really gotten to the point of like, if I'm like, shutting my laptop and doing all this stuff, it's, the work day is over. Creates a nice separation."</p> <p>P3: "And so I found that recently that's been helping me fully mentally disconnect a lot as</p>

			<p><i>well, like creating not just like the physical interaction, but like the mental conclusion of outlining all my thoughts so.”</i></p> <p><i>P4: “But the way I like to shut down, if you will, is make sure all the files are closed. I like to restart the computer so it kinda wipes clean. And I feel like the computer's off, I'm able to then step away. And the computer's then fresh for the next day. It's not bogged down or, you know, tons of files open. It's it's kind of a new thing I'm doing and it's very effective, I think. It's helping me to be a little more structured and a little more focused, so I can say I know I have this process coming up. And I kind of plan for it. I know I have to work that little process in and it's really helped me kind of make that shift.”</i></p> <p><i>P5: “I guess I do the same thing kind of here, where I turn everything off.”</i></p> <p><i>P6: “So it's a similar thing to home...it's that the the the end of the end of the day is really when I have shut down my computer and I can't do anything else.”</i></p> <p><i>P6: “I don't think it does because it's it's...I guess it's [ability to disconnect] not really connected to the workspace as much as my like my physical laptop. It really is about the shutting down of the computer and that's, that's the end.”</i></p> <p><i>P9: “So when I like...like restart the computer and shut it down, I</i></p>
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			<p><i>do like close the laptop and then like in these pictures I have my notebook. So usually at the end of the day, I'll write down like whatever I did that day and whatever I need to do the next day. So then it's not like sitting in my brain and then I close that too, and I'm done."</i></p> <p><i>P9: "I think like writing down stuff helps me a lot, like in this, like my work notebook. For me, like if I don't write things down, I'll hold on to it in my mind 'cause, I don't want to forget it, but for some reason, like writing it down helps a lot, and I feel like that's like the most beneficial thing for me."</i></p> <p><i>P8: "It's pretty much the same way actually. I will just shut down my laptop. I will shut off my mouse, pack up, and then I will check my desk to make sure that I haven't left anything behind, like my phone or anything and then I'll leave."</i></p> <p><i>P8: "But typically, like as soon as I...oh, I would say a good like marker for me on in person days is when I unpack my lunch box. That's where I get more into my in home 'cause sometimes I'll stay in my work clothes, but if I'm at, because you know, sometimes we go out later. So even if I stay on in my work clothes when I like, unpack my lunch box, I would say that's a good mental marker for me."</i></p> <p><i>P7: "I kind of go and get some water if that helps because it</i></p>
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			<p><i>kind of helps me kind of drink a lot before because again, at home I have my Stanley Cup at my desk. Here I don't. So I don't get up to drink water. Whereas at the end of the day at office, I always feel a bit better about it because I'm just like, OK, I get to go drink my water and then I go drink it and then it just feels like I ended the day like it's, it's sorted. I know that sounds really silly, but it is genuinely what I do at the end of the day, and it helps kind of mark...yeah, mark the end."</i></p> <p><i>P10: "I think it's because it's the closest thing I have to a routine with disconnection that it feels like every day. Like there's a variety of objects that I was thinking about like from as general as like my car or like shoes to go on a walk or, you know, like TV remote or something. It feels like all of them were kind of structured around this idea of like this is what I do after work is done rather than like telling myself like, OK, this is when it's over."</i></p> <p><i>P2: "...what I end up seeing is that a lot is like people just kinda have their own kind of either timing or thing or something that ends up being their trigger to be like, OK, I'm ending now."</i></p>
	Code 1B: Post Work Rituals	Hybrid workers engage in various post work rituals to initiate the transition between work and	<p><i>P10: "I often put on a podcast and similar to the being on my phone thing I will just kind of turn my brain off a little bit and stop trying to like actively make myself think about things."</i></p>

		<p>personal life, facilitating the process of disconnecting from work.</p>	<p><i>P6: "So that's the like mind clearing walk when I'm listening to something and then when I'm riding the metro, I'm usually reading a book, and they've mostly been just general fiction these days. So it's. That's how I disconnect."</i></p> <p><i>P6: "I think it's pretty similar because here I have the physical presence of my family right away and at home...at work I'm calling and you know, connecting with them right away so that that's the same signal that I'm switching from, you know, work sphere to domestic sphere."</i></p> <p><i>P1: "I'll frequently change clothes. I like to exercise after work generally, so I will change clothes into something more fitting for that activity."</i></p> <p><i>P1: "Take off my belt, my badge, my keys. Those are all things that hang and jingle and jangle, and I'll usually change clothes."</i></p> <p><i>P9: "So if I'm like by myself and I'm trying to like disconnect, like driving home or something, I do like listen to audiobooks and stuff, which I think helps to think about something else."</i></p> <p><i>P3: "Kind of like the biggest few things that like I do are either I'm transitioning into normal life mode either by like making food. Typically by the end of a workday it's, it's almost dinner time, so sometimes I'll go to the</i></p>
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			<p><i>store, make food, like something related to like making dinner and so that kind of like pulls me right out of it.”</i></p> <p><i>P4: “And then I typically I like to go into the kitchen, which is kind of right around the corner, and clean the kitchen because I like the kitchen to be clean before the girls get home from daycare so that I can make dinner. And that's also kind of a nice shift.”</i></p> <p><i>P5: “I usually go to the gym right after work, so that's kind of my time for myself, where I can walk, be on my phone, or then listen to music and work out.”</i></p> <p><i>P7: “So in this space, it's quite similar to how it is in my home space, so I would usually go to talk to other people and that is essentially the main thing I do. So I have a lot of colleagues whom I'm friendly with, so I would just go up to them, talk to them about anything but work and that helps me transition essentially.”</i></p>
Theme 2: Conditions of Disconnection	Code 2A: Disconnection Takes Time	Hybrid workers’ experience differing transitional times in a week but ultimately highlight how the experience of disconnection is interlinked with time.	<p><i>P2: “It’s not because I enjoy the commute. It’s just because the commute is like a transitory period, where it’s just my thoughts.”</i></p> <p><i>P9: “So for the most part, it's like I'm able to shut it off and then by the time I commute home like it's...my mind's clear of the work and everything.”</i></p> <p><i>P4: “And I have to disconnect more quickly at home because</i></p>

			<p><i>um I'm working just as long and I'm still working until 4:35, but then I immediately have to go you know, quickly throw something in the oven and quickly run to get the girls. Or there's kind of less time to transition, whereas on my days I work from the office, my husband is in charge of picking up the kids."</i></p> <p><i>P6: "I think in office is a little easier because I have the buffer of the public transit time. It takes me about 75 minutes I think, all in. So I get, I get a lot more physical exercise because I'm I'm walking than I usually do, you know I do, the stairs a couple times when I'm home and not quite as much. So I have the physical exercise, and the time that I don't have when I'm home. When I'm home, it's directly from work to, to not work."</i></p> <p><i>P3: "Whereas like in the most direct case of like, I'm working from home, it's like pretty it like pretty instantaneous from like closing the laptop to like now I'm, now I'm supposed to be doing personal stuff. So I find myself like, even like when I'm playing with my cats and stuff, I, I find that like I do a lot of sort of mindless things for a while before like I, I do anything productive which is why, like I try to like just go to the grocery store."</i></p> <p><i>P8: "Generally after a remote workday, I'm away from my desk</i></p>
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			<p><i>for at least an hour before I do anything personal at the desk.”</i></p> <p><i>P2: “And then after like, like the good thing is after laying there for a little bit or even watching anything, something like that, just like laying there for a minute, maybe 10-15 minutes, 20 minutes or whatever, I'm fine with coming back up and like sitting down and doing stuff on my computer for personal reasons.”</i></p>
	Code 2B: Physical Separation Helps Disconnect	For hybrid workers, physical separation helps disconnect from work across workspaces.	<p><i>P1: “Having a completely distinct physical space for me is much better as far as...only and I mean only, only insofar as it makes it easier to detach from work.”</i></p> <p><i>P6: “So I think moving away from the, the coded work, like the really serious work environment is helpful.”</i></p> <p><i>P10: “I like, do not ever work once I get home. That's like a very hard line for me. So it is just the kind of physically leaving the space again.”</i></p> <p><i>P5: “I think just leaving the area in general. It helps that once I leave, I try to leave my bedroom in, in, in general when trying to transition from work to now personal hours because I've just been sitting here all day.”</i></p> <p><i>P8: “But after that I will, actually, I tend to leave my room, to kind of enable that transition of this space being a workspace back into it being a personal space. So I don't stay at</i></p>

			<p><i>my desk after...at least... I don't like sit at my desk and play on my phone after work. I will like almost immediately get up and like move around."</i></p> <p><i>P8: "I just exit this entire space for a while and then once I've done something like personal downstairs like talk to my family or watch some TV or play with my phone, then I am able to re enter the space as like a personal space."</i></p> <p><i>P7: "I never stay at this desk after work because if I'm sitting here, I'm thinking about work and when I'm not sitting here, it's easier to disconnect."</i></p> <p><i>P9: "I mean, I think when I'm at home, like if I wasn't so careful about like having a work desk and like leaving it when I'm not working, it would be a little harder to like mentally disconnect."</i></p> <p><i>P1: "Sure, in college, when I interned fully remotely, I did all of my work completely via my computer, like my desk that I had in my bedroom and the complete lack of separation there meant that when I was done with work it was really, really hard to feel done with work. I ended up working later than I wanted to, or maybe not even working, but being mentally occupied by work later than I wanted to."</i></p>
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	Code 2C: Visual Presence of Work Inhibits Disconnect	Hybrid workers keep work related things “out of sight” suggesting that visual reminders of work inhibit detachment. This is especially important to hybrid workers on remote workdays.	<p><i>P4: “So, it's not like I ever see it even physically when I'm in the house. So I can essentially close the door. I don't have a door, but it's the same feeling. So, it's out of sight, out of mind in many ways.”</i></p> <p><i>P9: “I think for me like having...like it doesn't matter as much like if I'm in office or not um...especially if I have like an office space in my home that like I can like shut the door to. So I think just having some sort of, I guess, literal door is helpful, to kind of like put it “out of out of sight out of mind” almost.”</i></p> <p><i>P3: “But like as far as the work day ending right when I'm at home, it's very hard to be like 100% disconnected because like my laptop is like still out.”</i></p> <p><i>P1: “It's most effective when I also unplug the laptop and put it in my backpack, so that it's out of sight.”</i></p> <p><i>P10: “I think that if I was going to like walk by and see the space with my notebook open my laptop open, it would be stressful again. So I think that is kind of the visual signal for me of like my laptop's closed.”</i></p>
Theme 3: Disconnection as a Personal Experience	Code 3A: Ownership Over Disconnect	When discussing images of their disconnect object or spaces, hybrid workers' highlight that they feel a sense of ownership over	<p><i>P7: “It's my thing, my space, my, my coffee machine, that kind of thing, if that makes sense.”</i></p> <p><i>P1: “It's one of two real rooms, distinct rooms, in my apartment that are mine. That I can make mine.”</i></p>

		how and what helps them disconnect.	<p><i>P1: "It's my space. You know, it's the space that I've made as comfortable as I can for myself."</i></p> <p><i>P5: "I think for a long time it's just been, for me, it's been really easy to disconnect and disassociate while I'm in the gym 'cause it's my own time, you know, like I'm focusing on my health."</i></p>
	Code 3B: Disconnection as Something Totally Different from Work	Hybrid workers emphasize that what helps disconnect from work is doing something or being somewhere that is completely different from work.	<p><i>P1: "A lot of...it's the center of a lot of my life that does not have to do with work."</i></p> <p><i>P9: "And I think like doing the volunteer work and stuff is helpful for me because it's like something else that I'm doing away from work, like it's totally separate."</i></p> <p><i>P6: "But when I'm outside I...there's...I can't...I'm not with a computer. Not with anything. I'm usually not...I don't have a book. I'm just...just me and the trees."</i></p> <p><i>P8: "And so which is kind of funny because even though sometimes I'll be doing that type of thing at work, which is like mostly like data entry relevant things, sorting your Pokémon cards is like it uses like the same part of the brain or at least it feels like it. But because it's with Pokémon and not with work, I enjoy it a lot more, even if it's like the same type of thing."</i></p> <p><i>P6: "So generally I think that's probably the other disconnect space is when I'm cooking or or</i></p>

			<i>baking something 'cause I'm doing it for the people that I love and it's not...it's really not related to work."</i>
	Code 3C: Reconnecting to Self Through Disconnecting from Work	Hybrid workers' experience of disconnecting from work involves an experience of reconnecting to their personal self.	<p><i>P1: "For me, it's less about mentally disconnecting from work because I'm once I'm out of the office, I am disconnected. It is more so how I can...reconnect with uh, with myself.</i></p> <p><i>P4: "Just calming and um...if, if I'm looking that way, I can't see anything but that water and the plants. So it's a physical disconnection, but it's also a mental and....mental and emotional reconnection with things that make me happy personally."</i></p> <p><i>P4: "If I'm having a tough work day...taking a...a tough work day from home or something, taking a break out here both disconnects me and reconnects me and grounds me."</i></p> <p><i>P5: "Um, it's just time for myself, you know, time for me to work on myself. Reflect on anything and become a stronger version of myself."</i></p>
	Code 3D: Disconnect Varies by Personal and Contextual Factors	Among hybrid workers, the experience of disconnection varies by individual and contextual factors that uniquely shape the experience of disconnection for each individual.	<i>P5: "I guess it all depends on what my workload is looking like, where it would be harder to disconnect because if I have a deadline coming up, you know I'm gonna want to prioritize that and will probably push, you know, this outside place, like going to the gym to later in the night compared to when I usually go like I try to go around</i>

			<p><i>six or seven and then maybe I'll go at 9:00 instead, right?"</i></p> <p><i>P4: "If I was running slow, just tired or something, even the shutdown is hard to do because I'm just feeling, you know, maybe disappointed in my performance for the day, or, you know, my feeling about what I accomplished, definitely affects the shutdown and affects the transition to personal life."</i></p> <p><i>P2: "Again the days that I'm in the office when I come home, it's more like I'm like, I'm so tired kind of thing that I'm like it...it's so I mean, I'm, I'm begging to disconnect at that point. I'm like, I don't wanna think about work at all when I'm at home."</i></p> <p><i>P4: "I think it's kind of easier [mentally disconnecting] for me than a lot, a lot of other people."</i></p>
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Appendix F: All Interview Transcripts

P1 Interview Transcript

44m 32s

Interviewer 0:05

OK. Well, hello. I wanted to begin by taking the time to thank you for participating in the interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P1 0:47

Sounds good.

Interviewer 0:48

OK, great. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P1 0:53

Nope.

Interviewer 0:54

OK, great. So to start out, can you please tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P1 1:01

Bit about myself. I'm a 23 year old man. I grew up in and around the southeast United States, specifically [location extracted]. I went to [school name extracted] in [location extracted]. I graduated in 4 1/2 years. I interned at two places. Do you want to know specific companies?

Interviewer 1:20

Um, it's up to you. They're going to be removed name wise.

P1 1:23

OK. One engineering firm with which you might be familiar and one engineering software company that you're probably not familiar. I am currently employed, thankfully, full time in a rotational development program at the engineering firm. The former of the two. I began my employment January of 2024, so a year and 3-ish months ago.

Interviewer 1:45

OK, great. And those past internships were those hybrid or remote or fully in person?

P1 1:52

One was hybrid, one was remote.

Interviewer 1:54

OK, great. And can you tell me a bit about your current job role that you started to mention?

P1 2:00

Sure. I'm in a rotational engineering development program, so I change jobs every six months. Every single one of my roles has had some form of hybrid work, some more remote than others, just depending on the needs of the job and the team that I was on in particular

Interviewer 2:08

Mm hmm.

P1 2:13

at that time. What I do right now is mostly data analysis for the company that I work at. Maintenance and diagnostics specifically. My team is largely not in the office. Most of them average about a day and 1/2 in the office per week. There is no in office mandate in our company, at least not this location. Though if you want to have a reserve desk, you have to come in I believe 3 days a week now. I don't.

Interviewer 2:38

Gotcha.

P1 2:39

I usually average two days a week. I sit one day with my team and one day with the other people who are in the same program as me in the office.

Interviewer 2:41

Mm hmm. OK, great. And yeah, expanding a little bit about that hybrid work schedule. I guess what days a week do you go in and how exactly is that decided?

P1 2:59

I go in Tuesdays and Thursdays, one of those is because I have an obligation to go in, that'd be on Tuesdays for the program that I'm in. The Thursdays because that's the most common schedule for people at my work location, at our company, and as an early career engineer or employee I guess, but I'm an engineer, it's advantageous to be in the office and other people are. It would be a little silly for me to go in two days a week when no one else is in the office. Kind of defeats the purpose in my eyes. So I go in so I can best maximize the time that I have in the office, both for like exposure and also for like my own learning and development as far as technical understanding goes.

Interviewer 3:36

Right. OK. Great. So moving on, I'm gonna share my screen really quick. Hopefully you can see that all right.

P1 3:48

Yep.

Interviewer 3:49

OK, great. So before this interview, I asked you to please share a photo of your remote workspace and your in-office workspace. We will start here with the remote workspace and just going to be talking about your experience in this space and asking you some questions about it. So to start, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P1 4:06

Sure, this is the space that I work at, at home. It's obviously a little messy, but we have an open floor plan as far as the common space, so our living room and our kitchen are just one big, long, basically hallway. What you see on the right is the kitchen counter. We have a table that sits on the end. We being my roommate and I who are both employed at the same company and who both follow approximately the same in and out of office schedule. We both go in Tuesdays and Thursdays and enter and leave at around the same times. So when we're working at home like today, technically that, we were in the office today for part of it. We work facing each other on this table with each of us having our laptop sitting there. That's why it's a little messy cable wise. I have a monitor that I use. I don't think that he does so.

Interviewer 4:48

OK, great. And I think you just mentioned, so today you were in the office for the first half of the day and then came home. Is that something that's typical or it just depends?

P1 4:57

No, it's atypical. That only happens, in my case at least, when I have something that I need to do in the office that is on a day I don't go in. Especially at this work location, most people only come in two days a week or one day a week, so it...

Interviewer 5:06

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P1 5:13

Very, very...

It's less...lower occupancy on off days Monday, Wednesday, especially Monday and Friday, but Monday, Wednesday and Friday. So I, I tend to come home if I...once I fulfill my obligation at the office on my off days. As far as, I should say, out of the office days such as today.

Interviewer 5:31

OK, great. And looking back at this photo, how do you feel when working in this space?

P1 5:42

Uhh. Mmm, that's a good question. More relaxed than when I'm in the office. If I was gonna give a comparison.

Interviewer 5:48

Mm hmm.

P1 5:49

Often I feel less comfortable. It's not the most comfortable chair or setup.

Interviewer 5:53

Mm hmm.

P1 5:55

Umm. Obviously not particularly ergonomic. It's a little cramped as far as workspace goes. I definitely feel less perceived than when I'm in the office, and that's a big plus for me. I don't know how much that impacts my productivity, but I definitely feel more comfortable.

Interviewer 6:06

Mm hmm. Right, great. And so can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day in this space? So I guess just like walk me through a day.

P1 6:16

Sure. I will come out of my bedroom, which is behind the chair that you see in that photo, anywhere between 8:00 and 9:00 am, sometimes a little earlier depending on my obligations for the day. If I have early morning meetings, I'll be out a little earlier. If I do not, I'll be out a little later. It really just depends. If I get out of my bedroom early enough that I have time to eat breakfast or, you know, prepare for the day outside of that before my meetings or my obligations begin, I will, I will do that. And if I do not, I will take my meetings and then eat breakfast and get myself ready for the day after.

Interviewer 6:50

Gotcha. And then during work I guess does that day depending?

P1 6:54

Oh, sorry I didn't finish, sorry.

Interviewer 6:56

No, you're all good.

P1 6:58

Yeah, that's the beginning. And then I will work intermittently depending on tasks that I have for the day. So for example, if I have a task that really needs to be done, like a deliverable the next day, I will kind of "lock in," I guess, for lack of a better phrase and really focus on my work in that moment. If it is a day where I

Interviewer 7:10

Mm hmm.

P1 7:17

have more meetings, more fluff work, less dedicated direct tasks with hard deliverables, I will often be unengaged. I will be on my phone or browsing the Internet or thinking about something else or listening to a podcast, some other form of mental occupation just because I don't have that in this space and I feel more free to do so than when I'm in the office.

Interviewer 7:39

Right. And in those moments where, like, you just said that you're kind of like disengaged or, you know, doing other things are you, would you say that you're, like, disconnected from work or it's still kind of there in your mind?

P1 7:51

No, definitely not disconnected, I feel...

Interviewer 7:53

Mm hmm.

P1 7:55

It's honestly in some ways a way to pass the time.

Interviewer 7:58

Right.

P1 7:59

It's more so, you know, especially in, in the age where we have apps like Teams and Slack, I, I feel very perceived at all times in the office or out of the office, especially during working hours because I am expected to appear as though I'm doing work more so

Interviewer 8:07

Mm hmm.

P1 8:14

than actually do work. I could meet my deliverables and appear online for six hours a week, but because I have an obligation to appear online, that is always on my mind, whether I'm in the office or out of the office. In fact, I feel it more so when I'm out of the office. Because when I'm in the office I am visible, or I feel more visible. When I'm out of the office, I know the only way that I can look as though I am doing work is by being appearing online on my computer and as a result, any activity that I

Interviewer 8:29

Mhmm.

P1 8:45

partake in that is not related to work during those hours is less fulfilling and relaxing than uh,

than it would be otherwise, and is more so a way to escape from that discomfort than it is an actual moment of leisure.

Interviewer 9:01

Right. OK, great. And how do you signal the end of a workday when you're working from this space in particular?

P1 9:10

I close my laptop, and I walk away.

Interviewer 9:12

And how effective is that for you? For like leaving work behind, let's say?

P1 9:19

Pretty effective. It's most effective when I also unplug the laptop and put it in my backpack, so that it's out of sight.

Interviewer 9:26

Right.

P1 9:27

I generally do not go into that space during the week for leisure. Obviously, or as I mentioned, on the left is the living room in this photo, this visual you're seeing. So, in the weekend and when I have more formalized plans that involve our common space during the

Interviewer 9:38

Mhmm.

P1 9:47

week, I will take advantage of that space, and in those moments work can be on my mind unless I put the computer away.

Interviewer 9:53

Mm hmm.

P1 9:53

But during the week, more often, especially since my roommate and I work in the same space for eight plus hours a day, we will kind of go and do our own thing. He calls his girlfriend. And so uh we will take our own time and our own spaces. So, in that sense it is effective when I'm not also in the space. When I am, it can be less effective.

Interviewer 10:16

Right. OK, great. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday? Maybe usually when you're working in this space.

P1 10:24

My mindset at the end of the workday when I'm working from home? Um. Relief. It's nice to no longer feel perceived.

Interviewer 10:29

Mm hmm.

P1 10:32

There is less perception, I think.

Interviewer 10:32

Mm hmm.

P1 10:35

Maybe it's just the ritual being less definitive than walking to my car and driving home and going down the elevator, you know, and changing clothes or whatever it might be when I get home.

Interviewer 10:41

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P1 10:46

There is less of that, so my mindset is definitely relief. Relief from the, the feeling of perception. I always feel perceived when I'm working from home and that's...it's nice to be away from that.

Interviewer 10:55

Right. Yeah, definitely. And I guess you kind of described the end of your workday and how you usually you know just kind of close your laptop and move on. But can you talk a little bit about how you transition from, let's say, work mode into your personal time when when working remotely?

P1 11:16

You mean? What things that I do to get myself in that headspace or like the end of like what the end of the workday process looks like? Meaning like how do I like... What does it look like when I focus less and less on work and start to focus on my other things? Or like what specifically?

Interviewer 11:36

Yeah.

P1 11:37

Sorry, is that not clear?

Interviewer 11:38

No, no. Yeah, I think both would be interesting. If you want to or if you had been, if you have an inclination to speak on one more than the other. Just anything to kind of describe how you get out of that mindset, that work mode, when in this space.

P1 11:52

I'll frequently change clothes. I like to exercise after work generally, so I will change clothes into something more fitting for that activity. Often I will lay on my bed. As far as the end of the workday, what it looks like mentally, I will focus less and less on work unless I have a hard deadline at the end of the day, as the day goes on. I am most productive

Interviewer 12:08

Mm hmm.

P1 12:14

when I work from home, generally between the hours of 10 and 1. After 2:00 PM or three at the very latest, I am completely unfocused on work and if I am thinking about work actively, I'm focused entirely on making sure that I am perceived as online. Such as right now.

Interviewer 12:32

Right. OK, great. And I guess how do you try to mentally disconnect from work at the end of this workday?

P1 12:42

Um. I try and do things that occupy my mind outside of work.

Interviewer 12:44

Mm hmm.

P1 12:46

Some of the work that I have is mentally stimulating. Some of it is not. In the event that it isn't, it can be hard when doing another, not mentally stimulating task to stop focusing on it. When it is mentally stimulating and I put it away, I can stop thinking about it much more easily.

Interviewer 13:00

Right. OK, great. And I was wondering in this space that we have here what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize to try to maintain the separation between like work and home life, let's say?

P1 13:14

Well, there's a door behind this chair that is a good way to distinguish.

Interviewer 13:16

Mm hmm.

P1 13:18

In fact, there's another door to my right, right now. I'm in my bedroom currently.

Interviewer 13:22

OK.

P1 13:23

I almost never work in my bedroom. If I do it is only because I have to plug my computer in or I don't want to interrupt my roommate while I'm on a meeting. But, more often than not, when I'm working from home, I will be outside of this room. I don't like to have my

Interviewer 13:32

OK.

P1 13:36

work computer, even in this room, I keep my backpack outside of this room. The only work thing outside of my clothes and my badge that I bring in here is my work phone to charge it and that's it.

Interviewer 13:46

OK, great. And can you explain a little bit more about why you've decided to do this?

P1 13:51

Sure, in college, when I interned fully remotely, I did all of my work completely via my computer, like my desk that I had in my bedroom and the complete lack of separation there meant that when I was done with work it was really, really hard to feel done with work. I ended up working later

Interviewer 14:00

OK.

P1 14:10

than I wanted to, or maybe not even working, but being mentally occupied by work later than I wanted to. And in that space, at that time, just a few years ago now, I did not really have a space to work with my work computer that was not in my bedroom so.

Interviewer 14:27

Mm hmm. Gotcha.

P1 14:30

Yeah, I did not like how that felt at all.

Interviewer 14:32

Right. OK, great. Well, lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P1 14:42

Distraction, certainly.

Interviewer 14:43

Mhmm.

P1 14:46

Um. I would make the argument that I am similarly distracted when in the office, I just feel less guilt about it.

Interviewer 14:50

Mm hmm. Right.

P1 14:53

You know, going and walking around the office with your coworkers is expected. You know, your what is it?

Interviewer 14:58

Mm hmm.

P1 15:00

Water cooler chat is expected.

Interviewer 15:02

Mm hmm.

P1 15:03

Being more visible physically and less visible online when you're in the office is an expectation.

Interviewer 15:09

Mm hmm.

P1 15:10

But I definitely feel that having a similar level of similar lack of active work when you are working from home feels much worse.

Interviewer 15:23

Right. OK, great. Well, now we can move on. The second slide here we have two photos that you sent regarding your in-office workspace. So pretty similar to the first time around, can you just tell me a bit about these photos?

P1 15:42

This room is a converted conference room. There are little office cubbies, like the one you see in the photo on the right, where a few of us work. That is a setup that I have. It's a monitor from home, a keyboard from home, a mouse from home, and one monitor that is from the office. But yeah, you can see in the left that's just a view that we have since it's a converted conference room, there are like longer tables there.

Interviewer 16:06

Mm hmm.

P1 16:06

But generally I work at the desk in the photo on the right.

Interviewer 16:09

Gotcha.

P1 16:09

But it's within that space. So, the photo on the left.

Interviewer 16:12

Right, OK, great. And can you tell me a bit about how you feel working in this space?

P1 16:12

Uh. I feel like a better worker, even if I'm often not.

Interviewer 16:25

Mm hmm.

P1 16:25

I feel interestingly this arrangement is preferable to most other offices that I've been in because there is a door that separates us from the rest of the office, so I do not have the same sense of feeling perceived that I have in more common cubicle or other desk setups, which makes it, I think, much better. It has some of the advantages in my mind of working from home in the sense that you are insulated from perception by your peers and your superiors. But you also have, in my opinion, some of the

Interviewer 16:56

Mhmm.

P1 16:59

maybe benefits of being in the office in the sense that you can sort of detach from your personal life in some ways. Though, I guess maybe the lack of perception means that I can detach in a similar way as when I'm working from home, guilt free.

Interviewer 17:13

Right, OK, great. And similar to last time, can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but let's say on a day where you come in office?

P1 17:26

Sure, so...Similar to when I work from home, I will check when I have meetings and come in based off of those. When I go into the office, I always will get ready before I go in and I almost always will prepare food so it's more of it's more time that is not related to actual work that I have to spend to get ready. As it happens, my commute is very short, so that's not a huge deal. It's not much longer than the walk from my bedroom to the to the desk in the common space.

Interviewer 17:48

Mm hmm.

P1 17:52

So that's not a huge deal for me. However, when I have had a commute previously that was another aspect of it as far as the process for the beginning. As far as working there, you know the general flow is probably 30 to 45 minutes of productiveness followed by different breaks going to the bathroom, getting water, getting coffee, standing just to stand.

Interviewer 17:59

Mm hmm.

P1 18:15

I will still be listening to music or podcast or YouTube videos or whatever. It is just as much as when I'm at home. I just will be slightly more aware of if someone walks in and sees me. Whereas when I'm at home all I care about is a. if my work gets done and b. if I seem like I'm online and working.

Interviewer 18:30

Right. OK, great.

P1 18:31

Yeah.

Interviewer 18:33

And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in the office in this space?

P1 18:38

Leave.

Interviewer 18:40

Just leave? Close your laptop as well?

P1 18:41

That's the easiest answer, yeah. Laptop closed, laptop in backpack, backpack over shoulder, headphones in, sunglasses on, walk out the door. And it's pretty definitive. I'll either call my girlfriend or my mom, or text a friend or change the video or music that I'm listening to, to signal to myself that it's the end of the day, but that's more passive than anything. It's just things that I want to do. For me, the biggest thing is as soon as I'm out the door, I stop thinking about it, and that is a nice hard end to things.

Interviewer 19:03

Right. Right. And I guess you started to kind of cover it this, but how effective is this for you the whole just leaving this location?

P1 19:17

Having a completely distinct physical space for me is much better as far as...only and I mean

only, only insofar as it makes it easier to detach from work. I abhor it as an obligation in every other way. But it is nice that there is a hard stop. That I do appreciate.

Interviewer 19:33

Mm hmm. Right. OK, great. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday on the days that you go into office?

P1 19:47

Tired.

Interviewer 19:48

Tired.

P1 19:49

Definitely more fatiguing, often longer hours. A different type of feeling perceived, but definitely more just fatigue. I feel much less fatigued when I work from home.

Interviewer 19:59

Mm hmm.

P1 20:01

There's just less mental work that goes into it. I can sit there in my underwear and a t shirt and its not a big deal

Interviewer 20:01

Right. Definitely.

P1 20:07

At a minimum in the office I have to have pants on.

Interviewer 20:09

Right. OK, great. And so. You kind of already described, you know, the end of your workday. So, I guess similar to last time, how do you actually though transition from work mode into your personal time on the days that you go into office?

P1 20:30

Uh. Take off my belt, my badge, my keys. Those are all things that hang and jingle and jangle, and I'll usually change clothes. Often when I go into the office, I'm less prone to like wellness activities like working out because I feel more fatigued. So I'll change more into a leisure mindset. Then I will into something that is more,

Interviewer 20:48

Definitely.

P1 20:53

I hate to say productive, but healthy perhaps.

Interviewer 20:56

Right. And I guess does, that lead into, how do you try to mentally disconnect from work these days that you go into office?

P1 21:04

For me, it's less about mentally disconnecting from work because I'm once I'm out of the office, I am disconnected. It is more so how I can...reconnect with uh, with myself. You know it's a different version of yourself in the office.

Interviewer 21:16

Mm hmm.

P1 21:17

More so when you're working from home, you don't have to wear that mask as much. So, it's the mental load of being in the office and performing actively and also socially, I mean also in your your actual tasks. But putting on that performance of being an office worker

Interviewer 21:33

Mm hmm.

P1 21:36

and then having to kind of take that mask off and sit with yourself for a bit, it's harder. It takes longer.

Interviewer 21:45

Yeah, definitely. OK, great. And lastly, I would say what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this particular space?

P1 21:58

Um. It's louder. There are more people there. Again, feeling visually perceived is definitely a different sensation than feeling perceived when you're working remotely.

Interviewer 22:08

Mm hmm.

P1 22:09

It's less...it's not everywhere all the time, but when it is there, when you are being actively perceived, it's much more intense because you're not just either appearing online or appearing offline, you're actively showing the visuals of a worker and trying to look like someone who is worthy and productive and interesting and worthy of promotion or whatever it might be. So, there is certainly...

Interviewer 22:32

Right.

P1 22:38

What was the question, sorry?

Interviewer 22:40

Like what challenges, if any, do you experience working in this space?

P1 22:43

Yeah, that type of perception. It's much more intense. I feel much more perceived when I am perceived and then also just as a busier space. So there, like there are little administrative challenges associated with that, you know being in meeting is harder.

Interviewer 22:51

Right.

P1 22:57

Yeah, it is nice to have a larger area to work in. That desk is larger than the table we sit at when we work from home. But I still prefer working from home. Personally.

Interviewer 23:05

Yeah. Yeah, great. And you keep talking about, you know, these these feelings of how you're perceived in one space and the other does this at all bleed into, like once you're done with work, do you, like, linger on those thoughts, or are you able to leave it behind at the end of the work day?

P1 23:24

Generally I'm able to leave it behind. The fatigue that that stress causes me, I am not able to leave behind. It is significantly more fatiguing to feel perceived than not. For sure. It's annoying when working from home to worry about feeling about being perceived, but that is still significantly less difficult and stressful and tiring than actually being perceived.

Interviewer 23:47

Right. OK, great. So moving on here, I just kind of put the photo side to side 'cause now I want to talk a little bit about kind of like comparing these workspaces. And I know as we have been talking, you've kind of already brought in some comparisons. So, I guess my first question, if you want to cover something different or expand on something that we've talked about, but how does your in office workspace compare to your remote workspace?

P1 24:14

I'd say it's neater, in large part due to the fact that it's larger.

Interviewer 24:15

Mm hmm.

P1 24:18

Obviously there's more monitors. Yeah, they're different space constraints because I don't have to pay for the space that is in the office, the company does.

Interviewer 24:29

Mm hmm.

P1 24:32

Um. It's also visually more work oriented. You know it's a desk chair.

Interviewer 24:35

Mm hmm.

P1 24:37

It's not like a dining room chair and table.

Interviewer 24:40

Right.

P1 24:43

I have nicer peripherals in large part because there wasn't room for them at my home space 'cause I spend more time working from home, but also because I like to be perceived as someone who has nice things and I actually do happen to have nice peripherals, so I bring

Interviewer 24:46

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P1 24:57

them to the office to kind of exercise my, my perception muscles I suppose.

Interviewer 25:04

Right. OK, great. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace, whether that be physical, mental, et cetera?

P1 25:22

I think in the in-office workspace, this is an exception, this space specifically. In general, I feel that my boundaries are often and regularly violated without my permission or desire in the office. In this space, because there's a door that separates us from everyone else, I feel that significantly less.

Interviewer 25:37

Mm hmm.

P1 25:42

I still do feel it far more than when I'm at home because my boundaries are, frankly, never violated when I'm at home, with the exception of when I message outside of work hours.

Interviewer 25:43

Mm hmm.

P1 25:51

But, I also have a rule of not responding outside of working hours,

Interviewer 25:55

Right.

P1 25:55

so that's a countermeasure there. But um, I think the only boundaries that I'm really concerned with when I'm working generally is my like emotional and mental boundaries. I don't...never had to worry about my physical boundaries, probably because I'm a young man worker, but you know.

Interviewer 26:07

Mhmm.

P1 26:17

Um. Yeah, it's just when you get walked in on and you realize that you have to look perceived or have to have to look busy and you are being perceived actively. And that that is not a pleasant sensation. Ever. Even when you are actually working, you have to change what you're doing.

Interviewer 26:35

Yeah, definitely. And I guess how does your ability to disconnect from work when in the office compare to when working from home?

P1 26:47

It's better. It's more finite. It's more final when I leave the office, I leave the office. I feel no guilt about being online or offline.

Interviewer 26:54

Mm hmm.

P1 26:54

There is a significantly more blurred line as far as separation when I'm working from home. It's better now that I have a space where I only do work, but it is still more blurry than when I'm at the office.

Interviewer 27:05

Right. Yeah. And I guess would you say... 'cause you just said you in office, you kind of like leave it behind. So I guess would that disconnect be like easier and quicker and like does it take you longer in at home or not necessarily?

P1 27:25

It's hard to say because at home I feel like it's slower, but I also am immediately into leisure as soon as I'm done. I can walk over and do the leisure activity immediately. When I'm at the office, even though my commute is short, it's probably 15 total minutes, to like from getting up from my desk to when I am able to do have the same amount of leisure opportunities as when I'm working from home. I'm not sure if one is faster than the other, if one feels faster/

Interviewer 27:40

Mm hmm.

Right.

P1 27:50

Because the, from the moment I arrive into this space to when I feel comfortable beginning leisure is much shorter when I work in the office, but also I've had more time between when I stopped working and when I started trying to do my leisure activity than when I work from home.

Interviewer 28:08

Right. OK. And so, of the two pictures that you shared, which feels more like a workplace to you? Like if I said workplace.

P1 28:20

Certainly the office workspace.

Interviewer 28:23

And what elements of it or, or why would you think that?

P1 28:27

Well, firstly because it is a workspace and the other one is my home.

Interviewer 28:33

Right.

P1 28:33

So, there's that aspect of the conversation. But the other aspect is that I have intentionally made it look more like a workspace. I could neaten the table. I probably should. I don't feel as much pressure to do so because I live there.

Interviewer 28:47

Right.

P1 28:47

I am actively being seen and judged by the cleanliness and presentation of the place that I work in the office though.

Interviewer 28:55

Right. OK. Great. So, moving on lastly, here we have... I asked for a photograph of either an object or a space that helps you disconnect from work at the end of the day, and you provided these two. So I was wondering if you can just tell me a bit about these photos.

P1 29:17

Sure, these are both of my bedroom. The picture on the left is of my freshly made bed and I have my TV and speaker setup. So I listen to music to unwind often. I really like my bedroom and this space I made it into. It's a space that feels insulated from work. Feels safe and unique to me. I like to be in it, which is very nice. On the right, and it's also on the right in real life and where I'm sitting right now is my like personal computer.

Interviewer 29:36

Mm hmm.

P1 29:42

I like to play video games, competitive and otherwise, both with my friends and my girlfriend and alone. So that's a significant portion of my, my leisure time is gaming and other activities on my computer.

Interviewer 29:56

Right, OK, great. And I guess given the prompt that I gave you, why specifically did you choose these photos?

P1 30:12

It's one of two real rooms, distinct rooms, in my apartment that are mine. That I can make mine. So that's the first thing. Second thing is 'cause this is the space I spend the most of my leisure time in.

Interviewer 30:19

OK, great. And, no go ahead.

P1 30:19

There are many. There are many activities I do. I mean, I might be watching TV, videos, listening to music, podcasts, reading books, playing games, whatever it is, a lot of it's done here.

Interviewer 30:31

Mm hmm. OK, great. And I guess what meaning if any does this space have for you besides anything that we talked about?

P1 30:44

Well it's the place that I sleep. So there's that.

Interviewer 30:45

Mm hmm.

P1 30:49

It's my space. You know, it's the space that I've made as comfortable as I can for myself.

Interviewer 30:50

Mm hmm. Right.

P1 30:53

It was not. No one else has been really a priority. I mean, I guess my girlfriend 'cause she spent some time here, but mostly me in terms of decoration and also just the things that are in it. Its representative of a lot of my hobbies as well.

Interviewer 31:02

Right. Mm hmm.

P1 31:05

So I I guess the question was how I feel about it.

Interviewer 31:08

Yeah, like or what meaning it has for you.

P1 31:11

A meaning it has for me? Yeah, it's a place of rest, relaxation, leisure, my hobbies.

Interviewer 31:21

Mm hmm.

P1 31:21

A lot of...it's the center of a lot of my life that does not have to do with work.

Interviewer 31:24

Right, definitely. That's great. And I guess expanding a little bit about how does this space help you mentally disconnect from work?

P1 31:33

Well, I don't keep anything work related in here except my work phone when I charge it.

Interviewer 31:39

Mm hmm.

P1 31:40

That's the first thing. Also, it has a physical threshold in the door that separates it from the space where I do work. Technically 2 doors actually.

Interviewer 31:43

Right. Mm hmm.

P1 31:51

You know, it also just doesn't have things that, I mean it has. There are things that I do here that I also do at work, you know, but the things that I do here, I do not do in the same way that I do at work, even if it's the same things. I listen to music more actively here than I do when I'm at the office. When I watch a video, it is with a nice sound system and is a majority of my field of view instead of just being the audio that I listen to.

Interviewer 32:09

Gotcha.

P1 32:16

Mhmm.

Interviewer 32:17

Right. OK, great. And I guess you kind of touched upon this, but does this space helping you disconnect from work depend on whether you're working from home or in the office? Or is it more effective on one of these days?

P1 32:34

It feels more relaxing when I'm coming from being in the office, but I also think that's because my default state is more relaxed when I'm working from home than when I'm at the office. So that difference is larger.

Interviewer 32:37

Mm hmm. Right. OK, awesome. And so moving on, just generally talking about your experiences of working between these different spaces during the week and also just switching between working in these different spaces. I think you have a really unique kind of like Tuesday, Thursday schedule. So you have a good amount of like switching on and off between going in the office and working from home.

P1 33:11

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 33:12

But I guess before that still talking about your ability to disconnect from work. Are there certain times either of the day or the week in which it's easier or harder for you to disconnect?

P1 33:27

It's easier to disconnect when I know I don't have to go to work the next day. So Friday night is the easiest.

Interviewer 33:31

Mm hmm. Right.

P1 33:37

The hardest is probably when I do have to go to work the next day, especially if I have to go in early because I can just feel the time that I have between the current moment and when I have to be in the office approaching.

Interviewer 33:48

Right.

P1 33:49

That's always front of mind in those nights.

Interviewer 33:52

Right. And I guess is there. Do you think is there a certain reason why that's a front of mind is just because you have to go into the office? Or are there other elements to it?

P1 34:02

Oh, that's just because I have to get ready. There are logistics associated with it. You know, I don't have to prepare food in the same way when I'm working from home because I can put it on a plate, but it needs to be in Tupperware or lunch box, or

Interviewer 34:07

Mm hmm.

P1 34:12

whatever it is when I'm going to the office. Also, just making sure that I wake up in time, set my alarms and so on. My routine in the morning is different when I go in the office versus when I work from home. I don't often put on Cologne when I'm working from home. Sometimes I do but

Interviewer 34:20

Mm hmm.

P1 34:26

usually I don't. Just a different process. It's a completely different...

Interviewer 34:31

Mm hmm.

P1 34:34

It's a different morning and as a result, the nighttime before is also different. It just has different concerns.

Interviewer 34:39

Great. Yeah. OK that's great. And so can you describe how you typically move between these different workspaces during the week? So I know you mentioned your short commute, but you can also talk about your experience just within working from home as well. Transferring between the spaces during the week.

P1 35:01

I mean like how it makes me feel or what I do like mechanically.

Interviewer 35:04

Let's start with mechanically.

P1 35:07

Mechanically. Well, I drive to the office when I go in. I walk to my living room when I don't go in. So, Tuesday, Thursday generally are the days that I go.

Interviewer 35:13

Mm hmm.

P1 35:14

In some weeks it's not that simple. Like this week, I went in on Wednesday but. Generally, I go in Tuesday, Thursdays and on Monday, Wednesday and Friday I work from home or on Fridays usually I'll try to go work from a coffee shop for at least part of the day.

Interviewer 35:31

Oh, nice.

P1 35:31

Get out of the house...apartment.

Interviewer 35:33

Great. Definitely. And I guess now moving into how does this either commute or just general transition make you feel?

P1 35:47

When I go into the office, I can begin work more quickly because I have spent a larger amount of time physically transitioning. When I walk 15 feet and sit down after I got out of bed 5 minutes before, it is just a slower start because I haven't had

Interviewer 35:56

Right.

P1 36:04

as much time to process the change in the role that I am playing. So,

Interviewer 36:08

Definitely.

P1 36:11

it feels slower. As far as how much time it actually takes, probably similar because I don't have to drive there.

Interviewer 36:16

Mm hmm.

P1 36:18

And my drive is particularly short. It would be much faster if I had any meaningful commute.

Interviewer 36:22

Right. Yeah. So that actually kind of leads into my next question of do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?

P1 36:33

No because my commute is shorter than my walk from my desk to my car. But the desk from... my walk from my desk from my car does for sure.

Interviewer 36:42

Right. And I guess earlier you did speak in maybe previous roles, you did have a longer commute, would you say in those cases it had helped you in a way to disconnect from work or not really?

P1 36:54

I always felt frustrated when I had a longer commute. I mean, I had a 7 minute walk from my desk to my car and a 20 minute drive which was not a particularly fun distribution of events.

Interviewer 36:57

Mm hmm.

P1 37:04

I also wasn't like going fast or enjoyable driving.

Interviewer 37:04

Right.

P1 37:08

It was stop and go traffic on a congested highway. So that was not something that I really, no it didn't help me disconnect. If anything, it made me feel like I was stuck thinking about work when I didn't want to be.

Interviewer 37:20

Right. OK, great. And how does the movement between these different spaces during your work week influence your ability to disconnect from work would you say? Or does it?

P1 37:32

The movement in of itself doesn't really have a huge impact. It's more the fact that I'm moving as a result of having to go in or not go in. That's the bigger determining factor. The actual commute, again for me is 2 minutes.

Interviewer 37:41

Mhmm.

P1 37:44

It's not particularly long. The actual driving is often 30 seconds, so it's not, it's really not difficult for me. But in times when I did have a longer commute, it made things harder for sure.

Interviewer 37:49

Right. And do you feel at all like the mental switch of like working in different physical spaces, does that impact your ability to disconnect at all?

P1 38:10

Are you asking if having two separate places where I work makes the act disconnecting agnostic of which one I'm at more difficult, or if one is more difficult than the other.

Interviewer 38:21

I guess maybe if the act of like... the first one, the first thing that you said.

P1 38:28

OK. Maybe. Yeah. It's less of a routine. I have two separate routines, so that's different. Sometimes when I work from home, it feels as though I am not following the routine, despite the fact that working from home is more often what I do.

Interviewer 38:44

Yeah, definitely, right.

P1 38:45

It's less formalized of a process, and there's less oversight or less perceived oversight. So as a result, it feels less formal and official and rigid in its structure than the alternative.

Interviewer 38:50

Yeah. Right. Right. And I guess this question expands on that. So it's OK if you don't have anything else to say, but in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day?

P1 39:11

Depends on a lot of factors, but in general....uh. It is a faster, cleaner break of my day when I work in the office than when I work from home.

Interviewer 39:22

Mm hmm. Right. OK, great.

P1 39:27

I don't prefer it, but the break is faster and better.

Interviewer 39:32

Right, I get. So which one would you say then you prefer and why?

P1 39:36

Working from home, certainly.

Interviewer 39:39

Right.

P1 39:40

Because the fact of the matter is that the majority of white collar jobs similar to mine consists of very little actual active work time per week. As a result, feeling as though you have to seem as though you're working in front of other people for a lot of

Interviewer 39:47

Mm hmm.

P1 39:54

that week, which everyone pretends that they do, is a waste of time, a waste of mental effort and is unpleasant.

Interviewer 39:56

Right.

P1 40:01

What's much nicer is when all I have to worry about is whether or not I'm appearing online and meeting my deliverables. I would prefer to not even have to worry about appearing online at all and can just meet my deliverable, and there are those who do that. I don't personally feel comfortable doing that at this point of my career and this economic situation, but that's why I prefer it.

Interviewer 40:06

Right. Mm hmm. Right.

P1 40:16

Also, it's my space.

Interviewer 40:22

Mhmm.

P1 40:24

I can wear what I want. I can say what I want. If I want to scream because I'm frustrated, I'm only annoying my roommate not my coworkers. Well, I guess my roommate is my coworker, but. It's not 5 to 20 coworkers that I'm annoying, only one. He might scream. You know when I'm here, he might scream with me, so that's nice. But it really just depends.

Interviewer 40:40

Right, yeah.

P1 40:41

It's, it's definitely preferable for me.

Interviewer 40:44

Mm hmm. OK, great. And what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be like to successfully disconnect from work at the end of the day? So in like a perfect world, what would your week and setups look like?

P1 40:59

I would maybe go into the office once a week required and twice a week if I wish, and I would have a separate physical room only for working.

Interviewer 41:05

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P1 41:08

Those are the only things that I would change. I could go into the office one day a week now. I'd get some raised eyebrows, but no one would stop me.

Interviewer 41:15

Mm hmm.

P1 41:16

However...sorry I had to check my work phone.

Interviewer 41:19

No problem.

P1 41:22

The, the one thing that I would change is having an actual distinct physical. I mean, we kind of have a table that we sit at, but an actual room of the door, even if we were both working in it the same way, would I feel make things

Interviewer 41:30

Right.

P1 41:34

better for me.

Interviewer 41:36

Right. And can you expand just a little bit on that on why I guess having that designated space just for that would help?

P1 41:44

Because I felt an increase in my ability to focus on leisure when I no longer allowed myself to do any work in my room or do much work at all in my room or have anything related to work in my room, or much at all related to work

Interviewer 41:53

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P1 41:55

in my room. So I feel as though having that further delineation in my spaces would only help me.

Interviewer 42:03

Right, definitely. And lastly, 'cause, you just kind of brought up your phone again and you did say that that's the only real thing that you bring in work wise in your room to charge and stuff. Have you found yourself at all, like finding it more difficult to disconnect because it's in that space, or if it buzzes or stuff after work hours or not, really?

P1 42:25

My work phone is often dead, so no, it doesn't really bother me.

Interviewer 42:27

OK.

P1 42:28

But that's actually why I have to bring it in my room to charge it. I use a different charger than my, my actual phone.

Interviewer 42:31

Right, yeah.

P1 42:33

Otherwise, I would never bring it in here, so no. And when I do, I feel such spite and anger that I was even given a work phone in the 1st place that I refuse to check it until the next morning.

Interviewer 42:43

Yeah. OK, great. And then one other thing I did wanna ask you about was you mentioned earlier that maybe sometimes on Fridays you go to a coffee shop. So I guess like this third workspace that you work in. I guess maybe talking a little bit about how working in that space makes you feel and if that at all has impacted or shaped your ability to disconnect from work on those days?

P1 42:56

Mm hmm. It feels good, it feels low pressure and low stakes, which is often why I do it on

Fridays, because it's the day that has the lowest stakes as far as appearing online. Most people are off by two or three on Fridays, so.

Interviewer 43:12

Mm hmm. Right. Mm hmm.

P1 43:21

Maybe four, but not me. So I know, I go there not because it helps me disconnect from work, but more so because on a Friday I'm not doing much of any work at all.

Interviewer 43:29

Mm hmm.

P1 43:33

I'd rather do that at a coffee shop than at home.

Interviewer 43:34

OK. Right. OK, great. And I guess is there anything else that we did not cover that you would like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker that transitions between these different workspaces or anything else about your general ability to disconnect from work?

P1 43:52

I don't think so. I just like to reemphasize that I do not believe that going into the office is superior to working from home.

Interviewer 43:58

Mm hmm.

P1 43:59

I have never believed that. Despite my issues with the form of hybrid work that I partake in, and many people do, I still prefer it vastly to being full time in the office. Having done that before.

Interviewer 44:11

Right, yeah, definitely. OK, great. Well, thank you so much for your time. And do you have any final questions before we wrap up?

P1 44:20

Don't think so. Thank you.

Interviewer 44:21

All right.

Thank you.

P2 Interview Transcript

1h 46m 46s

Interviewer 0:05

OK. So hello, I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. And I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P2 0:48

Sounds great.

Interviewer 0:49

OK. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P2 0:53

No, I'm ready to go.

Interviewer 0:54

All right. Well, to start out, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P2 1:00

All right, so a little bit about myself. My name is [name extracted]. I study mechanical engineering for my undergrad. I'm doing the same for my master's right now. Employment history wise, I pretty much just interned at [company name extracted], I want to say like a year, no two years ago and then that led into my full time employment with them a year later. And that, I mean it's that's pretty much like the only relevant real experience I had. So I'm glad it worked out. Yeah, I'm, I'm...I would consider myself a hybrid, like a completely hybrid employee. Um I, I have the option of going in. I also have the option of being remote. Especially right now in my current role I have really no reason, like no compelling reason to go in, but I, I still do.

Interviewer 1:59

Mm hmm.

P2 2:00

So I mean for, for varying motives, but I enjoy the flexibility and yeah, no, I'm just ready to answer any other questions you have.

Interviewer 2:09

OK. Great. Yeah. So to clarify those internships that you did, were they remote, hybrid, or in person?

P2 2:16

OK. That was fully in person, fully in person. That really keyed me into that I wasn't perhaps a five days in the office kind of guy.

Interviewer 2:28

Mm hmm.

P2 2:29

'Cause it was again five days a week, 8 hours a day. 'Cause I was hourly too, so if I took lunch, you know that meant an extra hour. And I did not wanna do that extra hour anyway if I didn't have to. So yeah I, I like the current situation a lot better.

Interviewer 2:42

Right. Yeah. And can you just expand a little bit about your current role, maybe what you do? And also I know you touched upon your hybrid schedule and how it's a bit flexible, but maybe go into detail on the days that you go in, how that's decided etc.

P2 2:58

OK. So my current role, I'm working what's called performance engineering, which is basically for the gas turbine and we're, we're in a in the gas power business. So basically in my current role we analyze

Interviewer 3:12

Mm hmm.

P2 3:17

different customer requirements, customers that we've engaged with and we have a, we're moving forward with a with a, with a plant or, or perhaps a unit and we're trying to make sure that what we bid with them is matching to our latest understanding. So, is the performance gonna match? Is the efficiency gonna match what we offer them? If it isn't, you know that's someone else's problem. But I'm just here to make sure that it is and then taking all the different technologies that we have there from all the different teams, I try to bring it together and have an understanding of like, okay, here's where we're at right now versus where we were eight months ago whenever we signed the, the final, the final bid on that.

Interviewer 3:57

Mm hmm.

P2 3:59

In terms of my work schedule and the actual days that I come in, how that's decided. Up to this week it was I...I was, I had to come in on Tuesdays at least for four hours, usually, or sometimes

Mondays as well, depending on the week due to part of the, the program that I'm in there is an aspect of credit towards a master's degree and that part of that comes into me having to go in and attend lecture once a week on Tuesdays, usually 4 hours, 8 to 12, sometimes again, Monday sometimes

Interviewer 4:22

Mm hmm.

P2 4:39

a whole week, but usually it's just Tuesdays. And with that,

Interviewer 4:41

Mm hmm.

P2 4:45

previously, my last role I guess, this is a rotational program, so every six months I'm, we're changing teams. So my previous one, my team was also in a similar like hybrid situation as I am. They would come in only really Tuesdays and Thursdays which lined up with what I kinda wanted to do.

Interviewer 4:58

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 5:04

So I would just come in Tuesdays and Thursdays whenever they would be in. Sometimes early other days for specific reasons, but mostly the regular rhythm would be Tuesday, Thursday. Now and my current situation again I, I technically only have to come in Tuesdays,

Interviewer 5:21

Mm hmm.

P2 5:22

but I guess the the office environment is is pretty nice to come in and I kinda enjoy sometimes the different levels of focus that that come between working at home versus going to the office. Sometimes I can feel a little bit...breaks the, the, I guess the rhythm of like just being at home.

Interviewer 5:38

Mm hmm.

P2 5:46

I go to the office, it, it kind of...

Interviewer 5:46

Mm hmm.

P2 5:48

I can kind of flip a switch sometimes that it's a little harder to do at home. There's a little bit sometimes, a little bit easier for me to do that, but I do enjoy having that split of a day at home day at work, a day at home, a day at work, a day at home, and the flexibility that comes with that.

Interviewer 5:59

Mm hmm.

P2 6:08

But that's kind of what I'm at right now. That is subject to change wherever role I end up going to, but I'm pretty comfortable with what it's like, like this, this current setup.

Interviewer 6:18

Right. OK, great. And so now I'm going to share my screen. You can hopefully see that all right?

P2 6:30

Yeah, see it perfectly.

Interviewer 6:31

OK, great. So before we started the interview, I asked if you could please share a photo of your remote workspace and your in person workspace. So we'll start here with your remote workspace. And I'm just going to ask a little bit about your experience and some general questions, but focused on these images. So to start out, can you just tell me a bit about these two photos?

P2 6:55

Yeah that's, that's the desk I'm currently sitting at for this interview. It's just pretty much the, has my stuff there, my monitors, my computer, my chair and everything. I do have my work laptop as you can see closed to my left and that's pretty much where, there's no, ideally there would be some sort of an ideal situation space where I could have that open as well and I could have access to let's say three screens, but I, I make do with the two. When I'm working, I kind of just open the laptop and it takes the place of that second monitor. Although it, I can just put something on there.

Interviewer 7:33

Mm hmm.

P2 7:38

Pretty much the, the way it's set up is purposefully. I thought about when I was ,when I first started full time at [company name extracted], like in an engineering role having that work laptop, I figured I'm gonna work from home some days.

Interviewer 7:48

Mm hmm.

P2 7:52

I need to get that set up.

Interviewer 7:53

Mm hmm.

P2 7:55

And I was struggling with, figuring out a space where I could do it

Interviewer 8:00

Mm hmm.

P2 8:01

using the the peripherals that we were given, the mouse that we were given, the keyboard we were given. That did...that wasn't really comfortable for me.

Interviewer 8:05

Mm hmm.

P2 8:09

So I tried really hard to look for a solution and that's kind of that. There's two little central items, there's a red box and then a little black box on top of that

Interviewer 8:21

Mm hmm.

P2 8:21

which the the little black box has a like a button on it, and that switches all my peripherals to my workspace... uh pretty much my work laptop and then I swap the monitor screen. And then that's how I switch from like work to personal use.

Interviewer 8:40

Mm hmm.

P2 8:41

And it's, it's just as easy, the easiest way I could find, instead of having to unplug and replug every time I, I figured I'd just just, this is gonna be a switch. And then that way it can get to use the stuff I'm comfortable with day-to-day when I'm doing work, and I feel like that

Interviewer 8:53

Mm hmm.

P2 8:57

helps me be a lot more productive. Less downtime on changing. Makes the, makes the transition from working at home to going to the office a lot more seamless.

Interviewer 9:10

Mm hmm.

P2 9:11

Due to...I, I just, I don't really move anything. I just simply unplug one little hub, and disconnect the, the power cord and I can just take my laptop. Cause I've really struggled, just like, it personally just being able...doing all that it felt like it's such a hassle.

Interviewer 9:30

Mm hmm.

P2 9:30

So this is kind of why it's set up the way it is

Interviewer 9:34

Right.

P2 9:35

currently. Ideally it would change in the future, but that's, that's pretty much what I can say from that.

Interviewer 9:40

Nice. And is this its own designated space, like a room? Or is it within another space?

P2 9:47

So used to be my previous apartment, this was just in the same bedroom that I was, that I was sleeping in.

Interviewer 9:54

Mm hmm.

P2 9:55

Now it's, it's kind of weird to say. It's kind of like out in the open. It's not really it's own room. I thought about being its own room, but just I wanted to have like a room that I, in case we had guests over. I didn't wanna just be working out there at 8:00 AM, like, "oh, sorry to wake you up." So it's kind of, pretty much out of the open, which makes it a little bit easier to, to hop in and out.

Interviewer 10:17

Mm hmm.

P2 10:19

I just. I don't feel like I have to go in and out of a room.

Interviewer 10:23

Mm hmm.

P2 10:23

It does have like, you know, a little bit of it's downside of like it's just, I'm just out here kind of. It's like a little bit of a nook, next to the living room. So, it kinda doesn't feel too out of place

Interviewer 10:28

Right. Yeah.

P2 10:36

but yeah, it's, it's pretty different to what I'm used to. Usually I have it like a little bit more secluded area, but it, it seems to be working fine for now.

Interviewer 10:46

Yeah. OK, great. And how do you feel when working in this space?

P2 10:53

I feel again the, the advantages. I just feel really comfortable 'cause, it's, it's I'm at home. It's, it's...I'm using my stuff. It feels like I, I don't know.

Interviewer 11:02

Mm hmm.

P2 11:05

I'm used to everything that I'm using. I'm comfortable with all my peripherals, my headphones, my microphone. Like I don't have to kind of settle for the stuff that my workplace gives me, so that's definitely an advantage.

Interviewer 11:17

Mm hmm.

P2 11:19

And also I guess when there is when, when for example I'm taking my lunch break,

Interviewer 11:26

Mm hmm.

P2 11:27

I can swap back, one button, swap the monitor and then I can just, you know, put on something that I wanna watch or, or just swap to like my stuff, because technically they they can both be running at the same time.

Interviewer 11:38

Right.

P2 11:41

I have my laptop running and then I have my computer running.

Interviewer 11:41

OK.

P2 11:45

And they could both be on at the same time really. Like in theory, not that I've done it, you could have, you know, you know a sports game going on behind the laptop and then I mean, the main monitor can be the laptops and the I could have the laptop open and do doing work, but I could still kind of like see it. That's actually part of the reason why you see two pairs of headphones there.

Interviewer 12:07

Mm hmm.

P2 12:08

These pairs of headphones right here are the ones, the same ones that are connected to the microphone. So

Interviewer 12:13

Mm hmm.

P2 12:15

I if I wanna swap peripherals

Interviewer 12:18

Mm hmm.

P2 12:18

when I press the button, these ones swapped to whatever that's set to, but the other ones are always connected to the computer, my personal computer. So if I'm again not listening to, I mean I don't to get in a call or anything,

Interviewer 12:27

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 12:31

I just take these headphones off, put these other ones on and I can be listening to the game or whatever is going on in the second monitor while I'm working.

Interviewer 12:38

Right.

P2 12:39

So I've thought about that.

Interviewer 12:41

Right.

P2 12:42

That's part of the reason why it is set up the way it is because I, I'm like, OK I mean I'm, no one's calling me, I don't need to attend to anything, let me just put something on. It's, I'm at home. I'm comfortable.

Interviewer 12:50

No. Yeah, exactly.

P2 12:52

So that's, that's, that's a plus for me.

Interviewer 12:55

Yeah, definitely. And so now can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day in the space? Like a day that you work from home.

P2 13:03

OK day that I work from home. It's pretty similar to when I go into the office again, the only difference is I usually like to have something going on in the in the in my second monitor while I'm in work mode because it, it can be a little bit...there can be some downtime and I can just

Interviewer 13:16

Mm hmm.

P2 13:23

be like, oh, let's see what's going on there. So I'll just usually start by setting, putting something there, and then I just open up my work laptop, swap everything, like press a button, swap the monitor, and then

Interviewer 13:26

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 13:35

just check my e-mail, do all that stuff. And then I guess a little bit different from going into the office is I don't feel

Interviewer 13:38

Mm hmm.

P2 13:44

the need to take, like a dedicated lunch break like I do at work. At work, I definitely feel like I like the the exhaustion a little bit building up, builds up a little bit faster to the point that I'm like OK twelve hits I need to get up just completely get off

Interviewer 14:02

Yeah.

P2 14:04

that work. Disconnect. Here

Interviewer 14:05

Right.

P2 14:06

I'm just, I'm fine with just working through lunch or like eating at my desk while I'm working and not really taking, like a lunch break.

Interviewer 14:16

Mm hmm.

P2 14:16

I don't eat like, I eat kind of like a different hours. I don't like stick my stuff to oh OK, I need to eat breakfast before I go into work, I can just see breakfast at 9 or 10 and then lunch moves.

Interviewer 14:26

Right.

P2 14:27

Everything moves.

Interviewer 14:29

Mm hmm.

P2 14:30

Much more easier, easy to take the like meetings in here than at work, because again I don't have to be like, Oh my God, I'm taking my meeting while I'm eating. Or like during my lunch hour it's ...it feels a little bit...everything feels a little bit more easy to do, especially again in the morning meetings. 8:00 AM meetings. I can do those here

Interviewer 14:48

Yeah, right.

P2 14:48

no problem versus getting ready and going into the office.

Interviewer 14:52

Definitely.

P2 14:53

And then. Yeah, I don't know. I, it's even the fact that it's here and it's easy. Not, not that I want to do it but I, I did it at the beginning. I felt really compelled to work past like in the normal hours, just because it's there.

Interviewer 15:02

Mm hmm.

P2 15:07

I mean, it's not. It's not a hassle. I can just do it like in two seconds so. I do purposely, I don't have it here with me because I moved it, but my work phone I would have it facing upwards so I could see if someone's messaging me from a different time zone. Perhaps they're still working, or they need something from me after my hours and I would very easily just be like, OK, I can do it. (click noise) Button. Open. I'm done.

Interviewer 15:28

Yeah.

P2 15:29

I'm there, you know. So I've kind of set some boundaries for myself of like, OK.

Interviewer 15:30

Mm hmm.

P2 15:35

I'm not flipping this phone. It is staying facing down.

Interviewer 15:38

Mm hmm.

P2 15:38

You know, there's the, it's, it's...I'm not working right now. Unless I, I'm expecting something that I need to do again.

Interviewer 15:42

Right. Right.

P2 15:46

It makes it easier to like, keep finishing a project that I need to finish.

Interviewer 15:51

Yeah.

P2 15:51

I can just keep going until it's done if I, if I need to, and then I don't have to worry about like, OK everyone's leaving

Interviewer 15:59

Yeah.

P2 15:59

the office. I'm gonna be the last person in the office. You know, last person to leave. It's gonna be a little depressing. Drive home solo.

Interviewer 16:04

Mm hmm.

P2 16:07

I'm gonna be hungry, you know? So that's...it.

Interviewer 16:09

Right.

P2 16:10

Just it's...it changes how I work a little bit like that.

Interviewer 16:13

Yeah, definitely. And so how do you usually signal the end of a workday when working in this space specifically?

P2 16:23

See that's, that's where that comes in. It's a little bit hard for me to just be like, OK, I'm done.

Interviewer 16:26

Mm.

P2 16:28

Usually at work. You know everyone starts leaving like that. That's usually like, I don't know like somewhere around 4. And I'm like, OK.

Interviewer 16:35

Yeah.

P2 16:35

It's comfortable like, everyone's leaving. I'm just, I'm gonna go unless I have something up. Here it's like, OK, I guess I get to pick when that's this moment happens. I don't just follow the, you know, the mass of people that are like, OK, leaving, leaving. I'm like, OK, it's fine to leave.

Interviewer 16:50

Right.

P2 16:51

I just kinda figure if I don't have anything pending and I'm, I'm compelled to just stick around until 5:00.

Interviewer 16:55

Mm hmm.

P2 16:58

'Cause I do know that maybe other people are working remote also have the same like schedules. Its a little bit different.

Interviewer 16:59

Mm hmm.

P2 17:06

I don't...

Interviewer 17:07

Right.

P2 17:07

I mean, my team's not in the office with me so it, it might be a little bit different. I do watch and see if my boss is...needed me to do something and I try to get it done, but really it's just kind of my, up to me.

Interviewer 17:21

Right.

P2 17:22

I, I try to not stick around past five if possible, so some that...I try to cut it off just for my sake around 4:30 and I just...I mean, it's easy

Interviewer 17:29

Mm hmm.

P2 17:31

I just close the laptop and stop my monitor and I'm done.

Interviewer 17:36

Nice. And would you say that's effective for you like an effective end to your day in that space?

P2 17:43

I do. I, I want to say yes.

Interviewer 17:47

Mm hmm.

P2 17:47

I don't really have an issue with the transition from working to personal time, most of the time. Unless again with the grad school classes, it's a little bit muddy than if it were just my, my regular work.

Interviewer 17:50

Mm hmm.

P2 18:05

I, I do feel like a little bit if I there's something like a project that I'm and I need to finish by the end of the week and it's getting there, I will...

Interviewer 18:13

Mm hmm.

P2 18:14

It'll take me a minute to just like, I'll be out...It'll be personal time, monitor will be swapped, but I'll just kind of like not be able to commit to doing anything because I, I feel like a little bit like I like...I can't like I'm not fully 100% like OK

Interviewer 18:29

Yeah.

P2 18:30

relax. Like I feel like something in the back of my mind is like still nagging at me.

Interviewer 18:34

Definitely.

P2 18:34

And sometimes that happens and that prevents me from like, OK, I wanna watch a show. Like, oh, I don't know if I am ready for that whole commitment. I need to.

Interviewer 18:36

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P2 18:42

Like...so.

Interviewer 18:42

Right.

P2 18:43

Sometimes I'll...that's what I'm just...I just swap like that. That, that happened to me.

Interviewer 18:47

Mm hmm.

P2 18:49

It's a little bit easier now that I don't have grad school just yet. Starting soon again for the summer classes. But yeah, I think it once I'm completely done with it, it's gonna be a little bit easier. But just having that extra you know out of work hours of responsibility always kind of like has a little nagging in the back of my head that makes it not super easy for me to just be like, OK,

Interviewer 19:05

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 19:11

let's go and jump into this new show.

Interviewer 19:13

Yeah.

P2 19:13

A 20, like 34 episodes, let's go. It's just like, oh, hold on commitment, I don't know.

Interviewer 19:18

Yeah, no. Yeah, great. And so how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday in this space in particular?

P2 19:29

Yeah, it's different than when I'm at work. For sure. I can tell always.

Interviewer 19:36

Mm hmm.

P2 19:36

Work after I'm done with work, I'm like, oh yeah I'm glad to go home, like, oh, I'm home finally. Sit down. Relax. Here I'm just like, OK, I'm done. I, I'm like, OK, I guess I don't have to feel bad about having the game going on the second monitor.

Interviewer 19:50

Yeah.

P2 19:51

I can just...I wap my headset and then I'm just like, OK.

Interviewer 19:54

Mm hmm.

P2 19:55

I'm...guilt over.

Interviewer 19:58

Right.

P2 19:58

But yeah, no it's, it's usually not a, not a very strong feeling just because it's already kind of...both kinda live already from me.

Interviewer 20:09

Mm hmm.

P2 20:09

I don't feel as strongly about ending the work day as if when I'm at work and leaving 'cause, I'm already here, so I get like I have like most of the advantages of being here already, at home.

Interviewer 20:17

Mm hmm.

Right.

P2 20:22

So it's, it's less of like, oh, I'm looking forward to the end of the workday and more like, oh I, I guess I'm done. It's, it's 5:00 PM. I'm done. So um.

Interviewer 20:30

Right.

P2 20:31

That is definitely a, a difference there that I've noticed.

Interviewer 20:36

OK, great. And I guess you already kind of described the end of your workday in this space. You know how you kind of switch everything off, but maybe expanding a little bit more about how exactly you transition from work mode into your personal time or if it's easier to talk about how you just like start to mentally disconnect from work?

P2 20:58

Well, I mean, you have that fourth picture and I could speak a little bit about that. My couch is like

Interviewer 21:04

Mm hmm.

P2 21:07

less than six feet away, I want to say maybe like a little bit, maybe a little bit, maybe like right around six feet.

Interviewer 21:08

Uh huh. Right.

P2 21:13

I just kinda...usually like if it's been a long day I'm kinda tired.

Interviewer 21:16

Mm hmm.

P2 21:19

Again, I don't have the energy to just keep sitting at my desk for you know. I've already done this for like, like a while, though I do get up often

Interviewer 21:21

Yeah.

P2 21:26

if I can. I'll get up and then I'll lay on the couch and that like left leg like kind of just like...it's almost like laying in bed.

Interviewer 21:33

Uh huh. Right.

P2 21:37

And then I'll just you know, I'll just wind down there a little bit and then maybe we'll put something on the TV.

Interviewer 21:41

Mm hmm.

P2 21:43

And then that's kinda like I feel a little bit more comfortable watching something there than just watching something here. Like that

Interviewer 21:51

Definitely.

P2 21:51

commitment is a little easier when I'm, when I do that walk, when I do it over there, I'm like, OK. I'm like it's because it feels like a little bit somewhere separate, and I'm not just still sitting here at my desk.

Interviewer 22:01

Yeah.

P2 22:03

And then yeah the, in terms of like I mean routines that that I usually I find myself doing that even like I'd say sometimes I usually I don't take a lunch break. But if I do wanna take the time, I will just stand up and just I'll, I'll just go and lay on the couch for a little bit, pull out my phone and just like

Interviewer 22:22

Mm hmm.

P2 22:24

do some social media browsing or just like open up something. I check my messages or whatever and then that feels like a little like a pretty nice disconnect from sitting here, even though I can just swap easily. I don't...

Interviewer 22:35

OK.

P2 22:38

I, I sometimes just go and do that because I do feel a little fatigued and just like sitting here and like staring at the screen all day.

Interviewer 22:41

Great.

P2 22:45

I just wanna get my eyes somewhere. Somewhere where I get a little bit less artificial light in them. So that's kinda nice, but yeah, it's...It, in terms of mentality like I don't know I'm I, I guess I'm pretty like I'm, I don't...like a difference to work...in work you can, I can feel when I'm at work like people are like getting off and like you're chatting and then like it,

Interviewer 22:59

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 23:14

not really getting a lot of work done because it's like everyone's getting ready to leave. Some people are already leaving and you're like catching them going and then you're

Interviewer 23:17

Right.

P2 23:19

talking to them. Here is more like

Interviewer 23:20

Mm hmm.

P2 23:23

abrupt. It's just like no, there's no...Like I, I don't...You don't hear like the buzz of like, people really don't walking away or grabbing their stuff.

Interviewer 23:29

Right.

P2 23:30

So that's there's no like that signal to tell you like, OK, you should also start chilling and then getting ready to go.

Interviewer 23:35

Right.

P2 23:36

It's more like, I mean, there's none of that here, so I'm just kinda like, it's like, oh, I guess the work day is kind of over. No one's replying to my messages. No emails are getting sent back to me. Everyone's kind of slowly going offline. Like I guess it's over. So then I just stop so.

Interviewer 23:55

Yeah.

P2 23:55

It's, there is a difference there for me.

Interviewer 23:57

Right, OK, great. And what objects or arrangements, if any, do you try to utilize in this space to kind of maintain that separation between your work and home life, especially 'cause you just mentioned that the couch is right there, so it's kind of like both spaces combining.

P2 24:14

Yeah, I mean I do feel like again when I, when I changed headphones from like my work ones like to my personal ones like that, that is a change for me.

Interviewer 24:25

Right.

P2 24:26

Like I'll definitely feel like, OK, I'm I'm no longer kind of doing work stuff. Like now I'm, I'm kind of in home mode.

Interviewer 24:32

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 24:36

Yeah, usually I'm I have a blanket over on the couch.

Interviewer 24:38

Mm hmm.

P2 24:41

I'll simply just take that, like, grab myself in that blanket and then that's like I'm like really comfy there. And I'm like, OK.

Interviewer 24:44

Mm hmm.

P2 24:46

And this is no, no work stuff over here. So that really helps me out.

Interviewer 24:49

Right. OK, great.

P2 24:52

Sometimes um...It it you know, I have my pets come around and usually they don't, they don't really interact with me that often when I'm working, but when I'm on the couch and I have the cozy blanket on top or nearby, they like to go and kneed on the blanket so that it's kinda like I'm sort of, I'm petting my cat, so that feels

Interviewer 25:03

Mmhm. Yeah. Right.

P2 25:12

like a, a nice like a, like you know, I don't I...this doesn't happen in the office. This doesn't happen even when I'm here. So this, this kind of behavior only really happens when I'm not working like at all.

Interviewer 25:17

Yeah.

P2 25:22

I'm like disconnected. So that kinda, I guess makes.

Interviewer 25:23

Right.

P2 25:25

me feel like a lot more relaxed, 'cause I'm like petting the cat and stuff and it's...So I'd say those are pretty big things that that I do or that that I notice when, when I'm like disconnected from, from the workspace even if it's not too far away like location wise.

Interviewer 25:27

Right. Uh huh. Great. Yeah.

P2 25:42

Geographically, it's not that far away like.

Interviewer 25:44

Uh huh.

P2 25:46

But it yeah, I mean, I'm still, like, walking up, walking like a two or three steps popping down. So that's that...there's like a little bit of a threshold there that helps with that.

Interviewer 25:58

Right. OK, great. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P2 26:09

Yeah. I mean there are...There's somewhat like the level of like a little bit of a distraction with the fact that I'm at home and then sometimes like, if there's stuff that needs to happen at home, it's a plus and a minus. It's a plus because I can deal with it. It's a

Interviewer 26:18

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 26:26

minus because like I guess in terms of work, I'm like, OK. I'm getting up and I'm, I'm putting my laundry away or I'm like, starting the washing machine or oh, someone needs to come in and like, check the fire, the fire alarm like

Interviewer 26:37

Right.

P2 26:37

thingy and I'm like letting them in asking them stuff. So there's that level of like, if stuff is happening around me. Sometimes the vacuum will, will turn on a little.

Interviewer 26:45

Mm hmm.

P2 26:47

We have a little Roomba. It'll turn on.

Interviewer 26:49

Yeah.

P2 26:49

It'll start hitting my desk chair and I have to,

Interviewer 26:52

Yeah.

P2 26:53

I turn it off. And the I have to be like OK hold on what was I doing. So there are, there are like a little...I mean the cats have run around and then they're biting each other and I'm like hold on stop, you know.

Interviewer 26:57

Yeah. Right.

P2 27:04

Or sometimes they cry for I mean for food. So there is like...sounds like a lot, but I mean it's usually not that like chaotic. It's just like once something will maybe come up

Interviewer 27:14

Right.

P2 27:16

that does add like a separation that you know that can't happen in an office. Not to say that the office doesn't have it's own set of distractions. Just distractions aren't the Roomba and there's not two, like a pair of cats running around.

Interviewer 27:23

Right. Right.

P2 27:30

But yeah, it's it's mainly that. I do feel like I'm um...It's easier for me to be like...I mean, sometimes at work when you truly don't have anything to do and your work, waiting just for someone to get back to you, I can just flip the switch and I'm doing like I'm doing my own stuff.

Interviewer 27:45

Mm hmm.

P2 27:50

I'll just be waiting to see if an e-mail comes in.

Interviewer 27:50

Yeah. Right.

P2 27:54

So I guess in terms of like, oh, I'm like, I mean technically I guess I could be reading some, you know old documentation you know and doing, using my time that way. But I mean, I think in terms of mental energy, that's kind of detrimental cause...OK, I could...there...I feel...I believe there is a limit amount of good work that you can do in a day and

Interviewer 28:05

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 28:18

usually I'm fine with, you know, using it for doing work stuff, but if there's nothing for me to do, I'm assuming that that bit of like work juice that I still have, I'm not gonna go and like, look at random e-mail like general emails that don't do any

Interviewer 28:25

Mm hmm.

P2 28:35

for me. I'm gonna...I'm saving that little bit of juice that I have for, like anything that comes in and I need to like, OK.

Interviewer 28:38

Yeah.

P2 28:41

This is the stuff that I actually care about, that I actually need to do.

Interviewer 28:41

Yeah.

P2 28:44

I'll do it.

Interviewer 28:45

All right.

P2 28:45

So until that happens or the work day is over I'm, I might just be able, I might just be doing my own stuff which I don't know.

Interviewer 28:51

Right.

P2 28:51

It might be a positive, might be a negative depending on who you ask. But I, I think that's kind of my take on it.

Interviewer 28:56

Yeah. No, that's great. OK, awesome. So now we can move on. Next we have...um. I asked for an image or a sketch of your in office workspace and you provided this sketch here. So similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about this photo or sketch?

P2 29:12

OK. So this is a semi, it is like semi close off cube. So at the top you can kind of see is it's got three like, 3 walls and like 1/2 wall so it's there's no like door you can just walk in freely.

Interviewer 29:28

Mm hmm.

P2 29:31

The desk chair, important. I try to make it as realistic to what it is. It's a half little half back chair. Doesn't have the full back rest.

Interviewer 29:36

Mm hmm.

P2 29:40

I can't do this. [stretches back] I cut off my lower back.

Interviewer 29:41

Gotcha.

P2 29:44

So clearly not meant to be sat down for 8 hours a day

Interviewer 29:47

Right.

P2 29:49

particularly. The desk is quite narrow.

Interviewer 29:53

Mm hmm.

P2 29:54

In terms of it, it's, it's not like in I...everything fits there, but it's not particularly big. You have, you know, there's like a little mouse pad on the right. The, my work headphones are kind of they're connected to that monitor. There's my laptop right in the middle. There's like a, there's like a there's like a two level kinda situation. And then the second level is I have the two work monitors and then usually given that we need to use our work phones usually for the two factor kind of stuff, I'll keep it facing up on that

Interviewer 30:24

Right.

P2 30:26

left side in case something goes up, I need to quickly bring it up and authenticate.

Interviewer 30:27

Mm hmm.

P2 30:31

So it's, it's pretty,

Interviewer 30:32

Right.

P2 30:33

it's pretty, there's not a lot of you know personality there. I have a little tiny calendar that I put, put on there and then that's kinda like in.

Interviewer 30:40

Uh huh.

P2 30:41

the middle between the two desks. But it's pretty impersonal.

Interviewer 30:42

Mm hmm.

P2 30:44

I'll put my backpack in the, the top. You can kind of see that.

Interviewer 30:44

Mm hmm.

P2 30:47

That kind of black spot, that's like my work backpack where I lay it down.

Interviewer 30:52

Right.

P2 30:53

And then there's, there is...It's, it's not tiny, it's not super big. It's kind of cuby. Yeah but it's, it's pretty sparse.

Interviewer 30:59

Mm hmm. Right. OK. And then how do you feel when working in this space?

P2 31:09

I don't hate it. It's better than other spaces. I kinda like the...It's kinda private, semi private.

Interviewer 31:11

Mm hmm.

P2 31:18

I appreciate that. Not a big fan of open floor spaces

Interviewer 31:20

Mm hmm.

P2 31:23

for offices and then I used to be in one last rotation. And again, it's not that I hated it.

Interviewer 31:29

Mm hmm.

P2 31:32

It was fine. The desk was nicer and the, there was a lot more natural light or not, not natural, but a lot more like lighting on it.

Interviewer 31:40

Right.

P2 31:40

But I do like my privacy. I don't...I enjoy not having...I guess that is a plus of being at home, but here it's kinda similar.

Interviewer 31:47

Yeah.

P2 31:49

It does have a benefit that it's a little bit private, so I don't have to worry about someone looking at if I'm looking in my e-mail or something else on my monitors. So I enjoy that.

Interviewer 31:52

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 32:01

It feels nice to have the three, the three monitors, that is kind of an advantage, like just nature of the work I do,

Interviewer 32:04

Mm hmm.

P2 32:06

it's easier to just have stuff separately that I can see. Although the work laptop isn't exactly super spacious in terms of screen size.

Interviewer 32:12

Right.

P2 32:17

But I feel like I can do pretty, pretty good work here. All things considered. I, it's not super comfortable. I do feel fatigued at the end of the day. Might be a mixture of workspace, the chair not being super great and then I guess the nature of how I like to work. I, I probably should get up more often than I do at work.

Interviewer 32:40

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 32:43

I kinda just like sit down and, and work the whole time and I take less...I feel like I take sometimes less like standing breaks like that than I do at home. But the breaks that I do take at work, they're way longer than I do at home.

Interviewer 32:57

Yeah.

P2 32:58

Usually someone will catch you in a conversation and then it's like... it's kinda like you're for 30 minutes talking to someone and you can't press the skip button.

Interviewer 33:08

Right.

P2 33:08

And you kinda, you try to match it, but they don't, you know it's not coming through. They're not getting the message, so you're kinda like, oh, I gotta go back to my desk. So, but apart from that it's, it's one of the better ones that I've worked at.

Interviewer 33:12

Right. Yeah.

P2 33:25

It destroys the one that I was at in my internship. Just is a, is a step up from the one I had in my previous rotation. But yeah, it, it's all right. It does its job mostly.

Interviewer 33:39

Yeah. And I wanted to actually ask about a point that you brought up where you you said that you kind of like that it's a bit more private, not super, but a bit more private. Just 'cause you don't have people then looking over and stuff to see what you're looking at. Like you said earlier, sometimes you just don't have a lot of work or just are looking at other things.

P2 33:59

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 34:00

Does that at all, do you think tie into how people perceive you? Do you feel that it's a part of that, or how would you describe that feeling?

P2 34:11

Umm. I agree it is somewhat perception. Of what other people's perceive like look and...and 'cause...they will form an opinion. People can form, and I know I've done it unconsciously sometimes just from looking at what someone else is looking, you can kind of get a like a glimpse of the brain, especially when

Interviewer 34:15

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 34:32

they're, they're not exactly aware that you're looking at them. That's kinda the best time.

Interviewer 34:35

Mm hmm.

P2 34:36

You're like, oh, they don't know I'm looking so they're not have to pretend so I can see

Interviewer 34:38

Right, yeah.

P2 34:40

kind of a glimpse into, into their mind. And I kinda...I like to be not... not out of...not purposefully, but I do like to keep my privacy into my brain into the way I think somewhat.

Interviewer 34:52

Right. Yeah.

P2 34:56

I don't know if it's like a vulnerability thing or it's just like I don't...especially because of work. It's I don't I, I don't want to give someone a reason to get a, a wrong idea of who I am or, or some other thing like that.

Interviewer 35:09

Right.

P2 35:12

That is definitely a factor. I mean, the more I think about it, the more that makes sense to me.

Interviewer 35:17

Mm hmm.

P2 35:18

And it it does...It does lead a lot for me, the fact that again you trying to build a, an image of who you are, that it leads a lot more times, like when it it's not this private when it hasn't been this private, I do feel more exhausted because I have to like, OK, no...Like depending on the work environment and the coworkers around you, that changes.

Interviewer 35:34

Mm hmm.

P2 35:42

That has changed for me as I've gotten to know people.

Interviewer 35:42

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 35:46

People sometimes are more relaxed about it, but some people have a very strong perception of what work look should look like, not necessarily correlates to what work is, but what it should look like.

Interviewer 35:48

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 35:57

And that leads to maybe me trying to appear that I'm doing more stuff than I actually am, which ends up kind of tiring me out, which I believe just ends up hurting my work production in the end because I'm having to

Interviewer 36:02

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 36:12

pour over meaningless documents that I don't really care about. It's not gonna penetrate my brain because

Interviewer 36:16

Mm hmm.

P2 36:17

I'm out of juice.

Interviewer 36:19

Mm hmm.

P2 36:19

So and then I just end up really tired. Versus when it's a little bit more private I can just, I can take the moment and just like back kinda just like not actively like focus because I don't think you can actively focus 8 hours a day. It's just...

Interviewer 36:23

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 36:36

My perception is it's, just it's impossible.

Interviewer 36:37

Yeah.

P2 36:39

You need to.

Interviewer 36:40

Mm hmm.

P2 36:40

Sometimes your brain needs to take a minute, so I'd like to...the privacy part of it. The privacy, as the British people say.

Interviewer 36:46

Mm hmm.

P2 36:50

Just a part of it where you can just, you know, feel comfy...the the word, is the word is comfortable 'cause you can feel comfortable not having the privacy. I'm, I guess maybe just the way I am and knowing the people that I know and if you knew more people or maybe if your

work role were higher or whatever, that level of comfortable like would change. Like I don't know if I'm like

Interviewer 37:03

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 37:13

8 levels above everyone around me you know, I feel like I it'd be a lot easier for me to be comfortable to just, you know, not have to

Interviewer 37:15

Yeah.

P2 37:20

appear fully focused 24/7 and I'd be OK with maybe a little bit less privacy. But I guess in the position I'm in now, and I mean the fact that maybe I'm not comfortable with everyone around me,

Interviewer 37:23

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 37:32

usually, not, not where I'm at now, but in the past, you know, I would I to more of an effort of like trying to appear that way and maybe in it and I'm not comfortable

Interviewer 37:41

Right.

P2 37:43

so I'm like, OK, I wanna have privacy.

Interviewer 37:45

Right, yeah.

P2 37:45

So I guess that's kinda where I where I'm at with this.

Interviewer 37:50

Yeah, definitely. And can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day in this space? So I guess just walk me through a day where you go into office.

P2 37:58

OK. So I pull...I have my backpack with me. Usually have a jacket on just in case it's raining.

Interviewer 38:05

Mm hmm.

P2 38:05

I'll take it off. There's a little bit of a...there's, these are like kind of back-to-back to back little cubes. And this one has the, the, the half wall and that's completely solid, which is nice.

Interviewer 38:18

Right.

P2 38:19

The one behind me doesn't have 1/2 wall but has kind of like a graded,

Interviewer 38:23

Mm hmm.

P2 38:23

graded little wall section so you can have we have a little, well, I have a little hook that I brought and I hang my jacket on there. And then I take my backpack off and I put it there in that always, usually always in that same spot

Interviewer 38:29

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 38:41

next, like right behind the the little half wall. I open up and I bring out my laptop. Put it on the in the right in the, in that spot where it's at in the middle, and then I connect both monitors. They're hub monitors, so that's the only things that I need to connect to it. It can charge through that too. And then I bring it up and I'm kind of there.

Interviewer 38:56

Right.

P2 39:00

That's when I'm, that's that's usually when I walk in here. Sometimes I'll when I'm a little bit early

Interviewer 39:04

Mm hmm.

P2 39:07

I will go and get coffee and then I come back down with that. I usually if there's other people that are already in, I'll, I'll stop by and say quick Hello. That a little bit, just like whatever my friends are, are talking or or something happen or whatever. I'll do a little, a little chat with them, maybe a minute or two. And then and then this will start.

Interviewer 39:29

Mm hmm.

P2 39:30

So, but usually that's this is like the routine when I'm walking into this like, right into this cube, that's usually what I do.

Interviewer 39:31

Right.

P2 39:39

And then I just check my e-mail, check my any teams messages that are up there and then I kinda

Interviewer 39:42

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

t

P2 39:47

Srt picking up like back where I left off, which is kinda the, the, the hard thing. Sometimes at work if you're getting a really long pause

Interviewer 39:57

Mm hmm.

P2 39:58

starting to pick up steam again, like being like, OK. It's kinda you're finding yourself like, what was I doing? What was I, who was I talking to? So it's kind of like organizing my thoughts like that.

Interviewer 40:05

Right.

P2 40:08

Sometimes I'll have notes of what I was doing before, and I'll read those. Sometimes I remember right away, but sometimes I'll be like, OK, let me. I know I have two tasks I'm working on.

Interviewer 40:11

Mm hmm.

P2 40:17

So what was I on? So that's kinda like how I start ramping up.

Interviewer 40:22

Right. OK, great. And then how do you signal the end of a workday in this when working in this space?

P2 40:29

Alright so. I'll, pretty much for me in this space. I'm usually not the first, the very first person to leave, and that is easy 'cause you still see maybe one or two, a couple people leave and then that that like sends me the, the signal of OK, people are starting to

Interviewer 40:35

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 40:49

leave. Usually it's like around fourish.

Interviewer 40:50

Mm hmm.

P2 40:53

And then I guess the first thing I do is I. I close my laptop. I put in the backpack and I got my jacket and then I maybe like, say a word or two to, to the other people that are still in there.

Interviewer 41:04

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 41:09

Someone, maybe, maybe someone will come in before I do that and they'll ask me, "Hey, Are you ready to go?" And then I'll, I'll be like if I have something to do I'll, I'll say "no I have something to do." Otherwise, I'll be like, "yeah, yeah, I can go." And then we just...I'll do the same thing and start to get ready. But yeah, it's usually that. We do have a building that, that we're at right now...

Interviewer 41:24

Mm hmm.

P2 41:31

there's a kind of a, a traditional... How do I say this, like a ring? Like, imagine if you were in high school sometimes, like every hour it rings like "Ding Dong Ding Dong." You know like, kinda like a Jingle.

Interviewer 41:42

Mm hmm. Yeah. Right.

P2 41:49

So I'll hear that Jingle and I'll be like, OK. It's 4. This is the last Jingle I'm gonna hear because I'm not hearing the fifth one.

Interviewer 41:55

Right.

P2 41:55

I mean the 5:00 PM one. So that's usually like first, first indication that it's starting. I hear the big Jingle and then and I and I look at the the time and it's 4.

Interviewer 42:02

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 42:05

Or like if 3:59 or whatever. It's not, you know, sometimes it is not right in the money and then I'll be like OK. Heard that. And then I'm like, OK, in my mind, I'm already expecting people to start getting ready to go whatever. Usually in the next 10-15 minutes, some people will start getting ready to go or have

Interviewer 42:09

Yeah.

P2 42:19

already gone and then I'll, either someone will stop by then, or not, or they'll leave. And then I'll be like, OK,

Interviewer 42:20

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 42:26

it's like around 4:25, 4:30, whatever.

Interviewer 42:29

Yeah.

P2 42:29

I don't see anything coming up and then I just do my pack my stuff away. Grab my, grab my jacket and, and just head out.

Interviewer 42:37

Yeah. Yeah. OK, great. And how effective would you say that is for you those kind of like cues from either the people or the jingling of the chime?

P2 42:49

I, I mean, it's pretty, it's pretty good 'cause I at some point I just kind of like, I kind of expect it, like I'm like it's 3:50 it's 3:50. Last I checked for example, last I checked the, the clock its like 3 forty something, 3:50 and I'm you know in the typical

Interviewer 42:52

Uh huh.

P2 43:06

office conversation that you know you're just talking to people like 'cause and no one's really doing anything and the end of the workdays approaching. And then you hear that jingling, and you're like, OK

Interviewer 43:08

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 43:14

it's four now. I don't even have to look at my watch.

Interviewer 43:16

Right.

P2 43:16

I know it's 4. I start grabbing my stuff and I'm just like I have my stuff ready to go and I'll just keep talking to people and then eventually, you know, conversation as we go. And I think that that's pretty...It's, it's a pretty like good indicator for me because cause I feel like, OK, like someone something inside of me just kind of relaxes at that point. I'm like, OK, it's

Interviewer 43:35

Yeah.

P2 43:36

time to go. No more pressure to, to, you know keep completing your task or whatever. Everyone seems like they're, it's winding down. Kinda like the the, the energy seems like you know a little bit muted versus like you know in the morning energy's like usually kind of higher. Everyone's

Interviewer 43:45

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 43:52

coffeed up, you know, got that that caffeine in them that, that something's happening.

Interviewer 43:53

Mmhm.

P2 43:57

Meetings are happening. People are moving. Usually at this point, you know, everyone's moving a little bit slower, going back to their car, going back down the elevator so that that kinda,

Interviewer 44:00

Right. Yeah.

P2 44:07

that kind of does help with that 'cause I'm it helps me just be like, OK, no more like lock in.

Interviewer 44:10

Yeah, definitely.

P2 44:12

I can just take it easy.

Interviewer 44:13

Yeah, yeah. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday, maybe particularly on days that you go into office?

P2 44:23

Ah, just relief usually. Like oh OK, nice

Interviewer 44:24

Yeah.

P2 44:27

I can just go home. Sometimes like I'll be really tired and I know I have stuff to do, but I was like I did not think it was gonna take this much out of me today and I'll, I'll kind of be like, no, I still gotta

Interviewer 44:34

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 44:41

you know, stop by the grocery store, put gas in the car. Sometimes I'll just be like, OK, I mean, at least I can just go home and lay on the couch and then go back to that.

Interviewer 44:51

Right, definitely.

P2 44:54

More often, usually when I come in from the office, I'll just go straight there and I'll just be like, ugh at least I'm home.

Interviewer 44:57

Mm hmm. Yeah, definitely.

P2 45:03

Yeah. So it's usually that. I mean, sometimes I'll feel like, oh, it's more rare, it's like "OK, I, it's, that was good. That was like a good, a good day, a productive day." But usually I'm just like kind of tired.

Interviewer 45:12

Mmhm.

P2 45:16

Maybe that's just the personality that I am.

Interviewer 45:16

Yeah.

P2 45:17

I, my, my battery it drains faster.

Interviewer 45:18

Mm hmm.

P2 45:22

So I don't know, it's usually... Yeah, usually that kind of feeling. Not, not to rag on anyone.

Interviewer 45:25

Yeah.

P2 45:29

That's just who I am.

Interviewer 45:30

Yeah. No, definitely. And so I guess you know, you already kind of described the end of your workday. So can you expand a little bit more on how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space? The days that you go into office.

P2 45:46

OK. How do I go from personal to work mode when I go into the office?

Interviewer 45:49

How do you go from work mode to personal time, but on the days that you go into office? Yeah.

P2 45:52

Oh, when I'm at the office, OK. OK. Yeah. So I mean usually it does like once jackets on, I have my backpack on.

Interviewer 46:01

Mm hmm.

P2 46:04

I'm pulling out my phone, my personal phone. Working one, work phone you know that's, that's staying in my pocket.

Interviewer 46:05

Mmhm.

P2 46:10

Its not coming out until I get home and put it down. So I'm looking at my messages and seeing if I missed anything from anyone you know. I'll check,

Interviewer 46:13

Right.

P2 46:19

I'll check social media or, or you know just kind of browse a little bit while I'm walking down the elevator.

Interviewer 46:21

Mm hmm.

P2 46:25

So I'm already kinda like not thinking about work stuff.

Interviewer 46:25

Yeah.

P2 46:28

Or trying not to, at least.

Interviewer 46:28

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 46:31

And then usually it's, it's when I get home that I, I'm truly done.

Interviewer 46:35

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 46:38

It's 'cause I still have my work stuff with me, like physically, like stuff that I came to work with, like backpack, my jacket that I only really wear when I'm going out or, you know, going to the office.

Interviewer 46:44

Right.

P2 46:49

So when I come in home I, once I hang the keys, take off my backpack,

Interviewer 46:54

Mm hmm.

P2 46:55

take off my jacket and then I'm like, get, get comfortable, like, take off my shoes.

Interviewer 46:59

Mhmm

P2 47:02

I'll be like, then I'll be like, OK I'm relaxed. 'Cause I can still...I could like, part of me is like still like, OK

Interviewer 47:06

Yeah.

P2 47:09

I'm still kinda like, someone could message me. I do have my work phone in my pocket.

Interviewer 47:11

Yeah.

P2 47:14

I can still pull it out and I'll still check like if I if I, (buzz noise) an e-mail comes in, I'm walking in at home, I go OK checking. Like if it's important I need to do it. And sometimes it does happen that I come from working in

Interviewer 47:24

OK.

P2 47:27

the office to working at home that same day, if something comes up that I need, have needed to do, I hook it up here and then I'll kinda like continue, but at my home workspace.

Interviewer 47:33

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 47:39

But I tried really hard not to do that 'cause that usually is, that'll burn, that burns me out pretty hard for the week having to do that 'cause like

Interviewer 47:46

Right.

P2 47:49

it kind of messes me up a little bit because then the next day I'll be...the next day when I wake up, I'll still be that...I'm that..

Interviewer 47:51

Mm hmm.

P2 47:57

I'm not going into the office, my stuff's already there. Usually it isn't. I don't usually set up my, connect my laptop to my stuff

Interviewer 48:01

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 48:07

the night, the day before. I usually do it the day of. Like I wake up like, you know, seven in the morning or whatever time before any before 8:00 AM and I'll connect it. I'll pull my laptop from my backpack that I took in the previous day, and I'll plug it in and I'll plug it in and then I'll be like, OK, I'm working. If it's already there, it feels kind of weird to me 'cause it, it means either I

Interviewer 48:20

Right. Yeah.

P2 48:28

worked extra like I, I came the, the day before and I kept working at home. Or it means that I didn't go in one day and usually that and I kinda like,

Interviewer 48:34

Right.

P2 48:40

having that that break for whatever reason, doing two days a straight at home, I can do it.

Interviewer 48:43

Mm hmm.

P2 48:46

Sometimes it's fine, but it's kind of feels wrong to me in my head.

Interviewer 48:50

Mm hmm.

P2 48:50

I don't know why I, I guess I feel like I'm like, I miss out on something.

Interviewer 48:56

Right.

P2 48:56

Something must have happened , I didn't get to take part in it. Or kind of feels bad 'cause some,

Interviewer 48:59

Mm hmm.

P2 49:01

I do look forward to seeing some people at work that I would otherwise don't see, so it kinda it, it I like "Oh, I haven't seen this person for like so long because I didn't go in that day for whatever reason."

Interviewer 49:03

Yeah.

P2 49:13

So I do enjoy keeping those kind of routines in place.

Interviewer 49:18

Right.

P2 49:18

And yeah, when I get home from that work day, take of all my stuff, put down my backpack,

Interviewer 49:23

Yeah.

P2 49:23

lay on the couch, I'm like, OK...No big thing. Big, big one. Untucking my shirt. Oh, taking off the belt. OK, I'm free.

Interviewer 49:29

Right. Yeah, great.

P2 49:31

I'm freed.

Interviewer 49:32

Yeah. And I guess you can add anything here or if not, that's totally fine, because I think you already spoke a lot about this. But how exactly do you mentally disconnect from work on these days? Besides all the things that you mentioned? Or is that it?

P2 49:48

No, I mean that's it's pretty much it. It's just, I try not to...

Interviewer 49:50

Mm hmm.

P2 49:53

It, it has changed with my current role. It's a lot...

Interviewer 49:55

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 49:58

It's not as demanding and fast-paced as the one I had previously, and I found a really responsive...I, I guess maybe part of it was being my first role and like my first you know full time position like this that I felt kind of like a responsibility

Interviewer 50:01

Yeah. Mm hmm. OK. Mm hmm.

P2 50:13

to the team that I was working with to, I guess not fail them and hit the deadlines and all that stuff. And that kind of pressure carried home. Now I'm kind of, I've learned to not think that way as much and it's helped me

Interviewer 50:30

Right.

P2 50:32

I, I guess kind of respect my, my time a little bit more. And you know that, the separation of like not you know, living to work kind of thing, just you know work to live.

Interviewer 50:36

Mm hmm. Right, yeah.

P2 50:44

So that's, that's kinda helped from you know the time that that I've been here. I could, I've noticed that in myself. And I, I felt really guilty. Really guilty at the beginning. About like every... no, especially when I was an intern.

Interviewer 50:56

Mm hmm.

P2 50:59

Boy, that was bad.

Interviewer 50:59

Mm hmm.

P2 51:00

It was especially that like the feeling of really strong guilt towards...I, I thought, I thought in my mind like work was like 24, no, no, 8 hours of pure concentration trying to maximize.

Interviewer 51:12

Yeah.

P2 51:14

You know, I was like, OK, every second that I'm not purely doing you know an activity

Interviewer 51:19

Mm hmm.

P2 51:20

it's like a minus. Like it felt like I'm robbing someone, you know? I felt really guilty.

Interviewer 51:25

Yeah.

P2 51:25

Then I learned you know, I learned to, like, go and calm down a little bit.

Interviewer 51:28

Mm hmm.

P2 51:30

I figured, I learned that not, like that's just me thing.

Interviewer 51:30

Right.

P2 51:32

Like my brain thing, not no one's thinking that way. For whatever reason, I didn't attend the class where they taught you that. So I, you know, I was still thinking that.

Interviewer 51:38

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 51:42

So that's, that's helped a lot for me to, you know, be able to separate that and be able to like, turn off work mode in my brain.

Interviewer 51:46

Right. Yeah, yeah. OK. And so lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P2 51:58

I do feel again this challenge is some, you know, being hungry for example. I, I forget to cook a meal and I'm suddenly like, OK, I have to tough it out.

Interviewer 52:06

Mm hmm.

P2 52:09

I have to grab some of the really unhealthy snacks they have the office power through with that. So health wise is probably not the best in that way.

Interviewer 52:12

Right.

P2 52:19

I get a little bit less sleep in those days because I do have wake up extra early to get my stuff ready drive. Thankfully, I have a pretty short commute but.

Interviewer 52:25

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 52:28

And I have had a short commute even when I was at the previous office. But I, I do feel like that would make me a lot more miserable having a longer commute, having to get ready even earlier. Like in terms of sleep, I get a lot more when I'm at I get to work at home.

Interviewer 52:41

Yeah.

P2 52:49

Like so it, it does, it does feel like sometimes I'm a little bit tired, maybe because of that too. I don't get as much sleep when I go into the office and that kinda...I feel a little bit like you have to do a little bit of perform like act a little bit performative when you're in the office.

Interviewer 52:54

Right.

P2 53:02

Perhaps that also drains some energy versus at home.

Interviewer 53:03

Mm hmm.

P2 53:05

So like having a keep appearances of like, not like

Interviewer 53:05

Mm hmm.

P2 53:10

you pretend that you're someone else, but like just kind of like, you know, be polite, polite conversation with people and you know someone's talking about this and that, and versus, you know, engaging in your own terms at home. Like I choose who I message, you know, it's

Interviewer 53:19

Right. Yeah.

P2 53:23

not like I'm not getting a usually like approached and if I do get a message I have the, the work setting so that I can choose to respond when I want.

Interviewer 53:32

Right.

P2 53:32

So that gives, the bonus is on, on me to decide not like on, you know, the situation to decide for me, like, oh...I'm not,

Interviewer 53:37

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 53:40

I can't just you know not reply if someone's talking to me at work. So there's that, you know.

Interviewer 53:46

Yeah.

P2 53:47

Yeah, I mean, the food was a big thing. Just, you know, being able to just take my meals when I want.

Interviewer 53:49

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 53:54

Do them, like prep, like, get something together if I want to, whenever I want to. Not being able to do that at work is, is not great. Or like if I want, if I'm craving something I have here at work I can't just go and grab it in.

Interviewer 54:05

Yeah, yeah.

P2 54:06

my fridge. I have to like wait, wait till I get home. Like OK.

Interviewer 54:10

Yeah.

P2 54:10

It's two more hours and I get to have the, the, the, the ice cream that I have in the fridge, you know. I could just grab that here so.

Interviewer 54:16

Yeah. Right.

P2 54:19

That that, I mean it...It does, I do, I mean may not sound like a big challenge, but the food thing is ends up sucking in the days that you don't have it.

Interviewer 54:24

Yeah, no. Makes sense. Uh huh. Yeah.

P2 54:27

It does suck like having to, like I can get a big breakfast versus like, oh, I have to put something together. I need to go.

Interviewer 54:33

Right.

P2 54:34

Although there is not a very strict time to go in, I do hold myself kinda like to like trying to keep the same schedule as my team mostly.

Interviewer 54:42

Yeah.

P2 54:44

So I do feel like, OK, I'm, I gotta get ready. You know my teams usually gonna be there, usually get there at 8.

Interviewer 54:48

Yeah.

P2 54:49

So just, just me personally, that might be a thing that affects that. But yeah, it's it's, I mean, my chair being uncomfortable sucks too.

Interviewer 54:53

Mm hmm.

P2 54:57

Like if it were a bit more comfortable, maybe I'd feel a little bit better.

Interviewer 54:57

Mm hmm.

P2 55:00

But you know, I'm, I'm comfortable here.

Interviewer 55:00

Right.

P2 55:03

I can just lay back and stuff. At work I'm just, it's not super comfortable. That kind of sucks. The peripherals, kind of, again, they're not my own. They're kind of...the work, the laptop keyboard which, it's a laptop keyboard, and then the work mouse which is doesn't fit my hand.

Interviewer 55:16

Yeah.

P2 55:18

You know, my mouse fits like you know, it fits my hand. It's, it's what I want. It's kinda light.

Interviewer 55:22

Yeah.

P2 55:25

The one I keep at work, you know, it's not, it doesn't...It's not the same. The work headset is, it's like, like a little torture device for my ears. So it kind of presses my ears in like it sucks if I'm in a long call like an hour call and I have those on.

Interviewer 55:33

Right.

P2 55:39

It just sucks.

Interviewer 55:40

Yeah.

P2 55:40

Sound quality is not good and all that stuff. So there I mean, this just the work stuff is not great.

Interviewer 55:43

Yeah.

P2 55:46

The monitors are, you know, the work ones.

Interviewer 55:46

Right.

P2 55:48

And then I have one of them that just doesn't work sometimes. You know, it kind of just flickers.

Interviewer 55:51

Right.

P2 55:52

It's, it's it really bugs me 'cause that I, I need it. I need it and it exists.

Interviewer 55:56

Yeah, right.

P2 55:58

The computer knows it exists, but it just this display screen is just like it flashes black and like sometimes it's just black completely, but it's still on, so stuff can open on that monitor

Interviewer 56:09

Yeah.

P2 56:09

but I, I have to keep it plugged in 'cause my other stuff is plugged in there. I can't you know, unplug it and then. But again, I really like it when it's working.

Interviewer 56:17

Yes. Yeah.

P2 56:18

Sometimes it isn't. So again, that that also sucks, that it's, you know, it's at work. Cause it's like the stuff I have at work is not my home stuff that I know I'm, I like and I'm used to.

Interviewer 56:27

Mm hmm.

P2 56:27

So yeah, it's, it's, it has a certain challenges like that is, is just a little annoying.

Interviewer 56:35

Yeah.

P2 56:35

I, I'm, I, I again, I work through them.

Interviewer 56:38

Yeah.

P2 56:38

It's at the end of the day they're not huge, but you know it is something that I prefer to not deal with when I'm working from home. I mean, I guess that's why I prefer the 3/2 split of working three days

Interviewer 56:46

Definitely.

P2 56:49

at home, two, in the office. Majority of again I get to do a lot of my, my work here and I guess that's also I mean being comfortable with my stuff. In my previous role, that was a big a little bit more of a big deal because I was doing some, some CAD modeling and that's like, it's a little bit more intensive in terms of like you're doing a lot of stuff with your hands with your mouse and, and then your keyboard,

Interviewer 57:03

Right.

P2 57:16

and stuff like that. So it the, the value was way higher for me working at home there like I need to do,

Interviewer 57:18

Yeah.

Mm hmm.

P2 57:23

take care of something, I much rather do it at home than at, at the office. Especially 'cause I have a big monitor. You have a lot of space to look and stuff.

Interviewer 57:26

Great. Yeah.

P2 57:31

Current, my current I guess role it's, it's not like that.

Interviewer 57:34

Mm hmm.

P2 57:34

So it's a little bit less of a priority, but if I were to do something like design focus like that that I mean that was, that was definitely one of the best things that that about working from home compared to working in the office.

Interviewer 57:48

Yeah. OK, great. And that actually kind of perfectly transitions us into this next section where I wanted to talk about comparing the two workspaces and your experiences within them.

So my first question was actually how does your in office workspace compare to your remote workspace? But I think you've already kind of covered a lot of that. But anything in general or one? Maybe one specific thing that sticks out to you?

P2 58:15

Yeah, I mean still the, the, the, the peripherals is just the biggest one. I mean that's, the only reason why I have it the way I do is so I can use my stuff.

Interviewer 58:19

Yeah. Right.

P2 58:25

And I mean that's why I was doing research and I was asking people like, how do you do it?

Interviewer 58:25

Definitely. Yeah.

P2 58:28

How do you work from home? I didn't want to buy new stuff just for my work setup, find a new desk or find somewhere to put it. That might not be as comfortable.

Interviewer 58:33

Right. Right.

P2 58:37

I was like, I'm working from home. I'm working from maximum comfort.

Interviewer 58:38

Yeah. Yeah, no.

P2 58:41

In every way. So I, I that's definitely a comparison that I,

Interviewer 58:46

Mm hmm.

P2 58:46

that I, that sticks out to me. I mean, I have my little cabinets with stuff that I that I use sometimes. I can pull it out.

Interviewer 58:48

Great. Yeah.

P2 58:52

At work it is pretty, I mean it's a table, so there's nowhere to put stuff or no filing cabinet or anything in this workspace.

Interviewer 58:55

Right.

P2 59:00

So everything that that that I have is either on display at the desk or in my backpack.

Interviewer 59:05

Yeah.

P2 59:06

So really no stuff. No, no way...It doesn't really feel like, it doesn't feel mine, which like it's fine.

Interviewer 59:13

Mm hmm.

P2 59:15

But it's, I guess my final perception is that eventually,

Interviewer 59:15

Mm hmm.

P2 59:20

if you have a desk in your in the office, eventually you want to like add some little stuff that you makes it yours a little bit, and then it makes that kind of makes it a little bit more like home. This feels just kind of like a temporary

Interviewer 59:27

Right. Right.

P2 59:32

like transitory space for me. So that's, I have a hard time like

Interviewer 59:35

Mm hmm.

P2 59:39

feeling like, OK, if I'm not, if I if I don't feel I'm gonna be there for a long time, which I might be here for, you know, a whole year.

Interviewer 59:44

Right.

P2 59:46

So I mean it's just goes to show you how crazy my head is. I, I feel like I have a hard time like committing to like making it my own if I feel like I'm just gonna have to like tear it down and repeat again. So that's kind

Interviewer 59:55

Mm hmm.

P2 1:00:02

of the nice thing I guess about being at home is 'cause I am like OK I, it feels a little bit easier for me to make it home because I'm, I'm spending a lot of time here, so might as well make it comfortable.

Interviewer 1:00:05

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:00:12

Versus at work and I'm like, I don't hang stuff 'cause...I mean, I could, but I don't because I feel like it's kind of a waste if I'm, it feels transitory to me like and it's it still does. And I feel like unless someone tells you like "you are gonna be at this desk

Interviewer 1:00:12

Yeah. Right. Yeah.

P2 1:00:26

for you know, the next four years," I can't

Interviewer 1:00:27

Yeah.

P2 1:00:28

you know really commit to like, you know. Maybe bring a little bit something else, maybe like, I

don't know, at some point do bring somewhere to, to something to display, or something else to make it like kind of homey. So I guess that's kinda I, I don't feel that you know that pressure like that like that barrier when my home stuff. I, I can add whatever you want. Make it as comfortable as I want. So I, I think that's, that's just one other thing that I had.

Interviewer 1:00:54

For sure. And how do you...How would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P2 1:01:04

Yeah. In, in office, I feel like the boundary's a little bit more strict. I mean, there is not a lot of personal like, like space for me doing personal stuff at work. I mean, I can do stuff on my phone, but it's like not really comfortable or, you know, limited in that scenario.

Interviewer 1:01:11

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:01:27

At home it's a little bit, like it's a lot more fluid, like the boundary between personal work is a flip of a switch, so.

Interviewer 1:01:31

Mmm.

P2 1:01:38

It's not, it's not really hard for me which I, I enjoy.

Interviewer 1:01:42

Mm hmm.

P2 1:01:42

I can see how that might, if I were a different person I, that might be a little harder to cope with.

Interviewer 1:01:48

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:01:51

Not having that strict boundary. I know that mean, that's probably part of the reason why some people do like to come in more often or do like separate workspaces than they're, having the same one. But I do, I enjoy it. I it, it works for for me and I like...I have...I try to keep

Interviewer 1:02:06

Mm hmm.

P2 1:02:12

a mentally not have it, you know, seep in too much the fact that it's so, it's easy to, to...the boundary's so fluid at home.

Interviewer 1:02:20

Right.

P2 1:02:21

But I do like when it is, when it is time for me to not keep working, I do try not to. Because I, 'cause I had that problem before at the beginning of it seeping into my personal time.

Interviewer 1:02:26

Yeah. Right.

P2 1:02:35

I, I've learned how to not make it happen because the fact that again the fact that it's so fluid means that it can go one way or the other. I just really try not to let it go into the way of my personal as much as possible.

Interviewer 1:02:51

Exactly. OK, great. And kind of connecting to that. How does your ability to disconnect from work, you know, mentally forget about the work day, leave it behind, how is it like the days that you go into office compared to the days that you're working from home?

P2 1:03:08

Like can you, like rephrase a little bit? Like how do I?

Interviewer 1:03:12

Yeah. So I guess...So your ability to mentally disconnect from work, so like leave it behind, turn off work mode, whatever you wanna call it, how does it compare the days that you go into office and the days that you work from home?

P2 1:03:19

OK. Right. OK. Yeah, definitely. The disconnect is a little, I'd say, a little bit easier to do that at work because I to, the there's a, there's so much that goes into that I'm seeing the people, the sounds again, and then me physically moving the location, having a driving period of time where... where I mean, I hate it when people say this, but I do kind of understand it for

Interviewer 1:03:53

Yeah.

P2 1:04:00

my very, very, very short drive and not advocating for a long one. But I do believe that that short time that I'm driving.

Interviewer 1:04:02

Yeah. Yeah.

P2 1:04:07

I'm kind of just, you know, looking forward to home and it's short enough that I enjoy it.

Interviewer 1:04:09

Yeah.

P2 1:04:12

Not long enough that I, you know, start hating myself for not being home yet.

Interviewer 1:04:13

OK. Yeah, right.

P2 1:04:17

So that is that is something that I, I guess I do acknowledge. Don't accept,

Interviewer 1:04:22

Mm hmm.

P2 1:04:23

but acknowledge. And I mean versus at home again at home is it's, it's, it's different than that.

Interviewer 1:04:23

Yeah.

P2 1:04:30

Like it's not...It's a little bit harder because I don't have that whole transitory period, but I'm not doing anything and then suddenly I'm home and then and I'm still, and I'm not like, I don't have to like

Interviewer 1:04:36

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:04:42

change clothes or anything like, I don't like take like

Interviewer 1:04:44

Yeah.

P2 1:04:46

untuck my shirt. I don't take off my belt 'cause I'm not wearing one in the first place. So I don't have that, those kind of things that I do happen. My laptop is still on my desk. You know, like I, I haven't you know, I don't pack it until the day of that I go into the office so. I do, I mean I, I go over to the couch and then that is kind of like signals it. But I feel like it's a lot easier, a lot, lot easier for me to like, see 5:00 PM on my work computer when I'm working from home than it is when

Interviewer 1:05:14

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 1:05:22

I'm working at work. I very rarely, if ever see 5:00 PM on my work computer when I'm at work.

Interviewer 1:05:24

Mhmm

P2 1:05:29

At home, it's a lot higher possibility. Like more, more possible for it to happen.

Interviewer 1:05:29

All right. Yeah.

P2 1:05:35

So I do believe that in terms of time that I'm working at home, that kind of like

Interviewer 1:05:39

Mm hmm.

P2 1:05:42

it's, it moves a lot, it can move a lot both ways. Like I'm, I'm even encouraged to start early just 'cause I'm home. I don't...

Interviewer 1:05:49

Yeah.

P2 1:05:49

I'm up already at 7:30 or whatever I might as well just flip it up and start going like it's, it's not ...That kind of, those kind of like, that kind of fluidity that exists from being at home like makes it harder. It makes it harder for

Interviewer 1:06:00

Yeah.

P2 1:06:03

to, to have like that switch off mentally.

Interviewer 1:06:07

Right.

P2 1:06:09

But I, I feel like I've learned a lot how to do it. And then now it's, it's a lot easier for me to be like, OK

Interviewer 1:06:12
Definitely.

P2 1:06:15
let me just stop my screen. Like I could stop my screen, press the button, sometimes swap my headphones if I have the other ones on and then I'm,

Interviewer 1:06:16
Yeah.

P2 1:06:23
I'm, I'm kinda like I've done, I've done practice, but I'm, I'm home now. Home mode now versus, versus work mode.

Interviewer 1:06:28
Yeah, definitely. And then lastly of the two pictures you shared here or technically three, I guess which one feels more like a workplace to you? So if I say the word workplace.

P2 1:06:43
You know it's, it's easy like the easy answer would be to say the, the work one feels more workplace, but it really, it kind of doesn't. Even though I have all my, like my home one it's the same desk that I use for all my stuff and it should just feel like my home.

Interviewer 1:07:03
Yeah, yeah.

P2 1:07:05
It also feels like workplace just because I mean the time that I've used it and, and because I don't know the other one just feels transitory.

Interviewer 1:07:08
Yeah.

P2 1:07:16
Like even if it were, even if I knew, like I mean, you never know how long you gonna be in a role or in a desk or anything. Just the fact that I like, I know at some point, you know, I might move somewhere else or whatever and

Interviewer 1:07:16
Yeah.

P2 1:07:28
it's, it,

Interviewer 1:07:28

Right.

P2 1:07:29

it kind of just feels like this, this might change. I, it doesn't feel static to me. So workplace to me feels like my desk when my laptop's on there.

Interviewer 1:07:35

Mm hmm.

P2 1:07:40

That's workplace. If I, if I were to like...it's still on there right now.

Interviewer 1:07:41

Yeah.

P2 1:07:44

If I were to take this [holds up laptop] and I move this off then I, then it's, then the temptation to even work is like destroyed. Like I can't.

Interviewer 1:07:47

Uh huh. Right.

P2 1:07:54

I can't. I can't. So that's, this where I'm like the most comfortable. Like if I actually do, physically do this and take this [laptop] and put this [laptop] in my, my work backpack, which I just did,

Interviewer 1:08:05

Yeah.

P2 1:08:06

then there is 0 capability for me to work, and then it, I can, it no longer looks like a workplace to me. Now if, but if the laptop is sitting there and it's, it's plugged in

Interviewer 1:08:12

Right. OK. Right.

P2 1:08:17

even if it isn't actually. Even if it's and it's just sitting there in that position in front of the other monitor, it just, it looks like, OK this is like a workplace, a workspace for me.

Interviewer 1:08:23

Yeah, yeah.

P2 1:08:26

So that's I, I hadn't noticed that, but now that I did it, I you know, I just feel like...

Interviewer 1:08:29

Mm hmm.

P2 1:08:33

I even feel more comfortable now because it's not there anymore, so it's not even like, I don't even have the possibility to do it if I did it, if I wanted to so.

Interviewer 1:08:35

Yeah. Definitely, yeah. Great.

P2 1:08:43

Yeah, that's how I feel about it.

Interviewer 1:08:45

Nice. OK so lastly, I asked if you could please share a either object or space that helps you mentally disconnect from work at the end of the day and it looks like here like you said, you have your couch and I see your little cats, but can you just tell me a bit about these photos?

P2 1:09:05

Yeah, I mean this just has kinda everything that I use. I have the blanket that I, like the blankets there.

Interviewer 1:09:10

Anywhere.

P2 1:09:12

It's a really big blanket too which I think was important for me 'cause I can just completely burrito myself, cover myself in every way and I'm just kinda like, oh I'm, I'm that's like a big object that I like...

Interviewer 1:09:14

Yeah.

P2 1:09:22

When it's not there, I feel like if I'm laying there just like without it, I'm kinda like OK, I can still get up like easily. It makes, it's, it adds another

Interviewer 1:09:23

Mm hmm.

P2 1:09:33

I guess another barrier for me to getting back to work which helps. Like it's like, it kind of feels like again I have to take it off and it's like I, I don't want to.

Interviewer 1:09:36

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 1:09:44

So my body's kind of like sending, like, you know my, my survival instinct is telling me to not take it off because it's nice and warm there. I, I keep my apartment a little bit on the colder side.

Interviewer 1:09:49

Yeah. Right.

P2 1:09:54

So that helps. And again, the fact that it's a physical object helps for me to not want to like...like it, it prevents me from just coming back over here 'cause I'm, I don't wanna walk over here with that. When my cat's on me, I'm, I'm not moving. So it's keeping me from, you know, even if I wanted to.

Interviewer 1:10:05

Exactly. Mm hmm.

P2 1:10:12

And then I mean the cat's are there. Like I, I count them as kind of part of the, the whole deal.

Interviewer 1:10:17

Right.

P2 1:10:18

I'm on that pillow. I'm that little L kind of part of it. And then they know they're coming over or, you know, I'm like, I'm petting them and stuff like that. And that's just, you know.

Interviewer 1:10:26

Yeah.

P2 1:10:27

How can I, how can I rip away from this beautiful sensation of getting petted just to go back to work so?

Interviewer 1:10:33

Yeah.

P2 1:10:34

They, I think that they definitely, you know, kinda like help me. I mean again, I'm not thinking. I'm focused on the, the animal in front of me. I'm not thinking.

Interviewer 1:10:42

Mm hmm.

P2 1:10:44

I don't have space to think about anything else 'cause you know it looks cute in front of me.

Interviewer 1:10:48

Right.

P2 1:10:48

So that helps for sure. Just to you know, not have to like...It's another thing that's just kind of like because it's kind of hard. I, I do believe it sometimes if you have a deadline coming up and it's kind of pressing and you're thinking about work.

Interviewer 1:11:03

Mm hmm.

P2 1:11:06

stuff and like, oh, you gotta do this, you gotta do that tomorrow,

Interviewer 1:11:09

Yeah.

P2 1:11:09

I, I do, I do feel like that happens sometimes. But if I'm focusing on something else kind of pulling my, my thoughts away. I mean I, I can turn on and put a, a show as well or a movie and I'm already there and then it's kind of like

Interviewer 1:11:12

Mm hmm. Yeah. Great.

P2 1:11:23

OK my, I, I can forget about it. And then I don't remember it again until the next morning. Or you know, you know when you're sitting in bed

Interviewer 1:11:28

Yeah.

P2 1:11:33

and since it's late and then you're alone with your thoughts and then sometimes it'll come back to haunt you but.

Interviewer 1:11:36

Yeah, yeah.

P2 1:11:38

That's just, that's, that's usually how I uh...stuff that helps me out.

Interviewer 1:11:43

Yeah, definitely. And just really quickly on those points of when you have the deadlines and stuff creeping in, do you notice a difference in like how easy it is to push those thoughts away depending on whether you were in the office or at home that day or does it depend?

P2 1:12:00

Well, it feels like the only reason why it, it might be a little bit easier the days that I go into the office versus the days that I'm at home because the days that I'm going to the office, I know the next day I'm gonna be at home.

Interviewer 1:12:10

Mm hmm. Right, right.

P2 1:12:14

So [laughs].

Interviewer 1:12:14

OK. Yeah.

P2 1:12:15

When I'm going to sleep and I'm going to sleep, I'm like, OK, you know, I don't have to wake up early, get all that stuff ready. So it's kind of like, like, OK at least I'm going to be, you know, going to get to sleep in a little bit more.

Interviewer 1:12:25

Yeah.

P2 1:12:26

You know, a little bit cozy. I don't really know that, those all kind of help me like oh, I'm looking forward to being at home tomorrow. I can put the game on, you know, I can,

Interviewer 1:12:34

Yeah.

P2 1:12:35

I can...Kind of like, like excited a little bit. But days that I'm working at home

Interviewer 1:12:37

Yes.

P2 1:12:39

you know, even if it's the same deadline I, I do have, I'm thinking in my mind like about this, the work stuff, but then I'm like, ugh I'm gonna have to wake up early tomorrow. I gotta go in.

Interviewer 1:12:45

Yeah. Right.

P2 1:12:50

What about lunch? Do I have lunch?

Interviewer 1:12:51

Yeah. Yeah.

P2 1:12:52

I don't have lunch. It's gonna suck. I'm gonna have to either find something or go out to lunch. So, I that's the only reason that I do believe that it's easier in those days because I am looking forward to the, to the home days and also because the home days

Interviewer 1:12:54

Right. Yeah.

Mm hmm.

P2 1:13:09

you know, the workdays, there's always work the next day. At least home days

Interviewer 1:13:12

Yeah.

P2 1:13:14

sometimes it is nice because you know it's a Friday and then you know it's a weekend. So I do,

Interviewer 1:13:19

Uh huh.

P2 1:13:20

that makes that that Thursday that I'm working much easier for me to forget about it because I'm like, oh, I'm no I'm like, staying at home this whole like, you know, weekend is starting like, not tomorrow like, but it's starting tomorrow. Like it's starting like tomorrow after work, you know, so.

Interviewer 1:13:35

Yeah, yeah. Definitely.

P2 1:13:38

It's kinda that, that makes it a little easier to push those thoughts away on, on those days that I'm at, that I'm in the office versus the ones that I'm at home.

Interviewer 1:13:42

Yeah. Yeah, exactly. And this might be kind of similar, but I mean you already mentioned like how this space helps you mentally disconnect from work. You know, it allows you to relax. You have the cats there. The blanket. But I guess does how effective it is to help you disconnect depend on whether you go into office or at home as you just mentioned?

P2 1:14:05

Yeah, it's if...I'm in, if I'm if I'm going to the office the next day, you know, and I just finished my work day at, like, from working at home it's, it, it, it helps me a lot just because like, I haven't, it's not late enough that I'm usually, that I'm like, you know, thinking about what I need to do for tomorrow so.

Interviewer 1:14:16

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:14:30

It does. At least you know help me set up the rest of my afternoon

Interviewer 1:14:34

Mm hmm.

P2 1:14:35

to like just be able to do stuff that I want and it', it's, it's usually pretty good. Again the days that I'm in the office when I come home,

Interviewer 1:14:37

Yeah.

P2 1:14:42

it's more like I'm like, I'm so tired kind of thing that I'm like it...

Interviewer 1:14:42

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:14:46

it's so I mean, I'm, I'm begging to disconnect at that point. I'm like, I don't wanna think about work at all when I'm at home. It's, it's like I have a little bit more energy. So I'm, you know, it helps me because of that

Interviewer 1:14:51

Right. Right.

P2 1:14:59

because I do have the energy to keep going if I wanted to, or if I needed to. So that's just why

Interviewer 1:15:04

Right.

P2 1:15:05

it's, why it's nice as opposed to, you know, being like, OK

Interviewer 1:15:06

Yeah.

P2 1:15:09

finally, this is like, like this is like a... 'cause this is also the same spot I use for both of them. It's like, it, when I'm coming in from, from work I'm like OK

Interviewer 1:15:14

Exactly.

P2 1:15:18

let me go back to the spot.

Interviewer 1:15:19

Yeah.

P2 1:15:20

And but it's not, it's not 'cause I need it, it's 'cause I'm like, you know, like I'm, I'm comfortable using it already. So I'm just like, OK.

Interviewer 1:15:27

Right, yeah.

P2 1:15:27

I don't need it to disconnect. I already disconnected

Interviewer 1:15:29

Exactly. Yeah, right, right.

P2 1:15:30

on my drive here, you know, or mostly, mostly, I mean the last little bit is like after I take everything off and everything is off like I'm at that, at that point. I'm done.

Interviewer 1:15:34

Yeah. Mm hmm.

P2 1:15:41

Like my backpack's not really getting opened at all, and I'm not touching any of that stuff.

Interviewer 1:15:41

Right. Exactly.

P2 1:15:46

So that's just like, you know, final nail in the coffin. But you know 90% of the, the progress is already achieved by that point versus when I'm at home I need, I need it to push me there.

Interviewer 1:15:46

Yeah. Definitely.

P2 1:15:59

So that's how I would, that's how I would describe the difference there.

Interviewer 1:16:02

Yeah. No, that's great. And then lastly, just what meaning, if any, does this space have for you?

P2 1:16:13

I it's, it's, I mean, there's a lot of positives that I...like it's a really positive space for me 'cause. I have people over, friends over.

Interviewer 1:16:25

Right.

P2 1:16:26

Usually you know I have like cozy like moments in my, in the couch. You know, I'm cuddling with, with the cats or with my partner.

Interviewer 1:16:31

Right

P2 1:16:33

So it's, it's, it has those like positive you know

Interviewer 1:16:34

Right.

P2 1:16:39

memories there that, that, that help.

Interviewer 1:16:43

Right.

P2 1:16:44

So it, it feels like safe.

Interviewer 1:16:47

Yeah.

P2 1:16:47

Very safe. I mean there is um, you can kind of see there's like on the far left of that picture there's like a little bit of a like a like a nook there.

Interviewer 1:16:58

Mm hmm.

P2 1:16:59

That's like a little tiny wall.

Interviewer 1:17:02

Mm hmm.

P2 1:17:03

And the other side of that wall is the desk actually so. So the, I can see...

Interviewer 1:17:05

Oh, gotcha.

P2 1:17:10

I can't directly see, but if I'm laying on the couch and I have my head on that pillow for example, I can't see

Interviewer 1:17:12

Mm hmm.

P2 1:17:17

the desk. You know that

Interviewer 1:17:19

Gotcha.

P2 1:17:19

kinda, the visible...There's like a visible, like a, like a something blocking the view into the desk.

Interviewer 1:17:27

Right.

P2 1:17:28

So that kinda adds a little bit of that safety layer to me 'cause, I'm like, oh, I'm like there's, I can't even see anyone.

Interviewer 1:17:32

Yeah, sure.

P2 1:17:35

If there's someone that wanted to message me, I can't even see it.

Interviewer 1:17:38

Right, yeah.

P2 1:17:39

So it's, it's kind of that too. Like you know comfiness, safety and it's kinda like warm and stuff like that. And I just it, it's, it's kinda what...it's very,

Interviewer 1:17:46

Yeah.

P2 1:17:49

very attractive to me to just go in there

Interviewer 1:17:52

Definitely.

P2 1:17:53

because of that. I can

Interviewer 1:17:54

Right.

P2 1:17:55

I mean I, right now I feel like I just want to go there. I mean work's done,

Interviewer 1:17:59

Yeah.

P2 1:18:00

I don't have anything really to do, but like I kind of just feel like OK, sitting here working and all that stuff

Interviewer 1:18:03

Yeah.

P2 1:18:07

I wanna just like lay down and then just completely switch this off. And then after like, like the good thing is after laying there for a little bit or even watching anything, something like that, just like laying there for a minute, maybe 10-15 minutes,

Interviewer 1:18:07

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P2 1:18:19

20 minutes or whatever, I'm fine with coming back up and like sitting down and doing stuff on my computer for personal reasons.

Interviewer 1:18:20

Mmm right.

P2 1:18:27

But that...I had like a period of like, you know, decompression and then now I'm like it,

Interviewer 1:18:31

Yes.

P2 1:18:33

I don't feel like...I feel like kind of like refreshed in that, in that sense. Versus like I'm just like sitting,

Interviewer 1:18:37

Yeah.

P2 1:18:40

I keep, I keep just sitting here, which sometimes is fine, but you I, I prefer it to not just power through the whole time here.

Interviewer 1:18:49

Yeah. OK, great. And so lastly, moving on from the photos, I just wanted to talk a little bit more generally about your experiences switching between workspaces and just general ability to disconnect and so are there certain times of either the day or the week in which it is easier or harder for you to disconnect from work?

P2 1:19:13

Times of day or the week? Is that?

Interviewer 1:19:15

Yeah, either or.

P2 1:19:17

I mean definitely it's easier when it's getting later towards the week. That's easier for me to disconnect especially, even if some days if I've done like extra time another day and it's earlier in the day it's, I find it harder to disconnect if it isn't that four to five like range of times.

Interviewer 1:19:37

Mm hmm.

P2 1:19:42

So unless...if, if it's earlier than that it's, I find it hard.

Interviewer 1:19:47

Mm hmm.

P2 1:19:47

I find it really hard. 'Cause, I just feel like I can be accessible, like I don't have to.

Interviewer 1:19:53

Right.

P2 1:19:55

I can. It's an option.

Interviewer 1:19:57

Yeah.

P2 1:19:57

So having that option kinda makes it like a little bit harder for me to like do it even though I shouldn't feel like I need to be, I kinda still do like even if I say oh I, I was working like till 8:00 PM the other day just 'cause

Interviewer 1:20:01

Mm hmm.

P2 1:20:09

I needed to.

Interviewer 1:20:11

Right.

P2 1:20:11

I'm entitled to, you know, not, you know, be on till, on after like 2:00 PM whatever, I still kinda feel weird about it just 'cause I can.

Interviewer 1:20:17

Right. Yeah.

P2 1:20:21

So I, I say their...the working hours I have a hard time doing it. Post that, it, it's really just a day

of the week kind of thing. Like usually towards the the Thursday is like a beautiful day for me. Thursday and Friday are great.

Interviewer 1:20:41

Yeah.

P2 1:20:42

Monday and Tuesday is usually don't feel as easy to disconnect just because I know that I, I'm, I'm kind of sometimes looking forward to doing stuff that week.

Interviewer 1:20:49

Mm hmm.

P2 1:20:53

So I kind of just part of me is like, oh, I want to just keep doing, keep going so I can just get it over with.

Interviewer 1:20:53

Right.

P2 1:21:01

So that's why those days a little bit harder for me to just be like, OK, I'm unplugging.

Interviewer 1:21:06

Yeah.

P2 1:21:08

I, I do think that it would change a little bit if my, my work days, the days that I go into the office were different. I might feel differently if I were doing no, I don't know, Monday, Wednesday,

Interviewer 1:21:24

Right.

P2 1:21:24

for example. Or Tuesday, Friday, for example.

Interviewer 1:21:26

Mm hmm.

P2 1:21:26

Feel like that Friday coming home would feel a little bit like would feel significantly different than coming home on Thursday or versus coming home on Wednesday. That Wednesday, I feel like it would like again, I'm coming home on Wednesday and I'm not going into the office Thursday, Friday,

Interviewer 1:21:29

Right.

P2 1:21:43

that would be...I can't even, I don't even know how I would perceive it, but I do know, I can tell, guarantee you it would be different than right now. Right now

Interviewer 1:21:51

Yeah, yeah.

P2 1:21:53

it's a kind of like a like a sweet spot. I'm not like I, I think, I think, I haven't tried the other two, but I, I guarantee that the, the feelings would be very different and the easiness of disconnecting would be very different.

Interviewer 1:21:59

Yeah.

P2 1:22:06

If you, if you move those, those like work in days differently or if you added one I, I feel like if I had three days in a row like Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, which I have done sometimes

Interviewer 1:22:13

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:22:22

when I was in a different, at a different office for a temporary period like two weeks or so visiting I was in three days a week, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 'cause my team was, and that felt a little, it felt very different

Interviewer 1:22:33

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:22:38

than what I do now and it, I mean, I did feel like I was lacking that extra day in the middle to kind of just like, like that day at home versus that like it felt like a, like a a lot more of a grind.

Interviewer 1:22:48

Yeah. Right.

P2 1:22:55

Being on, on every like on, on, on and then finally I can turn off a little bit on that Friday 'cause again, it's the fact that...

Interviewer 1:23:01

Yeah.

P2 1:23:06

It's, it's the, the fact that you, there are people around that could come up to you at any moment and ask for something which is part of the positive of going in. But it is a negative if you wanna not have to deal with that and if you.

Interviewer 1:23:10

Yeah.

Mm hmm.

P2 1:23:19

wanna just focus. Sometimes like I would look forward to going into the office in my previous role because I knew there was gonna be people there that I could talk to and get the problem solved or get their perspective or whatever and reaching them was I feel like maybe easier going in. But I, I do feel like there is an extra kind of burden because that's a possibility on those days that I go in. So I feel like it would change a lot.

Interviewer 1:23:43

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:23:47

My, my answers would change significantly, everything, if my schedule weren't the one I have right now.

Interviewer 1:23:50

OK. Right.

P2 1:23:54

Having done that five days a week,

Interviewer 1:23:56

Yeah.

P2 1:23:57

I would, I would be like I never wanna go in. But currently how I have it I kinda I, I kinda like going in those two days than in my previous role. Now I, I mean I I'm keeping the same schedule and it's working fine for me.

Interviewer 1:23:59

Yeah.

P2 1:24:11

But it would change I think if I had a different schedule.

Interviewer 1:24:16

Right, definitely. And like you just said, you do seem to like the switching of like one day on one day off, one day on one day off. And would you say that has helped you disconnect from work or made a difference from like you just said your prior experience? And how's the switching of that?

P2 1:24:34

I think it helps me. It helps me 'cause it reminds me the days that I'm working, it reminds me, like working in the office versus working at home,

Interviewer 1:24:40

Mm hmm.

P2 1:24:46

so the day having that those days that I'm going in, I kinda appreciate the comforts of being at home a little bit more and it kinda helps me do that switch.

Interviewer 1:24:49

Yeah. Right, yeah.

P2 1:24:57

I feel like if I were doing 5 days at home remote I would struggle. I would struggle. 'Cause I, it's it.

Interviewer 1:25:02

Yeah.

P2 1:25:04

it's part, part of that is understanding the habits of the people around you too.

Interviewer 1:25:09

Right.

P2 1:25:11

The culture, it's a little bit harder to know that if you're not, you know just, just going off of like, you know, a little teams bubble. It's hard to tell like, what is their actual, what are they actually doing, Like how are they actually, what is actually the pace seem for work.

Interviewer 1:25:21

Yeah.

P2 1:25:24

So if I didn't have my experience, initial experience as an intern going in and being able to watch people, I wouldn't,

Interviewer 1:25:25

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:25:33

I would have still been thinking up to this day, like if I were fully remote, like Oh my God, I'm not working 8 hours full focus, I would feel very different about how I approach that.

Interviewer 1:25:39

Right.

P2 1:25:43

So I, I think that having those in person days has helped me appreciate the remote ones more.

Interviewer 1:25:44

For sure. Mm hmm.

P2 1:25:53

Look forward to them some as well but I, I like the, the in one like, the ones when I go in as well.

Interviewer 1:26:00

Yeah.

P2 1:26:00

I like that option. I like that I give myself that option. And it, and it, it does help me like kinda like keep that boundary. I feel like even now even having all the, the experience I have, if I were fully remote I would, it would take me a while to be able to do that switch.

Interviewer 1:26:10

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:26:20

Like to, to be able to keep that switch and like be able to like go back to personal mode versus work mode.

Interviewer 1:26:28

Yeah.

P2 1:26:29

Because I, there's not, there wouldn't be something to anchor me to other people and to the, the, the general work culture that that the, the company has.

Interviewer 1:26:33

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:26:40

So I think that the current on and off on and off on and off just keeps, keeps that consistency in my in, in the way I approach things and

Interviewer 1:26:40

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:26:49

allows me to, to do that much easier. I think even, I mean I have going forwards, I have the option to I, I don't even have anything that's compelling me to go in on Tuesdays.

Interviewer 1:26:53

Mm hmm.

P2 1:27:01

But I think I'll just keep doing it.

Interviewer 1:27:03

Right.

P2 1:27:03

Just because I, I am, I am very comfortable with what I'm doing now, even though I have the option to not do it.

Interviewer 1:27:07

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. OK, great. And can you briefly describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week?

P2 1:27:20

So primarily I'm just this space and the office space, but I do

Interviewer 1:27:26

Mm.

P2 1:27:28

occasionally work at like, you know, out in a coffee shop or, or, or somewhere else.

Interviewer 1:27:31

Mm hmm.

P2 1:27:33

I do have that.

Interviewer 1:27:33

Mm hmm.

P2 1:27:35

I have done that before and I mean it's usually I mean primarily just, you know, traveling by my, my, my, my car and getting somewhere or getting, getting to the office and then carpooling from there to somewhere else

Interviewer 1:27:37

Mm hmm.

P2 1:27:51

then coming back. Going to someone's place, carpooling some to the coffee shop, and then working out of there.

Interviewer 1:27:56

Yeah.

P2 1:27:56

So it's, it's, it's, it's usually that like that's usually how I'm transitioning. I mean there, there's not anything super nearby that like walking distance. But sometimes

Interviewer 1:28:07

Mm hmm.

P2 1:28:10

we, me and some of the coworkers will get somewhere, and then there'll be like several different places that we could work at and then we would just walk to and scope out one of them and then be like, OK

Interviewer 1:28:16

OK.

P2 1:28:20

this looks nice. Then we'll just work out of there. So that's the way.

Interviewer 1:28:21

Right. Great. And I guess how do your commute or this transition make you feel generally?

P2 1:28:30

Usually I'm kinda, when I'm going to the office versus going to other workplaces like other workspaces, this kinda is pretty different. Other workspaces I kind of look forward to it because again it's, it's kind of like if, if working from home is here and working in the office is here. It's kinda like a somewhere in between but not like not either. Or it's a

Interviewer 1:28:41

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:28:59
little bit of rigidity

Interviewer 1:29:01
Mm hmm.

P2 1:29:01
due to the fact that I'm just not fully comfortable because I'm not at home.

Interviewer 1:29:05
Right.

P2 1:29:05
But it is a little bit more, you know relaxed compared to being in at the office 'cause you know, there's no one. We're very I mean, apart from the people I know, there's no one else from the office to usually at those workspaces, so I do have a little bit more comfort of just like relaxing and working at my own pace. And that makes the traveling to those destinations kinda like looking forward to it a little bit more.

Interviewer 1:29:17
Yeah, right. Mm hmm.

P2 1:29:31
Versus the office is kinda like a little bit of a, OK I'm going to the office. Unless there's anything special it's usually there's, there's no strong feelings, or sometimes I'm like...sometimes a little bit of anxiousness about getting there in time.

Interviewer 1:29:42
Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:29:47
Even though even though I there is no strict time, I'm not punching in the timecard. There is that subconscious thought of I need to be there at this time.

Interviewer 1:29:52
Yeah. Right.

P2 1:29:57
That kind of haunts me. Which it makes it so hard to

Interviewer 1:29:59
Yeah.

P2 1:30:03

be like, OK. I'm gonna go in. I can work from home a little bit and then go in. I hate doing that though. I hate working at home and then going in, even if it's for not a long time. I feel like,

Interviewer 1:30:08

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:30:16

it really messes me up when I do that. I'd rather just go in and work at 8 versus going and working at home and then going in at 9 going in at 10 because I just feel like I might as well have just stayed at home or.

Interviewer 1:30:18

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:30:30

It's it just, I don't know, I just feel even 15 minutes feels so hard to be like, like oh, now like now I have to justify the next 7 hours and 45 minutes. I could I,

Interviewer 1:30:33

Exactly, yeah.

P2 1:30:41

I could., I did 15, I could easily do 30.

Interviewer 1:30:42

Yeah.

P2 1:30:44

I could easily do an hour and I only did an hour, I could easily do another seven hours. So it, it's hard to, to not keep to, to move away from that like schedule that I have of

Interviewer 1:30:44

Right. Yeah.

P2 1:30:57

I wanna go in there at 8 which makes, adds a little bit of anxiety to that work trip towards work from about like making it in time and making it at that time and

Interviewer 1:30:59

Mm hmm. Exactly.

P2 1:31:07

making sure like, oh, hopefully...usually I don't have that issue, but previously I'd be like sometimes if I had to bring something in, I'd be like hope I don't forget anything last minute. Or I mean, sometimes actually, it'll be like I go out the door and like I forgot my lunch and go back in and I go back out and I'm like

Interviewer 1:31:12

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:31:25

oh my drink.

Interviewer 1:31:26

Yeah.

P2 1:31:26

Go back in and I go back out. And then suddenly, there's like a, a mounting level like a little bit of anxiety and anxiousness there about getting there.

Interviewer 1:31:31

Right, yeah.

P2 1:31:33

But that's not really the case when I'm going somewhere else

Interviewer 1:31:37

Mm hmm.

P2 1:31:37

that's not the workplace. I, even if it's past the normal hour, like past the 8:00 AM, kind of like internal clock that I have for getting there, I don't feel the pressure if I'm going to another workspace somewhere else with other people. I for whatever reason, it's not there.

Interviewer 1:31:47

Mm hmm. Yeah, for sure.

P2 1:31:55

If I'm going to a coffee shop or anything I'm like, oh, it's 8:35. It's 8:40.

Interviewer 1:31:58

Yeah.

P2 1:31:59

It's I, I don't feel like that like internal buildup that happened if I were to go into the office instead for I don't know why. Some brain chemistry stuff.

Interviewer 1:32:06

Yeah. No. Yeah. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work at all?

P2 1:32:14

Yeah I, I did mention it is. I hate to say this. I hate to say this.

Interviewer 1:32:19

Yeah.

P2 1:32:20

It...a little bit, a little bit. But it doesn't,

Interviewer 1:32:22

OK.

P2 1:32:25

it doesn't. It's not because I enjoy the commute. It's just because the commute is like a transitory period where it's just my thoughts. That might as well, doesn't have to be in the car. Disclaimer for everyone now.

Interviewer 1:32:34

Yeah. Hmm.

P2 1:32:38

It can beautifully be on a train ride or walk or bicycle ride.

Interviewer 1:32:38

Right.

P2 1:32:43

It's just the reality of America. But I, I would, I would say it does kind of help.

Interviewer 1:32:51

OK, great.

P2 1:32:51

'Cause especially...No, I will say this and this is kind of a big one now that I think about it.

Interviewer 1:32:57

Mm hmm.

P2 1:32:57

The fact that I am inaccessible or should be inaccessible at that time to anyone and it's a like a completely valid reason why.

Interviewer 1:33:09

Right.

P2 1:33:10

So I don't feel like...there like I can, I can disconnect from work because I can't,

Interviewer 1:33:15

Right.

P2 1:33:15

I can't do anything. I can't check my phone. You know I can't be checking my e-mail, I'm driving, you know. Or, you know, like there's no there's no,

Interviewer 1:33:18

Exactly.

P2 1:33:20

there's no, there's no, I don't have service here. I'm down in the, in the, at the subway. There is no way I can be reached. You know, like it's out of my hands.

Interviewer 1:33:24

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:33:29

I'm riding my bicycle both hands on my bicycle.

Interviewer 1:33:31

Exactly.

P2 1:33:31

I can't reach for my phone, you know? So that kinda...And then after you're unreachable for a little, it doesn't have to be long, but like that kinda subconsciously removes the pressure of like, you know, I was fine being unreachable for 5 minutes, I'm OK with just, you know, being in like home mode now. You know it kinda helps, but that it's like the initial.

Interviewer 1:33:49

Right, exactly.

P2 1:33:54

It's like the initial push kinda that helps you be like, OK,

Interviewer 1:33:56

Yes.

P2 1:33:59

I'm, I'm fine. Like I wasn't reachable.

Interviewer 1:34:00

Great.

P2 1:34:01

No, the world didn't burn down, you know, no one was reaching out like crazy like "I needed you for something." You know, 'cause it was fine.

Interviewer 1:34:02

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:34:06

So the kinda, I do say that kind of helps. That having like plausible deniability of like I'm I mean I am commuting back home.

Interviewer 1:34:07

Yes.

P2 1:34:13

I was driving back home. I can't do anything about it, so I kinda I, I would say that kinda helps.

Interviewer 1:34:15

Great.

P2 1:34:17

And then again, the time with your thoughts alone.

Interviewer 1:34:18

Yeah, exactly.

P2 1:34:19

You know, you just already like thinking about your next...your thinking about destination, not where you were at, you know. You're thinking like oh, where do I need to go? Like do I need to take the next, next stop or do I need to switch lines or oh, do I need to, you know, turn left here if I'm driving or you know that kind of stuff is like, your, your brain is thinking about that stuff and it's, it

Interviewer 1:34:34

Yeah.

P2 1:34:40

doesn't have time to think about, you know, stuff you're doing at home. You have to be focused on driving or like where you going or like what direction you're taking and then and then you like think, now that you're thinking about your destination, you're thinking about stuff that you're gonna do there and stuff like that.

Interviewer 1:34:44

Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:34:52

So I will say that does help.

Interviewer 1:34:53

Yeah. Great. And then you already covered this quite extensively though, but just in case you have anything else to say, how in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day? Again, if you just want to highlight a top point.

P2 1:35:12

Yeah, yeah. I mean it's it, it, it's just like the routines, kind of, I would say think that's a big one there is.

Interviewer 1:35:18

Yeah.

P2 1:35:19

I have certain work routines that help me do that. It's a little bit hard. I feel like if I build some routines at home it might make it even easier. Right now it's kind of lax on that.

Interviewer 1:35:30

Mm hmm.

P2 1:35:31

So it's just kind of like swap my, my peripherals maybe swap my headphones and then jump in the couch.

Interviewer 1:35:35

Right.

P2 1:35:37

So it's not like super structured routine. At work it is. Feels like very structured in that sense.

Interviewer 1:35:41

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:35:45

So that kinda helps in that way. In, in other workspaces and the ones that I'm in for a day or two, like if I'm gonna in a coffee shop or working out somewhere else or some other person's place 'cause I mean, remember I can work from

Interviewer 1:35:48

Yeah.

P2 1:35:58

wherever I want.

Interviewer 1:35:59

Yeah.

P2 1:36:00

I'm at someone else's house and working there, it is,

Interviewer 1:36:03

Mm hmm.

P2 1:36:03

there's no routine there, but the fact that I'm doing something else, usually because I'm somewhere else, makes it a little easier.

Interviewer 1:36:05

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P2 1:36:12

I don't need a routine 'cause I'm not, I don't have like that, like I'm...'cause I'm not at home and I don't have that you know that, that barrier isn't there. And it is a strong barrier. I'm like somewhere else.

Interviewer 1:36:23

Yeah.

P2 1:36:23

And then usually there's something else compelling me to like, detach from work wherever I'm at. So that kinda, that kinda helps in that way. So that's why I don't feel like I need to be doing something specific when I'm somewhere else. But at work it is just like OK,

Interviewer 1:36:32

Right. Yeah.

P2 1:36:39

thanks [name extracted]. Hear the bell, I hear, I see the people going out, so that's just kind of like my signal. I'm going down the elevator so that those routines just kinda, that routine kinda helps me. The same thing when my previous workplace it was kind of similar kind of stuff like. This one is just, the jungle really just helps. Jingle is fantastic. 4:00 PM bell... it feels like I'm back in in, like, high school, elementary school,

Interviewer 1:37:01

Right, yeah.

P2 1:37:02

whatever. You hear the bell and it's like my brain never forgot. It was craving it.

Interviewer 1:37:06

Yeah, that's funny.

P2 1:37:07

It was craving the, the sound of something to tell you that you're over. Actually, I mean, those people are...those, those, those educators had,

Interviewer 1:37:12

Yeah.

P2 1:37:15

they're, they're on to something with those bells. It works.

Interviewer 1:37:17

Right.

P2 1:37:19

But yeah, that's all I got for that.

Interviewer 1:37:19

Yeah. OK. Nice, great. And I'd say, what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to successfully disconnect from work at the end of the day, let's say every day? So in a perfect world, how would your?

P2 1:37:36

Perfect world. OK, perfect world. At work it's kind of...I, I think this is a, the situation right now is pretty close to perfect. If there were like, you know, some sort of mandatory kinda like

Interviewer 1:37:50

OK.

P2 1:37:58

call or event or something at the end of the work day that kinda like took you away from your workstation.

Interviewer 1:38:01

Mm hmm.

P2 1:38:03

It was like, you know, like a huddle or something that like, like, more kind of formalized that would be, I guess, a little bit better.

Interviewer 1:38:10

Yeah.

P2 1:38:10

'Cause then you would know like, OK, huddle's starting, I'm done. Or like or like, oh, we're doing like the, the end of day, you know, coffee or not coffee, but like the end of day like a little tea. Whatever. You know, something like that. Like a little

Interviewer 1:38:22

Yeah.

P2 1:38:24

formalized I think would help 'cause then it's a little bit easier for everyone to just be like OK hard stop.

Interviewer 1:38:25

Mm hmm.

P2 1:38:30

That's at work...

Interviewer 1:38:31

Right.

P2 1:38:32

I think that's kinda like, that's kinda like is like a work kinda geared solution. At home ideally I guess. It's a little hard, I mean harder for me to think about something. I know. Ideally,

Interviewer 1:38:50

Mm hmm.

P2 1:38:50

there is a really comfortable second room that has stuff that I'm not that I'm enjoy using. It has peripherals I enjoy using as well and that I can simply look...I mean there would need to be, I again keeping along with this ideal, ideally there is some sort of

Interviewer 1:39:12

Yeah.

P2 1:39:16

a work like trigger that kind of indicates like it's fine. You know, like something happens, like your boss sends out, like the end of day, like, you know, like, like plan for the week or whatever and then they always send that a four at 4:00 PM or whatever.

Interviewer 1:39:30

Right.

P2 1:39:33

And then you're like, OK, they sent it out. That means I'm good. No...end of business is happening. I can just get up, close the door and don't have to go in that room again and then think and then and then I kinda like, can leave work there and then go somewhere else.

Interviewer 1:39:42

Great. Exactly. Mm hmm.

P2 1:39:50

I think that's close to ideal.

Interviewer 1:39:53

Yeah.

P2 1:39:54

In my mind, I don't...

Interviewer 1:39:55

Right.

P2 1:39:58

And I guess that's just, I don't know if it has to necessarily work like that in terms of like, I just feel like it's easier when it's superior driven or employer driven, kinda like something stopping you.

Interviewer 1:40:11

Right.

P2 1:40:12

Umm. Or giving you the go ahead. But I mean it, it's hard cause business doesn't have like a set time for certain things, so it's kinda hard to do that everywhere. But I think that kinda makes it easier for the employee in that scenario to be able to just like turn off because I...what I end up

Interviewer 1:40:20

Great.

P2 1:40:31

seeing is that a lot is like people just kinda have their own kind of either timing or thing or something that ends up being their trigger to be like, OK, I'm ending now. Maybe there's, like, maybe there's a time that everyone looks at the clock that decides like this is my time to, you know, start winding down. It can be 4:08 for this person, 4:12 for this person or whatever, and then no one just agrees on a time. I think we can do that if we just all agree like this is the time, we can just start winding down.

Interviewer 1:40:56

Right, yeah.

P2 1:41:01

Then usually I guess that's easier in that, yeah, in my mind.

Interviewer 1:41:03

Alright. Great. And so lastly, I know we talked about so many things and thank you so much for all of your insights. But is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between these different workspaces or just on your general ability to disconnect from work?

P2 1:41:24

Let's see. As a hybrid worker I feel like the office space needs to offer something tangible that's different from, like a tangible benefit for me to want to...I mean the fact that it does is the only reason why I'm going in as much as I do now. If it didn't have some tangible benefit to me to coming in, I wouldn't really be compelled to, to do so.

Interviewer 1:41:47

Right. Yeah.

P2 1:41:55

The fact that I that it is like somewhere you can find people and then kinda sometimes getting to use it as a meeting space.

Interviewer 1:42:03

Yeah.

P2 1:42:04

It, it I, I see that as a benefit, me personally. And that, that's the, that's the reason that brings me in.

Interviewer 1:42:07

Mm hmm.

P2 1:42:11

But if there weren't, if conditions...When I was, when I went in for the work trip briefly and I was working at a different work location,

Interviewer 1:42:19

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:42:23

that, those kind of benefits weren't there and that made it a lot harder. I mean, I was compelled to go in just because I, my team was going.

Interviewer 1:42:25

Right.

P2 1:42:31

I was like kinda like this internal like pressure for myself to go in, but if that wasn't the case I would have not wanted to go in at all.

Interviewer 1:42:35

Right.

P2 1:42:39

At all.

Interviewer 1:42:40

Definitely.

P2 1:42:40

Even, even if it meant like me having to adjust to working fully remote, I would have rather done that than going in. Kinda like a drabby work area. The, the mood wasn't great. Lighting is not great. Like that,

Interviewer 1:42:55

Right.

P2 1:42:56

I feel like that needs to be there and I think that would change if, if my workplace at home weren't as nice as I have it right now, I feel like that,

Interviewer 1:42:58

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P2 1:43:08

that that really nice workplace kind of like wouldn't be more attractive in that way because I it would be nice to sometimes like to have lighting and have people. So, it I think it's, it's not...it really depends on...and also I guess

Interviewer 1:43:12

Right.

P2 1:43:26

I do have to mention this and I think this is a bigger,

Interviewer 1:43:28

Mm hmm.

P2 1:43:30

a bigger deal than I have just because the fact that my commute is so small, I have to, other

things, factors come in. If my commute were like longer, I feel like that would really influence my, my answer. Like I feel like I would rather go in the amount

Interviewer 1:43:35

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Right.

P2 1:43:49

I do now. If I were 30 minutes away, I would maybe go in once.

Interviewer 1:43:55

Yeah.

P2 1:43:56

If I work further away I would go in once every two weeks, you know? So distance to workplace heavily, heavily decides whether I want to change work locations like that, like workspaces like that.

Interviewer 1:43:59

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P2 1:44:11

I don't feel like that's the case for like alternate workspaces, but like mandatory like work versus home like that that like, like dual like main places that I work at. If you told, if you extend that work distance,

Interviewer 1:44:17

Right. Mm hmm.

P2 1:44:29

I think that makes that, the amount of time that I wanna be there lower, unless there's really, really, really strong reasons why I wantm I wanna go in. Like, really, really strong pull for me to go in. I would, I would,

Interviewer 1:44:35

Great.

P2 1:44:44

I would be more comfortable even trying to adjust myself at home.

Interviewer 1:44:48

Mm hmm.

P2 1:44:49

than where I'm at now. I have I, I guess right now I have the benefit of being so close that I, I get the best of both worlds. But that would not be the case if it, if it were further. I wanna say there's like, there's a

Interviewer 1:44:51

No. Yeah, definitely. Right.

P2 1:45:01

magic number probably around 20 minutes and that if, if you're pushing past that, oh you...really hard.

Interviewer 1:45:02

Yeah. Yeah.

P2 1:45:10

But if you're under that, you know, then you start seeing like the people are, I would say, unless you're talking about maybe...

Interviewer 1:45:12

Yeah.

P2 1:45:17

Well, changes with age and you know how you approach social relationships with people. But usually people, you know the younger side you're under 20 minutes, you might see the, the, the people wanna come in a little bit more than go into the office a little bit more than, than if you're past that 20 minute, you know barrier. I think it's also a mental thing. You know, after the big 2-0. You know 2-0, no 2-5 minutes to get there. 3-0 [ugh]. So if it has a one in front of it,

Interviewer 1:45:36

Definitely, yeah.

P2 1:45:47

doable. 1-9 is really doable. As soon as you hit twenty. Oooh.

Interviewer 1:45:49

Yeah.

P2 1:45:51

You start that...there's like, there's a switch that happens and you're like, I don't know if I wanna go into work three days a week if I'm driving 20 minutes.

Interviewer 1:45:57

Right, yeah.

P2 1:46:00

So that's I guess that's the last thing I wanted to maybe bring up.

Interviewer 1:46:02

Yes, no, amazing. Well, that's all I had for today, but I wanted to thank you again so much for taking the time to speak with me today and for providing your insights.

P2 1:46:12

Awesome. It was my pleasure. I feel like this kind of helps me, have helped me to think about it too. 'Cause I, I it kind of, I hadn't sat down and, you know, thought about it this like deliberately.

Interviewer 1:46:19

Yeah. Yeah.

P2 1:46:28

I think that's kinda like, I feel like I've explored a little bit by myself in the way I think just by speaking it out.

Interviewer 1:46:33

Yeah.

P2 1:46:35

So I appreciate it.

Interviewer 1:46:35

Yeah, great. Yeah, of course. Thank you.

P2 1:46:44

Bye.

P3 Interview Transcript

1h 1m 24s

Interviewer 0:05

OK. So hello, I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering, and you can stop and pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs that you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P3 0:50

Sounds good.

Interviewer 0:51

OK, great. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P3 0:54

No

Interviewer 0:55

OK, great. And so can you please tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P3 1:02

Yeah. So do you want me to say my name? OK. Yeah, so I'm [name extracted] I am a software engineer currently working out of the West Coast of the United States. Being a software engineer, a lot of the roles nowadays typically are either hybrid or remote. So my current employment status is...wait no, I feel like I'm on a job interview [laughs]. Um. Yeah, I don't know how much you want me to talk about there.

Interviewer 1:33

Yeah, any...maybe any past internships or jobs you've had?

P3 1:38

Yeah, like the specific companies?

Interviewer 1:41

Those will probably be taken out. Just general experiences that you've had.

P3 1:43

OK. OK. So my past few jobs that I've worked have all been like web developer focused. So my

current role is like a full stack web developer working on both like websites and like the services that run them. I've been doing that for a couple years now. Prior to that, I was in college just two years...yeah, two years ago. Two years ago, I was in college studying aerospace engineering. Um and that was during the COVID era, so that was also kind of hybrid in the sense of a lot of my classes were either based online or assignments were given online. So I've kind of been in a hybrid era for a while.

Interviewer 2:24

Yeah, and more specifically, can you tell me about your current hybrid work schedule and kind of how that's decided?

P3 2:31

Yeah. So my current work is very flexible. So it's not an established schedule of, like, OK, Mondays you can take or Mondays you can work from home or Fridays you can work from home. It's a little bit more flexible in like if you need to work from home at any point or if you want to work from any home at any point, I have the option to do so.

Interviewer 2:53

Mm hmm.

P3 2:53

Currently I exercise the option to like always work from home on Thursdays.

Interviewer 2:58

Mm hmm.

P3 2:58

I find that this like really opens up the door for me to like get a lot of things done at home while also working. Especially considering like for me, I have a lot of meetings during the week, especially Mondays and Friday, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Interviewer 3:06

Mm hmm.

P3 3:13

So Thursday's not having a lot of meetings, it's very easy for me to get up, do laundry, come back, do more work, get a lot of chores done at the same time as getting my normal work done.

Interviewer 3:19

Mm hmm.

P3 3:25

But it's not a like strictly enforced schedule and I can work more days from home if I so choose. I just really like going into the office. So I'm trying to find a, an even split right now.

Interviewer 3:38

Yeah. And I know you mentioned a little bit, but can you just tell me a little bit more maybe about your current job role and what that looks like?

P3 3:46

Yeah, like my specific responsibilities or like my day-to-day schedule.

Interviewer 3:49

Yeah. Either-or. Whatever comes to mind first.

P3 3:53

OK. Yeah. So right now I'm on a very small team of software developers trying to build out this web app for I'll say clients I can't, I can't actually say. But clients.

Interviewer 4:04

Mm hmm.

P3 4:07

And so a lot of my responsibilities have to deal with, like, interacting with a lot of other people more than the I think the average software engineer. Constantly talking to other people internally in my company, the other, the few other people on my team

Interviewer 4:17

Mm hmm.

P3 4:22

as well as our clients, we have lots of meetings with them and then external partners as well. So we work with another company trying to put together the this service. So I have a lot of meetings.

Interviewer 4:37

Mm hmm.

P3 4:38

And then other than that, I'm doing a lot of coding.

Interviewer 4:42

Mm hmm.

P3 4:44

And on top of all of that, I have to design a lot of like the actual elements that like a user will interact with on a website. And so I have to do a lot of design work for that, a lot of...both like system and just like graphically being like all right, this button will be blue or green or however that is. So, everything from meetings to designing to coding can fill up

Interviewer 4:52

Mm hmm.

P3 5:09

every day of the week for me so.

Interviewer 5:11

Great. Great. Sounds great. And so before we started the interview, I asked if you could please share a photo of your remote workspace and your in person workspace. So now I'll just go ahead and share my screen. Uh, hopefully you can see that, all right.

P3 5:29

Yup.

Interviewer 5:30

And so we'll start here with your remote workspace, um, and just talk a little bit about your experience in this space. And so to start out, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P3 5:37

Mm hmm. Yeah. So this is my work laptop and a mouse that I use specifically for my work laptop

Interviewer 5:48

Mmhm.

P3 5:48

kind of wedged onto my desk. So I'm in a somewhat small apartment, so a little space limited and I already have like a computer at home.

Interviewer 5:54

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 6:00

So my, my at home work, my remote workspace, is essentially me pushing a bunch of my normal computer setup to the side and setting up my work laptop. Sometimes I will connect the monitor that you see to the laptop, but otherwise it's, it's kind of at a disconnected state and I'm just using the laptop monitor. Yeah, and then I have a little light in the background 'cause it gets dark and yeah.

Interviewer 6:26

Mm hmm. Great. And is this space like its own designated space in the apartment or your home? Or is it in another space?

P3 6:41

Uh its...I think the answer to your question is, yes? Uh. What do you mean? Like designated for remote work or designated as like a space to do work?

Interviewer 6:50

I guess is it...I guess. Is it in its own like room or within a larger space where you do other things, I guess?

P3 6:56

Hmm. Yes, yeah, yes, it's in a larger room. So this little desk office setup is inside of my bedroom and then it's also kind of you can see the doorway blurred behind me, but it opens also to the living room kinda right here.

Interviewer 7:02

Mm hmm. Oh nice.

P3 7:12

So it's one bigger space.

Interviewer 7:15

Right. OK, great. And how do you feel when working in this space?

P3 7:22

Honestly, a little distracted from time to time. I've tried to kind of wedge myself in here and...and

Interviewer 7:25

Mm hmm.

P3 7:31

create a sort of very, very small space for myself. But I feel like there's a lot of distractions at home, especially at my desk, right.

Interviewer 7:34

Mm hmm.

P3 7:39

Like I like to do a lot of things on, on my computer.

Interviewer 7:42

Right.

P3 7:44

And I, I find it all a little distracting, but I don't really have much else of a place to, to work, unless I leave the house and work out of like a coffee shop or something. So yeah, this is kind of the only choice.

Interviewer 8:02

Yeah. OK, great. And can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day specifically in this space? So a day when you work from home.

P3 8:14

Yeah. So typically when I work from home like I'll get up, I'll make coffee and breakfast and then it's very, the commute's very short.

Interviewer 8:20

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P3 8:23

So yeah, I'll like sit at my desk. There are times where if I have like meetings in the morning and I'm feeling kind of lazy, I will take my laptop and honestly just sit on the couch. It's comfier and I don't need to be super focused.

Interviewer 8:41

Right.

P3 8:42

So I'll sometimes take meetings from the couch or or somewhere comfier. But, most the time when I actually need to work, I'll sit at this desk. I'll honestly work until I kind of get like tired in the sense of like a little bit of brain fog or I just, I'm getting stuck on a task.

Interviewer 8:59

Mm hmm.

P3 9:02

And at that point, which is typically maybe an hour or so,

Interviewer 9:07

Mm hmm.

P3 9:08

like, I'll get up and try to do something else productive. That's the nice thing about being home is I can do a chore or anything else that's, that's productive.

Interviewer 9:14

Mm hmm.

P3 9:17

Maybe a snack, get some water and then I'll find myself right back here at the desk and continue going through meetings and stuff.

Interviewer 9:23

Mm hmm.

P3 9:27

Typically my mornings are a lot of meetings, so I'm kind of just going through the motions in the morning and like joining a meeting, talking if I need to, so on and so on.

Interviewer 9:29

Mm hmm.

P3 9:37

And then the afternoons are, are where I'm really like sat right here and coding and designing and stuff.

Interviewer 9:44

Right, great. And so how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P3 9:53

To me the, the, the most signifying thing is when I actually like shut my laptop.

Interviewer 9:54

Mhmmm

P3 9:59

Like, I'm like, all right, I'm, I'm done. I shut my laptop and even more so a lot of the times these headphones that I'm wearing I'll

Interviewer 9:59

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 10:06

have plugged into the laptop to take my meetings, so it's a whole physical routine of like I unplug my headphones, close my laptop and then the mouse that you see pictured I like turn it off

Interviewer 10:09

Right.

P3 10:18

so the battery doesn't die and so that like three-step process of like unplug headphones, close laptop, turn off the mouse like I feel like it, it's a direct signal to my brain of like, all right, we're done. And even more so if I'm like, going to transition into, like, doing stuff on my,

Interviewer 10:30

Right.

P3 10:35

or my personal computer or what have you, like

Interviewer 10:36

Mm hmm.

P3 10:37

I'll often just put all that stuff into my work bag so I can just grab my backpack the next day if I need it.

Interviewer 10:42

Great. Mm hmm.

P3 10:46

So yeah, it's a whole, whole physical shutting down process that, that does it for me.

Interviewer 10:52

Right. Yeah, that's great. And how effective would you say that is for you?

P3 10:58

Uh...It's I...I would say it's really effective. It may

Interviewer 11:01

OK.

P3 11:03

be a little bit of just like, you know, being excited to be done for the day. But I think as soon as I go through that whole routine, my brain immediately knows

Interviewer 11:07

Mm hmm.

P3 11:13

all right, we're, we're, we're done here. And and I, you know, I get happy.

Interviewer 11:14

Mm hmm.

P3 11:19

I'm like, oh done with the day. It kind of feels like when, when Friday afternoon rolls around you're like, oh, it's, it's weekend

Interviewer 11:19

Yeah, right.

P3 11:26
time.

Interviewer 11:26
Yeah.

P3 11:29
But yeah, I think it works, it works really well. And so, I've...I don't wanna jump ahead to a different question if you have it, but I kind of repeat the same routine at work like at my physical work because I bring this laptop to, to and from work.

Interviewer 11:40
OK.

P3 11:46
So in both scenarios I, I'm doing this. So I'm doing this every single day. So my brain has really gotten to the point of like, if I'm like, shutting my laptop and doing all this stuff, it's,

Interviewer 11:54
Yeah.

P3 11:56
the work day is over.

Interviewer 11:57
Yeah.

P3 11:58
Creates a nice separation.

Interviewer 12:00
Yeah, that's great. And so how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P3 12:08
For remote work and normal work or just?

Interviewer 12:11
I would say, for now, for remote work.

P3 12:14
OK, I would say a little...

Interviewer 12:19
Mm hmm.

P3 12:20

tired. Um like I kind of mentioned I, I tend to cram a lot into the remote workdays.

Interviewer 12:27

Mm hmm.

P3 12:28

So I do feel a little tired at the end of it and honestly, I immediately find myself like trying to relocate, like physically. Like I'll often like I'll shut my laptop and everything and I'll either go to the kitchen or go to the living room and like

Interviewer 12:39

Yeah.

P3 12:46

I'll try to like step away.

Interviewer 12:48

Right.

P3 12:52

But yeah, honestly, like a mix of like tiredness and just kind of the same like happy feeling of like oh done, done with work for the day.

Interviewer 13:01

Right, yeah. And so you kind of describe the end of your workday in this space already and how you, you know, wind down close your laptop and stuff.

P3 13:10

Mmhm.

Interviewer 13:11

So I guess can you talk a bit about how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P3 13:19

Yeah. Kind of like the biggest few things that like I do are either

Interviewer 13:24

Mm hmm.

P3 13:24

I'm transitioning into normal life mode either by like making food. Typically by the end of a workday it's, it's almost dinner time, so sometimes I'll go to the store, make food, like something related to like making dinner

Interviewer 13:28

Mm hmm.

P3 13:40

and so that kind of like pulls me right out of it. If I'm just trying to relax, I'm not, maybe I'm not hungry yet, I'll play with my cats like they're always trying to get on my lap, anyways, I feel like they've tried to do that 100 times during this meeting. But they're constantly trying to interact with me and so sometimes like when I'm, like, putting away my stuff, they start to pick up on like, oh, he's done now and so they'll try to

Interviewer 13:55

Mm hmm right.

P3 14:08

play with me, so that takes me right out of it.

Interviewer 14:12

Mm hmm.

P3 14:13

Or yeah, just like laying, like, walking over to my couch and honestly, just laying on my couch also just pulls me straight out of it.

Interviewer 14:20

Yeah.

P3 14:22

So yeah.

Interviewer 14:23

Nice. Great. And so these might be the same things, so if you don't have anything else to add, that's alright. But how exactly do you mentally disconnect from work on these days?

P3 14:39

That one's a little tougher.

Interviewer 14:42

Mm hmm.

P3 14:42

Yeah, kind of the same sort of routines. I will say that like for my given role sometimes uh...like I have like...I can get like paged from my work like often. I don't wanna say too often.

Interviewer 14:49

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 14:56

Maybe once a week something will happen post work hours that I'll need to respond to. So it can be a little bit harder to like fully mentally disconnect because I, I'm kinda always listening to hear if my phone goes off for something, but

Interviewer 15:00

Right.

Mm hmm.

P3 15:13

honestly, for me, it's truly about like the full experience. So like I...if I'm done with work like I'm gonna like focus on cooking. I'm like going to try to take my brain off work and, and focus on other things, and I, I think a big part of that for me is I try to finish everything

Interviewer 15:23

Right.

P3 15:32

at, at work or I try to put it in a state to where I don't have to think about it anymore.

Interviewer 15:34

Mm hmm.

P3 15:37

So like even in scenarios where

Interviewer 15:37

Mm hmm.

P3 15:41

I'm designing something right and, and I'm not gonna finish the design by the end of the day, it's definitely gonna take a few days, I try to, at work, like make a whole like conclusion or like a whole document, explaining like, all right tomorrow when I get in, I'm gonna do this, this, this. Like outline every single thing that I have done and I will do the next day, so that way I don't have to think about it in between. Like I could fully forget everything as soon as I leave, and I could show up to work the next day and have something there that, that helps me sync back up.

Interviewer 16:05

Yeah.

P3 16:14

And so I found that recently that's been helping me fully mentally disconnect a lot as well, like

creating not just like the physical interaction, but like the mental conclusion of outlining all my thoughts so.

Interviewer 16:28

Yeah, definitely. Great. So, what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain separation between your work and home life?

P3 16:41

Is like during the workday or or just in general?

Interviewer 16:44

Yeah, I think maybe just in general. Just to make sure you have that separation since you did say earlier that it is kind of within your other kind of living space.

P3 16:53

Yeah. Yeah, honestly, like having these headphones on kind of puts me into like a productive mode.

Interviewer 16:59

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 17:01

I even when I'm at my physical office, like with how many meetings and stuff I do like, I'm almost always wearing these headphones.

Interviewer 17:07

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 17:09

So I think just recreating that same sort of like micro environment of like, have my laptop with this specific mouse.

Interviewer 17:18

Yeah.

P3 17:20

Like have these headphones on. I think that sort of feeling like keeps me in the space. Otherwise, like, personally I, I do have a little bit of trouble.

Interviewer 17:28

Right.

P3 17:34

Umm.

Interviewer 17:34

Mm hmm.

P3 17:40

Like, sorry, what was the original question?

Interviewer 17:46

What objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain separation between work and home life?

P3 17:52

OK, between yeah...OK, yeah. So creating like, recreating kind of like the mini environment of like my laptop with this mouse with the headset like I, I try to keep all that the same to, to focus me in on like this is work and then also kinda like...what's it like pushing my, my personal stuff to the side like some way it doesn't even like the normal setup isn't even there or it's there but you know it's not,

Interviewer 18:07

Yeah. Right.

P3 18:19

not quite how it's typically set up.

Interviewer 18:23

Mm hmm.

P3 18:25

Sort of like forces me to be like, all right, it's like work time.

Interviewer 18:30

Right

P3 18:30

Like, I don't even have the option to not, not to work.

Interviewer 18:34

Yeah, definitely. OK, great. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P3 18:44

I might have touched on this, but like distractions are, are big.

Interviewer 18:47

Right.

P3 18:49

It's...I find myself very easily when I'm at home looking at other things like whether it might be like my phone or my, like my cats, or sometimes I'll be like I'm gonna go start a chore, even though I should really be doing, doing work.

Interviewer 18:57

Mm hmm. Right.

P3 19:07

There is just a lot, a lot of distractions around.

Interviewer 19:10

Mm hmm.

P3 19:11

And I've been trying to work on self-control, but sometimes like...I just find it's a lot easier like to like if I see my phone light up, pick up my phone when I'm at home. Versus at work

Interviewer 19:25

Right.

P3 19:25

like, it feels a little bit more pressure to like stay super focused

Interviewer 19:32

Mm hmm.

P3 19:33

in the office. Whereas here it's, it's very easy to be like, oh, my brain is, is tired, I'm gonna do something else for a little bit.

Interviewer 19:35

Mm hmm.

P3 19:40

So I, I think that's been the, the biggest complication.

Interviewer 19:41

Right. Definitely. So now we can move on. The next image I have here is of your in office workspace. And so our conversation will now focus kind of on this space. And so similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P3 19:59

Mm hmm. Yeah. So this photo is my desk at work. I do have my own little, little desk area. So you can see the same laptop, the mouse, the headphones that I was talking about. As well as

there's like a second monitor that kinda sits up behind this laptop. I have some personal items in there. So I have this little like Lego set that's off to the left and some like little...I don't even know what...the little card like, little card things that I've collected off to the right. And then, and not within the scope of the picture, or, yeah not within the frame of the picture,

Interviewer 20:42

Mm hmm.

P3 20:46

my desk is like...my entire office space it's like a larger room, and your desk is kind of like... How do I describe this? There's like rows of desks with like no separation in between, so it's kind of like one big sort of shared space.

Interviewer 21:04

OK.

P3 21:06

Granted, the desk itself is still like one desk, so you know this is my space. But they're kind of all in a row. There's no divisions. The green sort of like backing to this desk that you see is like...it would probably end like if the photo was just a little bit more zoomed out.

Interviewer 21:19

Mm hmm.

P3 21:25

It's very short, so you can see like right over to the person across from you. It's very much a shared open environment.

Interviewer 21:26

Mm hmm.

P3 21:33

It's, it's how honestly I...I feel like if you just like search software startup company like office space. It's kind of that generic

Interviewer 21:39

Uh huh.

P3 21:42

sort of, sort of world.

Interviewer 21:44

Right. Yeah. And how do you feel when working in this space?

P3 21:50

Honestly, I feel very much like focused and in tune with like what I'm supposed to do. Like when I come into the office and I sit here, it's like very clear that I'm doing work today because

Interviewer 21:56

Mm hmm.

P3 22:04

there's, there's not really anything else to do. And I really like the open environment or like the open environment with coworkers aspect.

Interviewer 22:13

Mm hmm.

P3 22:15

In my opinion, it does achieve its goal of like promoting like collaboration and like productivity. I find myself very often like just swiveling my chair to the right and, and talking to the person next to me about whatever we need to get done.

Interviewer 22:26

Right. Right.

P3 22:32

And overall, I think the environment itself is...I like, I like the feeling of like sitting down at my, at my work desk...like the same sort of routine of like closing the laptop and, and disconnecting,

Interviewer 22:45

Mm hmm.

P3 22:46

I get that same feeling when I when I sit down at that desk and, and open it up that I don't really feel when I do it remotely.

Interviewer 22:55

Mhmm

P3 22:58

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 22:59

Great. And so can you now tell me about how you spend a typical working day on a day like this when you would go into office?

P3 23:08

Yeah. So, I get up in the morning. And instead of like making coffee or anything at home

Interviewer 23:16

Mm hmm.

P3 23:17

I honestly get in my car. I've been switching back and forth between driving and taking the bus.

Interviewer 23:23

Mm hmm.

P3 23:24

But I get to the office in the morning and then like the very, very first thing that I do before I even sit down is my work has like a little coffee machine. So I'll go and grab a cup of coffee as, as pictured.

Interviewer 23:33

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 23:39

And then I'll find my way to my desk. I'll take like everything out of my bag between the laptop, the headphones, the mouse. I've got like my work phone, I've got...I've got so much stuff in my bag, so I spent like a few minutes just setting everything up.

Interviewer 23:54

Right.

P3 23:55

And then typically once again, it's, it's sort of the same ish routine of like my work day at home. So, I'll have a lot of meetings in the morning, do a lot of like coding and design work

Interviewer 24:03

Mm hmm.

P3 24:10

in the afternoon.

Interviewer 24:11

Mm hmm.

P3 24:13

And honestly, I find myself working later in the office. I think sort of the mentality there is like having to commute back and forth and like having that physical separation,

Interviewer 24:28

Mm hmm.

P3 24:28

if I have more stuff that I, I haven't finished yet, I feel more inclined to to get it done. It's kind of the "I'm already here mentality" of like

Interviewer 24:37

Right.

P3 24:40

oh, like if it's gonna take me like 20-30 minutes to get home and there's traffic and this and that, all right, well, I might as well work 15 minutes more to try and get something done. Whereas if I was home, it's a lot easier to be like oh, I'm already home...it's already...like I've already worked for a number of hours and it's a lot easier to just kind of like stop, like find a, find a good stopping point. But mostly like the actual tasks that I'm doing on any given day, like the responsibilities it's, it's very much the same between in, in work and out of work...

Interviewer 25:04

Right.

P3 25:15

or in office and, and at home.

Interviewer 25:16

OK. Great. OK, great. And so I think you mentioned earlier that how you signal the end of the workday when working from home and in this space is pretty much the same.

P3 25:28

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 25:29

Is there any difference at all when working in the space?

P3 25:32

Yeah. So, there's a very small difference.

Interviewer 25:35

Mm hmm.

P3 25:36

Like same exact routine, but just some stuff added on.

Interviewer 25:39

OK.

P3 25:42

So like this coffee cup here, like, I'll refill with, like water and stuff and like use it constantly and

they're, they're sort of like communal. So, like after doing, like closing everything down all that, like, I'll take my coffee cup, go to the kitchen and like wash it and like put that away.

Interviewer 25:46

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 25:59

And then I will also...I have a couple work friends that like I'll say bye to at the end of every single day. So just like some added things of like do my normal routine, like have my bag with me, go to the kitchen, clean stuff up and then go one space over and say goodbye to people, and then that's...that even further tells my brain

Interviewer 26:10

Mm hmm.

P3 26:18

all right we're, we're really done. But yeah, taking those steps and, and then like commuting home is I guess part of that process. But very, very, very similar so.

Interviewer 26:31

Yeah. And I guess how effective is all of that for you as well to just kind of like be done with the workday?

P3 26:37

It's, it's honestly less effective when I'm in the office strictly because sometimes I'll find myself like when I go to say bye to coworkers or like in my in my process of trying to like shut down, someone may come up to me and be like, oh hey, by

Interviewer 26:44

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 26:56

the way, like something, something work related. Like oh, like can we set up a meeting for this time or what

Interviewer 26:59

Yeah.

P3 27:02

what were your thoughts again on like XY or Z like? It's very easy for that routine to kinda get disrupted by external people.

Interviewer 27:12

Mm hmm.

P3 27:14

So there is the issue there. I think what counteracts that part is the actual driving home or like taking the bus home.

Interviewer 27:22

Mm hmm. Right.

P3 27:26

If that didn't exist, if I lived like right next to my office, I feel like it could kind of mentally mess with me of, like, feeling like I'm shut down and then someone brings up something as I'm walking out the door and then, well, now I'm gonna be thinking about that for the next 15 minutes, but.

Interviewer 27:43

Yeah.

P3 27:45

Luckily, my commute time is enough to where by the time I get home, hopefully I'm not thinking about it anymore.

Interviewer 27:50

Yeah.

P3 27:51

But yeah, it's definitely. It's definitely in some ways easier remotely to, to fully shut down and just and just not look at it anymore.

Interviewer 27:56

Yeah, definitely. OK, great. And so how would you describe your mindset at the end of the work day, specifically when you work in office?

P3 28:10

Umm. I think I often find myself....Uhh....Good question. I think I...I know I said tired for the other answer. But it's a different kind of tired. It's like...I find myself a lot more like, socially tired.

Interviewer 28:36

Mm hmm.

P3 28:37

I...even though like I'm doing the same amount of like on the laptop meetings and, and all that,

Interviewer 28:41

Mm hmm.

P3 28:43

with the amount of people that are in my office and it being an open space and like the amount of like in person interactions I have whenever I'm there,

Interviewer 28:51

Mm hmm.

P3 28:52

I can feel it's like a lot more socially draining and that after work I typically

Interviewer 28:54

Yeah.

P3 28:58

have less interest in like either like seeing friends or like talking with other people. Whenever I work from home,

Interviewer 29:06

Mm hmm.

P3 29:09

it's kind of flipped like I feel like I've exhausted my productivity. Like I, I try to cram a lot into those days, but I'm not doing a lot of in person interaction.

Interviewer 29:17

Right.

P3 29:19

So on those days, I as soon as like work ends, I like immediately want to go like see people.

Interviewer 29:27

Right.

P3 29:28

So it's kind of like flipped in that sense.

Interviewer 29:30

Yeah, definitely.

P3 29:30

But both, both answers were tired.

It's just a different, different kind of tired.

Interviewer 29:33

Yeah, no. Yeah, fair enough. Yeah. And so you already described you know the end of your workday in this space. So I guess can you talk a bit more about how you actually transition again from kind of this work mode into your personal time on days that you work in this space?

P3 29:51

Yeah. Yeah. So after doing like the whole routine.

Interviewer 29:55

Mm hmm.

P3 29:56

On my way home from work or like when I go to say bye to some of my coworkers, I sometimes hang out with them like outside of work.

Interviewer 30:04

Right. Mm hmm.

P3 30:13

So just trying to talk to them about non work things like maybe what we are doing that weekend, or I don't know whatever hobbies we're getting up to that can like help take me like out of it.

Interviewer 30:19

Mm hmm.

P3 30:19

But I'm like still physically at work, so it never really, really quite works.

Interviewer 30:21

Yeah.

P3 30:24

But on the way home from work, I'll always either listen to music which that helps, or I'll try to call someone. I'm very often like calling my younger sister, asking her how like her life's going, or try to call some of my friends and,

Interviewer 30:29

Mm hmm.

P3 30:41

and see what they're up to.

Interviewer 30:43

Mm hmm.

P3 30:45

So I think. I think like when I'm actually driving home is like when most of like the mentally checking out part is happening of, of

Interviewer 30:52

Yeah.

P3 30:54

doing one of those things, or...Sometimes even like I'll be going straight from work to something else, whether it's like the gym or there was one time where, like me and my friends like went golfing, like right after work like. Um.

Interviewer 31:08

Mmhm.

P3 31:10

Sometimes, like going straight to another thing like immediately helps, like clocking out and and thinking about like, oh, that thing that I'm literally about to do in 10 minutes. Like you start just thinking about that instead.

Interviewer 31:22

Right.

P3 31:23

So that can help.

Interviewer 31:24

Yeah, definitely. And would you say those are kind of like how you mentally disconnect from work? All of those things?

P3 31:31

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 31:32

OK, great.

P3 31:33

Uh.

Interviewer 31:34

Oh, sorry. Did you have something?

P3 31:35

Oh, no, sorry, sorry. Go.

Interviewer 31:37

And then lastly, what challenges, if any, do you have, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P3 31:44

Yeah, I find that...Actually, let me think about it for just a second.

Interviewer 31:50

Mm hmm.

P3 31:55

I find that at times when I'm like, tired or hitting my like just limit for the day, I feel like I'm kind of frequently pushed beyond that.

Interviewer 32:05

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P3 32:10

I guess just like a little bit more context into like my company. It is a bit of like a startup or it, well it is a startup, but like it, it definitely has like a bit of that like startup culture of like grind, grind, grind. So whenever I'm in office, I feel like the biggest challenge is like, finding time to like, take a break. Whenever I'm at home, like, I'll work like I mentioned, like I'll work for an hour and then like, you know, you hit a limit of like how much you can focus for a given time.

Interviewer 32:30

Right. Yeah.

P3 32:39

And so it's very easy for me to like find something else to do where I might still feel productive, like, I still feel like I'm, I'm doing something, but it's just not necessarily like thinking about work. Whereas when I'm in office,

Interviewer 32:44

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P3 32:52

it's very hard to like when I hit my limit, find and do anything else 'cause I don't feel like I can just sit there on my phone like that doesn't, that doesn't feel right.

Interviewer 32:59

Right. Mm hmm.

P3 33:06

So I'll very much find myself like trying to just walk around the office and maybe talk to those same people that I talked to at the end of the day and trying to just not look at a screen for a little bit. But yeah, it's, it's, it's very hard to, to like take breaks I guess is, is the answer.

Um...Yeah, I think...yeah, I think that's it.

Interviewer 33:36

OK, great. And just to touch upon that point on how like going on your phone and stuff doesn't feel right maybe in the office compared to at home. Can you maybe expand a little bit more about that and why you think that is?

P3 33:49

Yeah. Yeah. I think like, it's very hard when you're like in person and there's 20 people around you who are all doing work and then like, like you are. You are operating during like work hours, right? Like we'll say, in the stereotypical like 9:00 to 5:00,

Interviewer 34:07

Right. Mm hmm.

P3 34:11

you know, it's an interesting dynamic because no, no, no person is actually working like nine to five like you.

Interviewer 34:20

Right.

P3 34:20

It's not possible to focus and like be productive for that long, or even if you are trying to like actually work that amount of time, you are, your productivity level's probably going down over time, whereas taking a break probably would have helped.

Interviewer 34:24

Right. Mm hmm.

P3 34:35

Um. And so part of that is like at a certain point you, you do need to, to mentally take a break, but when you're surrounded by 20 people, the time when you might need a break might not sync up with others.

Interviewer 34:43

Right.

P3 34:49

So it...like pulling out your phone and like maybe doing something on your phone where someone walking by might not know how long you've been on your phone, or like what you're doing on your phone.

Interviewer 34:50

Hmm. Yeah.

P3 35:01

Like those kind of...like pressures of...of like trying to manage like what your coworkers think about you and like you don't want to give off the impression that

Interviewer 35:10

Mm hmm.

P3 35:14

you're like, you're the kid spending all, all day on your phone and stuff like that.

Interviewer 35:17

Right. Yeah, no.

P3 35:21

I think. Yeah, the big the big difference, like your phone versus other break things is if I go and like take a break by talking to like one of my coworkers, like, I get up and we don't like...not talk about work, just like the weekend thing or anything like

Interviewer 35:27

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P3 35:36

that, if you go and you physically talk to someone, there's almost never any judgment because it's like, oh well, at least they're...I don't know. I can try to formulate my thoughts better, but.

Interviewer 35:48

Yeah.

P3 35:53

Yeah, I think...I think the biggest. Let me, let me clean it all up. The biggest problems with using the phone are like other people don't know what you're doing. They don't know how long you've been, how long you've been on your phone.

Interviewer 36:05

Mm hmm.

P3 36:10

And they also like, don't really know if like you've actually hit your limit, like you're not like communicating in any way

Interviewer 36:15

Right.

P3 36:16

like why you're taking a break. They just see you like on your phone. But at the same time, that's like really the only way to take a break unless you go and distract someone else.

Interviewer 36:25

Great. Yeah, exactly.

P3 36:29

So yeah.

Interviewer 36:31

OK, great. So moving on, I kind of want to talk a little bit about kind of comparing these two workspaces and you kind of have already in some ways talked about your experiences in both. So just to start out, how does I guess your in office workspace compare to your remote workspace in general? The first thing that comes to mind.

P3 36:50

Yeah. First thing that comes to mind cleaner.

Interviewer 36:55

Uh huh.

P3 36:56

More, more organized. Um and...Not better maintained, but it's just like better suited I think is, is the best way to put it. Like this is, like a, like my desk at work is you know very empty, very open for me to put things on and, and exist in that space and

Interviewer 37:04

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Right.

P3 37:18

it feels very much more like designed for me to work at, whereas my at home one is a little bit more thrown together.

Interviewer 37:24

Yeah.

P3 37:30

It honestly...it...my at home one though is still comfortable because like it is like the desk that I picked out for myself and the chair that I picked out for myself. Like it's...

Interviewer 37:41

Mm hmm.

P3 37:42

it contains like things that I've picked out for myself, but,

Interviewer 37:45

Mm hmm.

P3 37:47

they're just kind of multipurpose, so it doesn't feel as,

Interviewer 37:49

Right.

P3 37:52

as designed for working versus like it, it's kind of more multipurpose for like also doing XY and Z. Whereas my desk and everything at work is designed for me to like, be comfortable and and do all my work and and have the space to do that so.

Interviewer 38:09

Yeah, definitely. And I think you kind of started to touch upon this, but of the two pictures here that you shared, which feels more like a workplace to you.

P3 38:18

Yeah, definitely like my actual in office one. The one on the right.

Interviewer 38:22

Right.

P3 38:24

It, it feels very much more like specific for working.

Interviewer 38:27

Yeah.

P3 38:30

Yeah.

Interviewer 38:30

Yeah, great. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P3 38:38

Can you define boundaries a little bit more?

Interviewer 38:41

Yes, it could be anything from like physical boundaries, temporal boundaries so any time based routines, or just even mental or emotional boundaries that you have in both spaces.

P3 38:47

Hmm. Yeah. So physical boundaries at work, I guess I'll start with work.

Interviewer 38:55

Mm hmm.

P3 38:55

Physical boundaries at work, don't really have any.

Interviewer 39:00

Mm hmm.

P3 39:00

I kind of try to signify that like to like not bother me or interrupt my space by like putting on my headphones and like I feel like that sort of conveys a message of like, all right, he might be on a meeting. He might be just like working really hard. Like don't bother him.

Interviewer 39:14

Right.

P3 39:15

So like, I've tried to sort of build that space, but otherwise like it is a very open environment like.

Interviewer 39:21

Mm hmm.

P3 39:21

Like there is no separation at my desk. Like a little bit out of frame to the right there it's like the next desk, so it's it's hard to sort of like confine myself

Interviewer 39:27

Gotcha.

Mm hmm.

P3 39:35

to an area. Whereas like, like complete juxtaposition of the photo next to it, like my desk, is kind of wedged into like a corner of my room. Like there's even like a little like

Interviewer 39:45

Right.

P3 39:50

outcropping where it like perfectly fits a desk like into the wall. Like that's what you can kind of see here.

Interviewer 39:54

Right.

P3 39:57

So, like wedging myself into that space, it like feels very much more like physically defined,

Interviewer 40:02

Yeah.

P3 40:03

and like there's an actual, like physical wall boundary there,

Interviewer 40:06

Yeah, right. Uh huh.

P3 40:14

which kind of also creates a pseudo mental boundary of like separating me from the rest of the things that are going on in my apartment.

Interviewer 40:16

Gotcha.

P3 40:18

Similarly with like the mental boundaries,

Interviewer 40:21

Hmm.

P3 40:22

like the headphones convey like or like I'm trying to put myself like a imaginary physical boundary, but that in of itself is a mental boundary.

Interviewer 40:27

Yeah.

P3 40:29

Like I'm trying to box myself into like what's happening at my desk.

Interviewer 40:33

Right.

P3 40:34

Whereas at home I don't really have any sort of like mental boundaries at all. It's...it's...

Interviewer 40:41

Mm hmm.

P3 40:43

like, this is why I get distracted. Its like there's, there's so much around me, like, so many things that I bought because I enjoy looking at them, like using them, whatever, are all around me.

Interviewer 40:45

Yeah. Yeah. Mm hmm.

P3 40:55

And so I'm still trying to work on, on like creating some sort of mental barrier between me and all those distractions. Whereas at work it's, it's mostly just about trying to like...I don't know not, not have to talk to the guy next to me all day.

Interviewer 41:13

Yeah, exactly. Yeah, great.

P3 41:14

Yeah.

Interviewer 41:16

And how does your ability to disconnect from work when in the office compared to when working from home?

P3 41:24

In office, it's very, very hard.

Interviewer 41:28

Mm hmm.

P3 41:28

It's very difficult. I work in a like office building, so like like a like a high rise. So it's, it's not even really possible to just like like leave work and go for a walk at one of my previous internships like we were on like the first floor of like

Interviewer 41:43

Yeah.

P3 41:49

a small little 3 story building so, sometimes, like when I just needed a break, I would just like go for a walk and then I'm not like physically in the office and it's very easy to not think about things. Here,

Interviewer 42:00

Yeah.

P3 42:00

there's not really anywhere to go.

Interviewer 42:03

Yeah.

P3 42:04

So...What I'll often do is like, like walk a couple laps around my office floor and like just try not to think about the things that are going on around me or I'll try to go to like one of my coworkers like friends desks and like bring up something not work related and try, try to get my mind off it, but it almost always very rapidly like descends back into work talk.

Interviewer 42:26

Right. Yeah.

P3 42:34

So it's very hard to do that in office, whereas like at home,

Interviewer 42:37

Yeah.

P3 42:41

it's, it's a lot easier for me to like, just physically get up because this is my only like work defined space. Physically get up, go to another, like, just go to that room behind me

Interviewer 42:49

Right. Yes. Yeah.

P3 42:54

and immediately like I'm, I'm separated and I can think about anything else and it's, it's a lot easier to, to transition out of it.

Interviewer 43:04

Right. Yeah. And this is kind of similar. So if you don't have anything else, that's all right. But do you feel that it is easier or harder to completely kind of detach from work at the end of the day, the days that you go in office? And how is that compared to like the days that you go that you work remote?

P3 43:21

Yeah. So this is actually...I, I like this question because it is...my answer is gonna be a direct contradiction to what I just said. But in office it's very hard to like mentally check out but...

Interviewer 43:30

Right

P3 43:39

But like as far as the work day ending right when I'm at home, it's very hard to be like 100% disconnected because like my laptop is like still out.

Interviewer 43:42

Right.

P3 43:51

I'll try to put it away sometimes, but like, it could still be like sitting on my desk...or, uh...Like I'm still kind of existing in that work home space like where I could be doing work. Like there are sometimes where I have so much on my plate to where like the fact that, I'm...

Interviewer 44:02

Yeah. Right.

P3 44:09

I have the capability to at any point just open the laptop again and get more work done. It's, it's, it's like hard to 100% separate from it. Whereas like when I'm working out of the office, when I leave for the day like that that is that like that, there's no more work is getting done.

Interviewer 44:14

Mm hmm. Right.

P3 44:29

And so I can like pretty much check out. Like there is like the matter of you know I could get pinged on my phone or something like that but, but it's a lot easier for me to be like I am done being productive today. Like my day is over.

Interviewer 44:43

Yeah.

P3 44:46

So yeah.

Interviewer 44:49

So lastly, moving on, I asked if you could please share a photo of either a space or object to something in general that helps you, you know, mentally disconnect or detach from work at the end of the day. And you shared this photo. So can you just tell me a bit about it?

P3 45:04

Yeah. So these are my 2 cats. The closer up front one, the black one.

Interviewer 45:07

Mmhmm.

P3 45:10

His name is [name of cat extracted] and the farther one is [name of cat extracted], the gray one.

Interviewer 45:11

Mm hmm.

P3 45:16

So I've had these cats for a while now. [cat name extracted] just turned 2. [cat name extracted] turns 4 soon. And they are honestly my biggest distraction through and through. They love just like playing and hanging out and even like right now just out of frame, [cat name extracted] just jumped on my lap. Say hi [cat name extracted]. They love to just, like, hang out and play. So they help me disconnect. Like whether I want to or not, they help me like bring me back down and, and...

Interviewer 45:46

Right.

P3 45:52

Not everything's about work. Like, like these guys have never paid taxes in their life.

Interviewer 45:54

Yeah.

P3 45:59

Yeah, they...it's, it's really easy to if I need to like check out at the end of the day, or if I just need a mental break and I'm working from home, I can just look to the right and they're probably there waiting for pets and it takes me right out of it.

Interviewer 46:07

Yeah.

P3 46:17

Yeah, or if, like, I'm coming home from work and if somehow, like, I'm still thinking about something, right, like I walk in the door and they're immediately meowing and, and like trying to jump on me and stuff and all the thoughts are gone.

Interviewer 46:21

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 46:31

Like I just it,

Interviewer 46:31

Right.

P3 46:32

it really helps me separate whether I'm like getting home from work or I've been at home working and I, I need to check out.

Interviewer 46:41

Right. And I guess maybe why out of everything or anything that you could have shared, did you share this photo specifically of your two cats?

P3 46:50

Yeah. Good question, I think...Oooh good question. Yeah, 'cause I have mentioned like there's a lot of distractions, right?

Interviewer 47:02

Mm hmm.

P3 47:04

But I think a lot of those things are either temporary distractions or even in the moment like, I know that, like I'm just looking at this thing to, to try and take a break. But it's all...but it's all kind of fleeting.

Interviewer 47:26

Uh huh.

P3 47:27

And a lot of the things that are like in my house that I would, that I could use as like a, a checkout point whether it's like any sort of like games that I have or books or, or anything of the sort, it might not be every day like I'm not gonna do those things every single day.

Interviewer 47:40

Mm hmm. Right. Yeah.

P3 47:46

And they also like, you know most of those types of things are like commitments like, you're not gonna...I don't read a book for like 2 minutes.

Interviewer 47:51

Yeah.

P3 47:53

Like it's, it's probably gonna be a commitment. So my cats are like the greatest source of I'm like done for the day. I just play with my cats for 5 minutes and it's like very fun and like it doesn't require any thinking.

Interviewer 48:05

Right.

P3 48:08

I'm just hanging out.

Interviewer 48:09

Yeah.

P3 48:09

Just, just pet them and, and also just like the physical touch aspect of like you know, like touch, like touching a fluffy little cat is makes the...makes the brain feel good and

Interviewer 48:19

Yeah.

P3 48:24

I don't know. I think it's the, the simplest everyday thing

Interviewer 48:32

Mm hmm.

P3 48:34

that helps me like know that it's, it's over and that I don't have to think about it.

Interviewer 48:36

Yeah. Right, yeah. And so, I mean, you kinda described how they helped you mentally disconnect from work of just, you know, being there and playing with them. But just to clarify like you just said, so you do this kind of everyday, it doesn't depend on whether you work from home or not.

P3 48:51

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 48:53

They help you disconnect any day of the week?

P3 48:56

Yeah, it's, you know, their, their job is a little bit more lenient when I, when I drive home from work because I do feel a greater separation as I'm like driving home.

Interviewer 49:04

Mm hmm.

P3 49:09

It still takes the same effect, right. Like I like...if I if I still have any connection to work, like when I'm ,when I get home, they still wipe it away. But it's...they're the most effective when I'm, when I'm at home.

Interviewer 49:20

Right.

P3 49:24

It, it really, it really takes me out of it.

Interviewer 49:28

Yeah.

P3 49:28

And that's why like if I'm on like work calls or like I'm trying to be productive like I'm, I'm not trying to be like negligent or anything, but I have to be like, "no, not like not right now."

Interviewer 49:33

Mm hmm. Right, yeah.

P3 49:40

And I have to...yeah, not have them climb all over me.

Interviewer 49:43

Great. Yeah, for sure. Great. So lastly, moving on, I just wanted to talk a little bit about general experiences of you know, your ability to disconnect, but also about switching between these workspaces, which kind of leads perfectly into you were just talking about your commute. So I was wondering if you can just describe

P3 49:56

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 50:01

how I guess you typically move between these different workspaces during the week?

P3 50:21

Yeah. So, I have been switching back and forth between taking public transportation in the form of a bus to work as well as driving myself to the office. We have a garage at our office that I can park my car in so that's very much how I how I physically get to and from.

Interviewer 50:23

Yeah.

P3 50:26

But...Yeah...Sorry, I'm trying to remember. I, I jumped ahead of myself. What, what was the question besides the physical aspect?

Interviewer 50:37

No, you're good. Yeah just, just describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week.

P3 50:44

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 50:45

But you can also talk about how that commute or transition in general makes you feel.

P3 50:49

OK. Yeah. So part of the whole like commute aspect and move in between is like, like my backpack that I use for work.

Interviewer 50:59

Yeah.

P3 51:00

So part of the routine is like packing that bag and making sure I have everything like I need a badge to get into my office building, so making sure I pack that.

Interviewer 51:08

Mm hmm.

P3 51:09

As well as all the, all the little devices that I use with my laptop, whether it be my mouse, my headphones, my I, I have like this like flash drive that I like to use to store stuff on. Um. Making sure I pack all those both coming home from work, sometimes I'll leave some of that stuff at work when I know, like I very often work Monday and Tuesday in office, so sometimes I'll leave some of the stuff in office on Monday night. But for the most part, going through the routine of packing the bag and then going to the office, I drive, park there, badge in, so on.

Interviewer 51:44

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 51:48

Reverse coming home. And then, I mean when I'm here in the morning I try to build a commute routine of like getting up and going and get coffee or, or sometimes I'll even try to just like walk a lap around my block to feel like I'm going somewhere.

Interviewer 52:00

Mm hmm.

P3 52:11

It does...it...it sometimes works but.

Interviewer 52:13

OK.

P3 52:16

Yeah, it's, I think that kinda answers all of it.

Interviewer 52:19

Yeah. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?
And if so, how?

P3 52:26

Yeah, yeah. So it serves as like a good transition period.

Interviewer 52:30

Mm hmm.

P3 52:32

Like sometimes when I jump too quickly from one thing to another, whether it's...Like at one of my previous jobs

Interviewer 52:42

Mm hmm.

P3 52:43

we had like a little cafe next door and so sometimes like me and some of my coworkers would like after work, just go and grab some food.

Interviewer 52:46

Mm hmm.

P3 52:52

But the problem there was like it was so quick after work that sometimes discussions from work would, would bleed into, into that space.

Interviewer 53:00

Right.

P3 53:00

So then it doesn't really serve as like a...like I, I don't get that separation. Whereas like driving from home, driving to

Interviewer 53:06

Yeah.

P3 53:09

home alone,

Interviewer 53:10

Mm hmm.

P3 53:12

it's very easy to like, like find other distractions and just like fully get my mind off of it. Like there's no one to talk to work about, there's,

Interviewer 53:18

Yeah.

P3 53:21

there's no real...I mean like I can just think about it, but like, if I if I find distractions to take my mind off of it, there's no way that it can kind of come back up.

Interviewer 53:29

Right.

P3 53:30

And then as I'm going from work to home like I walk in the door, and then I definitely feel like all right now I'm, now I'm at home and I throw my like bag to the side. That's over there now, like I don't, I don't have to think about working anymore.

Interviewer 53:44

Right.

P3 53:44

Umm. So that that's the, the commute definitely helps.

Interviewer 53:47

Thanks. Yeah, that's great. And how does the movement between these spaces during your work week influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P3 54:03

I think...Hmm I think...Going, yeah, going from work to home has been very good for disconnecting for the reasons like I've previously listed of, of you know just like physically being separated and also like, like lack of interactions related to work. Lack of distractions tied to work.

Interviewer 54:14

Mm hmm.

P3 54:31

Going to work.

Interviewer 54:32

Mm hmm.

P3 54:35

I think it's, it's, it's...It's part of like the...I feel like it's kind of like part of my actual like routine at this point. Like it when I get in my car to like go to work and I'm starting to drive and like

commute in like my I feel I kind of feel like my brain is like waking up and I like immediately start like thinking about all the things I need

Interviewer 54:44

Right. Mm hmm.

P3 54:54

to do for the day.

Interviewer 54:55

Mm hmm.

P3 54:58

And so, like by the time like I park my car and I'm starting to badge in, I'm already like, OK, I need to talk to this person in like 15 minutes, I need to, I need to do this. So, it is like a ramp up period as well, like just as much as it's a ramp...like a decompress period, it's, it's a ramp up period.

Interviewer 55:07

Yeah.

P3 55:18

Which can be nice for the same reasons of like why it's nice to not have like the immediate back-to-back modes.

Interviewer 55:23

For sure.

P3 55:25

It gives me time to like, think about what I'm gonna do for the day,

Interviewer 55:29

Mm hmm.

P3 55:29

before like I, I dive in. There's, there's been, there's been sometimes where like I work from home and I get up and I immediately start working on some things and I'm like, oh, shoot, like, I'm I should have, I should have been doing something else. Like, I should have been, I should have talked to

Interviewer 55:41

Yeah.

P3 55:42

this person or I should have done this other thing.

Interviewer 55:44

Right.

P3 55:45

So not like giving myself the time to like, think about all the things I'm going to do for the day can be a little bit negative, but.

Interviewer 55:50

Yeah. Right, yeah. And in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work, mainly like at the end of the day depend on the workspace that you're in for that day.

P3 56:07

I think it depends a lot.

Interviewer 56:09

Mm hmm.

P3 56:11

Depending on like where I am depends on like, or like changes how long of a like decompress period that there is.

Interviewer 56:22

Right.

P3 56:23

So like if I'm in office, right? And like I've got like a bunch of things that I need to pack up and like, I end up talking to like, like some of my coworkers there, like, and then I drive home and then this. Like it, it ends up being like a whole long process.

Interviewer 56:36

Mm hmm.

P3 56:38

And so it gives my brain a ton of time to, like, defocus from all that. Whereas like in the most direct case of like, I'm working from home, it's like pretty it like pretty instantaneous from like closing the laptop to like now I'm, now I'm supposed to be

Interviewer 56:39

Right. Right. Yeah.

P3 56:55

doing personal stuff. So I find myself like,

Interviewer 56:57

Yeah.

P3 57:01

even like when I'm playing with my cats and stuff, I, I find that like I do a lot of sort of mindless things for a while before like I, I do anything productive

Interviewer 57:07

Mm hmm.

P3 57:09

which is why, like I try to like just go to the grocery store. I try to do something. But it ends up being like a lot longer before like,

Interviewer 57:14

Yeah.

P3 57:20

I feel like, I'm doing any sort of like fun activities I guess or like really take my brain off work.

Interviewer 57:24

Right, yeah. Yeah, makes sense. And so last question, what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to like fully and successfully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P3 57:40

Oh, good question. Um I think...Ooooh. Good question. Uhhh I think with my current in-office setup it's, it's pretty good. Like I, I don't know what improvements I could really make.

Interviewer 58:09

Mm hmm.

P3 58:11

Like if you go back to the photo, like the second photo. Like all the things that I talk about, like bringing to and from work kind of get packed off this desk. Or like all the productive ones, right? Like my laptop and my headphones and my and my mouse and all that.

Interviewer 58:23

Great.

P3 58:25

Like I pack it all off my desk. So when I do that and I see kinda like the empty desk like it's, it's good for telling my brain like we're, we're done now and like the whole commuting aspect and being able to like talk with coworkers at the end of the day it, I think that

Interviewer 58:27

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.
Right.

P3 58:43

whole routine is very good for building that separation. I don't know what improvements I would really wanna make there. Maybe making my commute a little shorter, but that's, that's not really a factor of anyone.

Interviewer 58:55

Yeah.

P3 59:00

As far as like the home one, I think if I had like a more dedicated space like, like ideally if I had like a slightly bigger apartment or like a way to have like a separated room where like I knew that room was gonna be for work, I

Interviewer 59:02

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P3 59:18

think that would really really help. Because this does like overlap with my personal space where I spend a lot of my time. And so even when I put away my laptop,

Interviewer 59:21

Yeah. Right.

P3 59:27

like my work laptop and everything in my backpack, oftentimes if I'm working from home, I'll just leave my backpack right next to my desk.

Interviewer 59:31

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Right.

P3 59:35

So then if I'm sitting at my desk to do other things, like, not only am I still in the same physical space, but my backpack with all my work stuff is right next to me. And so, it's kind of hard to separate. So,

Interviewer 59:49

Yeah.

P3 59:50

I think if there was like a an actual like room or more dedicated area,

Interviewer 59:55

Right.

P3 59:56
that would help a, a lot. Like a lot.

Interviewer 59:58
Yeah, definitely. Yeah. And out of curiosity, how long is your commute generally?

P3 1:00:05
Yeah, it ranges a good bit.

Interviewer 1:00:08
OK.

P3 1:00:10
But I would say on average like when I leave in the morning, I try to give myself

Interviewer 1:00:13
Mm hmm.

P3 1:00:15
like 25 to 40 minutes. Somewhere, somewhere in that range.

Interviewer 1:00:18
Gotcha.

P3 1:00:22
And sometimes it's, it's less, sometimes more. But I would, I would say generally like in the 25 to 40 minute range.

Interviewer 1:00:25
Yeah. Right. Yeah, great. And so lastly, is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or anything about your general ability to disconnect from work?

P3 1:00:41
Hmm. Umm. I don't think so.

Interviewer 1:00:58
That's fine.

P3 1:01:03
No, I don't. I don't...I don't think so. I, I think, I think I've yapped a lot.

Interviewer 1:01:08
No problem. Yeah, no. Yeah, but thank you I guess so much for your time today and for all the insights that you provided.

P3 1:01:14
Yeah. Thank you.

Interviewer 1:01:18
All right.

P4 Interview Transcript

47m 26s

Interviewer 0:05

OK. So hello, I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. Everything that you say during the interview will remain completely confidential. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs you provide, you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P4 0:52

Yes.

Interviewer 0:53

Great. And before we begin, do you have any other questions for me?

P4 0:56

No.

Interviewer 0:57

OK, great. And to start, so to start out, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P4 1:05

My name is [name extracted]. I am a designer. A museum exhibit designer. I'm a graphic designer by training, originally. I started out working...Um I got a degree, a Fine Arts degree, Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design. Moved to [location extracted] and got an internship at a museum. Then I worked in

Interviewer 1:28

Mm hmm.

P4 1:30

the private museum exhibit design firm world for probably umm 12 years.

Interviewer 1:40

Mm hmm.

P4 1:40

And then moved into the in-house museum world and I've been at [name extracted] Museum as the manager of exhibitions for about, for seven years.

Interviewer 1:51

That sounds amazing. And those past roles were they in person, remote, hybrid?

P4 1:57

All in person, yes. Yeah.

Interviewer 1:58

OK, great. And so can you maybe tell me a little bit more about your current job role?

P4 2:05

So my job as manager of exhibitions is to lead and design and manage the process of all of the design of temporary and permanent exhibition spaces. So I design from the ground up special exhibitions for our curators, and I also manage the creation and management of stewardship of other graphics and things throughout the museum. Any any kind of visual element I'm in charge of ideating and then implementing.

Interviewer 2:40

Mm hmm. Wow, very nice. And can you tell me a bit about your current hybrid work schedule?

P4 2:50

So my current schedule is I'm in the office Mondays and Tuesdays and I'm allowed to work from home Wednesday, Thursdays and Fridays. And I typically really often I'm into the office a third day, just depending on if a team member needs me.

Interviewer 2:54

Mm hmm.

P4 3:07

The typical set up at [museum name extracted] is 2 in the office, 3 at home, but my supervisor is really kind of generous and lets me use that third one as needed.

Interviewer 3:18

Yeah, that's great. And so, before we started this interview, I asked if you could please share a photo of your remote workspace and of your in-person workspace. So I'll go ahead and share my screen now. Let me know if you can hopefully see that all right.

P4 3:39

I can, yeah.

Interviewer 3:40

Great. So, starting off with your remote workspace here, just talking a bit about your experiences and asking questions specifically in this space. So to start out, can you just tell me a bit about these photos?

P4 3:54

Yeah, very messy. My office space at home is actually it's way back in the back. It's kind of halfway underground. You can see from that image the top left.

Interviewer 4:07

Mm hmm.

P4 4:08

The ground level is right at the bottom of the window. I'm looking out right now.

Interviewer 4:12

Mm hmm.

P4 4:12

It's just it's kind of a space that my husband and I carved out for both of us, really. When we moved into this house, the washer and dryer were here. But he

Interviewer 4:21

Mmhmm.

P4 4:23

made me a desk and and some levels. The cabinetry was already existing and um yeah it's a little bit makeshift but we actually call it my layer.

Interviewer 4:35

Mm hmm.

P4 4:35

It's kind of a little cave that I'm able to really concentrate. It's really quiet.

Interviewer 4:41

Mm hmm.

P4 4:42

Yeah. And it's it's actually quite a bit cleaned up. I usually have a lot of tchotchkes all around, but,

Interviewer 4:47

Mm hmm.

P4 4:49

we're sort of looking toward a move, so I went ahead and had packed them up. But usually it's a lot more covered and creative things and little memories that inspire me and keep me kind of happy.

Interviewer 4:54

Right. Yeah, that's great. And I guess is this just more dedicated, um a more dedicated area, as for being a workspace?

P4 5:11

Yes, it's it's dedicated. I've got a desktop computer there with a second screen. I don't know if you can tell. I actually have two desktops because I'm in the middle of, of trading computers, but it's a dedicated workspace.

Interviewer 5:17

Mm hmm. Got it.

P4 5:25

Our desktop, my husband also has a profile so he can come back here and work a little bit too.

Interviewer 5:31

Hmm.

P4 5:33

Sometimes he'll unplug the second monitor and plug it into his laptop.

Interviewer 5:37

Mm hmm.

P4 5:37

But it's, it's definitely a separate area that we both can use, mostly me.

Interviewer 5:43

Right. That's great. And how do you feel when working in this space?

P4 5:49

I feel good. Like I said, it's very cozy. Quiet. It's, it's pretty dimly lit, but I do feel good.

Interviewer 5:54

Mm hmm.

P4 5:57

I feel like it's my space. I feel some ownership over it. That's just sort of a personality quirk of mine that I don't like to really share my space very much and want my things.

Interviewer 6:06

Mm hmm.

P4 6:11

I want my little tchotchkes around and that I'm able to do that here and as a creative person, that keeps me...my mind kind of satisfied.

Interviewer 6:23

Right, great. And can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day specifically in this space?

P4 6:30

In this space, when I'm working from home, I am able to sleep ever so slightly longer. I have two young children. So I'm able to get up, maybe look at my calendars, you know, getting moving with coffee.

Interviewer 6:37

Mm hmm.

P4 6:46

I'm able to maybe come down and fire up the computer and then take the girls to daycare, which isn't very far so um.

Interviewer 6:53

Mm hmm.

P4 6:56

I usually I try and get them there by 8:30 so that I'm, I can run back to the house, maybe stop for a Starbucks or something, and sit down and do a couple of hours of work here and the first half is usually just orienting my myself, especially on a Wednesday when it's my first work day at home,

Interviewer 7:12

Mm hmm.

P4 7:15

I have to kind of refocus, reconnoiter, unpack my bag, lay it all out. I work at a, when I'm at work, when I'm at my office at [museum name extracted], I work from a laptop.

Interviewer 7:30

Mm hmm.

P4 7:30

And when I'm here I work from my desktop, so I have to fire it up. I've gotta let all the files sync and queue and make sure everything's updated.

Interviewer 7:40

Right.

P4 7:41

So there's a little bit of passive kind of getting ready, firing up all the neurons you know. But um, then I'm able to take a lunch break and I'll usually go sit out on the patio or maybe upstairs in the living room and then do a couple more hours of work, which is usually a little more productive

Interviewer 7:48

Yeah.

P4 8:02

there in the afternoons.

Interviewer 8:04

Mm hmm.

P4 8:05

And then I'm able to go get my girls from daycare.

Interviewer 8:08

Right, great. And so how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P4 8:15

I try to...because some of the files I work on are often pretty large and take a lot of computer power,

Interviewer 8:23

Mm hmm.

P4 8:25

I really like to...the the time I stop varies usually on what I'm working on. So if I hit a good stopping point on a task at 4:15 or 4:30, then I'll stop. But the way I like to shut down, if you will, is make sure all the files are closed. I like to restart the computer so it kinda wipes clean. And I feel like the computer's off, I'm able to then step away. And the computer's then fresh for the next day. It's not bogged down or, you know, tons of files open.

Interviewer 9:05

Yeah, great.

P4 9:05

Yeah.

Interviewer 9:06

And how effective is that for you?

P4 9:09

It's it's kind of a new thing I'm doing and it's very effective, I think. It's helping me to be a little more structured and a little more focused, so I can say I know I have this process coming up.

Interviewer 9:22

Mm hmm.

P4 9:23

And I kind of plan for it. I know I have to work that little process in and it's really helped me kind of make that shift.

Interviewer 9:34

Yeah, definitely. And so how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P4 9:42

It's usually fine. I mean, I might have, depends on if I've had too much coffee or or what I have going on. If I'm on a deadline, I might be anxious thinking about that or wishing I could

Interviewer 9:48

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P4 9:57

work 30 more minutes, but I've gotta go pick up the girls.

Interviewer 10:00

Right.

P4 10:01

But I would say mostly, mostly it's good. It's calm.

Interviewer 10:07

Yeah. OK. That's great. And so you kind of already described the end of your workday in this space and kind of how you transition. But I guess if you could expand a little bit on exactly how do you transition from work mode into your personal time when working in this space?

P4 10:26

Yeah, I like to shut it down. I like to make all make sure all the lights are off. I have, it's really dimly lit, so I've got actually have three lamps here.

Interviewer 10:34

Gotcha.

P4 10:35

So I like to turn off all the lights, so I know that that, this is shut down. You know, if I come back in, I have to turn on the light because it's dimly lit. And then I typically I like to go into the kitchen, which is kind

Interviewer 10:45

Mm hmm.

P4 10:50

of right around the corner, and clean the kitchen because I like the kitchen to be clean before the girls get home from daycare so that I can make dinner. And that's also kind of a nice shift. This is what I do before I go pick up the kiddos.

Interviewer 10:58

Mm hmm. Right. Okay that's great. And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P4 11:17

I think it's kind of easier for me than a lot, a lot of other people. I have a lot of creative things I do in my side world. So, I'm kind of always thinking about everything at once. So I have...I don't. I don't mind thinking about work later.

Interviewer 11:38

Mm hmm.

P4 11:39

But yeah, I think I just, especially with children...there...I've learned that each hour of the day is very precious and I kind of can't afford to think about this work stuff when I have to go get them and get dinner and I kind of for self-preservation have to turn it off.

Interviewer 12:01

Right. Yeah, definitely. And so I guess what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to really maintain that separation between your work and home life?

P4 12:14

I think again, back to the physical shutting down. So the lights go off. That is kind of it for me.

Interviewer 12:22

Right.

P4 12:23

And and it's physically kind of far. Like there's the living space., the kitchen, is in the front, and then between the office and the kitchen is a fairly large storage area. So I have to walk through the storage area and back into the main house. So, it's not like I ever see it even physically when I'm in the house.

Interviewer 12:49

Right, yeah.

P4 12:50

So I can essentially close the door. I don't have a door, but it's the same feeling. So, it's out of sight, out of mind in many ways.

Interviewer 12:59

Yeah, no. Yeah, that's great. And so lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P4 13:08

Umm. You know, the reality is I'm still in my house and more than more than thinking about work when I'm in my personal life, I, it's a struggle for me to not think about my personal life

Interviewer 13:11

Mm hmm.

P4 13:22

in my office space, because I'm at home, I, my mind will wander. I think about, oh, I haven't done the girls laundry in a week, or I start to worry about what I'm going to make for dinner, and did I take that thing out of the freezer? And our deep freezer is right there. I can see it. So, I'm kinda like oh gosh, I need to get the chicken pot pie out or something. And I think that's just

Interviewer 13:38

Yeah.

P4 13:46

a common thing in family life and with young children is, is it's...it's sometimes hard for me to say this is work time. You're not going to do laundry. You're not going to save that for when you turn off the lights.

Interviewer 14:06

Mm hmm.

P4 14:08

Let's say that's, that's a challenge, but.

Interviewer 14:10

Right. Yeah. No, that's great. And so now we can actually move on to the next slide. And here you shared a couple images of your in-office workspace and so these questions and these experiences will be specifically about this space.

P4 14:22

Yeah.

Interviewer 14:28

And so very similar to last time. Can you just start by telling me a bit about these photos?

P4 14:33

So I don't have a full office picture, but these two different desks are parallel to each other.

Interviewer 14:38

Mm hmm.

P4 14:42

One is always behind me. The one with the painting is behind me usually, and the one with the desk chair is where I sit and I have a little stand there for my laptop. So when I get into work, I can plug in hard wire to the Internet, plug in that to that second monitor and so I do all my office work there and then I can easily kinda spin around to the secondary desk which is super messy and I usually sketch there or I have you can see some finished samples, some material samples scattered around there. Um. I've got a little project there on the on the right of, that white box, is a new light that we have that I ordered for the museum. So that's kind of the in-process junk table. It's usually a little more clean than this. But I've got two lamps there. I always keep the over light overhead light in my office off.

Interviewer 15:43

Mm hmm.

P4 15:44

So I have two desk lamps on that secondary desk, and on that first desk I have one and I've got a fairly big window there.

Interviewer 15:51

Yeah.

P4 15:51

So I like the room to be a little less sterile feeling and kind of soft lighting, especially looking at the computer all day.

Interviewer 15:58

Right, definitely. And so how do you feel when working in this space?

P4 16:06

I feel really focused. My colleagues are close by. I have [name extracted], my supervisor, is just right there. We can pop over to each other and ask questions or remind each other of things to do, and I feel motivated on those two days because there are certain things that I can't do at home, so I have to prioritize those in the office and you know, I set up all my meetings on Monday and Tuesdays. I have a running list in my little notebook. Um

Interviewer 16:41

Mm hmm.

P4 16:42

again, with the time is precious, there are certain things that have to be done. And it makes me feel energized and you know, I be bopping around the whole museum, walking fast and then coming back and taking care of some things. So it's often a different type of work I'm doing here. I'm doing less administrative things here because I can do that at home.

Interviewer 17:03

Mm hmm.

P4 17:03

I'm doing things that require physical interaction with the museum. So like I said that, that urgency keeps me focused through the day.

Interviewer 17:15

Yeah, definitely. And can you tell me about how you spend I guess a typical working day on a day like this when you would go into office?

P4 17:24

Yeah, I like to schedule any meetings with my colleagues for about 10:00 because I can get into the office and set all my stuff down, stare at my calendar, plug in the computer, get settled. I do run late. It's like between these kids and I have a long commute so traffic could be really long or I could...it could be fairly short, you know, and. So I try to give myself some cushion there just 'cause I know me. So like any...any uh

Interviewer 17:55

Mm hmm.

P4 18:00

meetings I like to start no earlier than 10 and then on Tuesdays we have a team meeting with our entire department at 11. So you know, some days I don't really sit down to my desk until after, right before 12. I like to eat pretty early, so I eat right at 12. Take 30 minutes, 45 minutes for lunch and then yeah, just kind of the second-half of the day, if I have any meetings, they'll be at like one or two. And the second-half of the day

Interviewer 18:29

Mm hmm.

P4 18:30

is just that running around. It's that thinking, okay, what of this big list of things that I need to do, what have to be done here in the office? What requires some reference or resource physically at the museum?

Interviewer 18:46

Right.

P4 18:48

So yeah.

Interviewer 18:49

Nice. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P4 18:55

It's kind of the same thing. It's kind of moving back from my desk, shut down the computer. You know, I'm spreading out a lot more in this space and on Mondays I'll leave my laptop at work.

Interviewer 18:56

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P4 19:07

So I just shut down the computer, make sure the second monitor is off, turn off all the lights. I have to kind of stare and make sure I have all my things to get home. Say goodbye to my colleagues. Run to the restroom. There's that, that set of things that I have to do before I get in the car.

Interviewer 19:27

Right. Great. And I guess how effective is all that for you?

P4 19:35

It was hard to get used to. I'm not a very structured person, I guess, 'cause I'm a creative person.

Interviewer 19:42

Mm hmm.

P4 19:44

You know the ADHD. It's kind of hard to focus, but I've gotten good at it now and I rely on those set of things.

Interviewer 19:51

Mm hmm. Right, definitely.

P4 19:56

So they've kind of become second nature.

Interviewer 19:59

Yeah. Nice. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P4 20:06

It depends, yes... for example, yesterday I felt great. I got so many things done. I felt really confident, felt really great about myself and I got out of the office quickly. I did the shutdown really quickly because my, you know, I was really firing.

Interviewer 20:20

Mm hmm.

P4 20:22

I, like I said, felt satisfied with what I've gotten done. If I don't have that satisfaction. If I was running slow, just tired or something, even the shutdown is hard to do because I'm just feeling, you know, maybe disappointed in my performance for the day, or, you know, my feeling about what I accomplished, definitely affects the shutdown and affects the transition to personal life. So, it really depends.

Interviewer 20:56

Yeah. No, definitely. And you started to touch upon this there. But how do you actually transition from work mode into your personal time in this space? So, like the days that you go into office.

P4 21:07

It's really helpful. Like I said, I have such a long commute.

Interviewer 21:11

Mm hmm.

P4 21:11

It's a long time to kind of let go of work stuff. So, I have... It can take me an hour and 45 minutes to get home.

Interviewer 21:22

Oh wow.

P4 21:25

So I just use that time to, I don't even listen to the radio. Everyone asks me if I listen to podcasts or music or something and I don't. It's just quiet and I just kind of zone out, and by the time I get home, I'm really happy to be home, obviously.

Interviewer 21:41

Yeah.

P4 21:42

But I've, I've already. If something was lingering in my mind, I've already worked through it during that commute, and typically I'm able to just let it go.

Interviewer 21:53

And I guess is that the process of how you like mentally disconnect from work the days that you go into office?

P4 21:58

Yeah.

Interviewer 22:02

Ok, great. And lastly like last time, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P4 22:09

It can be hard to remember all the things you've got to bring. So you know I'm...if I leave my...I'm kind of an analog person.

Interviewer 22:13

Mm hmm.

P4 22:19

I like my physical calendar that I write in. It just helps me...if I write it helps me remember it. Well, if I leave that at home

Interviewer 22:26

Mm hmm.

P4 22:29

you know, on a Monday or Tuesday or whatever, or typically on Monday because maybe I worked, you know, at the end of the week, everything's set up in my home office. If I left that at home for some reason, it really throws me off. Or if, I have a small notebook that I write all the things I need to be doing,

Interviewer 22:42

Yeah.

P4 22:46

notes from meetings you know, everything is all the eggs are in one basket. And if I forget any of the eggs it really throws me off and you know, kind of go through phases of being very organized. I never forget anything. And then I go through phases of forgetting things and, and that's a challenge.

Interviewer 23:06

Yeah. No, definitely. And so now moving on, just talking about your general kind of comparison between these workspaces, you've already kind of started touching upon there. If there are some things in one space or the other. So these questions will just be about your experiences and you know, comparing both spaces and if you'd like to talk about any of the images or anything, just let me know. I can always toggle between them. But the first question is just how does I guess your in office workspace generally compare to your remote workspace?

P4 23:45

Umm. I would say that my in office workspace is less distracting. Just by its natural, you're not in your own home thinking about laundry and thinking about, I would say it's less distracting in in that way.

Interviewer 23:56

Right. Mm hmm.

P4 24:03

My office at home is better for sort of my general mental health because even though I may be stressing or distracted a little bit about what I'm gonna make for dinner, I actually have time to make dinner.

Interviewer 24:23

Right.

P4 24:24

Which makes me feel good that that I'm, you know, "doing it all," so to speak. I'm able to do more in all areas of my life at home, so that feels good.

Interviewer 24:32

Mm hmm. Right.

P4 24:39

It's really a give and take.

Interviewer 24:40

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P4 24:53

Um. I think they're a little easier to set in the office workspace, it's easier to set boundaries just by virtue of bringing less into the office. Umm...yeah.

Interviewer 25:14

Yeah, you could also if there, if you happen to have any differences or thoughts on any of the physical elements as well as your time based schedules in either spaces or even mental or emotional boundaries, do you feel a difference in either space?

P4 25:27

Mm hmm. I don't think I do.

Interviewer 25:33

Mm hmm.

P4 25:34

I think that. They're so different in some ways.

Interviewer 25:39

Mm hmm.

P4 25:40

In...in they're different in different ways in such a way that it balances out.

Interviewer 25:46

Yeah, definitely.

P4 25:47

If that makes sense. I can accomplish A and C at the office, but I can't do B and D.

Interviewer 25:49

Yeah.

P4 25:55

But at home I can do B and D but not A and C.

Interviewer 25:58

Yeah, definitely.

P4 25:59

It's it really kind of evens out.

Interviewer 26:02

Right.

P4 26:03

I would say that one doesn't accomplish any constellation of more things than the other.

Interviewer 26:11

Yeah, no makes sense.

P4 26:13

Just different.

Interviewer 26:14

Yeah, absolutely. And I guess how does your ability to disconnect from work the days when in the office compared to the days working from home?

P4 26:30

Umm. I think it's just such a different process.

Interviewer 26:33

Right.

P4 26:36

And I have to disconnect more quickly at home because

Interviewer 26:40

Mm hmm.

P4 26:42

um I'm working just as long and I'm still working until 4:35, but then I immediately have to go

Interviewer 26:47

Mm hmm.

P4 26:53

you know, quickly throw something in the oven and quickly run to get the girls. Or there's kind of less time to transition, whereas on my days I work from the office, my husband is in charge of picking up the kids.

Interviewer 26:57

Right. Yeah. Mm hmm.

P4 27:06

So I don't really worry about that element immediately. I mean, I'm, I'm probably anxious driving home thinking about, are they feeling OK?

Interviewer 27:12

Yeah.

P4 27:17

Did they eat well?

Interviewer 27:17

Mm hmm.

P4 27:19

Is the baby crying? You know.

Interviewer 27:21

Right.

P4 27:22

So yeah, I think maybe it's just the amount of time that I have to make that transition.

Interviewer 27:28

Yeah. And I guess to expand a little bit about...you just mentioned at home, you kind of have to disconnect quicker just because of the nature of the things you have to do. Is that effective? Like that quicker disconnect?

P4 27:45

I don't know if it's effective.

Interviewer 27:47

Mm hmm.

P4 27:48

It just is.

Interviewer 27:50

Yeah. No makes sense.

P4 27:52

Maybe it is effective because it's...Mondays and Tuesdays I'm on my own time, in a way. I'm by myself.

Interviewer 27:59

Yeah.

P4 28:01

My husband's in charge of picking up the kids. So I'm on my own mentally a little bit more.

Interviewer 28:09

Mm hmm. Yep.

P4 28:13

So yeah, does that make sense?

Interviewer 28:15

Yeah, no, it definitely does. And I guess this kind of leads into this question. So if you have anything else to add, but if not, that's OK. But I guess, do you feel that it is easier or harder to detach from work the days that you go in office compared to the days that you go...that you work from your remote workspace?

P4 28:38

Yes, but maybe not in the way that you'd expect. I think it's harder for me to detach from work

Interviewer 28:39

Mm hmm.

P4 28:46

when I'm at the office, even though I have the long commute, I think it's harder because

Interviewer 28:48

Mm hmm.

P4 28:53

I'm so focused on work all day and I'm so desperate to achieve this set of things that can only be achieved in the office.

Interviewer 29:03

Mm hmm.

P4 29:04

And I'm so focused on what my colleagues need and I...there's a lot of lot of complex feelings in there about, I don't want to disappoint them because I'm lucky to have this arrangement, so I need to be available to them. I need to anything anybody asks me. I jump on it. If my supervisor asked me for something, I want to get it to him in the next 10 minutes or...so, it's a little more manic and I really am thinking so hard about that. That's not the only thing I'm thinking about. I'm also thinking about my kids and I'm thinking about my home life, but the work is more feeling is more intense.

Interviewer 29:39

Right. Yeah.

P4 29:46

So I, I feel I am a lot more manic at the end of a office workday.

Interviewer 29:50

Mm H.

Yeah, definitely great.

P4 29:55

So thank goodness I have the long commute to kinda bring that buzz down.

Interviewer 30:00

Yeah, that's actually such a great point.

P4 30:02

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 30:04

And of the two kind of sets of pictures that you shared here. Which feels more like a workplace to you? Like if I say the term workplace.

P4 30:17

I guess the...the office office feels more like workplace.

Interviewer 30:22

Yeah, for any reason in particular?

P4 30:25

I think I just have less of my personal stuff. I mean, again being a creative person, I have several really personal things.

Interviewer 30:27

Yeah.

P4 30:31

I brought in my own art. I've got this little, on top of, the silver lamp there. I don't know if you can see it. It's a little dragon.

Interviewer 30:41

Mmm.

P4 30:41

That was my grandmother's. It's a dragon turtle.

Interviewer 30:44

Wow.

P4 30:45

It's a Chinese animal, mythical animal, that's supposed to be good for Feng shui in a workplace.

Interviewer 30:53

Wow.

P4 30:55

As long as you have it pointing towards a window.

Interviewer 30:58

Very good.

P4 30:58

But there's still personal things, but at home I really have my personal things around me.

Interviewer 31:04

Yeah.

P4 31:06

And I don't really have them out in the rest of the house. It's like I said, I'm just such a tchochky person.

Interviewer 31:13

No. Yeah.

P4 31:14

So I think if you if you want to say “which one is more professional,” it would be the office space.

Interviewer 31:18

Mm hmm. Yeah. OK, great. And so lastly, we can move on here to the third slide where I asked if you could please share either an object or a space, just something that helps you disconnect from work. And so similar to the other two, can you just tell me a bit about these photos?

P4 31:39

Sure, this is my patio right outside my front door. So if I'm back in my office, my layer as we call it, I have to walk through the storage area into the kitchen and then right out the front door I have a patio with some outdoor chairs, a dining table. My family, we spend a lot of time out here.

Interviewer 31:59

Mm hmm.

P4 32:00

I work hard on the plants and we live here on the water and you can see, it's raining so the water's really muddy, but you can see there's a little swim platform

Interviewer 32:10

Uh huh.

P4 32:11

that people in neighborhood could swim out to. And so I have to walk through here to, to this patio space anytime I'm leaving or coming from the house. So ,if I'm leaving to go get the girls I walk out this way. Or at lunch I might have lunch out here. Um or a glass of wine with my husband at the end of the day.

Interviewer 32:33

Mm hmm.

P4 32:33

So this is just the most peaceful spot for me and sometimes even I just take a break and I step out onto the stoop and stretch and see this view and it's very calming and peaceful to me, and it's also what makes my awful commute kind of worth it is to come and be able to live in this beautiful

Interviewer 32:42

Yeah.

P4 32:55

place.

Interviewer 32:56

Yeah, definitely. I was gonna say when you sent this, it's just a beautiful view. Something to look at. It's great images.

P4 33:04

Very quiet and peaceful.

Interviewer 33:06

Yeah. And I guess you kind of touched upon a lot of reasons, but is there a specific one in general on why you chose this specific, you know space based off of the you know what I asked to bring in?

P4 33:19

I think it's just so different and it reminds me...it's a, it's a view and a feeling that reminds me why I do this awful commute.

Interviewer 33:29

Yeah.

P4 33:30

I mean, I love my job actually, and I really like my colleagues, which I think is kind of rare. So I'm lucky to have that as well. But I'm able to, especially after a tough commute, that two hour commute or something, it's just a view and a feeling that reminds me of why I do it. And why I'm really lucky to be able to do it.

Interviewer 33:52

Yeah.

P4 33:53

So it's a nice sort of perspective to be reminded of.

Interviewer 33:59

Yep.

P4 34:00

If I'm having a tough work day...taking a...a tough work day from home or something, taking a break out here both disconnects me and reconnects me and grounds me.

Interviewer 34:11

Yeah, definitely. And that actually perfectly kind of brings me to the my next question if maybe you can expand a little bit about how exactly this, this space helps you mentally disconnect from work?

P4 34:23

It's just all the things you might think. It's it's very quiet. I can't really hear any noise, so that's the... I don't...

Interviewer 34:26

Mm hmm.

P4 34:30

I don't hear cars...I don't hear honking...So that's the polar opposite of my commute. It's a lot of nature. Being in nature has always been very, very effective for me.

Interviewer 34:44

Right.

P4 34:46

Um. Just calming and um...if, if I'm looking that way, I can't see anything but that water and the plants. So it's a physical disconnection, but it's also a mental and....mental and emotional reconnection with things that make me happy personally.

Interviewer 35:10

Yeah, definitely. I think that's really well said. And does this space and kind of its ability to help you mentally disconnect from work, does that depend on whether you are working from home or in the office?

P4 35:25

No, because like I said, like it's a long commute.

Interviewer 35:26

Mm hmm.

P4 35:29

And when I get home in the summer, it's still bright.

Interviewer 35:32

Mm hmm.

P4 35:32

So I, the...this is on one side of my house and we park our cars on the other side and so I have to walk around the house and I'm usually like physically sore from the commute. I'm stiff, you know, I may be on edge from traffic and people honking, but even just coming around the corner

Interviewer 35:43

Right.

P4 35:52

of the house and seeing that is kind of like. OK.

Interviewer 35:55

Yeah, definitely.

P4 35:56

I'm so glad to be home, you know.

Interviewer 35:59

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And so moving on this last section is just about kind of your general experiences of kind of switching between these spaces, which we've already started to talk a lot about. You know, your commute and everything. And also just about your general disconnect experiences. But kind of hopping on to what we were just talking about. I know you've already kind of described how you move between these different workspaces during the week and you say you commute. Is that driving?

P4 36:29

Yes, I drive. Yep.

Interviewer 36:31

OK, great. And how does that, I think you've already kind of said, but anything else on how does this commute or transition make you feel?

P4 36:39

It can make me feel...the drive can make me absolutely insane and very angry.

Interviewer 36:47

Right.

P4 36:49

If I'm...if I'm have a particular particularly high level of mental fortitude that day, I can use it

Interviewer 36:57

Mm hmm.

P4 37:00

to you know...I joke with [supervisor name extracted], I joke with my supervisor that I don't even work in the computer all that much anymore. I am working in my head during the commute. I'm doing a design and I will do that for two or three weeks and design an exhibit in my head during this commute.

Interviewer 37:19

Wow.

P4 37:20

And then put it down on the computer in three or four days.

Interviewer 37:24

Yeah.

P4 37:24

And I think that everybody has come to learn that just 'cause they don't see me working on the computer all the time, doesn't mean I'm not working.

Interviewer 37:31

Yeah, definitely.

P4 37:33

But that's just something to do on the commute. It's not that I get home and I'm still thinking about it in a negative way.

Interviewer 37:39

Right. Mm hmm. Yeah, that makes sense. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from like this work mode? And if so, how?

P4 37:51

Yeah, it does just by virtue of how long it is. I can work through any problems I've had, you know, and if I'm anxious when I get home, it's usually not work related. It might be commute, that oh that's just such a tough commute, I just wanted to get home so badly, you know. Road rage, you know. But

Interviewer 38:03

Yeah, definitely.

P4 38:12

by the time I get home, I'm usually not upset about work things anymore or anxious about work things.

Interviewer 38:20

Yeah. No, that's great. And how does the movement between these spaces kind of maybe influence your ability to disconnect from work? Or I guess you have a pretty unique circumstance 'cause you know, in the beginning of the week you go in office and then you transition into working from home. So, I guess how does maybe that transition in particular... if you can talk more about that experience and also how that may impact your ability to disconnect or whether it does?

P4 38:52

I don't know if it answers the question but it makes me think about the reasons that I chose the days to commute. A lot of people like to work from home like Fridays and Mondays.

Interviewer 38:58

Yeah. Mm hmm. Right.

P4 39:07

Or the middle of the week or something, but I really wanted to...First of all, we have to be in on a Tuesday because the team meets together.

Interviewer 39:12

Mm hmm.

P4 39:14

It's important to be together and that's the one day that I think everybody is definitely on site. But I chose Mondays and Tuesdays because

Interviewer 39:19

Mm hmm.

P4 39:23

you know, work is really important. It's the reason I'm able to do all of this. We have really good benefits and I have small children and I respect my colleagues and they expect certain things from me and I felt that Monday and...going in, working in the office seeing people face to face, doing all those things with urgency, I felt that front loading that at the beginning of the week sets my tone for the week.

Interviewer 39:56

Mm hmm.

P4 39:56

You know that, I don't have, even if I work from home, I don't have Fridays off. I don't have Mondays off. I should be working and I think it no matter how good you are focused, you know it's hard to not think about home stuff when you're at home.

Interviewer 40:01

Yeah. Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P4 40:11

So I really wanted to push myself to start off strong and start the week off focused and if I'm, if I'm in the office Mondays and Tuesdays, I'm like I said, I'm kinda manic thinking about all those things. But I'm more focused to continue that work through the week. OK, what did I not finish on Mondays and Tuesdays? Or I'm not gonna work on this on Monday and Tuesday because I can do it from home Wednesday, Thursday, Friday.

Interviewer 40:42

Right, definitely.

P4 40:43

I just felt like that was a more responsible for my own personal style and weaknesses you know.

Interviewer 40:53

Yeah

P4 40:53

Felt like that would be at the more controlled way to keep my brain on target.

Interviewer 41:00

Yeah, absolutely. No yeah, that's great. And are there certain times of either the day or the week in which it's either easier or harder from you to kind of mentally disconnect from work?

P4 41:16

Mondays and Tuesdays are harder. Just for the reasons that I said that I'm focused so much and then I get home and you know, I'm usually, some kid is crying or. That is a little a little harder or I'm, I'm at the office and

Interviewer 41:36

Yeah.

P4 41:38

I'm like, oh, this commute's gonna be bad.

Interviewer 41:41

Right.

P4 41:42

You know, kind of the the dread of the commute.

Interviewer 41:45

Mm hmm.

P4 41:47

So maybe it's harder in that regard.

Interviewer 41:50

Yeah, definitely. And I guess this kind of ties into this question. So it's ok if you don't have as much here, but in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day?

P4 42:07

I don't think it does.

Interviewer 42:08

Mm hmm.

P4 42:10

As long as I've remembered to bring all the stuff. Like it's a really big issue actually for me, mentally, if I leave something...

Interviewer 42:12

Right, definitely.

P4 42:20

It's less of an issue if I leave something at home that I needed in my work office. It's much more stressful for me if I leave something at work that I need at my home office because I'm here more and I feel like, oh my gosh

Interviewer 42:32

Gotcha.

P4 42:36

am I gonna have to go into the office to get this thing I need? When I didn't have to make that commute.

Interviewer 42:40

Right.

P4 42:43

There's that mental load of, ugh I have to do the commute on a day that I wouldn't typically have to.

Interviewer 42:52

Yeah, definitely, yeah.

P4 42:53

Umm yeah.

Interviewer 42:56

And I guess what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to successfully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P4 43:08

Feel like it's about as ideal as I can make it right now.

Interviewer 43:11

Yeah, that's great.

P4 43:13

I can't think of a way...Of course I would love for [museum name extracted] to be in the town that I live in.

Interviewer 43:20

Yeah, right.

P4 43:24

Then I'd probably go in the office every single day.

Interviewer 43:26

Right, definitely.

P4 43:27

If I live 10 minutes from, from where I worked. But I can't think of a way that that I could improve on it other than my own self-discipline. I don't think it's a matter of the physicality of the space.

Interviewer 43:30

Mm hmm. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And one other thing, I did have a question about. Earlier you mentioned that sometimes, maybe in office just because of the nature of the things that you have to get done or how you did that day, sometimes you'll be a little bit more tired. Do you find yourself being more tired in one space compared to the other, or is that just dependent on the day or the tasks?

P4 44:04

Definitely more tired in the office.

Interviewer 44:07

Gotcha. Yeah.

P4 44:08

Wednesdays, like today, after commuting and working in the office those two days I am physically just destroyed.

Interviewer 44:18

Yeah, yeah.

P4 44:19

I am so tired. Wednesdays are much harder. My morning is not as productive because I'm just like...

Interviewer 44:25

Mm hmm.

P4 44:28

that switch is hard. Again, not 'cause I'm worrying about work. It's just physically...

Interviewer 44:35

Mm hmm.

P4 44:38

It is mentally, but it's not work tasks. Does that make sense?

Interviewer 44:42

Yeah, definitely.

P4 44:44

Like it's just what I've had to do. I don't get home...I get home much later, Mondays and Tuesdays. Maybe I also have to stop for some dinner for the kids.

Interviewer 44:51

Yeah.

P4 44:52

Maybe I also have to stop for a gallon of milk.

Interviewer 44:55

Yeah.

P4 44:57

And I've gotten up so much earlier Mondays and Tuesdays and

Interviewer 45:01

Mm hmm.

P4 45:02

you know, making breakfast, packing the...making the bottles for the baby, all this kind of stuff.

Interviewer 45:07

Yeah.

P4 45:08

It's just, I am just destroyed.

Interviewer 45:11

Right. I can imagine. Yeah, definitely. Yeah, well.

P4 45:15

You know, Wednesday, Thursdays, Fridays I have...I have almost two extra hours to do all those things.

Interviewer 45:22

Oh, wow, nice.

P4 45:23

And then Mondays and Tuesdays...or Sunday nights, Monday nights, I'm, maybe I'm staying up late to clean the kitchen and make the bottles ahead of time or make the lunches ahead of time, or. So, and then on Wednesdays I can maybe on my lunch break I can go make my daughter her lunch. Or I can start the dishwasher so.

Interviewer 45:43

Yeah, definitely.

P4 45:45

Without affecting my work. How much time I'm spending at work.

Interviewer 45:48

Mm hmm. Yeah.

P4 45:52

Yeah. So I think just physically, I'm just like exhausted.

Interviewer 45:54

Yeah, yeah. No, definitely. And so lastly, I guess is there just anything that we did not cover that you'd like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between these workspaces or just anything else on your general ability to disconnect from work?

P4 46:14

I don't think so. I, I would say...I don't know if this is like helpful or maybe it's just a different perspective. I would say it's all it can be tough and it can be...sure, there are pros and cons and I might struggle one day to transition and not the other. But for me? All of that is just all worth it.

Interviewer 46:41

Yeah.

P4 46:42

This work from home...this opportunity to work from home has been so life changing

Interviewer 46:46

Mmhm.

P4 46:49

for me.

Interviewer 46:50

Yeah.

P4 46:51

That it doesn't matter how hard it is those Mondays and Tuesdays, I am going to make it work because it has been that life changing for me.

Interviewer 47:01

Yeah, no. Yeah, that's amazing. But well, that's all I had for you today. So again, thank you so much for taking part in this interview. Before we end, do you have any other questions for me?

P4 47:12

No, thank you so much for asking me to participate.

Interviewer 47:16

Yeah, of course. All right. Thank you.

P4 47:19

Thank you. Take care.

Interviewer 47:20

You as well. Bye bye.

P4 47:22

Bye bye.

P5 Interview Transcript

44m 59s

Interviewer 0:04

All right. So hello. I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P5 0:48

Yep

Interviewer 0:49

OK, great. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P5 0:50

Nope.

Interviewer 0:51

All right, great. So to start out, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P5 0:59

Yeah. So, I graduated from [school name extracted] May 2024 with a bachelor's in finance with a concentration in corporate financial management. During my time in college, I had an internship at [company name extracted], which is a PR communications industry where I was their business operations intern and so I got exposure to a lot of the financials and resource management industry during that role, which led me to my current role where I work at [company name extracted] as a financial analyst in the financial rotation program. So I just completed...this is a 2 year program. I just completed my first round of rotations that was ten months long for program finance, where I specifically dealt in the public sector that [company name extracted] has, and I worked under the health department, the center of integrated transportation, as well as the government and modernization center as well. And so, for there I do a lot of project...uh project management, budgeting, and just kind of proactive management for talking to project leaders and keeping in control with the leadership team that I have as well. And then making sure that we're ensuring that these projects land on time and kind of looking over contracts as well. I'm now moving into my second rotation, which is corporate FPNA, financial planning and analysis, where I am more getting an enterprise view of the business, like a holistic view. So there I will be dealing with the forecast cycles as well as looking at our indirect and direct rates that the

company deals with and so this role will last me for the next nine months and so essentially anything finance related is what I do on my day-to-day.

Interviewer 2:41

Yeah. No, that's really great. And you mentioned before this role you had an internship. Now, was that remote, hybrid, or fully in person?

P5 2:50

It was a hybrid, so I would go into DC two to three times a week, usually Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and then I would work from home every Monday and Friday.

Interviewer 2:59

Nice. That's great. And I know you told me a lot about now, your current job role, but can you maybe tell me a bit about your current hybrid work schedule?

P5 3:07

Yeah, so usually I'll work, since [company name extracted] does a hybrid and a resident position, I'm kind of in the middle because to be in the resident status you have to go in 80% of the time, but usually I'll work from home Monday through Thursday and I'll go in Friday. Wait, no, I'll stay home Friday. I'll go into the office Monday through Thursday.

Interviewer 3:31

Gotcha. And you said is that kind of I guess how is that decided? Is that a combination of you choose that or is that you know, part of their policy?

P5 3:41

Yeah, it's because of the program I'm, I'm in, they want you to be more in person at least like four times a week. But they're also very flexible.

Interviewer 3:48

Mm hmm.

P5 3:50

So if there are some weeks where you can only come in three times a week, that's totally fine. But hybrid status, it's that 50% where you can work from home three days a week and come in two times a week. But just because of my program is centered around early career professionals, they want us to come in, at least for the first two years of us being at the company, specifically my program. There are other programs to where they have, like the first three months, you just have to be more in person, so that 80%, and then you go into that hybrid schedule. But I usually try to keep in balance with the four days and then one day at home.

Interviewer 4:24

Yeah. No, that's great. Awesome. So now moving on, before we started this interview, I asked if you could please share an image of your remote workspace and of your in-person workspace. So I'll go ahead and share my screen now.

P5 4:39

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 4:40

Let me know if hopefully you can see that all right.

P5 4:43

Yeah.

Interviewer 4:44

Great. So, we'll start here with your remote workspace and just talk a little bit about your experience here. Maybe ask you some questions about it.

P5 4:51

Mhmm.

Interviewer 4:51

So first, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P5 4:55

Yeah. So, I have my work laptop on the left. And then I just bought recently a monitor since a lot of my day-to-day job revolves, looking at more than one screen at once. So that's just a monitor

Interviewer 5:06

Mm hmm.

P5 5:08

I use to have double visualization of my work and then my desk. So I just have it near the window so I can see some light.

Interviewer 5:13

Mm hmm. Yeah. And is this kind of its own designated room or workspace or is it within a larger space?

P5 5:27

It's in my bedroom, so like I'm, five, maybe ten inches away from my bed.

Interviewer 5:32

Gotcha. Nice. And how do you feel when working in this space?

P5 5:38

Definitely a little crowded because it is a smaller space compared to my office workspace. The desk is a lot smaller. I only have one screen here. And being at home also kinda makes me want to move and adjust my my location spaces, so sometimes I'll move from my desk to goes in

the living room just to have a different scenery. But most of my time I just spent here. But definitely it's on the smaller side.

Interviewer 6:07

Yeah. No, definitely. And I guess can you tell me how you spend a typical working day specifically like in this space?

P5 6:15

Yeah. So, I'll usually log in around 8 am, turn my laptop on, connect it to my monitor, and then I'm sitting here most likely till 12:00 - 1:00 PM. Then I'll go make a quick lunch downstairs. And then usually I'm only on lunch for like 30 minutes and then I come back and work until 5:00 PM. So I'm pretty, just sitting down at the space for eight hours.

Interviewer 6:40

Yeah. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P5 6:47

That's very hard to differentiate because I will sometimes get distracted with my own work and won't realize that it's, you know, its past 5:00 PM. And sometimes I'm working till 6:00 or 7:00 just because I'm doing so much

Interviewer 7:01

Mhmm.

P5 7:02

or I just lose track of time. But essentially I'll...it also helps that I'm sitting next to a window. So I guess I'll see that it's getting darker out, I'm like okay I think it's time to log off. But usually I try to aim to not work more past than like 5:30.

Interviewer 7:19

Yeah.

P5 7:19

I'll just wait for a good stopping point.

Interviewer 7:21

Yeah, and how effective is that for you? I guess setting that stopping point.

P5 7:30

I say it's pretty effective. Usually I, I can feel myself being more tired towards the end of the day, so usually around that 5:30 point

Interviewer 7:36

Mm hmm.

P5 7:38

I'm like, OK, if I'm not done with this, like, can it wait for tomorrow or can I finish it really quick within the next 30 minutes? And then I'll just try to stop myself because there's no need to work intensely after hours if not needed.

Interviewer 7:53

Yeah. No, definitely. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P5 7:58

Tired.

Interviewer 8:00

Tired. Is that, would you say that that's everyday or dependent on things during the day?

P5 8:07

Depending on the cycle. So with finance, it's usually the first week of the month and the last week of the month are the busiest because we're doing month end and just forecasting cycles and how that works. So,

Interviewer 8:09

Mm.

Gotcha.

P5 8:19

it, it really just depends on what time of the week we are in, in the in like the fiscal year calendar. So if it's the first and last week, I'm definitely a little bit more exhausted and we'll be probably working a lot longer but with if it's in the like the two week two and three mark of the month usually I just you know, that's just the end of the day I'm feeling relief that I'm done with work and ready to get started on like the later half of my day.

Interviewer 8:45

Yeah, definitely. And I guess can you expand a little bit and describe the end of your workday in this space?

P5 8:54

Yeah. So usually I'll just close out of everything that I have on my laptop. Close my laptop in general so that there is, I cannot see anything work related. My monitor automatically shuts off and then I immediately leave my desk chair because I'm tired of sitting all day. So I'll go on a walk or I'll lay down.

Interviewer 9:12

Yeah. No, that's great. And how do you transition from like work mode into your personal time in this space?

P5 9:24

Oooh. Great question. I think just leaving the area in general. It helps that once I leave, I try to

leave my bedroom in, in, in general when trying to transition from work to now personal hours because I've just been sitting here all day. And so, I'm looking at the same things,

Interviewer 9:29

Mhmm.

P5 9:42

you know, I'm around the same surroundings, so I try to go downstairs or that's when I go to like the gym or something so I can look at different things and not, you know, see a laptop or a screen around me

Interviewer 9:51

Mm hmm.

P5 9:54

and disassociate.

Interviewer 9:57

Yeah. No, definitely. And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P5 10:02

I usually go to the gym right after work, so that's kind of my time for myself, where I can walk, be on my phone, or then listen to music and work out.

Interviewer 10:12

Yeah. And I guess what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain separation between your work and home life?

P5 10:26

I feel like I don't have much to differentiate. This is like the same setup I had for school as well.

Interviewer 10:31

Mm hmm.

P5 10:32

Umm. I don't really have anything that changes that I think.

Interviewer 10:39

Yeah. And do you feel, I guess maybe touching upon that since it is in your bedroom because you don't have anything, does that ever have you ever felt that it's kind of like blurred those boundaries between work and home life?

P5 10:52

Yeah, like every time I sit on my desk, I feel like I'm supposed to be logging into work when I could just be, you know, on my laptop or my personal laptop and, you know, just shopping or or scrolling on anything that I need to be doing, I'll

Interviewer 10:56

Oh.

P5 11:07

automatically think that I should be logged into work because I have my keyboard and my mouse here and those I guess those things are what I kinda use for work. So if I use them for anything else, I'm like thinking that I'm supposed to be logged on.

Interviewer 11:18

Right. No, definitely that makes sense. And lastly, I guess what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P5 11:28

I guess it's kind of. You can see a pro and con in this, but just focusing in general so I can't...compared to being in the office I can't really like bounce back ideas with any of my coworkers or officemates.

Interviewer 11:41

Mhmm.

P5 11:44

And just and definitely not as much as quick access to, you know, walking down the hall to my manager's office and asking a question and seeing if something was right. You know, you always have to just wait to see if they're not busy or and hop on a call with them there. So I guess that's the, the main thing and then the wanting...the like the flexibility that I have working from home is just like OK if I really wanted to lay down on my bed I could. Obviously in the office I'm not gonna lay down anywhere, so I think that's those are the two main things.

Interviewer 12:16

Yeah. No, that's great. And so now we can actually move on to the next slide here. And so these images

P5 12:22

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 12:26

are of your in-office workspace. So now transitioning into these sets of questions, we'll be more focused around your experience in this space. So similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about these photos here?

P5 12:38

Yeah. So, the left photo, that's again my work laptop. And then I have two monitors in my, in the office, so that's helpful.

Interviewer 12:45

Mhmm.

P5 12:46

And then I have my mouse and then a keyboard and then on the right you'll see like a kind of personalized it a little bit. So I have just a little basket of pens, my name tag with my like Clifton strengths 'cause my company's very big on those and then some decor. So right now it's just two [school name extracted] flags.

Interviewer 13:03

Yeah. No, it's great. And how do you feel when working in this space?

P5 13:09

I feel good. I like it. It's very spacious. I feel the...I think the double monitor also really helps with getting a lot of things done.

Interviewer 13:18

Mm hmm.

P5 13:19

My main thing is space. Like my chair is comfier in the office, so I like. I like. That's why I also like going into the office more.

Interviewer 13:22

Mhmm.

P5 13:25

It's just a better surrounding for me to focus on my work.

Interviewer 13:30

Yeah. And I guess that point of focusing, do you feel more focused the days that you go into office?

P5 13:36

Yeah. So I think because I'm also surrounded by people who are doing the same work. If not, they're just within the finance realm, that it helps me concentrate because we all have deadlines. We're all trying to do the same things. So I do feel more, more focused at work. I'm less likely to, you know, get up and try to distract myself by sitting on the couch or anything.

Interviewer 14:02

No. Yeah, definitely. And can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but specifically on a day that you go into office like this? So I guess just like walk me through a day, you go into office.

P5 14:13

Yeah. So I usually try to get to the office by 8:30 in the morning and then from there, you know, I'll stop by, we have like a coffee shop in the office, so I'll stop by and get a coffee. Log into my computer, and then depending if I have any meetings, usually my meetings it's like 50/50 if they're in person or hybrid, just depending on who's...what day of the week it is. Usually Thursday, or sorry, Tuesday through Thursday, we'll have a lot more in person meetings.

Interviewer 14:36

Mm hmm.

P5 14:40

So, like Tuesdays are our big days. Usually I have back-to-back meetings

Interviewer 14:41

Mhmm.

P5 14:45

starting from like 11:00 to 1:00 where I'm with my team, and then I'll have like a break, which is just my lunch where I either choose to get like a 30 minute time slot for myself and disassociate or I'll just continue working while eating my lunch because I just, you know, don't really feel the need to take a break. Like I'm in a good point.

Interviewer 15:04

Mmhm.

P5 15:10

So or I'll catch up on reading my e-mail from being in meetings all day, so and then from there I'll just keep working. Around four or five as of recently, and sometimes I'll even go home for lunch just because I want to beat out traffic, but if it's really busy, I'll stay until five 5:00 in the office.

Interviewer 15:31

Gotcha. And those days where you'll go home for lunch and then you'll continue working remotely for the rest of the day?

P5 15:37

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 15:38

Oh, that's really interesting. And how is that experience, I guess working in both of those spaces in the same day?

P5 15:45

It's definitely, at the beginning it was kind of hard because my brain was like, oh, you're home, like it's time to not work anymore. But I've gotten used to that okay I come home, eat my lunch and then I'll log back into work and I try to do it when I know I have meetings so that I can still stay focused. If I don't have meetings, I try to make sure that I have a task like or something

to do. But if not, then I try to stay in the office because I feel like I will probably get distracted when I'm at home.

Interviewer 16:14

Yeah, no, definitely, that's great. And I guess how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P5 16:23

Usually everyone's logging off at the same time around 5:00, and I can start to see coworkers you know with their bags leaving, leaving the building or leaving the floor and heading to the elevators. So by that time, I'm like, OK, it's like almost 5:00 or it's 4:30 I think it's a good stopping point and I'll go. Also helps that a lot of my coworkers, you know, try to work the same schedule of leaving at five or four or five.

Interviewer 16:40

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P5 16:47

And so, it kind of, between like the six of us will be like, oh, I'm going home, does anyone wanna come? And then we all collectively decide, yeah, actually it's a good time to go home. And so we'll all go just walk to our cars together.

Interviewer 16:59

I know that's really great. And I guess how effective is all that for you?

P5 17:03

It's really effective 'cause if I didn't have I guess someone to bring up the idea of going home and you know, this is the end of the work day, then I probably still continue working.

Interviewer 17:12

Mm hmm.

P5 17:14

There has been times where I've been to the, or I've stayed at the office until 8:00 PM because either I was the only one in office and so I didn't really see anyone, or I also don't have a window in my office and so I lose track of time.

Interviewer 17:25

Right. Yeah. No, definitely. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P5 17:35

Let's see. I guess, also tired but relieved and productive.

Interviewer 17:37

Mm. Yeah. And that feeling of tiredness,

P5 17:44

Mhmm.

Interviewer 17:45

would you say it's kind of the same type of tiredness of the days that you work remotely, or can you expand maybe a little bit more on that?

P5 17:52

Yeah, I think tired 'cause it's a longer day for me when I go into the office because I wake up earlier because it's depending on the time and day the, my commute to work can go from 20 minutes to an hour.

Interviewer 18:06

Oh wow.

P5 18:06

So because of how bad traffic is and the same thing on the way back, so usually that 5:00 rush hour time, I get stuck in that. So it takes me an hour to get home. And so, I'm just tired from sitting all day and then I have to sit another hour in my car. And then it's like, okay I've been in meetings, I've been talking all day, which is great and I'm being productive about work, but compared to working from home, it's like I can sleep in maybe till 7:30 login at 8:00 and then when I'm done I can, I'm just,

Interviewer 18:32

Mm hmm.

P5 18:35

I'm already home so I can just start the second-half of my day. I don't have to wait another hour to start.

Interviewer 18:39

Yeah. No, that makes total sense. And can you maybe describe a little bit more in detail the end of your workday in this space?

P5 18:48

Yeah. I guess I do the same thing kind of here, where I turn everything off. I pack my bags.

Interviewer 18:54

Mhmm.

P5 18:56

It depends on the day, I'll probably grab a coffee on the way out to or like have a snack on the way out and then I just walk to the parking garage to my car and then I'll head home.

Interviewer 19:02

Mhmm. Great. And how do you transition from work mode into your personal time days when working in this space?

P5 19:14

I feel like my personal time kind of just starts in the car already 'cause I will, I think that's the last time I'll probably check my work phone as well to see if I've got any emails or responses back to anything that I've sent out as of that day. And then once I'm in the car, it's like OK, I'm listening to a podcast or

Interviewer 19:27

Mmhmm.

P5 19:30

music, and so I'm kind of in my own space and I don't really look at my phone until the next morning or try not to.

Interviewer 19:39

Yeah. No, definitely. And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P5 19:45

I guess from here, same regiment as, as working from home. Like I'll go to the gym

Interviewer 19:51

Mmhmm.

P5 19:53

if I can, or if I need a mental disconnect during the workday, I guess I will go on coffee walks with some of my coworkers, so we'll all just walk to the furthest coffee shop in the building.

Interviewer 19:58

Mmhmm.

P5 20:05

'Cause we have 4 buildings in total, so we're in building 2, we'll walk to building 4 and that's just like a a good little break within, within the workday.

Interviewer 20:05

Mhmm.

P5 20:14

So I'll go to get coffee or tea or a snack and then get some steps in and then walk back to the office, or my own office.

Interviewer 20:22

Yeah, no, that sounds great. And lastly, I guess what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P5 20:31

I think the challenge would be because all my coworker, or at least my office like mates because we share an office, so I have one other person who sits in the same room as me. She's...and we're around the same age, like she's just a year older than I am, so we'll kind of talk for a little bit and I guess that could be seen as a distraction, especially because our office right next door is also someone who's around the same age because we're all early careers. So it's a post grad program, or post undergrad program, so we're all just kind of talking. We're all into the same things and you know, or either listening to the same music or watching the same shows. So we'll just get caught up talking and then that's like, oh, 15 minutes went by,

Interviewer 21:11

Mm hmm.

P5 21:14

it's like we gotta go back to work kind of thing. So, you'll definitely see a lot...and then because everyone's in person, especially in the middle of the week, it's like, oh, people, you don't talk to as often because they sit on the other side or their

Interviewer 21:15

Right.

P5 21:25

always remote, and so if they're in the office, it's you want to catch up with them, so you'll walk to go get lunch with them, or walk to get coffee or just to fill up your water, you're all just kinda doing everything in pairs.

Interviewer 21:37

Yeah, great. And so now we can move on to this slide, which kind of has your remote and in person workspace side to side 'cause I kinda wanted to talk a little bit about you kind of started to do this already but kind of comparing your experience in both workspaces.

P5 21:47

Yeah.

Interviewer 21:55

And so to start out, how does your in office workspace compare to your remote workspace?

P5 22:03

For in office definitely it's a lot bigger. A lot more spacious. I have two monitors instead of just one. I feel like I can set up more of my things if I wanted to and kind of personalize it. My chair is comfier in the office.

Interviewer 22:20

Mhmm.

P5 22:20

The Wi-Fi is better in the office.

Interviewer 22:23

Yeah.

P5 22:23

And then for my at home one, obviously, yeah like I only have one monitor. My desk is fairly small for what I'm doing. And the background is not as like, I guess pleasing. So I always have to like blur out a background to my camera if I'm joining virtually when I'm at home, because you'll just see the other half of my room and in the office it's like it's just a neutral whiteboard, so it's fine.

Interviewer 22:41

Mm hmm. Yeah. And I guess, how do you any, any comparison of feelings of working in in both spaces and how one may compare to the other?

P5 22:59

Yeah, I, I feel more productive in the office because it is like my brain kinda sees a designated space to do work, where at home it's still kind of developing that sense of, oh, this half of the room is for work, but the other half isn't. Like I...

Interviewer 23:02

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P5 23:14

you know my bed is for sleeping, kind of thing, and not for work.

Interviewer 23:19

Mmhmm.

P5 23:20

So I definitely feel more productive, more focused in the office compared to at home. I think that's kind of the main, the main feeling difference.

Interviewer 23:31

Yeah, definitely. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P5 23:40

Like, what do you mean by boundaries?

Interviewer 23:42

Yeah, it could be anything from physical boundaries as well as time-based kind of boundaries or even any mental or emotional boundaries you may experience in either space.

P5 23:55

Um I guess. In the, or, when I work from home, I guess my main boundary is not overworking or making sure that you know I am logged on and and setting the boundaries that just because I'm home doesn't mean I can, you know, quickly go do a load of laundry in the middle of like waiting for a call or transitioning between meetings.

Interviewer 24:15

Yeah.

P5 24:17

Kind of making sure that I'm focused at all times. Meanwhile, in the office, I guess my boundaries would be making sure I'm not talking too much with my coworkers unless it's related.

Interviewer 24:19

Mm hmm. Right.

P5 24:28

Those are kind of be the in office and at home boundaries that I have. Other than that

Interviewer 24:32

Uh huh.

P5 24:35

I, I don't know I guess I try not to feel as over, I don't know if as overwhelmed is the right word, but just to make sure I'm staying busy in both locations, but mainly at home, because sometimes that is why I stay at home because it is a lighter workday on a Monday compared to a Wednesday for me. So, making sure that I'm still doing something and just because I'm not busy, that I can like walk around or just like, relax.

Interviewer 25:02

Yeah, no, definitely that makes sense. And how does your ability to disconnect from work when in the office compare to when working from home?

P5 25:13

Oh, it's definitely a lot harder to disconnect from work when I'm in the office because again, it's like I'm at my workplace I'm supposed to be doing work stuff at all times because I am in the office and I'm, you know, at any point can walk by my manager's office or walk by anyone else's office. And like everyone's there for the same purpose, meaning, well, compared to like at home, it's like I can disassociate if I literally move 10 feet or 10 inches away because I'll be in my bedroom and I have

Interviewer 25:32

Yeah.

Right.

P5 25:41

my bed or I have my TV and it's like everyone else in this house, like their purpose of being here is they live here and it's a chance for them to relax. So kind of splitting that and finding that

Interviewer 25:50

Yeah.

P5 25:53

like middle ground.

Interviewer 25:54

Yeah, definitely. And I guess. How would you? Does it feel easier or harder to detach from work let's say at the end of the day, the days that you're in office compared to the days that you work remote?

P5 26:12

Yeah, it's easier to...hmm.

Interviewer 26:13

If that makes sense. Like at the end of the day, when you like to like, leave and forget about work.

P5 26:17

Yeah.

Interviewer 26:19

Is that easier the days that you go to the office or the days that you work remote?

P5 26:24

Let me see. I think it's easier. I guess its easier when I work from home 'cause I'm already like ready to disconnect.

Interviewer 26:36

Mhmm.

Right.

P5 26:40

And I'm closer to it. I guess compared to when I'm in the office, like I'm mentally ready to just, or physically ready to disconnect, but I guess mentally I'm still like, oh, I have my commute home so technically I'm still not in my own hours, but I can do stuff I want to do, like if I wanted

to pick up food on the way home, I could and I wouldn't do that normally when I'm in working hours but.

Interviewer 27:07

Yeah.

P5 27:08

I guess overall when I'm at home it's easier to disconnect

Interviewer 27:11

Yeah.

P5 27:11

at the end of the day.

Interviewer 27:12

Yeah, OK, great. And lastly of the two or like 3 pictures, but of the in person and remote workspace pictures that you shared, which feels more like a workplace to you. Like if I said the term workplace.

P5 27:26

Uh the office one.

Interviewer 27:28

For any reason in particular.

P5 27:31

Just 'cause. I don't know, I feel like the the having two monitors really helps me with the feeling more connected to workspace. Just more office like.

Interviewer 27:42

Mm hmm. Yeah, no. Yeah, that makes sense. So lastly, we can move on here to the last slide where I asked if you could please share either a space or an object that helps you to mentally disconnect from work and you shared this photo here. So, can you just tell me a bit more about this photo?

P5 28:06

Yeah. So, this is a picture of a gym, so I am into weightlifting, so I go around five to six times a week to the gym right after work. And yeah, this is just a bunch of weights.

Interviewer 28:23

Yeah. And I guess out of, you know, when I gave you the prompt out of anything that you could have shared, why did you choose this specific space?

P5 28:32

I think for a long time it's just been, for me, it's been really easy to disconnect and disassociate while I'm in the gym 'cause it's my own time, you know, like I'm focusing on my health.

Interviewer 28:39

Mhmm.

P5 28:41

I'm doing things for myself.

Interviewer 28:43

Mhmm.

P5 28:43

And this is also where I am most often after work. So it's just become part of my day-to-day routine to come here. So I felt like this was the most appropriate picture to share.

Interviewer 28:54

Yeah, definitely. And I guess if you don't have anything for this next question, that's all right. But what meaning, if any, does this space have for you?

P5 29:00

Um, it's just time for myself, you know, time for me to work on myself. Reflect on anything and become a stronger version of myself. So I guess that's the main meaning is that I don't, I don't really have anything else to do or there's like we all have one purpose being at the gym and it's just to get our workout in and, and then go home. So for me that's my main meaning of going there, its just two hours of to myself that I get to have.

Interviewer 29:28

Yeah. Right. And how does the space or object help you mentally disconnect from work? If you can maybe expand a bit about that, on that.

P5 29:41

Yeah, because I made sure not to bring anything work associated to it. So I always like even just going into my if I were, if I were to walk into the gym with my work clothes on, like I still feel some sense of having to do work. So I make sure I go home after work.

Interviewer 29:56

Right.

P5 29:58

I change, I leave all my my laptop, my work phone. I bring nothing that's associated to work into this place and then that kinda changed my mentality of this is the gym.

Interviewer 30:04

Right.

P5 30:08

This is just for like gym stuff only.

Interviewer 30:12

Mm hmm.

P5 30:13

Umm. I guess that's, that's the main thing.

Interviewer 30:17

Yeah, definitely. And I guess this space and its ability to help you mentally disconnect from work, does that depend on whether you are working from home or in the office or it's kind of an everyday thing?

P5 30:29

Its an everyday thing because I'll go on days that I work from home and I'll also go on days that I work from the office. And so there's really no difference. It's just how soon can I get there, if you were to find a difference between those two, but its the same purpose.

Interviewer 30:42

Mhmm.

P5 30:45

Um yeah.

Interviewer 30:46

Yeah. And I guess the same, I guess if it has an effect on you and like this ability to help you disconnect from work, do you feel maybe a greater impact? Again, whether it's a day that you were working from home or a day that you're in office or not really.

P5 31:05

Maybe I guess the days I work from home, just because I finally can, you know, be somewhere other than my desk. So it helps me disconnect I guess a lot better.

Interviewer 31:12

Mhmm.

P5 31:16

You know while in the office, like I can see different things.

Interviewer 31:16

Mm hmm.

P5 31:19

I can walk...I walk to different buildings for my, for my meetings and stuff, so I already have some mobility there and, and, and getting some steps in if I wanted to throughout the day.

Interviewer 31:24

Right.

P5 31:31

Meanwhile, at home, it's like I'm sitting all day.

Interviewer 31:34

Mhmm.

P5 31:35

And so, this, I feel a lot better going to the gym after work from home day.

Interviewer 31:39

Yeah. No, definitely. Okay great. And so lastly, I just want to talk a little bit about your general experiences of experiencing a disconnect from work as well as just your experience of kind of switching between these two different workspaces during the week.

P5 31:55

Mhmm.

Interviewer 31:56

And so to start out, are there certain times of either the day or week in which it is easier or harder to disconnect?

P5 32:08

I guess it all depends on what my workload is looking like, where it would be harder to disconnect because if I have a deadline coming up, you know I'm gonna want to prioritize that and will probably push, you know, this outside place, like going to the gym to later

Interviewer 32:26

Mhmm.

P5 32:27

in the night compared to when I usually go like I try to go around six or seven and then maybe I'll go at 9:00 instead, right?

Interviewer 32:28

Right. Mm hmm.

P5 32:34

Because I want to prioritize and do what I have to do for work.

Interviewer 32:34

Mm hmm.

P5 32:38

But it really just depends on the workload. If it's a light workload then...there's, that's just that. It's just that I have more trouble disconnecting.

Interviewer 32:48

Yeah. Yeah. No, that's great. And I guess can you describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week? I guess so. Like up maybe a little bit more about your commute and what that looks like.

P5 33:03

Yeah, my commute to work. So without traffic, it's like 20 minutes, 22 minutes. With traffic, it can range from 45 minutes to an hour. So for that I do have to like plan earlier to go to the office, especially in the middle of the week. If I go to the office on a Monday, traffic will be a lot lighter because not that usually people are working from home those days. So it's

Interviewer 33:21

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P5 33:27

nice to go in on a Monday if I choose to and stay home another day and I can get there in like 30 minutes

Interviewer 33:32

Mm hmm.

P5 33:33

and it's so much of a time saver. But the days I really go, it's like 45 minutes to an hour to get to work and then same thing on the way back. If you don't leave by like 2:00 PM, then it starts adding into the time.

Interviewer 33:46

Mm hmm.

P5 33:47

So it'll jump from 30 minutes to then 45 to 50.

Interviewer 33:52

Wow. Wow, that's a lot. But I guess how does this commute make you feel?

P5 34:01

Awful. I hate it. I, it's just, it's such a pain because sometimes I will use like the apple maps like

feature where it tells me what time I should leave my house by to get to the office and even if I leave at like 7:45 and it says you're gonna arrive by 8:30, I end up arriving at like 8:40 because either an accident happened midway or there's just so many people that left at the same time. And it just adds up without me knowing and, and it's so hard when I have only two exits to take and I can see my one exit and see the buildings around and I'm like I am...I can see my building and I go, I am almost there

Interviewer 34:31

Right.

P5 34:44

but it's taking me...like it take even faster if I walk from where I'm stuck at this light to, like, go to my building than to drive the .2 miles.

Interviewer 34:53

Right. Oh gosh, and I guess, do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?

P5 35:04

Yeah, I guess when I'm commuting in the in the mornings, it helps a lot because if I'm working from home, it's harder for me to connect to work because I'm either still waking up or like I'm I'm eating my breakfast while logging into work and reading some e-mails.

Interviewer 35:08

Mm hmm.

P5 35:20

Compared to when I'm in the office, usually I already have that done and I just have to go and get my emails. I'll, I'll probably just go and get a coffee.

Interviewer 35:27

Right.

P5 35:28

And it's like, OK, I'm, I parked at the garage like I'm looking, I'm even looking at my phone sometimes when I park at the garage just to make sure I don't miss any important emails or any meetings were thrown at the last minute while I was commuting.

Interviewer 35:41

Right.

P5 35:44

So yeah.

Interviewer 35:45

Yeah. And at the end of the day, does it help you switch off from work like mode or that mindset?

P5 35:49

Yeah at the end of day, I think once I'm in my car, it's kind of that middle ground. It's like okay you can check your phone on your way home, but I try not to, one because I'm driving and two if, if someone's reaching out to me

Interviewer 35:57

Mhmm.

P5 36:03

past 5:00 PM like I'm, I'm hoping it can really wait till tomorrow.

Interviewer 36:08

Yeah, definitely. And I guess then do you more so not really feel disconnected fully until you like arrive or get home?

P5 36:16

Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer 36:18

OK, great.

P5 36:18

'Cause usually once I get home, it's like the good indicator is like OK, especially coming in from the office, like I'm now putting this away and putting it in my work bag and I won't see it till tomorrow morning.

Interviewer 36:23

Mm hmm. Yeah. No, that's great. And how does the movement between these spaces influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P5 36:39

Between...

Like?

Interviewer 36:42

Like I guess maybe. Yeah, like how does the movement, I guess working in different spaces during the week, so remote versus in office influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P5 36:51

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 36:54

Or does it I guess?

P5 37:02

Yeah, I guess the movement. It's easier to disconnect from work being at home than it is from leaving the office again, because it's like I can still check my phone...when I'm in the car, like driving home, so it kinda...even though the middle ground in my commute, I'm like oh I can still like if I get pulled into a meeting I can take it from my car. Meanwhile when I'm at home I made sure to shut

Interviewer 37:21

Mm hmm. Right.

P5 37:32

everything off and then I, I leave immediately so that I don't even see my phone.

Interviewer 37:36

Yeah, no. Makes sense. And I guess this is following up maybe a better way to phrase it. So if you have anything else that's great, but if not, no worries.

P5 37:43

Mhmm.

Interviewer 37:45

So I guess in your experience, how does that ability, your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day?

P5 37:57

I um, I think it also just kinda depends on like the type of work day I'm having and the workload that I have. So if it's a really busy in the office, I guess it's easier for me to disconnect there because of the amount of work I'm doing if I have like just a busy schedule. Then the second you know that, I know that I'm done, it's like great, I'm done.

Interviewer 38:05

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P5 38:17

I just have to wait till tomorrow to do it again.

Interviewer 38:20

Yeah.

P5 38:21

Versus when, like I'm at home, it's just like the scenery of just sitting down all the time. I don't access to move, or you know, go talk to someone else that's work related

Interviewer 38:30

Mhmm.

P5 38:31

about work stuff. So I guess if that helps.

Interviewer 38:35

Yeah. No, that's great. And I guess what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to successfully and like fully disconnect from work at the end of every day? So let's say in like a perfect world, what would your setup be to fully disconnect every single day?

P5 38:50

Yeah. I think in a perfect world like coming from the office, you know I wouldn't be stuck in traffic for an hour and like that would help me a lot. And then

Interviewer 38:58

Mm hmm. Right. Mm hmm.

P5 39:08

if everyone worked like the same schedule, like if everyone was, you know, in agreement 5:00 PM, you can't send out any more emails or like 5:00 PM, you can't like assign a last minute task that needs to be done by 5:30 or 6:00 and it's like okay well, now I have to work an extra hour to get this done.

Interviewer 39:26

Mm hmm.

P5 39:27

Or feeling that pressure kind of thing.

Interviewer 39:29

Yeah.

P5 39:30

Because definitely in the beginning I would always just check my work phone. And so now just building that habit of not needing to check it when I'm off from work or outside of work hours. So in a perfect world, yeah, less commute, no one sends me an e-mail past five, and then we're all in like, the same schedule of of working whenever we need to work.

Interviewer 39:45

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Yeah. No, definitely. And any changes to your remote workspace? Or do you feel that it's good as it is, or in an ideal world, would you change anything?

P5 39:59

For my remote workspace, I guess in a perfect world I have my own office, so I wouldn't put it in the same place as my bedroom. Like if I had a two-bedroom place, I'd have one be for, you know, sleeping in my own time and then the

Interviewer 40:04

Yeah.

P5 40:13

other one just be office related things. So probably a bigger, a desk, maybe another monitor, maybe a standing desk so I can move and like a little walking pad under so I can get like some type of like activity in during the work day and not just be sitting all day.

Interviewer 40:23

Yeah.

P5 40:29

Comfier desk chair for sure.

Interviewer 40:31

Yeah.

P5 40:32

But like that would probably be my remote setup if I could choose and like switch it up.

Interviewer 40:40

Yeah. No, definitely. And I guess one other thing 'cause you were mentioning sometimes that like pressure to answer, do things after hours. Can you maybe expand a little bit more about that and any other kind of work pressures you may feel either in or out of office?

P5 40:56

Yeah, this is definitely more prevalent at the beginning of my, 'cause I start, uh...beginning of my official job, like in June, where they gave me the work phone and I hadn't had one in my previous work experiences where you know, like I, I carry 2 phones around me. One to check my emails and then one to check, oh any text I get on the daily or whatever.

Interviewer 41:18

Mm hmm.

P5 41:19

So those pressures. It's just like, oh, if I, I can hear my phone buzz like, I mean, someone's trying to reach to me or like, there's an e-mail that's coming through. So I feel obligated to check it, just cause the notification's on and obligated to always have it on

Interviewer 41:33

Mhmm

P5 41:35

me in case anyone needs me. So even if I'm leaving my office, like to go to a different building to either get lunch or get a coffee, I'll bring my work phone with me

Interviewer 41:38

Yeah.

P5 41:48

to make sure that I'm not missing anything and also so that people know that like, oh, I'm at lunch, I'm still working. I'm just not... 'cause we we use teams also, so it's like it'll show that I'm yellow offline or green. You know the goal is to be green at all times 'cause I am working, but I've gotten to the point where I understand like just because I'm yellow doesn't

Interviewer 42:00

Mm hmm.

P5 42:08

mean I'm not working. It could literally mean I got up to use the bathroom, or like I'm gonna go fill up my water bottle.

Interviewer 42:11

Right. Yeah. No, definitely.

P5 42:16

Yeah. So those are the main pressures of carrying my phone around.

Interviewer 42:17

Great. Yeah. Uh huh. And do you feel? Is there anything else or is that just, I guess your main, your main pressure that comes from it, from working?

P5 42:29

I think that's the main one is just making sure I don't miss anything and learning

Interviewer 42:30

Mm hmm.

P5 42:35

to not always check it, like even during time off, like if I recently had a PTO lined up for me that my manager will always be like leave your phone behind.

Interviewer 42:38

Yeah.

P5 42:45

Like if no...if, we can take care of it if you are not in the office. Nothing should be so dire that only you can answer it kind of thing, especially at the entry level like.

Interviewer 42:53

Yeah. Yeah.

P5 42:58

Everyone should be able to take care and like backfill your role in the beginning of your point, like your, your position. So I, I sometimes still take it with me just because if there's a meeting that I know I'm gonna miss but I would like some insight on I'll join in. But

Interviewer 43:15

Mhmm

P5 43:17

for the most part, I just have it because I just don't, I wanna make sure I don't lose it.

Interviewer 43:22

Right.

P5 43:22

That's the other thing is I always take it with me because I don't wanna lose it and I wanna know where it is. So, but I'll try not to check it like I just had time off and I don't think I checked my phone during the entire weekend.

Interviewer 43:26

Yeah. Right.

P5 43:33

I just checked it in the beginning when I first logged off 'cause, I was getting emails for something. But then my coworker like filled in.

Interviewer 43:38

Yeah.

P5 43:42

So I was like, oh, great, I don't have to do it.

Interviewer 43:43

Yeah.No. Yeah, yeah. And that's really nice too, that you're like supervisor, you know, helped you know that you know, you can leave it behind when you have that time off and everything kind of set that precedent that you don't gotta be worrying about it or be on all the time when you have that time off.

P5 43:59

Yeah, exactly, that was great.

Interviewer 44:02

Yeah. And I guess so lastly, is there just anything that we did not cover that you would like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between different workspaces or just on your kind of general ability to disconnect from work?

P5 44:17

I don't think so. I think that was kind of...just a lot of great questions.

Interviewer 44:23

Yeah. No, that's great. Well, if you don't have anything, I guess before we end too just to ask you one last time, if you had any questions or anything else for me?

P5 44:34

Nothing at the moment, no.

Interviewer 44:36

OK, great. Well, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today and for, you know, answering all the questions. And I hope you have a great rest of your day.

P5 44:45

You too. Thanks so much for doing this. This was great.

Interviewer 44:48

Yes, thank you.

P5 44:51

Bye.

P6 Interview Transcript

42m 5s

Interviewer 0:06

All right. So, hello. I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. Everything you say during this interview will remain confidential and I wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P6 0:53

That's fine, thanks.

Interviewer 0:54

Great. And before we begin, do you have any last-minute questions for me?

P6 0:59

Nope.

Interviewer 1:00

All right, great. So to start out, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P6 1:06

Sure. My name is [name extracted]. I am currently working at [workplace name extracted]. I've been there since June of 2020, so I'm coming up on five years. And so, I initially started in the height of the pandemic, so at that point we were all home all the time.

Interviewer 1:20

Mm hmm.

P6 1:21

Because of the nature of my work, so I work in a museum and we work with objects, so sometimes you have to actually be with the things in order to be doing the job. So there were times when I would make arrangements in the beginning to come in to do that work and that that was through the whole pandemic that for us lasted quite some time because we were very cautious with coming back. And now I'm working...I still have a lot of parts of my job that require me to be with the things or with documents or with books that I can't take home. So I work 4 times, 4 days a week downtown in my office and then I'm home one day a week. And this is the only position that I've ever had with hybrid work.

Interviewer 2:00

Mm hmm.

P6 2:00

In the past, I've, I've always worked for museums, and I've generally been doing work with the collection, so it's really hard to to do that if you're not, if you're not there. Then maybe there were times around...so so hybrid work became a thing, like a real big thing with COVID, but there were times, I think, when I was coming back from maternity leave, where there were periods where I was dealing with care issues, where there were periods where I was able to do some work from home, but generally I had always been at on the site of whatever my job was.

Interviewer 2:29

Right. Yeah, definitely. And I know you mentioned kind of what days you work in office versus at home. Can you expand maybe a little bit more about how that's decided?

P6 2:39

So we decided as a team that for, for at [workplace name] within the museum team that we wanted to make sure that we were at least all together one day a week. So that's our Tuesday when we always have a meeting. Every single week. And then we also arranged it so that there was always coverage, at least one person, but generally at least two people every other day.

Interviewer 2:49

Mm hmm.

P6 2:59

So my my at home day is Thursday and nobody else is home. Well, there's somebody on paternity leave, but he he has a schedule where...but he was on site that day too. So, it was only me, I think, working from home on Thursday, so we worked it out. The short answer is we worked it out as a group so that we were maintaining coverage and then giving people at least one day who could work from home to work from home.

Interviewer 3:22

Yeah. No, that's great. And I know you mentioned a little bit, but can you just expand a bit more about your current job role and what that looks like?

P6 3:30

Sure. So, I'm responsible for the historic house structures and the objects, and then also records. And those are all physically on site. Although sometimes I can scan things so that I can maintain access to them when I'm not on site. I do research and also there is a public component sometimes. So, we're providing access either behind the scenes to objects, or we're doing tours for the public, so those are of course on site activities. Other other parts of my job. There's budget management and database management and that's, that's why it lends itself to hybrid, because that's the computer, that can be anywhere. Our technology is...

Interviewer 4:10

Right.

P6 4:12

recently they moved to an all laptop model, so everybody has a laptop which is in itself portable and then you have a docking station at work.

Interviewer 4:21

Nice. That's great. And so now we can move on into the main section, where before the interview, I asked if you could please share an image of your remote workspace and of your in office workspace. So I'll go ahead and share my screen now. Let me know if you can hopefully see that all right.

P6 4:42

I can see that. Yep.

Interviewer 4:44

Great. So to start out, I just wanted will start here on the 1st slide with your remote workspace image and talk just a bit more about your experience in this space. And so to start out, can you tell me just a bit about this photo?

P6 4:58

Sure. So I'm sitting at it right now. It's a physical desk in kind of an alcove in my bedroom, and my husband built all these shelves to put books on, and there's, like, a pegboard for hanging things that I need, and then the desk is where I have my computer. And I have an outdoor...I have

Interviewer 5:16

Mm hmm.

P6 5:17

a window, but I also have a door that locks so I can close the space off. And yeah, I I get natural sunlight and I have a comfy chair and it's kind of all you need.

Interviewer 5:29

Yeah, that's great. And how do you feel working in this space?

P6 5:34

I like it. I like the space. It's the being like in the home part like the the other...the things that tug at you that you're in your house and you know like maybe I put a load of laundry in before I started and I hear the machine buzz so then I'll be... I'll think of going to take care of that,

Interviewer 5:50

Mm hmm.

P6 5:52

so I think that being...when I'm focused and here it's fine. But there...I know, I'm aware of the things that are outside the door that are other responsibilities.

Interviewer 6:05

Yeah. And I know you mentioned, so this is kind of in its own alcove, but within the bedroom space, can you maybe expand a little bit about how maybe that makes you feel 'cause it's, you know within your, let's say, living space?

P6 6:22

Um I don't...it feels fine. Like, it's not like I am...it's not like it's representative of work or stress or anything, just being there. I, I, we worked really hard because our house is small to find the most efficient use of different spaces, so this little alcove that we turned into desk bookshelf like we're pretty proud of it.

Interviewer 6:45

Mm hmm.

P6 6:45

So I I think it's nice. It's it's all bright white. It's it's very clean. There's places to put everything so it doesn't get cluttered. And yeah, I like having it. Doesn't bother me that it's part of the bedroom space. It makes the best use of this little this little corner that we have.

Interviewer 7:02

Yeah. No, that's great. And now can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day specifically like in this space?

P6 7:10

Uh when I'm home?

Interviewer 7:11

Yes.

P6 7:12

OK, so once now I get the kids are all out, there all up at school. So I'll come in here as soon as that all happens which means I get seated by about a little bit before 9. And I'll work through until lunch when I'll wander down and try to find something to eat. And then sometimes if I can, if I've managed to work to start work a little bit earlier, then after lunch I can stop work a little bit earlier as well. So by the kids coming home 3:30 or 4:00, I'm usually done. And the kind of work that I'm doing is...like this morning I was just doing database cleanup, answering emails. It's all the computer stuff that sometimes kind of falls off the To Do List. I'm going through my, all of my notebooks with all of their various things to see what's gotten left behind to to sort of consolidate. And then I'm also making what happens is that there will be stuff that'll come up that I can't do because I'm here and not at work. So those that's a separate list that I have of the things that I need to follow up on when I get back into office.

Interviewer 8:07

Right. Yeah. No, that's all great. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P6 8:21

I think well, I shut down my computer and put it back in its home and then...because I...because there was a period where I had a desktop at work and a laptop separately, so I didn't have to worry about bringing them back and forth.

Interviewer 8:33

Mm hmm.

P6 8:35

Now, if I don't bring my computer to work, I can't do work at work. So at the end of my day is when I'm shutting down the computer, putting it into its case, and putting it in my backpack to get ready to go so that it's all ready and I don't forget it so. That's the end.

Interviewer 8:48

Yeah, and how effective is that for you?

P6 8:52

It's pretty effective. I still have my phone. That's it's my personal phone, but it has outlook, which is what we use for emails. So I, I still can see them, and I keep an eye on it if there's sort of an emergency thing that comes in, but I have to say that generally the work life balance is pretty good.

Interviewer 8:59

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P6 9:10

There's not the expectation that you're working beyond your, your hours. Although, because people are a little bit more flexible with their schedules, you might get people who do work a little bit later or who start a little bit earlier, so there could be things that are popping up. So I keep an eye on, on emails, but unless it's something that really needs an immediate response or it comes from the big boss, I'll ignore it until the next day.

Interviewer 9:35

Yeah. Okay, that's great. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P6 9:43

There's a moment where I'm kind of worried about all the things I didn't do that I that I thought I should do, so I'll take that time to just write down a list, so I don't forget what I was working on. But then once the computer shut down and put away, I'm, I'm not thinking about it anymore.

Interviewer 9:53

Mm hmm. Yeah. No, that's great. And I know you kind of already described the end of your workday and your physical shutdown process. So I guess can you talk a bit about how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P6 10:15

Oh, a little person usually opens my doors. So it's all over [laughs]. I...once the the kids start coming home, things get noisy and so there's not... it's immediate kind of that...there's not any way to concentrate anymore enough to do anything that requires any kind of concentration. So that's, that's the end.

Interviewer 10:33

Yeah. And do you typically stay within the space after the workday or leave it or what's that like?

P6 10:40

No. Well, I'll leave it because they'll still show up and I'll go...I'm on the 2nd floor and I'll go down to the first floor and then those, you know, snacks and making starting dinner and all the other domestic things start.

Interviewer 10:51

Right.

P6 10:51

So I I'm leaving here until it's time to go back to bed.

Interviewer 10:55

Right, okay great. And can you expand a little bit more on how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P6 11:04

I don't know that I'm all that good at that. So I'm not sure. Because a portion of our work is sort of intellectual, like the ideas are always kind of percolating is... I'm thinking about exhibitions or about how things that I've seen in in other contexts are,

Interviewer 11:07

Mm hmm.

Mm hmm.

P6 11:23

are interacting with what I what I do so I'm not ever fully not thinking about about something. It's not in a stressful I have to get this done kind of way.

Interviewer 11:29

Mm hmm.

P6 11:30

But it's just a presence of things. So I don't necessarily fully disconnect from from that part of of things, but I'm not, I'm not thinking about the day-to-day like it's, you know. Like "oh no, I didn't get my credit card reconciliation done." Like, that's fine. That can wait till Monday. That's not occupying my brain any other time except when I'm doing it.

Interviewer 11:50

Right. So it's more just of the, you know things about work but not necessarily like a work-related thing that you didn't get done it just yeah more general?

P6 12:00

Yeah, it's not specific tasks. It's more general stuff than thinking about ideas, and some...you know, we'll talk at dinner about what happened during your day with, with the kids so that, you know, things will come up then too.

Interviewer 12:10

Mm hmm. Yeah, definitely great. And so what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain that separation between work and home life?

P6 12:24

Well there's a door. It's the door.

Interviewer 12:28

Uh huh.

P6 12:29

I don't. I don't think there's really anything else. I don't really wear headphones or put on any music. I don't...I like to work when it's quiet, so I don't have any anything like that. There's nothing. The desk is clear. There's nothing else like there's no work...uh home stuff on the desk, so I think it's the lack of extraneous things that is more significant than any particular object.

Interviewer 12:55

Yeah. Okay, great. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P6 13:04

Well, there, there's a door, but it's not soundproof. So it, like I said, if I hear the, the like the dryer go off and I think I'll, I'll unload that and fold the clothes or

Interviewer 13:07

Mhmm.

P6 13:14

if my husband's home and is asking me a question about something, so I'll I'll hear the other things and then I'll go and and take care of those. And then when I leave to do lunch, sometimes I won't relocate back here. Sometimes I'll end up working in in the kitchen area or somewhere

else after the morning. The morning I definitely get in this space. But later, sometimes I'm somewhere else.

Interviewer 13:39

And do you feel any sort of difference of working within those different spaces within the house?

P6 13:45

I think I tailor that kind of activities that I'm doing. So, if I'm doing something that really requires concentration, I'll be here where I don't have to worry about any of the distractions. If it's something that's more... that doesn't really require, you know, it's more of like a... I don't know, just tasks that are less challenging, then I can do those somewhere else.

Interviewer 14:06

Yeah, great. All right. So now we can move on to the second image here, which is of your in-office workspace and these questions and just talking about your experience, but more specifically in this space. So to start out, very similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P6 14:26

So I am in like a sub almost basement area in like the far back corner of the house. This is part of the structure I think that's all the way back to the 1800s, so it's an older portion. But it has this really nice terracotta tile floor that I like a lot, and I do, despite the fact that it's mostly underground, I get OK sunlight and before I moved in here, I insisted they put in some lights for me and they are LEDs that are have an adjustable color and adjustable strength. So I can turn...I can modify that to myself, and then there's, there's two sets of doors until you kind of get out to where there's people milling around. So it's nice and quiet and I have a lot of desk space. So, there's the places where the things pile up. It's a little bit piled up in this picture, things that that are gonna get put away. But if I know I'm working with, if I need to work with archives for example, I have, I have space to do that.

Interviewer 15:12

Mm hmm.

P6 15:18

I have two monitors which I really, really like. It's a lot different from the laptop.

Interviewer 15:23

Mm hmm.

P6 15:24

And so I get.... that's easier to do the spreadsheets or things that really require the with or to process images or even read, like reorganizing things if you have the two screens, you can...I can better do that there. So that's part of what's in this space.

Interviewer 15:41

Yeah, absolutely.

P6 15:41

That's about it.

Interviewer 15:43

Great. And how do you feel working in this space?

P6 15:48

I like it. I think it's nice and quiet. I feel good.

Interviewer 15:54

Yeah, OK, great. Any comparison with how that... compared to your remote workspace of how it feels working in both spaces?

P6 16:07

Well, in my office, if I if I come across that thing that requires me to go physically look at an object or either go look at...I can go do it.

Interviewer 16:13

Mhmm.

P6 16:15

I don't have to write it down to remember to do it another time. I can just get up and do it. But the flip side of that is that if I was working on something else, it's easy to get kind of pulled in a different direction and not stay with the task.

Interviewer 16:19

Right.

P6 16:26

So I can be kind of more focused at home because there's a series of activities that are easier to complete and then at work I get...it's not so much distracted, it's that there's a lot of open projects so the day can take itself in a different direction.

Interviewer 16:39

Yeah.

P6 16:40

My colleagues generally...here I I can also interact with people. Like if I need to go talk to somebody, I can pick up a phone or I can go and actually talk with them or of course, all my in person meetings are in person at work. We've really gone mostly back to in person meetings. We don't have a lot of things that happen only virtually, so my day is I think a little bit more broken up by those meetings. I actually block my schedule for my work at home day so that people don't

accidentally schedule things with me, just because I know that it could be that although I, I can work and there might be other things...like it might be a day that I have, you know, a contractor at the house and if I have a meeting then that gets complicated. So yeah, this space is just I think it's more dynamic. I have access to everything that I need more quickly when I need it.

Interviewer 17:32

Yeah, great. And now can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but on a day like this when you would go into office?

P6 17:40

Well, so usually I have at least one meeting with somebody somewhere. So there...

Interviewer 17:43

Mm hmm.

P6 17:44

and there's several that are fixed. I have a Wednesday meeting that's always Wednesday and a Tuesday meeting that's always Tuesday. So those meetings are fixed. So I have...I'll be in and out for meetings. I may have had, particularly on a Friday, I've probably put something aside for my Thursday work at home that I have to go and figure out, so I have have that to deal with. And then there might also be moments when I'm not physically seated at this desk, I might be in storage with objects like yesterday, I had to unframe something and so I was working with the actual object or I'll be over in the library getting books or returning books. So I'm I think I'm up and down a little bit more than I'm... less less seated, less blocks of time, more smaller bits of time.

Interviewer 18:32

Yeah. Great. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P6 18:38

I go home and I have to leave like, exactly at 4:55 because of the series of public transportation I have to take. So it's pretty cut and dry there like the end of the day is the end of the day.

Interviewer 18:49

No, that's great. And how effective is that for you?

P6 18:53

Pretty good. Yesterday, somebody scheduled me a 4:00 meeting that went kind of long and so then I missed my my cut off to get home. So then I have to, you know, call and get a ride and it gets gets a little more complicated. But usually yeah, that's that. It ends okay. I have trouble though with kind of the very end of the day where I get into like just one more thing and I miscalculate about how long it'll take me to finish it. So I'm usually scrambling. There was a period where I put an alarm on my phone to get myself ready and I turned that off so I might need to put that back on 'cause it's a bit of a scramble then at the end where I have that one thing to do and it takes longer than I thought it would.

Interviewer 19:32

Yeah. No, definitely. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P6 19:38

It's the same thing that there's always, I'm afraid that I'm gonna forget something that was in process, so I will either in that case if I have not left myself enough time to write it down, I'll use the app on my phone, the notes app, and just scribble stuff. So I'm always remembering... forgetting and remembering about those that I have to go back and look at. Usually it's the actually the act of writing it down that makes me remember it more than me going back and looking at the notes. So it's the same moment where of like, panic and then once I'm out of the space like there's nothing I can do, and it'll wait till tomorrow.

Interviewer 20:11

Right. Yeah, that's great. And can you describe maybe a little bit more in detail the end of your workday in the space and kind of what that looks like?

P6 20:22

So like I said, it needs...it's pretty specific with what time I have to get out of there. So I will try to be keeping an eye on the clock by about 4:30 and starting to wind down. And then what I know I won't finish I will write down that I need to do it. It might be the end of the day too that I am confirming any appointments for the next couple days. If I know that I'm gonna be meeting with someone or somebody is delivering something, then I'll make sure that I confirm that. I'll go through to and yeah, just making sure that I'm aware of the next couple days of schedules, the last kind of things I do. My computer, I'm usually shutting it down, but at least, we're supposed to lock it when we walk away from it, so I'll at least lock it if there's a lot of programs open or things that I'm working on and I want to maintain that kind of virtual desktop. I'll leave it and just lock, but generally I'm shutting down the computer. So it's a similar thing to home...it's that the the the end of the end of the day is really when I have shut down my computer and I can't do anything else.

Interviewer 21:28

Yeah, that's great. And how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P6 21:36

So sometimes so, so, you know, pack every physically, pack everything up and leave.

Interviewer 21:41

Mm hmm.

P6 21:42

And then I'm usually putting on my, like my headphones and calling home, that's what I do, the first thing when I when I leave to figure out what kind of chaos I want to be walking into. You know what's for dinner? Do we need to pick up any groceries on the way home? That kind of thing. So it's once again like from work mode right into domestic responsibilities.

Interviewer 22:03

And I guess maybe compared to the day that you're working from home, how do you mentally disconnect from work on a day like this when you go into office?

P6 22:17

So I'll do that phone call and then depending on how long that lasts, I'll either put the radio. So I'll listen to NPR or whatever's happening as I'm walking. So I have to physically my home is walking to the [location extracted], so it's like a 20 to 30 minute walk.

Interviewer 22:32

Mm hmm.

P6 22:32

So that's the like mind clearing walk when I'm listening to something and then when I'm riding the metro, I'm usually reading a book, and they've mostly been just general fiction these days. So it's. That's how I disconnect.

Interviewer 22:44

Yeah, that's great. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P6 22:52

So it's the people...it happens when there's transitions of new fellows who are on campus scholars, because the nearest bathroom for the two meeting rooms is around the corner and not well marked. So one of the challenges is people walking in, but that happens extremely rarely and I've started to like prop open the...I've started to kind of do a little bit of work on that before it happens so like I'm not walking people to the bathroom for 20 minutes.

Interviewer 23:06

Mhmm.

P6 23:20

So I think that's maybe the only thing that's a challenge. And then if I get, you know, if I get a phone call to go do something else 'cause people can actually call me here and reach me. Although we text each other a lot too. So, it's there's

Interviewer 23:32

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P6 23:35

nothing particularly different about that.

Interviewer 23:37

Yeah. No, that's great. So now moving on, I put your photos side to side here 'cause I kind of

wanted to talk about general comparisons between these workspaces and I know we already kind of have touched upon a few things, but I guess my first question being how does your in office workspace compare to your remote workspace? Anything that comes to mind initially.

P6 24:01

Well, it's a big, bigger and there's a lot more desk surface area, which lends itself to what I have to do there, which is looking at documents and looking at and all the books that I have access to only at work. So there's just a lot more physical space.

Interviewer 24:17

Mhmm.

P6 24:18

Though you can't see in this picture, the other side is just a row of file cabinets and those are all of the records that are related to the objects. So, it's just when something comes up that I'm working on, I can just walk right over and get it. My space at home is smaller.

Interviewer 24:30

Mhmm.

P6 24:32

It has more sunlight though, and a window that opens to the outside so I can get fresh air, which is really nice. I appreciate that.

Interviewer 24:39

Yeah.

P6 24:40

So that's a difference. Yeah, there's a lot more square footage clearly at work. It's a pretty big office, which is really nice.

Interviewer 24:47

Yeah. No, that's really great. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P6 24:55

Well, there's no laundry to do, so I don't have any of the physically present domestic activities. I haven't been real good at, so you know, I think I have seven paid working hours. I'm salaried, so it's not an hourly thing, but taking a lunch break is something that I don't do real well at work. I'm, I will not eat my office because of the documents and books and things that I have, but I'm usually doing a pretty quick lunch when I'm working and because I've already prepared it, it's just heating something up. But when I'm at home, it's, there's a little bit more preparation for lunch, so I actually get like the full break of the hour if when I'm not working. So that's different.

Interviewer 25:33

Yeah, that's great. And how does your ability to disconnect from work the days when in the office compared to the days when working from home?

P6 25:42

I think it's pretty similar because here I have the physical presence of my family right away and at home...at work I'm calling and you know, connecting with them right away so that that's the same signal that I'm switching from, you know, work sphere to domestic sphere. So it's pretty, pretty similar.

Interviewer 26:01

Yeah. Yeah. So I guess 'cause that kind of leads into my question. Do you? Do you at all feel that it is easier or harder to detach from work the days that you're in the office compared to the days that you're working from home? Like is one easier than the other?

P6 26:19

I think in office is a little easier because I have the buffer of the public transit time. It takes me about 75 minutes I think, all in. So I get, I get a lot more physical exercise because I'm I'm walking than I usually do, you know I do, the stairs a couple times when I'm home and not quite as much. So I have the physical exercise, and the time that I don't have when I'm home. When I'm home, it's directly from work to, to not work.

Interviewer 26:36

Yeah.

P6 26:46

When I'm in the office, I have the walking and

Interviewer 26:46

Mhmm.

P6 26:49

other activity time until I'm having responsibilities again. So I think it's easier when I'm in the office.

Interviewer 26:53

Yeah. No, that's great. And lastly of the two pictures you shared here, which feels more like a workplace to you? Like if I use that term workplace.

P6 27:05

I think my in home...uh my in office, office. On site office.

Interviewer 27:10

Yeah, great. And for any specific reasons?

P6 27:13

I mean, it has a landline phone, is got the chairs are like those standard office chairs. The furniture is very office. I think it's just yeah, it just says "this is an office space."

Interviewer 27:24

Yeah. All right. And so now we can move on to the last slide here where I asked if you can please share either an image of a space or an object that helps you disconnect from work and you shared this beautiful photo here. So, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P6 27:46

So this is plum walk in the gardens at [workplace name extracted]. It's my, it's my favorite. They're the first trees to flower. They have these beautiful purple flowers in March. They, they come out for the cherry blossoms and don't tell the cherry blossoms, but they're my favorite.

Interviewer 27:53

Mm hmm.

P6 27:59

So at work we have the physical garden, which is very much always been presented as a place that you go to just be.

Interviewer 28:07

Mhmm.

P6 28:08

And so this is my favorite part of the garden. But you can wander in there. It's quiet except for the birds chirping. You know in the in the morning time in particular, before it opens to the public and gives you a chance to breathe some fresh air and look at some flowers and just not think about other things. The Wi-Fi is not very good, so you can't really...no one can get you.

Interviewer 28:33

Yeah. No, absolutely. And I guess from the prompt that I gave you, why did you choose this, this photo in particular, like specifically?

P6 28:43

Um. I don't know. I think because it's a, it's a place that I like to go that's...and it is physically at work, which is, I guess, ironic, but there's not really other things that that...I couldn't really think of anything else that was detaching 'cause, as I said, like fully detached,

Interviewer 28:51

Mm hmm.

P6 29:04

I don't that I'm ever really fully detached because I'm always kind of thinking about things that are work adjacent.

Interviewer 29:10

Mhmm.

P6 29:10

But when I'm outside I...there's...I can't...I'm not with a computer. Not with anything. I'm usually not...I don't have a book. I'm just...just me and the trees.

Interviewer 29:20

Yeah, absolutely. And I guess this is connecting to this, so if you don't have anything else, that's fine, or if you want to build upon anything you just said. But how exactly does this space help you mentally disconnect from work?

P6 29:33

Oh, it's outside. I think the fact of not like having walls is really significant that you can, you can wander around.

Interviewer 29:35

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P6 29:41

There's different like tactile sensations. You know, there's some paths are pebbles, some are some parts of the grass, you can walk on. So you get, that the difference, there's different temperatures, too. Breezes. Or parts where you're actually in the sun or in the shade, and all of the different. It's a different like environmental stimulus outside.

Interviewer 30:01

Yeah, absolutely. And you mentioned since is that work, is this something that you only use to disconnect on those work days where you go in office? Because obviously at home...

P6 30:12

Yeah, I can't get there from home. Yeah, yeah, I should...

Interviewer 30:14

Yeah.

P6 30:16

But it's, it's not impossible. I don't know...going out. It hasn't occurred to me that I could go outside at home too, but I could go outside.

Interviewer 30:24

Yeah, definitely. And does this space have any other meaning for you?

P6 30:33

I feel like... so [workplace name extracted] because of it's the [workplace individual names

extracted], but I just feel like the gardens are just like feminine in some way. Like I don't know. I feel like the presence of the ladies or something outside

Interviewer 30:39

Mhmm. Yeah. Yeah. No, absolutely.

P6 30:47

Sometimes you have to get away from the bros. I don't know. [laughs]

Interviewer 30:51

No, no. Yeah, that's totally fine. And I guess that the days that you don't go into office 'cause this is something or I guess to start, is this a disconnect space that you use every day that you go into office or is it dependent on how you're feeling that day or anything?

P6 31:08

I think it's depending on how I'm feeling and if I get like sucked into anything and don't make it outside. I really prefer to be outside before the public. Particularly it just gets so crowded now.

Interviewer 31:18

Yeah.

P6 31:19

So sometimes I'll miss my moment, but I do try. I've been trying a little bit more. It took me actually a really long time to go out in the gardens one because I was afraid I would get lost and not ever be able to find my way out, which is not true. So I resolved that. And there's also wildlife like, you know, snakes. But so far I haven't come across one of those either. So I do. It's not everyday. Probably at least once a week. And then it's weather dependent too. I'm not gonna go out in the rain. It's been pretty rainy.

Interviewer 31:47

Yeah, absolutely. And lastly, I guess do you have another space or object that you use in particular at home? Or again, it's dependent on how you're feeling?

P6 32:00

Not really. I mean, I used to. This is like into the hobbies question. It's just...I don't...it's not that I don't. I guess I cook. So I I guess it's like I'm disconnecting when I'm in the kitchen. I can't...if I don't focus on what I'm doing, I'll cut or burn myself. So generally I think that's probably the other disconnect space is when I'm cooking or or baking something 'cause I'm doing it for the people that I love and it's not...it's really not related to work. So that's probably the other space that's a disconnect space at home.

Interviewer 32:28

Yeah, great. So lastly, this last section doesn't have to do with any of the photos, but it just about kind of your general experiences relating to disconnecting as well as kind of switching between these workspaces during the work week. And so my first question is, are there certain times of either the day or week in which it is easier or harder for you to disconnect?

P6 32:56

Um I...I think maybe like the Monday through Friday. So it's probably harder to disconnect on a Friday because I have to be more deliberate about kind of closing out things.

Interviewer 33:01

Mm hmm.

P6 33:10

Otherwise, they'll...they'll not...if there's more of a likelihood that they will get...it'll it'll be harder to restart them on a Monday. So I think maybe disconnecting on a Friday to go into the weekend. Weekends are kind of intense at home, just with the other, the home things, so. So I think the Friday is probably harder. And then Monday, there's just when you start out on Monday, it's Monday through Friday seems like a lot of time. So I think that it's easier than on a Monday to go home on Tuesday because you're coming back on Tuesday and you still have Wednesday and Thursday and Friday to get the things done.

Interviewer 33:40

Yeah, right. OK, great. And can you describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week?

P6 33:54

Well, I'm so, I'm physically located in [location extracted]. So I have to...to get into work I take a bus to a train to a bus and then walk. And then to get home I walk to a train to a bus to get back home. So I'm using public transportation to get in and out of work.

Interviewer 34:08

Mm hmm. Mm hmm.

P6 34:11

And then home, it's the overwhelming benefit of home is that I can...the commute is nothing. So I get those...I mean 75 minutes each way. So that's, that's kind of a lot. So I, I get all of that time back to be doing other things. I get to sleep a little bit longer so.

Interviewer 34:29

Yeah.

P6 34:29

The, the commute to the home office is very easy.

Interviewer 34:32

Yeah. And how does that commute or transition make you feel?

P6 34:39

I like it. I've always...it's sort of...it was the ideal state for me not to have to drive into work anymore. The only better situation I had is when I could bike when I was close enough to bike to

work. So, I would...I would not say no to being closer. But not having to drive someone else, doing the transportation part, I can... I can read. I can...Sometimes I'm working and doing emails or research or things on my phone but. I like it, the time. I like that time.

Interviewer 35:09

Yeah, definitely. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode, and if so, how?

P6 35:18

It depends, because sometimes there's something that started to happen kind of early in the mornings. We have the onsite staff, the facilities people are on there by like 7. So, as I'm...that's about when I'm starting to get the bus. So I'm sometimes feeling the emails during the commute.

Interviewer 35:35

Mm hmm.

P6 35:36

So it's sort of, it's kind of leaky then the barrier between work and starting work. But I make judgements about how, how time sensitive things are. And some of it's just watching them and knowing when I get in, I'll work on that and then how good keeping up my Kindle streak of how many times I've read a book. So, I'm trying to read more.

Interviewer 36:01

Yeah. No, that's great. And how does the movement between these spaces influence your ability to disconnect from work, if at all?

P6 36:11

I think being physically distant from the space is helpful 'cause. It's not... like I can't,

Interviewer 36:15

Mm hmm.

P6 36:16

I can't be there. You can't recall me immediately. It takes me the time it takes to get in. Um yeah. You move away from them. And then the home space, I really this is, this is either where I am is either bedroom so we're sleeping at night, or it's the office for doing the work, when I'm doing work. So, it's it has a pretty distinct purpose. So when I leave this space, I'm not doing those things either. So I think moving away from the, the coded work, like the really serious work environment is helpful.

Interviewer 36:47

Yeah. No, definitely. And can you talk a little bit about how that switch from 'cause you say you work from home Thursdays, so that switch from going in office to working from home to back in office again? Can you maybe talk a little bit about that and how that makes you feel?

P6 37:05

So I was.... I like breaking up with a week like that because I found that it was kind of overwhelming to be home more than two days at a time. So, I think it's good for me and also Fridays tend to be pretty quiet, so I can get the things done that have.... so that's why I use this day to answer the emails and kind of clear out the inbox and also build the list of what I can do when I'm back in office on Friday. So, it works well for me, the rhythm of the three days on the one day home and then going back just for a day.

Interviewer 37:40

Yeah, great. And in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you are in for that day? Or does it?

P6 37:49

I don't think it does because

Interviewer 37:51

Mm hmm.

P6 37:53

it's it's...I guess it's not really connected to the workspace as much as my like my physical laptop. It really is about the shutting down of the computer and that's, that's the end.

Interviewer 38:01

Yeah, that's great. And what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to kind of successfully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P6 38:16

I tried it for a while to turn off all notifications for the...so that my phone wasn't pinging with work emails, but it's more kind of stressful to think that there might be something that I missed. So I don't do that anymore, but I guess if I if we were really looking for a complete like disconnect that would be that I shouldn't be...

Interviewer 38:36

Mm hmm.

P6 38:37

you shouldn't be contactable by the people who for work reasons by the people you work with. And because of the way technology kind of works now, that's not really true. And because there's support for flexibility where I work, which I really appreciate, as you know working parent,

Interviewer 38:46

Yeah.

Mm hmm.

P6 38:54

it makes sense that there's a little bit of...of hold over in each direction, like the work day is a

little bit longer. The attention that you have to give to a work day, it's not actually like the working on the tasks, but the kind of being available is a little bit longer.

Interviewer 39:10

Yeah, definitely. So would you say that having an ideal world if there was some way where everybody knew okay, starting at this point you can't be contacted or we're not doing work or thinking about work that would help?

P6 39:24

Um no, I think what I've seen...I've seen this in some e-mail signatures that say, you know, I know your workday is different from mine don't feel...you don't have to answer this e-mail right away. So, I think that is the culture that people realize and I'm and I'm wanting to be supportive and accommodating because people are supportive and accommodating of me. So, and I don't have a problem with people sending me

Interviewer 39:33

Yeah.

P6 39:41

the e-mail at 7:00 in the morning or at 6:00 PM or whatever time because I know that I've done that just because otherwise I'll forget. Although I, if I... if it's really not an issue and I'm wanting someone to look at it for their next day, I'll schedule that it doesn't send until 9:00 AM, so that's a little bit of what I do myself. But I, I'm okay with that as long as there's not the expectation of immediate response and there's not.

Interviewer 40:07

Yeah, great. And so lastly, is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to share either regarding your general experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or just on your, you know, kind of general ability to disconnect from work?

P6 40:25

No, I think that's all. I did...I was initially not... So this, the having to carry the laptop back and forth, I don't love. I really did prefer having the fix station and using the laptop just to just from home. But I understand that that was it was more consistent to implement this over the course of like for everybody and the and they let me keep my monitor so that was OK. But sometimes, like that's a little bit stressful is that like if I forget the computer like. So far it hasn't happened. But I'm I'm always afraid of that. So having to carry my work, essentially having to carry my workstation with me is a little bit stressful. But that's the only thing I can think of.

Interviewer 41:08

Yeah, and I guess. Is it? Is it just stressful, just in a general sense of 'cause then you can't really do work? Or is there anything more to it?

P6 41:18

Oh, I don't want to forget it at home and then need it or have to get almost all the way there and have to come back for it or it wouldn't be that I couldn't figure something out.

Interviewer 41:23

Yeah.

P6 41:25

It's just it would feel...Yeah, that's. I just don't want to...not... I just don't want to be without like what I need.

Interviewer 41:33

Yeah, absolutely. And I guess before we end, do you have any last questions for me or anything?

P6 41:41

Nope.

Interviewer 41:42

OK, great. Well, thank you again so much for taking the time to submit the photos, but also for taking part in the interview today. And that's all I had.

P6 41:52

Okay. Well, good luck.

Interviewer 41:53

Thank you so much. Have a great rest of your day.

P6 41:55

Thanks. You too. Bye.

Interviewer 41:56

Bye.

P7 Interview Transcript

50m 48s

Interviewer 0:03

So hello.

P7 0:04

Hello.

Interviewer 0:05

I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P7 0:43

Yes, yes, that's perfect.

Interviewer 0:45

All right, great. And before we begin, do you have any other questions for me?

P7 0:49

No, not at all.

Interviewer 0:50

Amazing. So, to start off, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P7 0:56

So well, my name's I mean, you know my name by now, but it's [name extracted] just for the record. But you're now going to anonymize. Sorry.

Interviewer 1:04

No problem.

P7 1:06

So I started working at [workplace name extracted] about eight months ago now, so in September and before this I was in university. So not significant work experience. I had to do a few internships, all of which were completely in person. So this is a very new experience for me, hybrid working, and the thing with hybrid working is that it's super super flexible 'cause I didn't

enjoy it at first, but I think it has enough social socializing on a daily basis that doesn't even feel like I'm working from home and I think it's actually a blessing in disguise because you get to do so much with your day when you're not going into an office. So I essentially go into an office once a week generally and sometimes I will end up going twice only because I'll have onsite at clients' places in London or I might travel to other parts of England. But most of the time, or I would say 50% of the time, it is once a week and the other 50% it is twice a week essentially. And yeah. Basically, I work in [location extracted],

Interviewer 2:06

Amazing.

P7 2:09

so I think that adds to the commute a little bit and why I prefer to stay here just because it's quite long. So I guess that could impact it as well, but yeah.

Interviewer 2:17

Yeah. OK. Great. Yeah, you kind of started to touch upon that, but I guess can you go a little bit more into how that hybrid schedule is decided? Is that something that you were able to decide or is it company specific, etc?

P7 2:28

So essentially it is something that I was able to decide. It's more like I had to go once a week because we have our team meetings then and everyone's in the office, so it's always nice to go. And I could go more, it's just that it's expensive and it's a long commute and I have no reason to, so that's why. So, I would say partially my choice. It would be my choice if I were to go more than once a week, but definitely recommend it or required to go once at least.

Interviewer 2:56

Yeah. OK, great. And now can you please just tell me a little bit more about your current job role and what that looks like?

P7 3:03

So I'm an analyst and I work in the FMCG industry, so a lot of fast-moving goods like ice cream and cereal bars and things like laundry detergent and stuff. But I work in the grocery teams, so it's more food items essentially, and basically everything that you see at a Tesco and say for example, it's a Haagen Dazs ice cream or a kind of skewer yogurt or something like that, they're all promoted in a certain way. They're all distributed in stores in a certain way, and they're all attracting a certain demographic of a shopper. So, my job is to analyze what's happening there, and if there are any issues like, are we promoting our product enough or are we targeting the right consumer base? That is essentially my job to look into that and then answer that question. So it's a consultative role essentially, but with a kind of FMCG lens, if that makes sense.

Interviewer 4:00

Yeah. No, that's really, really cool. So now we can actually move on to looking at the photos. Before we started the interview, I asked if you could please share a photo of your remote

workspace and your in-person workspace. But I'll go ahead and share my screen now. Let me know if you can see that all right.

P7 4:23

Yes, that's perfect.

Interviewer 4:25

OK, great. So, I wanted to start here with your remote workspace photo and just talk a little bit about your experience in this space. Ask some questions about it. So, to start out, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P7 4:37

So this photo was taken right after I logged out of work. So it's a pretty accurate depiction of what it looks like throughout the day. And I think the main thing there is that cup, the Stanley Cup, in the corner because a big part about me is when I start working, whether it's at home or actually more so when it's at home, I don't get up. I don't leave and I really should more often than I do, and having that water

Interviewer 5:02

Mm hmm.

P7 5:04

there has saved me from a lot of dehydration. And overall, yeah, it's just a good working space. It kind of puts me in the mindset to get started for the day. I think until I sit down here, I don't really feel like it and I try to not take work into my room. So this is in my living room essentially, and I like to keep that kind of separation between a bedroom and a living room and a working space because I think it plays a big role into how you're feeling and what you, yeah, and what your motivations are.

Interviewer 5:31

Yeah, no, definitely, that's great. And kind of expanding upon that, those feelings of not having it within your living space, can you just expand a little bit more about that? Did you have a prior experience and why you feel that way maybe?

P7 5:45

So when I was in university, I had to do everything, as I sure you can imagine. I had to do everything from one room and I would more often than not just be working in bed and doing things on my laptop. And while I was doing it, it didn't impact me at all. I, I mean, it didn't look like it impacted me as I wasn't conscious of it at least. But when I started working at a desk, I realized that it's so much nicer because when you go to bed at night or when you just log out of work and you go sit somewhere else it puts me at a much calmer space of...space because when you work from home, the boundaries between work and personal life are all ready a little bit blurred. So I think what I'm trying to do is kind of set those boundaries as much as I can within my control essentially.

Interviewer 6:27

Mm hmm. Yeah, absolutely. That's great. And how do you feel working in this space?

P7 6:39

It can depend, I think. I like my space because it's mine and I think I don't have to feel like overstimulated or like a bunch of people are always around me and like coming in my space and stuff like that. And it allows me to truly just sit down and concentrate and everything and I think even things like phones or distractions and stuff, it doesn't really bother me because when I'm sitting down, I think I kind of conditioned myself into believing that, okay this is work. It's time to work. Do your work kind of thing.

Interviewer 7:10

Mm hmm.

P7 7:11

And that kind of helps. And yeah, I feel quite like ready to start the day. Essentially I feel quite driven and motivated most of the time. I think obviously I have days and I just don't want to be sitting here and doing any work. But yeah, definitely puts me in that kind of work mindset. It makes me feel more focused essentially.

Interviewer 7:30

Yeah.

P7 7:30

But do you mean in terms of like stress or anxiety, or if there's anything that need to elaborate on, let me know.

Interviewer 7:33

Yeah. Yeah. No, that's all great. If there's anything else that comes to mind that would you would like to elaborate on, but yeah, nothing in particular, just your general feelings.

P7 7:45

I think more than when I sit down at the start of the day, I think at the end of the day, I feel a lot less stressed out when I get up from here. It depends on what tasks I have to do at home, of course, or like what's going on in my personal life. But I think on a general basis like I feel slightly lighter getting up and leaving the leaving this workspace and I think. What was I gonna say? I think sometimes at the end of the day, if I'm not done with work, I'm always thinking like, oh, I'm gonna come back and finish this off later on in the evening after I've done some household chores, but I realized that when I leave the space, my brain isn't on it anymore. So I don't think to come back, or at least I don't feel motivated enough to come back and do it. It just kind of stops me from working overtime and stuff like that. So I didn't think a space could play such a big role in making sure that you're following a certain routine, but I think it does, yeah.

Interviewer 8:39

That's great. And you just mentioned there, so after work, do you usually leave the space? Is that typical?

P7 8:45

Yes. More...I never stay here if I'm not. I mean, I am here now talking to you, but that's just because it's an easy desk to use. More more...

Interviewer 8:52

Right.

P7 8:53

I never stay at this desk after work because if I'm sitting here, I'm thinking about work and when I'm not sitting here, it's easier to disconnect.

Interviewer 9:01

Yeah, that's great. And now can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but relative to the space?

P7 9:09

So I would say I start off at around 9-9:15 and then I continue working until about lunch. So I sit down with a coffee in hand already. So once I sit here, I try to kind of limit how many times I'm getting up and going around. I don't think that's necessarily a good thing all the time, but at least I try to do that and a lot of times I mean, I'm in back-to-back meetings so I don't really get a chance to get up and go get a coffee or get some water. So, I usually start my day sitting down with a coffee in hand and with some water and then I get up for lunch. So this is again something I do to disconnect because in from the 12 to one kind of, approximately 12 to one kind of lunch break, I try to make sure I'm not eating my lunch here because if I eat my lunch here, I'm usually thinking about work, looking at my laptop. Whereas if I go sit on my sofa, that's literally 2 feet away, even though it's so close by, I don't feel the need to think about work as much because I can kind of enjoy my lunch, take the time to mentally recharge, and then I come back here and then work again for a couple hours. So this would be around 1:00 to 4:00 depending on meetings. Then from 4:00 to 4:15 or something I'll take a break to get a coffee, come back and then, yeah, essentially continue until 5:30. So that is my typical day.

Interviewer 10:27

Yeah, that's amazing. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P7 10:33

I shut everything down. So can if you can see the bottom right, the plugs and everything, the switches are completely turned off. So, I kind of just try to fully make sure that nothing in this space is on when I'm not here essentially.

Interviewer 10:46

Gotcha.

P7 10:47

So I just try to disconnect everything and yep, that's essentially how I do it. It's just everything's off. Every...so even if I have to come back to the space at some point to work over time, I have to physically turn everything back on. So it's a kind of prevent me from over exerting myself, essentially.

Interviewer 11:05

Yeah, absolutely. And how effective is all of that for you?

P7 11:09

I think it's quite good actually. I think I used to be the kind of person who was just, even if I had even like 10% of work to do and I knew I could do it on the next day, it would bother me until I just came back sat down and did it, and I would say, "oh, I feel so much better now." But I think it's not sustainable to keep doing that and I think it's just not required at the end of the day because then you're, you're not really, you don't really... um I think you don't really learn how to disconnect from it ever, because if it's a process that works for you even if it's unhealthy, you're gonna continue doing it. So yeah, I think it's just more like I think it is quite effective essentially in making sure that I stay...stay focused on my personal life and its personal hours and work life when it's work hours essentially.

Interviewer 11:58

Yeah, that's great. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P7 12:06

I think normally it's quite relaxed actually. I know, I said I'm quite stressed out during the day, but I think that stress is not like an unhealthy anxiety kind of stress. Most, most of the time. I think it is just more like okay I have a lot to do, but when I at the end of the day I feel a lot better having done the work essentially, so I get a lot of satisfaction from being productive. I mean I know, who doesn't? But like for me specifically, when I check everything off my to do list and leave this working desk, I feel much better because I know for a fact that it's done. It's not 'cause I'm not working anymore. It's more like I've done the work I need to do. If that makes sense.

Interviewer 12:43

Yeah, absolutely. And so you already kind of described the end of your workday, but I was wondering if you could just go a little bit more into detail of exactly, you know what that looks like that period of time at the end.

P7 12:55

So I kind of am my most...I don't know if this is fully a question, but I am my most productive earlier in the day. So, I would say from the morning time right after I log in to lunch and then until about like 4:30, I'm very productive. That 4:30 to 5:30 period always kind of kills me. So I'm already kind of mentally winding down essentially at that point. So when after I'm I finish work sometimes I can extend from 5:30 to 6:00, for example. But after I kind of do my end of the day logging off and turning off everything, I kind of just get up, walk around a little bit. I try

not to immediately run to the gym and stuff because I just enjoy breathing for a second and being away from my working area, if that makes sense. Does that answer your question?

Interviewer 13:41

Mm hmm. Yeah. Yeah no, that's great. And building upon that, I guess, how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P7 13:55

In this space?

Interviewer 13:56

Yeah, or in the space or one working from this space, I guess.

P7 14:00

I think it's just more like I don't do it normally. It's more like if I'm talking to someone or if I'm on, if I go on my phone and stuff, that kind of helps me. I think social interaction essentially, that helps me kind of disconnect when I'm already in this space or sometimes even to be honest some of my colleagues and stuffs, I'll just call them and talk to them like they're my friends. So that kind of helps me as well. So I think as someone who's quite outgoing and extroverted, I think.... I mean, I wouldn't say outgoing an extroverted. I think that's a bit of an exaggeration. But as someone who values that social connection, I think disconnecting from work to me often involves just talking to other people essentially, even when I'm in this space.

Interviewer 14:43

Right. Yeah, that's great. And this kind of ties into my next question. So it's all right if you don't have anything or if you want to build upon what you just said. But how exactly do you mentally disconnect from work?

P7 14:54

While I'm in this space?

Interviewer 14:56

Yeah, like on a day that you would work from home.

P7 14:59

On a day that I would work from home. I think so, firstly my... do you remember the, the coffee machine picture that I sent you of an object? That means a lot to me at work. I don't know if I meant to be touching upon that already, but.

Interviewer 15:10

Yeah. No, that's fine. The last image here.

P7 15:12

So essentially the reason why I said it is an item that helps me disconnect from work is because I'm again the kind of person who's unhealthily going to be sitting at my desk and working all day, and I earned that coffee machine.

Interviewer 15:12

Right.

P7 15:26

I saved up so much to buy it and I got it last year and I was so excited when I got it, and that excitement hasn't worn off. So when I get up to go get my little coffee, I always feel so excited and I'm not even thinking about work. I'm always just like, "Oh my God, it's time for my coffee" and I get it.

Interviewer 15:41

Yeah.

P7 15:42

So I think just these small kind of things help me disconnect because it's just stuff that's part of my daily routine that I enjoy and when it, and I think it also signals that, OK, I've finished a good part of my day. I've done this much of work.

Interviewer 15:49

Yeah.

P7 15:56

And now I'm able to reward myself by going and getting that coffee, essentially. So that kind of helps me disconnect in the sense that I'm allowing myself to disconnect at that point because I think I've kind of met my own kind of internal bar of how much work I'm meant to have done at that point. So, I think that definitely helps me and more often than not, I end up just calling my mom and stuff while making a quick coffee and I'm able to reply to a couple of messages because when I'm again getting out of the space, it kind of starts getting

Interviewer 16:12

Yeah.

P7 16:25

me thinking into what's happening in the outside world. So I think that definitely helps.

Interviewer 16:30

Yeah. No, that's great. And now going back to the other image really quick. What objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain that separation between your work and home life?

P7 16:43

Oh my Stanley Cup because it helps me... First of all, I think water makes a big impact because I get migraines if I'm working too long and or and I don't drink enough water, those two things combined start to give me migraines and it starts to stress me out more. Whereas if I kind of drink some water, I think it plays a really big role in calming my nerves because it's...because it kind of grounds me and I can just breathe for a second and I'm no longer staring at a laptop

screen. I'm usually just looking around, so I think that is definitely an object that helps. And I think, I mean, I don't think you can see it in this picture actually, but underneath this also my AirPods. So I put in some music and that really helps as well. So yeah, those two objects kind of help me kind of ground myself and disconnect a little bit more from anything that's stressing me out.

Interviewer 17:25

Yeah. Right. Amazing. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P7 17:40

In this space specifically.. I don't... I mean...That's actually a very good question. I think in terms of challenges, it's just more like because I have two screens, it kind of makes me feel like I'm only ever looking at a screen if that makes sense, which is something that personally I don't like doing that, I like to kind of go touch grass and relax for a little while and just look outside. So I think the only challenge I would say is being able to... or not being able to, but the inability to look at anything but a screen I would say.

Interviewer 18:17

Yeah. Yeah no, that's great. Amazing. So now moving on, we'll go to the second slide here that has a picture of your in office workspace. And now shifting kind of the conversation to your experience in this space and so to start out similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P7 18:37

So this is my incredibly clean desk. So if you look at the picture before, I'm just to compare, it's a lot less cluttered and it's a lot bigger as well. So I think that kind of helps. Actually, I would say a challenge to answer your previous question, a challenge for the previous one would be having a smaller space as well. So less opportunity to like move around and do something else. So I would definitely say in the next working picture you have more opportunities to be able to do that and it's much bigger and I like to keep it clean because I think when things start to look messy, my thoughts start to feel messy and then everything is kind of a mess. So I would...I would save my physical working space is usually a manifestation of how I feel mentally at the time. So if that task is messy, I'm probably very, very anxious or very, very stressed. So I think yeah, so it's usually very minimalist. Very, very clean and...You'll see that I sit next to a bunch of people so I don't have my own office, which kind of helps because like I said, social interaction does help me disconnect from work. And contrary to what you might believe, being in the office actually helps me disconnect from work a lot more because I'm around people, other people kind of doing similar things and similar phases of their lives, so I always able to kind of talk to them and that social interaction really kind of helps me. Whereas in my home space I have less opportunities to interact with people other than my flatmate but, she's also working so she's not home most of the time.

Interviewer 20:10

Yeah. No, that's great. And particular for your in office workspace, how do you feel when working in this space?

P7 20:19

I feel, I mean, I feel a bit tired and to be honest, just to start off with because it's a long commute for me to get there and it kind of... So I kind of start off with a little bit less energy than I would at home, but I would say that I feel a lot more productive because I see everyone around me also working. So I'm able to kind of get a lot of work done as well, depending of course, on the day on what I'm working on, et cetera. But at an overall level I would say that I feel more productive. I'm able to do work a little bit, mmm, faster because I just think that, yeah, other people are doing it too.

Interviewer 21:00

That's great. And can you tell me how you spend a typical working day, but on a day like this when you would go into office?

P7 21:07

So I would start by...so I get...um I carpool to work, so I go in to work with a few colleagues and then I get to work again around 9:15 and I start off by just opening up my laptop, looking at my emails. I start kind of slower than I would at home because at home I think I just want to kind of dive in and get started, whereas in the office, because like I said, it takes me a while to wind into the day because I, I'm a bit tired, I try to just take it slow at the start. And then around about 9:30 is when I fully get into the flow of working, and usually when I'm in the office, this...I try to prioritize things that involve significant teamwork. So rather than sitting with one person on a call sharing my screen all day, I get to actually talk to them in person. And more often than not, I would ask more questions to other people while I'm in the office because they're right there, so it's easier to just kind of tap them on the shoulder and ask them. Rather than if I was working from home, I would probably hesitate a lot more to reach out to them. So I think that way that, that is quite a big portion of my day, just trying to talk to as many people as possible and learn from what they're doing in their jobs. And my day in person often involves team meetings. So I wouldn't just be sitting at

Interviewer 22:10

Right.

P7 22:25

my desk. I would be going into meeting rooms and talking to them and yeah, just basically roaming around the office. And then I go into lunch again around 12. And then I go outside the office. Go grab lunch. Come back. We all sit at the kind of kitchen area. So no, none of us eat at our desks because again, I think that mentality of being able to disconnect from your desk applies to them as well. And so, we finish our lunch at one, come back, get started on work again, have afternoon meetings that we're kind of going and coming into meeting rooms. And then I leave around six from the office essentially.

Interviewer 23:03

Nice. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P7 23:08

I would say I kind of I kind of just fully push back from my desk and then I shut my laptop and everything and I just kind of... So while I'm working, I obviously face the desk, and I would sit.

Interviewer 23:21

Mhmm.

P7 23:22

But then here I kind of just swivvle around. Move so that I'm no longer looking at that laptop or that desk essentially. So where at home I might get up entirely and go somewhere else. Whereas here I think it kind of makes me feel better to just look somewhere else if that makes sense.

Interviewer 23:38

Yeah. Okay, great. And how effective is that for you?

P7 23:44

I think it's not as effective as I do it, as I do when I do it at home, because again, sometimes when I finish working, other people might still be working and there's also when I shut my laptop at home I don't have access to teams. I don't have access to any of that. I mean, obviously if I go on my phone, that's different, but. I don't have access to being able to ask people more questions, whereas if I'm in the office space, it's harder to even if I'm not at my desk, it's harder for me to disconnect because I can still ask people about work and go like "Oh, have you finished this by the way", or this or that. So I think it's less less effective but. Yeah, can't do anything.

Interviewer 24:23

Yeah. No, that's great. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday, but I guess particularly on day when you like like this when you would go into office?

P7 24:32

I feel a bit more drained than I normally would because even though I like social interaction, it's a lot to fit into because I think when you work from home a lot, it has its blessings and curses. So you get more used to talking to people online, but

Interviewer 24:39

Mm hmm.

P7 24:47

you also get more time to yourself. Whereas in the office, you're always surrounded by people, you're always kind of "on" in a certain that makes sense. I won't act particularly differently, but it's just more like, yeah, this is the level of interactions different. So I would say I feel more tired after a working day there than I would at home.

Interviewer 24:56

Right.

P7 25:07

So at home I'm usually excited to get out, do something, whereas at the end of a working day in the office, I'm usually a lot more, yeah, tired if that makes sense. But satisfied, because again, I would have gotten a lot of work done.

Interviewer 25:16

Yeah.

P7 25:20

So I'm not like tired because oh, no work is just more like, tired because I have a 2 1/2 hour commute to get back to and stuff like that.

Interviewer 25:28

Yeah, absolutely. And so you kind of already described the end of your workday in this space. So I guess can you talk a bit about how you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P7 25:41

So in this space, it's quite similar to how it is in my home space, so I would usually go to talk to other people and that is essentially the main thing I do. So I have a lot of colleagues whom I'm friendly with, so I would just go up to them, talk to them about anything but work and that helps me transition essentially.

Interviewer 26:03

Yeah, absolutely. And at the end of the workday, do you do anything in particular to, you know, when you disconnect and detach and go into your personal time? Do you...is there anything there that you do in particular?

P7 26:16

I kind of go and get some water if that helps because it kind of helps me kind of drink a lot before because again, at home I have my Stanley Cup at my desk. Here I don't. So I don't get up to drink water. Whereas at the end of the day at office, I always feel a bit better about it because I'm just like, OK, I get to go drink my water and then I go drink it and then it just feels like I ended the day like it's, it's sorted. I know that sounds really silly, but it is genuinely what I do at the end of the day, and it helps kind of mark...yeah, mark the end.

Interviewer 26:50

Yeah. No, that's great. And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P7 26:55

Again, I think just...I think I'm just so tired by the end of it that it comes more naturally to disconnect 'cause I'm just like I physically can't. I like, I physically can't think about it even if I wanted to. So I think it I'm kind of forced to mentally disconnect if that makes sense. So even if I'm around colleagues, I'm not as inclined to ask about it anymore because I'm just like, yeah, I feel a bit tired and then everyone is as well. So I would say it's a lot more of a forceful disconnection than it is at home, but I think it's because again, the boundaries with office is more clearly defined, right. So when you're out of your desk, you know you're out of that working

space. Whereas at home you are, you remain in your home all day, so it's just a matter of setting your own boundaries.

Interviewer 27:42

Yeah, absolutely. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P7 27:48

I think it's just a matter of time to myself, if that makes sense. I think I touched upon this earlier, where if you're at home, you get more time to kind of breathe and just relax and work at your own pace. Whereas in the office I feel a bit, I guess guilty if I'm not working at the same pace as everyone else. If that, I think it's just my inner perfectionist, but I like to kind of make sure I'm productive all the time and like doing stuff all the time. Whereas I think if I'm at home, I'm not putting as much pressure on myself to do that. So yeah, I think that definitely is a challenge I face while working from my desk and also I'm not...

Interviewer 28:24

Yeah.

P7 28:30

I'm just not as comfortable as I would be at home. Like at home I might be more inclined to kind of...I don't know.... move around, play with my AirPods and stuff like that. Whereas at my working space I'm not...I don't.... it's not that the people around me would judge me. I'm not worried about that. It's just I think I somehow don't feel as comfortable doing it.

Interviewer 28:50

Right, absolutely. That's great. And so, moving on to the next slide, I wanted to put the picture of your remote workspace and in office workspace side by side 'cause I wanted to talk a little bit about, you know, the comparison between both workspaces and I know we already, you've already done a great job of kind of pointing out the differences that you feel in both spaces. So, I guess my first question being, how does your in office workspace just compare to your remote workspace in general? Anything that comes to mind.

P7 29:20

It's a lot less cluttered. So it has very little on the desk, if anything, as you can as you can tell. And it's also much bigger, so if I need to like roll around and do something, it's nicer. And usually even though we have monitors in our office, I don't sit on a desk with a monitor because I think I try my best to not look at a screen

Interviewer 29:34

Mm hmm.

P7 29:42

and stuff and it just makes me feel a bit better about being able to yeah, just look at look at my laptop and then look and see just the outside world rather than again look up and see another screen, if that makes sense. So I have more space. I try to keep it less cluttered than I do at home.

Whereas my home desk space has the monitor, it has a wall behind it, and it has a laptop. So I'm usually looking at nothing except work and I am also a lot more constrained because it's a smaller space so I'm less likely to just kind of shift around and stuff. I know that contradicts what I said earlier about being free to move around, but I meant more like just being able to listen to music or just being able to kind of I don't text my mom or something in the office. Whereas in the home space I'm less likely to physically move around if that makes sense.

Interviewer 30:35

Yeah. No, that makes total sense. And you kind of already started talking about boundaries earlier and what that looks like in office versus at home. So I guess just expanding on that, how would you describe your boundaries in your in office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P7 30:51

I would say they're a lot harder because you have people around you all the time and people are always observing...I mean, not observing you, everyone's focused on their own work, of course. But you have to kind of maintain a certain level of decorum as, as you should. And so it's a lot harder to draw those boundaries and even if you're talking about your personal life, you are still talking about it with your colleagues. You're not necessarily talking about it with your friends. So you have to kind of think about what you're saying and stuff like that. I mean it's easier because I have pretty friendly colleagues who don't really care much about things, but I do think it's harder to draw those boundaries when you're at work.

Interviewer 31:31

Yeah, absolutely. And how does your ability to disconnect from work on the days when in the office compared to on days when working from home?

P7 31:41

I think it's, I think disconnecting from work...my ability to do it is better when I'm working from home because I have other things right after I log out of work, I'm able to kind of leave it, and then I also have more flexibility to talk to my mom or call a friend and stuff like that or text someone or listen to music. Whereas in the office I don't have as much flexibility to do that. So I would say I can disconnect from work a lot better at home. But I'm not, that doesn't go to say that I can't disconnect from work at the office 'cause I do end up going out talking to colleagues and stuff, but it does still feel like I am at work. It doesn't feel like I'm in...yeah, that I'm in my personal space, if that makes sense.

Interviewer 32:25

Yeah, absolutely. And I guess now talking about detachment from work at the end of the day, would you say that it's easier or harder to detach from work at the end of the day, the days that you're in office or the days that you're at home?

P7 32:31

Mm. It's harder when I'm in the office, so it's easier when I'm at home. Sorry, I got a bit confused with the phrasing. But I think it's harder to detach from work at the end of the day, when I'm in the office because I'm still around the same group of people and I'm still usually waiting....yeah,

going on a train with the same people, going in a car with the same people. So I'm a very anxious person, so I'll usually be replaying social interactions that I would have had and stuff like that from earlier in the day. So even though I'm not thinking necessarily about work, I'm still talking about thinking about my working life, if that makes sense. Whereas at home I don't care.

Interviewer 33:13

Mm hmm.

P7 33:16

Like I'm done. Whatever I've said that day, whatever I've done that day, it doesn't matter because I'm able to kind of look around me and see, okay, things in the world exists outside of my working space and it's not, it's not the whole world, essentially. Whereas it kinda of feels a bit more small when I'm in the office.

Interviewer 33:36

Yeah, absolutely. And I wanted to kind of build upon that. So 'cause it's harder in the office, does it get better? Does it take time like I guess 'cause you do have a long commute. At any point, does it get better or is it still kind of there on those days?

P7 33:52

I think it gets better because I'm able to kind of listen to music and read a book and stuff like that while I'm commuting. So that definitely helps. But I do think at the end of the day, it just feels like I've been at work for way longer than I should be. So I think yeah, it is harder on the days when I go to the office to disconnect.

Interviewer 34:08

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And of the two pictures you shared here, which feels more like a workplace to you, if I say, you know, that term workplace?

P7 34:20

The one in the office, yeah.

Interviewer 34:22

And for any reason in particular?

P7 34:25

Because I feel slightly more professional in that workspace. So I have to, because I associate work with being acting in a certain professional manner and being...have and having certain kind of targets, and, if that makes sense and standards that I have to live up to while I'm in a workspace, whereas at home it's a bit more relaxed as in obviously in terms of the work I do, it's the same. I don't... it's not that I'm not productive at home and not productive at the office. It just feels like I put a lot more pressure on myself when I'm in the office 'cause I feel like people are watching me, whether people are watching me or not. Usually they're not, but it's just my head.

Interviewer 35:04

Great. So lastly here we have an image. I asked if you could share a photo of either a space or object that helps you disconnect from work and you already kind of talked about this earlier in the interview. But can you just once again just tell me a bit about this photo?

P7 35:21

So I know I said that it kind of makes me excited, but I think it also just...I mean, I have my coffee for my coffee machine now, which I kind of got at the end of the day because again, it kind of just makes me feel like I've accomplished a lot and the coffee machine is also shared with me by my flatmate. So both of us together usually get a coffee from this coffee machine at the end of the day, and we sit down together and it just feels like...and she does something completely different to me, so it just feels like the beginning of the disconnect, if that makes sense. And I think also I was living in a space earlier where I wasn't able to keep this coffee machine outside and I always had to keep it inside and it was a lot harder to take out etc. Whereas now it's just in a public space. Every time I feel that I just every time I go, I just feel a bit more free in what I'm doing, if that makes sense. And when I'm...and then it also

Interviewer 36:18

Absolutely.

P7 36:21

reminds me of something that's mine outside my work. So it's not anything brought to me by work. It's not anything that I need to do for work or anything like that. It's my thing, my space, my, my coffee machine, that kind of thing, if that makes sense. Like it's part of my personal life because I feel like when you're working all day, when you're in the office all day or when you're talking to people all day, you have a lot of you kind of have to let people in, as in there you always interacting you're always sharing bits and pieces about yourself and stuff like that. Whereas this is something that's just mine and it's just something that I can end the day with thinking, okay, this is my life, my routine, my coffee. If that makes sense.

Interviewer 37:04

Yeah, absolutely. And besides, everything that you just shared based on the prompt that I gave you, is there any other reason why you chose this in particular, like, did the...you know?

P7 37:17

Because you know things like books and stuff help me disconnect, but I wouldn't say that it's something I do on a daily basis to actively disconnect. Whereas this is something that's come out of me telling myself that I need to disconnect and I need to get up and do something else rather than looking at my laptop. So, I

Interviewer 37:24

Mm hmm.

Yeah, yeah.

Yeah.

P7 37:36

think this is just more symbolic of an actual effort that I made to disconnect, which is something

I really struggled to do in the past and no matter what book you put in front of me and what...or what...I don't know anything you put in front of me, I wouldn't necessarily be able to disconnect as easy as I can with this. Essentially because I think it makes it easier because it takes a smaller amount of time to have a coffee than like, say, watch a movie or read a book. So it doesn't...like I'm doing something too out of the blue during a working day, but at the same time....as in is not as intimidating to do, if that makes sense to just go and get a coffee.

Interviewer 37:58

Yeah. No, absolutely.

P7 38:11

Yeah. So it kind of makes me feel proud.

Interviewer 38:11

Yeah.

P7 38:13

Like okay yes, I'm disconnecting from work.

Interviewer 38:15

Yeah. No, that's great. And I guess you kind of, is there anything else you wanted to share on how exactly it helps you mentally disconnect from work or are those the main points?

P7 38:25

I think those are the main points, yeah, for for sure. But if there's anything I haven't said or anything that you'd like me to elaborate on more or if anything if I've overlapped the answers a bit too much, just let me know and I'll.

Interviewer 38:28

No, no, that's totally fine. I just wanted to give you the opportunity to, if anything else came up. But does this object in its ability to help you disconnect from work, does that depend on whether you're working from home or in the office?

P7 38:53

I have so. Oh yes, actually, because in the office I think I'm a lot more stressed out because I don't have access to the same materials as I do at home. Because at home I have oat milk and I'm lactose intolerant, so when I'm in the office, it's a lot harder for me to get a coffee. So sorry, I sound super whiny right now. It's just more like I think the coffee, getting up to go get it plays such a big role in helping me disconnect at this point that at work I feel myself physically getting more stressed out or more drained because I'm unable to go make myself a coffee with my own milk and it's again not something that's part of my routine. Whereas when I'm at home, I'm able...I have the luxury to go do that, and again, it's my coffee. It's not like some gross coffee machine coffee without oat milk. So yeah, I think it's just the aspect of being able to go make something of your own, something that means a lot to you and come back that makes a difference.

Interviewer 39:49

Yeah, absolutely. And so just to clarify, so this is something that you do mainly on the days that you work from home, not on a day that you go into office?

P7 39:58

Yes, and I definitely think that has an impact because I think if I had this in the office, I would feel slightly happier about my day.

Interviewer 40:04

Yeah, absolutely. No, that's that's all great. And so lastly, I wanted to ask a couple just general questions about your experience disconnecting as well as transitioning between these two different workspaces during the work week. So these next questions aren't specifically linked to any of the photos, but if you did want to connect it in any way, you're more than welcome to. Are there certain times of either the day or the week in which it is easier or harder for you to disconnect?

P7 40:34

Definitely the evening after around 5:30, because I just think that when it's in the morning or the lunch break, I'm always thinking like, okay, I have to get back to work now. Whereas in the evening it's just like I'm done. So I think definitely the evening time and I get to do a lot more with my time like talking to people that I care about and reading a book, watching a movie, going to the gym and so on.

Interviewer 40:47

Mm hmm.

P7 40:58

So it just gives me more to look forward to essentially, that time of the day.

Interviewer 41:03

Yeah. And can you describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week?

P7 41:11

As in like between the home working space and my office working space?

Interviewer 41:13

Yes. So you can talk about general, the general experience of going, yeah, going into office as well as going into you know, starting work in this space and the general experience of both.

P7 41:28

I think I always feel a bit sad leaving my home working space because even though I like my colleagues and I enjoy talking to them and stuff like that, it's more just the aspect of working in an office that kind without my personal kind of bubble makes me feel a bit more makes me feel a

bit more, a bit less excited to get started on my day, if that makes sense. Not less excited actually, less relaxed to get started on my day. I think that's the right word because

Interviewer 41:55

Great.

P7 41:56

when I'm when I'm transitioning from this space to that, it always takes me a second to kind of get gather my bearings and like get used to the space I'm working in. Whereas at home it kind of just feels like I'm slipping into a routine. So that's always a bit hard. And then on the days when I go, especially to a client's office, it's kind of the same feeling of going into my office, whereas with the clients office is slightly more

Interviewer 42:10

Yeah.

P7 42:24

intense because I have to get used to an even newer space than my own office space. So I think just the aspect of like sliding into work and getting started, the transition isn't as smooth as I'd like it to be.

Interviewer 42:36

Yeah. No, that's really great. And talking more specifically about the commute that you take, the days that you go into office, you mentioned it could be quite long. So how does that commute make you feel?

P7 42:50

I think it's all right. I've gotten used to it now and I get, and I have some company with my colleagues while going and coming back as well. And I have some time to myself, so I do one leg of it by myself and one leg of it with my colleagues.

Interviewer 43:01

Mm hmm.

P7 43:03

So I think the commute itself is all right. I just think that it's...because I find it so difficult to disconnect from work on an office day it just feels like it's extending the day by more, if that makes sense. So it feels like I'm constantly working

Interviewer 43:17

Yeah.

P7 43:19

from like 6:30 in the morning to 8:00 at night when I get home essentially.

Interviewer 43:25

Yeah, absolutely.

P7 43:25

So yeah. Yeah, basically.

Interviewer 43:28

Great. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?

P7 43:35

I think, well, surprisingly well going to the office, I think it helps me because I'm kind of like winding up to start my day, so I feel myself getting more and more energy as the day goes by. I start off by like stopping and getting breakfast at the station and stuff like that, so I definitely think that helps me disconnect because it's like I'm telling myself, okay, I'm going to be working all day, it's going to be a long day, so I might as well think about work when I get to work because I don't need to be thinking about it 'cause, it's just going to drain me out more if I'm thinking about it from like 6:30. So it's just, yeah. So I definitely think that helps me wind down. And then also in the evening right before, I'm able to get home, I have to do a little bit of walking.

Interviewer 44:10

Yeah.

P7 44:20

So I think that definitely helps me. And listening to music, yeah.

Interviewer 44:24

Yeah, that's great. And how does the movement between these spaces influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P7 44:33

I think it...the movement between...the movement between these spaces. I think it positively influences my ability to disconnect because again, I have more people around me. I'm doing other things apart from just sitting down at a desk and looking at work, so I'm able to kind of again during these commutes, talk to my friends, talk to my family. I'm able to kind of

Interviewer 44:52

Mhmm

P7 45:00

look at the environment around me rather than just....even if I'm thinking about work, I'm not also looking at it if that makes sense, so that that definitely helps me.

Interviewer 45:07

Yeah. Yeah, that's great. And in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day?

P7 45:18

Oh, significantly, because I think again, the workspace that you're in sets the scene to what you're going to be doing as well. So, say for example if I'm home, then I'm able to quickly leave the workspace, whereas wait, sorry. Your question is as in getting up and going or do you mean like the space itself affecting my ability to disconnect?

Interviewer 45:42

No, like the first one...like as you...you were going into.

P7 45:46

Oh, OK.

Interviewer 45:46

Yeah, you were, yeah.

P7 45:46

Yeah, OK, I thought. I fully misinterpreted your question, sorry.

Interviewer 45:50

No, you're good. Yeah.

P7 45:52

Yeah. So I think definitely being at home kind of positively influences the disconnecting part because again, I get to immediately disconnect, whereas at work, it's like I'm still in the same environment, still surrounded by the same...

Interviewer 46:01

Yeah.

P7 46:07

I mean not people, because it seems like I don't...that I'm not friendly with my colleagues, but at the same time, it's also like you're in that same environment, you're in that same work zone and at the end the day these are people that work with you, so it's hard to disconnect from work if you're also surrounded by people who are doing the same thing.

Interviewer 46:24

Right.

P7 46:25

So yeah, I think, and the space makes a difference because again, at my office space, I feel a lot less satisfied with the work I've done, because getting up from it, it doesn't feel like I've accomplished everything I need to do, because sometimes I have to get up from my office space and leave just because it's the end of the day and everyone's leaving and not necessarily because

I've done everything I wanted to do or it doesn't feel like I have. Essentially, it always feels like I can do more even if I've done all the tasks that I need to do. Whereas at home I feel a lot better about getting out of my space after doing everything because I just think that, yeah, I just think that again, I'm reminded of other things apart from work. So even if I feel like there's more to do, I can always say like, OK, I can do it tomorrow. Whereas when I'm in the office, I'm always like, I can stay here for another half an hour and do this, if that makes sense.

Interviewer 47:17

No, that makes total sense. And what would your ideal arrangements in and out of the office be to like successfully and fully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P7 47:30

I think. I wish offices would be more inclusive in meeting people's needs. I think mine is quite good in terms of providing different resources and stuff for different people. But I think, I mean, even the example of something like oat milk, right? You think that they've stocked stuff like that just to make sure that everyone's happy, but I think just trying to make it as comfortable as possible for employees and making sure that they have things to disconnect from work. My office doesn't have...because so, so few people go into the office in the first place, they don't invest a lot in making it more comfortable, providing things like snacks or providing things like a cafe or, or decent coffee. So, I think definitely what offices can do is make employees feel as though it's more of a casual, not casual, but comfortable space than yeah, than a workspace if that makes sense. So kind of build...bridging the gap between home working and office working.

Interviewer 48:29

Yeah, absolutely. And would you change anything about your at home workspace or is that working for you?

P7 48:36

I wish it was slightly bigger. That's my thing. I mean, that's my own fault. I can buy a bigger desk. But I think that is essentially the only thing about my home working space that I would change. Essentially just having more room and stuff like that to move around. I think that is the one thing I would change about my home working space.

Interviewer 48:54

Yeah, that's great. And so lastly, is there just anything that we did not cover that you would like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or just on your general ability to disconnect from work?

P7 49:08

I think just on the ability to disconnect from work, I touched a lot about the social interaction, but I think there's always and I said and I kind of equated it to the same thing as being able to interact with your friendly colleagues and being in being able to interact with a flatmate. So, I think the disconnect and the satisfaction that I get from talking to, say, a close friend or someone I'm living with is a lot more like the disconnection than it is when I'm talking to colleagues, because I think even though workspaces do a lot to make it

Interviewer 49:43

Mhmm.

P7 49:45

comfortable at the end of the day, they don't do enough to remind you that it's it's not the end of the world, you know. It makes it feel as though work is everything because you're not surrounded by any, you're kind of surrounded by a lot of blankness and, like clean desks and a lot of unpersonalized aspects. Whereas I think at home that's not the case.

Interviewer 50:06

Yeah, absolutely. Well, great. That's all I had for today, but before we end, I just wanted to ask one more time if you had any last minute questions for me.

P7 50:15

No, that's about it, to be honest. I I hope I've answered your questions. I mean, I feel bad if I haven't, but I hope this contributes value essentially.

Interviewer 50:24

No, absolutely yes. No, it was great to hear your insights. And yeah, again, thank you so much. I really appreciate your time.

P7 50:32

Yeah of course.

Interviewer 50:38

All right. Well, thank you.

P7 50:42

Thank you.

P8 Interview Transcript

58m 11s

Interviewer 0:04

All right. So, hello.

P8 0:05

Hello.

Interviewer 0:19

I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering.

You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during the interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs that you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P8 0:45

Yes.

Interviewer 0:46

Great. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P8 0:50

No.

Interviewer 0:51

All right. So to start out, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P8 0:57

Sure. My name is [name extracted]. I currently work as the HR administrative assistant at [company name extracted], which is an American subsidiary of originally a German company that does like ITS solutions for public transportation systems. So things like automated passenger counting to like the sign boards that have like the “next stop this thing” to ticket vending machines. So a lot of like the supporting systems that aren't the actual vehicle but that help the public transportation system run. So, I do the admin stuff. A lot of the HR administrative stuff for them, like the onboarding and the E-Verify I-9 document inspections and stuff like that. And then a lot of like miscellaneous other administrative things. And then before that I worked for as a student hiring administrator for dining services for about a year and a half with [workplace name extracted] and then prior to that I worked as the student training coordinator at [workplace

name extracted], which is one of the dining halls at [location extracted], as yeah, as a student training coordinator, which is again mostly like on boardings and stuff.

Interviewer 2:14

Yeah. Amazing. And those past roles were those remote, in person, hybrid? What did that look like?

P8 2:22

Um. The past two roles, the student training coordinator and the student hiring administrator, were both fully in person.

Interviewer 2:29

Mm hmm.

P8 2:30

This current position was actually originally like full time in person and then about like a month or two into my time there we switched to the HR team being one day remote.

Interviewer 2:44

Nice.

P8 2:44

Currently I'm the only...well, no, not not anymore. But we've been having a lot of transitions in HR. So our HR manager who was previously the most highest...the highest ranked HR position, she is planning to retire within the next few years, so she is going to be stepping down from the HR manager into like an HRIS and compliance manager position and then we have a new HR director and a new HR generalist. The HR director, she is currently planning on doing full time in person, but once our new HR generalist gets more trained, then she's planning to do one day a week remote as well.

Interviewer 3:26

So that's to clarify the one day remote was kind of a company like they pushed that? Or is it your choice what day?

P8 3:38

So it... it's a little hard. Also, I know if I keep going on tangents just like let me know. But for our actually companywide for most of our administrative positions, because we also have like a production warehouse, so obviously the production warehouse is fully in person five days a week. But for most of our administrative roles so like accounting, IT, the project manager's proposal, managers, account managers and then...yeah, then they're actually mostly two days a week remote and three days a week in person, with Monday and Wednesday being our mandatory in person days. But otherwise they get to choose. But it's a schedule, so they have to like they have to be consistent with the days off essentially that they choose. The HR, because we do have employees who are in in office full time, it makes sense for us to have at least like one person in HR

Interviewer 4:22

Mm hmm.

P8 4:32

there each day. But because we have so much...we have a lot of we just have like a lot of you know work to do, I mean, it's HR. Everyone has a lot of work to do, honestly. But because a lot of, um, we have a lot of work, it is also more efficient for us to have some time remote because there are fewer distractions. So as far as I know, HR is the only department that has one day a week remote and most of the other upstairs departments are two days a week, and then everyone in the production ladder in the warehouse is zero days a week.

Interviewer 5:02

Yeah. Great. Amazing. And what day do you usually work remote?

P8 5:13

Currently, it's typically Fridays. Um. When the new HR generalist gets trained up more, we think we'll be doing somewhat of a rotation. So like I'll do Friday and she'll do Thursday one week and then the next week I'll do Thursday and she'll do Friday and just flip flopping on that is I think what we believe is happening right now. We haven't decided because nothing's concrete yet.

Interviewer 5:34

Yeah. Amazing. And I know you started to tell me a little bit about your current job role and what that looks like. Do you want to expand on anything? Maybe what your day-to-day looks like?

P8 5:46

Sure. I don't have an exact day-to-day, especially during the different times of the year. Mine is definitely the most miscellaneous of all of the HR positions in our company. Some of the things that I have to do vary like regularly. So, I check everyone's timesheet, make any changes that need to occur, reach out to them if they need any timesheet adjustments. I'll make like the anniversary slides and the birthday slides. If we have new hires, I'll typically be like the first, besides the interview and stuff, I'll be the first HR person to like greet them, introduce myself, get their I-9 documents to their E verifies, and then do their actual HR onboardings. I'll help coordinate like their IT onboardings if needed. We do check ins with our new hires, so I'm the one in charge of that as well. So we do them at one week after hire, two weeks after hire, one month, three months and then six months after hire. Um...Let's see what else? And then I do a lot of...it's hard to think of because I do a lot of miscellaneous stuff.

Interviewer 7:00

Yeah. No, that's totally fine.

P8 7:03

So we have we, the HRIS system that we use is called [name extracted], but our parent company [company name extracted] actually uses a different HRIS system called [name extracted]. So I'm

in charge of updating our entries in their HRIS system for like our, for all American and Canadian employees.

Interviewer 7:03

Mm hmm.

P8 7:24

And then I maintain the fire drill list. I update our org charts. If employees because...because it's a German company, we do have a lot of like international employees, so I'll maintain like I'll make sure all of the reverifications are up to date. And then a lot of the work, especially that I'm doing right now because we're having a lot of events, is I'm doing like a lot of the like the ordering of all of the things that we need, the RSVP lists. Oh, I maintain, or I send out and create any like employee surveys that we need to do or RSVP lists. Or like I said, ordering the things that we need for the picnic, just any miscellaneous things, mostly food, but also occasionally like, you know, whatever items we need. Reaching out to vendors for like our food truck events and then for [name extracted], which is just like an ice cream thing. And then also we have this like big...it's this thing called [name extracted], but it's basically just like a company wide conference that we just have at the building in [location extracted]. But I'm helping out with that as well because that's in September, so they're having me start doing a lot of it now and right, right now it's just maintaining like the registration list and the like creating the RSVP template or whatever, and then later I'm going to be helping with, like, hotel reservations and like, some other stuff that I don't know about at this point.

Interviewer 8:57

Yeah.

P8 8:58

But yeah, it's just like a lot of miscellaneous administrative whatever needs to happen at the time type thing.

Interviewer 9:05

Yeah, absolutely. That all sounds really cool. And so now I wanted to move on to...before the interview I asked if you could please share an image of your remote workspace and of your in person workspace.

P8 9:17

Yes.

Interviewer 9:18

And so I'll go ahead now and share my screen.
Let me know if you can hopefully see that all right.

P8 9:26

Yes.

Interviewer 9:27

Amazing. So, I'll start here with your remote workspace and just talk a little bit more about your experience in the space. So to start out, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P8 9:38

Yes. So it's a little messy. This desk is also the desk that I use for like all of my personal things, which you'll see a lot of like my personal care items on there, like my medications, skin care items, some mail, deodorant and other things like that so. I don't do like makeup, so this is where I tend to get ready in the morning. And then this is my personal laptop actually and not my work laptop. So if I am working, I will switch it out with my work laptop and then this to the side is a mobile monitor. My work actually gave me a monitor to use but with the current desk that I have which, it's a little hard to see, but there is this bottom layer which is glass, then there is this top, like small hutch type thing, which is just made of wood. Because of the current setup of it there is not really a, even if it was all cleared off, there's not really a practical place to put a large monitor just because it would either take up half of the workspace or I'd have to look like very up. For reference, I am rather short so I would have to look up at the computer monitor, which is not good ergonomically speaking, which is why for now I've chosen to go with the mobile monitor which has been lent to me by my parents. So that's what that is. Typically I only use the two monitors. Yeah, occasionally at work I'll use three, but I find that two monitors works best for me. There are also a lot of personal items that you can see. There is a large plastic coke bottle full of origami stars, some stickers and some plushies of my favorite Pokémon.

Interviewer 11:36

Yeah. Very nice.

P8 11:37

Yes.

Was there any other information that would?

Interviewer 11:38

No, that's all great.

P8 11:41

OK.

Interviewer 11:42

I was wondering is this kind of desk and workspace within another space in your home or is it its own designated space?

P8 11:53

Yes, this is within my bedroom. My parents both have their own like office spaces because they also work remote. But I don't really have another....we don't really have another space because there's already, you know, two offices. So this is within my bedroom, my personal bedroom.

Interviewer 12:13

Yeah. Amazing. And how do you feel working in this space?

P8 12:18

Relatively relaxed. I do like that....So it it this goes a little bit to my in office workspace but as you can see it's a cubicle and it's not that I feel unsafe of course or anything, but because it's a cubicle it's more open air and so just whenever I'm in any environment, I do try to stay vigilant of my surroundings. And then, because this office is within my home, I do definitely feel more relaxed. Like that I can actually get work done without having a million interruptions and as I'm sure you know, anyone within HR, because our job is to basically cater to all of the employees on a day-to-day basis, especially when they have like any issues at least at the level of HR that I'm at right now, it comes with a lot of interruptions and so being in my remote workspace helps me focus more. Umm. Occasionally there are some more interruptions, but mostly with my cat, but I would say as a whole there are fewer interruptions at my remote workspace than in my in office workspace, especially because a lot of times in my in office workspace it'll require me to go somewhere far away from my desk, and then of course you get caught up doing other things.

Interviewer 13:33

Right.

P8 13:36

Yes, sorry. Could you repeat the original question? See if I can offer any more information.

Interviewer 13:40

No. Yeah, no, just how do you feel working in the space?

P8 13:44

Gotcha. Yeah. OK. Yeah.

Interviewer 13:45

Yeah.

P8 13:48

Limited...occasional disruptions, but limited interruptions.

Oh, and then I guess...It's not pictured, but my office chair here is actually more comfortable than the one I have at work, just because it's wider and so I like sitting criss-cross applesauce in my office chair. So it allows me...I feel physically more comfortable as well I suppose. That's all I can think of right now.

Interviewer 14:18

Yeah. Amazing. And now can you tell me how you spend a typical working day, but specifically on a day like this when you would be working remote?

P8 14:28

Yes. So because my days remote are right now only Fridays, I typically allocate a lot of my administrative work to Fridays. So I will start...well I don't always start...well, no. OK. I start by like checking any teams, messages or any like emails and I'll reply to those first or if it's like a larger issue or something that requires more than just like a few sentences or a paragraph or two

of response, then I'll flag it for later. Umm. I will typically...I check...I check timesheets every Friday. It's the best way to do it because ours are due on Monday mornings, so I check everyone's on Fridays. Like I said, I check for any errors, so if anyone just forgets to clock in or out, I will check for short lunches. Our company policy is that they have to be at least 25 minutes long for the lunch break. Because you know the law...the law states that any breaks between 5 and 20 minutes must be unpaid, which is why we need to...or must be paid sorry, must be paid, which is why we need to make sure that they aren't having any break shorter, specifically any shorter than 20 minutes, but just to keep it in line with company policy checking for any break shorter than 25 minutes, and then to make sure that everyone is getting like their 40 hours in essentially. I typically have to do it for like 40 to 50 people, actually, I think right now it's around 60. But I will do that on my remote days. The other administrative things that I will tend to do are like updating our fire drill list or our, our organization chart, those things I will tend to do on Fridays. There is a program that we used called [name extracted] which is like a project management time tracking system. And so I'm responsible for inputting all of the vacation and sick days in [name extracted] and so I will typically again do these on Fridays. Umm. I don't really have like a schedule on Fridays, but these are all the things that I just tend to do.

Interviewer 16:57

Mm hmm.

P8 16:59

I typically will not have any meetings on Fridays just because I like to conduct those either in person or just in one of the booths that we have at work. So I typically don't have meetings on Fridays.

Interviewer 17:11

Yeah.

P8 17:15

Yes, but yeah, and then...Any other miscellaneous administrative things that need to be done will usually be done on Fridays.

Interviewer 17:26

Yeah. Amazing. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P8 17:33

OK. So I am not a good example for this. Because it's a little harder for me to disconnect on Fridays and it's the day that I feel I can actually get the most work done, I tend to work late on Fridays because I'm one of the people who tends to like to work until what I get what needs to get done, gets done, or at least until the end of my task or what I want to accomplish that specific day. So I'll tend to work a little bit later on Fridays. Before it would be...To preface, I'm working a lot of overtime right now. It's like 5 or 6 hour...okay it's not a huge amount, but five or six hours a week because we have so much happening right now. We just have a lot of new hires and a lot of, like I said the events coming up. So I'm working a lot of overtime right now. So I will typically end work right now around like 5:30 or six. And then on my remote days, again, right now I will work like 6:30 ish. Yeah, six thirtyish. Which again is I know it's like overtime.

This is not normal for my position or for my company to be transparent, and it's something that we're like working on, like getting my amount of overtime down. So, before I was doing a lot of overtime then I would typically just end the day at like 5 or 5:30 on my remote day, but which is still later than my in person days. But even though I tend to end later on my remote days I do find that... it's a lot...I don't....I feel a lot less drained.

Interviewer 19:09

Yeah.

P8 19:10

Because I mean, I know I've often spoken about this because of the lab that I was in, but just the the hassle and the struggle of commuting and getting ready and unwinding afterwards. And I drive to work, but it's not, it's not a long drive, but it is still a drive as opposed to like taking public transportation. So it is a bit more draining when I have to commute. So even though it's, even though I am working longer on my remote days, I don't feel as drained afterwards.

Interviewer 19:42

Yeah.

P8 19:43

Which is part of why I tend to work later.

Interviewer 19:45

Right. And that way that you signal the end of the workday in this space, how effective is that for you?

P8 19:52

Umm. I, I feel it's fairly effective. All I really do is...I shut down my computer.

Interviewer 20:04

Mm hmm.

P8 20:05

So I am an hourly employee, so I will only work when I am clocked in as opposed to like you know someone who is salary may check their emails in the evening or something um...or over the weekend. But since I am an hourly person, or, I do not do anything for work outside of when I am actually working. So I shut down my laptop every, every night, which signals like the end of that specific work day. So I'll shut down my laptop, turn off my mouse.

Interviewer 20:33

Yeah.

P8 20:37

Sometimes I will pack it in my backpack. Sometimes it'll just stay there until I need to use my laptop or whatever. But after that I will, actually, I tend to leave my room, to kind of enable that transition of this space being a workspace back into it being a personal space. So I don't stay at

my desk after...at least... I don't like sit at my desk and play on my phone after work. I will like almost immediately get up and like move around.

Interviewer 21:07

Great.

P8 21:07

Something that I did not mention earlier was that because I do have to tend to to go talk to people or go do something in person, I move around a lot more during my in person days so on my remote days I stay at my desk a lot more. But yeah, I'll shut off my laptop, walk around.

I'll typically like go downstairs and, like talk to my family, and I'm...Generally after a remote workday, I'm away from my desk for at least an hour before I do anything personal at the desk.

Interviewer 21:39

Gotcha. Nice. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P8 21:47

The remote workday, the in person workday, anything in particular?

Interviewer 21:50

Specific to this space.

P8 21:53

My mindset at the end of the day. I...Typically a little tired. Again, not as tired as I would be after an in person workday, but a little tired but usually quite satisfied with what I've been able to get done during the day.

Interviewer 22:08

Yeah. Amazing. And so, I know you kind of already described the end of your workday in this space and what that looks like. But, so I guess, how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P8 22:15

Um. Just leaving it essentially enough for my brain to turn off from being in work mode.

Interviewer 22:26

Yeah.

P8 22:32

I just exit this entire space for a while and then once I've done something like personal downstairs like talk to my family or watch some TV or play with my phone, then I am able to re enter the space as like a personal space.

Interviewer 22:46

Yeah, that's amazing. And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P8 22:52

Umm...Through those same things. I would say, I think for me by physically doing these things that do not relate to work, it helps me mentally disconnect as well.

Interviewer 23:03

Yeah. Amazing. And what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain that separation between your work and home life? Especially because this is within your, you know, bedroom.

P8 23:19

Honestly, I typically don't really do it. I don't really do that. I have two separate laptops like my personal laptop and my work laptop. But otherwise, it's not really necessarily kept separate. Yeah, even like the monitor I'll use for personal things when I'm not working. There is not really... I don't really have an answer for that one like that one is not really as applicable to my case or my procedures.

Interviewer 23:50

Yeah, absolutely. And I guess lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P8 23:58

It's a little messy, so sometimes that's an issue. I'll usually like clear it out before I actually have to start working. And then...I tend...like this area to the right of the laptop, it's not as big as the area is on my desk, even if it was all clear, it's not as big. I'm just...I tend to move the mouse around a lot when I'm working. It's just more comfortable for my arm. So I guess that would be a limitation, is just the amount of, or the lack of space for my arm I suppose when I'm working. I have a keyboard, but I again with this setup I don't necessarily have anywhere to put it because I don't like...there is a slide out thing specifically for the keyboard, but I, I don't like the keyboard being there because I don't want the keyboard and the mouse to be on different levels and there's even less space for the mouse here.

Interviewer 24:53

Mm hmm.

P8 24:54

I am planning on getting a different desk that will enable me to use like a larger monitor and a keyboard and have more space for my mouse. But I think in terms of limitations like that's really it. Otherwise, I'm pretty much fine.

Interviewer 25:16

Yeah. Amazing. So now I want to move on to the second image here which is of your in-office workspace and now all the questions and just talking about your experience, but specific to this space.

P8 25:28

Mhmm.

Interviewer 25:29

So starting out like last time, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P8 25:33

Yes. So this is my cubicle at our office. We have neighborhoods that are designated by color. So the Orange neighborhood, which as you can tell from like the orange backing and the orange carpet is mine, and this contains our HR department, our logistics team um...not, I'm sorry, not logistics team, purchasing team, and then our accounting department. It's actually not...it's not that big. Like the company that I work at is probably 150 ish, 150-160 people in the US and in Canada, and then about 1/4 to 1/3 of them are remote. And so there's only about 120 people in this actual office, and that's, of course, this neighborhood. And then we have two other neighborhoods as well as the entire warehouse and then the production teams. So this neighborhood is not very large. There's like 4 standing desks. No, sorry, not four standing desks. Two tall desks and two short desks to the left of this and then what you can see over there is about eight other cubicles, and then there is 4 cubicles in my little thing as well as offices on either side of this space. And all of the cubicles are relatively the same. So for instance, I have a standing desk and then here is my name... I'm realizing you can't see my mouse, but, I'm sure you can imagine what I'm talking about. So I have a standing desk which is actually pretty helpful 'cause I can stand and sit. Then I have my name tag and then I have some miscellaneous storage space over here.

Interviewer 27:17

Mm hmm.

P8 27:18

These are the two monitors that I use at work. You can see my work laptop there. I do not typically use it. Well, I mean, I don't use the screen of my of my work laptop when I'm at work. I just use the two, pardon, the two monitors. I have a candy bowl. That my, my coworkers can have candy from. And then you can see like the shelf kind of straight ahead underneath my lunchbox, that's where we keep all of our like birthday cards and such, and then something that you can't see is the shelf on the right side of the photo. That just has miscellaneous like paper towels or like some cleaning supplies. I, because I also clean off desks for new hires before they come in. As well as some general storage for like labels and stuff, and then also our fire drill list.

Interviewer 28:12

Yeah. Amazing. Awesome. And how do you feel working in this space?

P8 28:21

It feels like...fine. I guess this is a little hard to describe. I guess I feel very professional, I suppose would be the best way to put it. As you know, I graduated from undergraduate in May 2024 and this is my first corporate job after college, so I feel very professional when I work in

this workspace surrounded by, you know, all of my peers who have been here much longer than I have been.

Interviewer 28:57

Mm hmm.

P8 29:01

Yes, I feel just generally pretty good. But I do have a lot of interruptions, so sometimes I get a little frustrated, but generally it's pretty good working in this workspace.

Interviewer 29:15

Yeah. Amazing. And now can you tell me about how you spend a typical day, working day, but in this space like a day that you would go into office?

P8 29:25

Sure. So...I... again, it's a little hard because my job is so miscellaneous, but I will like go in and I'll check messages, check emails. I start my way the same the the same way as I do remote and then after that I kind of just jump into whatever needs doing. Oh, a lot of times I like having my meetings in the mornings. I just...I I tend not to put it this way, but I tend to like to get...I guess... not social interaction, but just like meetings over with in the mornings. And I feel that's when I'm also when I have the highest energy like, like extra or socializing energy...best highest social battery I suppose.

Interviewer 30:09

Mmhmm.

P8 30:15

So I get my meetings over with in the mornings and those will typically be occasionally onboardings recently more onboardings because we've had a lot of new hires.

Interviewer 30:16

Yeah.

P8 30:25

There's again lots of new hire check ins. And then any other meetings if I need to like sync with the, with the executive assistant, who is responsible for coordinating infusion this year or just any meetings in general, I, I typically tend to like doing them in the morning.

Interviewer 30:46

Mm hmm.

P8 30:48

And then throughout the day, it's half trying to get my work done and half working on things that have come up. A lot of times because I'm the HR administrative assistant, I'm usually like the first...not line of defense. The first point of contact. There we go. For employees who have like HR related questions, especially because our HR director and our HR generalist are new. And

our HR manager, our previous HR manager has stepped down, so a lot of people will come to me to either ask clarifying questions or to ask who they should go to. So if an employee has questions about their paycheck, sometimes they'll ask me and I'll redirect them to our accountant in charge of running payroll. Or if they have questions about benefits then I can redirect them to our HR generalist or you know anything like that...dealing with that. We've been having a lot of technical difficulties lately, so a lot of my day has been figuring out what that is. So for instance, like our time clock system, we've been having a lot of issues with it lately. And because like I said, our HR generalist is new and she's the one in charge of, like, activating their accounts, we will, like, spend time trying to figure that out.

Interviewer 32:11

Yeah.

P8 32:11

Or yeah...I basically just dealing with whatever pops up and then in between trying to get my job done. I mean, you know, that's how it is.

Interviewer 32:19

Yeah, absolutely. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P8 32:25

It's pretty much the same way actually. I will just shut down my laptop. I will shut off my mouse, pack up, and then I will check my desk to make sure that I haven't left anything behind, like my phone or anything and then I'll leave.

Interviewer 32:39

Yeah.

P8 32:39

Oh, clock out and then I'll leave.

Interviewer 32:41

Yeah, and how effective is that for you?

P8 32:45

It's semi effective I suppose. For me personally because I still have my work backpack with me and I'm still in my work clothing I'm not really switched off until I actually get home. So, I feel like I'm still in work mode as I'm making the as I'm like walking out of the building and as I'm making the commute to my car or not making the commute by car. I still feel as if I'm in work mode and then when I get home, I can actually disconnect from work.

Interviewer 33:16

Yeah, absolutely. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P8 33:23

Umm. Tired, I guess.

Interviewer 33:29

Yeah.

P8 33:29

I...I'm not as I'm not as satisfied as I am with my work on the remote days.

Interviewer 33:34

Mm hmm.

P8 33:35

I'm like not dissatisfied, but I'm just not as satisfied. And then I am definitely more tired. But yeah.

Interviewer 33:48

Nice. Yeah, and since you've already kind of described the end of your workday, I guess we can again talk about maybe how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P8 34:02

Oh, in...I don't do any of that transition in this space. All of that transition for me in my in person days takes place after I get home.

Interviewer 34:14

Mm hmm.

P8 34:15

But typically, like as soon as I...oh, I would say a good like marker for me on in person days is when I unpack my lunch box. That's where I get more into my in home 'cause sometimes I'll stay in my work clothes, but if I'm at, because you know, sometimes we go out later. So even if I stay on in my work clothes when I like, unpack my lunch box, I would say that's a good mental marker for me.

Interviewer 34:40

Yeah. And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P8 34:47

Umm...about the same way by yeah, by unpacking my lunch box...I guess, oh. This makes a little more sense to me now. OK, sorry. Because I completely like shut down my laptop and I don't have teams on my phone, so as soon as I shut down my laptop, I like don't get any emails. I do not look at any messages...sorry, I'm realizing now what you meant by this question. Yeah, I don't get any emails. I don't respond to any messages, and my coworkers really only text me if there's like an emergency which really hasn't happened while I've been here, so I don't have to worry...I don't have to worry about anything work related as soon as I shut down my laptop, even before I clock out. Even though I'm still in work mode, I'm not worrying about anything with work. OK, there we go. I think that's a good. That's good. OK.

Interviewer 35:40

Yep. Amazing. And lastly, I guess, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P8 35:48

The only thing that I I I keep mentioning because it is pretty pertinent is the interruptions.

Interviewer 35:52

Yeah.

P8 35:54

It's not just people. I mean, honestly, people messaging me, I don't really even count as an interruption. It's when, like people like physically come up to me and either talk to me or they like say or or if they message me and they say, "hey, I have a question" that I have to go then address in person. Like I have to walk down to like the warehouse or to the, you know, one of the time clocks or just to the production floor. That is probably the biggest challenge, especially because usually when I get there to address one thing then they have questions about something else and then we start going off on that.

Interviewer 36:26

Right.

P8 36:28

Not tangent, but that other part of work.

Interviewer 36:28

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Great. So now we can move on to here I wanted to put your in person and remote workspace images side to side 'cause I wanted to talk a little bit about comparing both workspaces and I know that you've already mentioned in a lot of ways how they compare or contrast but I guess how does your in

P8 36:43

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 36:48

office workspace compare to your remote workspace? Maybe something in general or something that stands out?

P8 36:55

Umm...It's larger, slightly more neater, but not nearly as private, I would say is the main thing.

Interviewer 37:04

Yeah.

P8 37:08

Which, like I said, I don't feel unsafe by any means at work. It's just because I'd like to be aware, very aware of my surroundings. So anything from like hearing someone walk up to my desk to someone talking next to me and like the other cubicles, are things that I would like tune into. Not on purpose, but just because my brain is like that is a new stimulus, you should make sure or, or you should see what that is before you go back to your, to whatever you were doing. So yeah, I guess even though there's, it's, yeah, larger, less private, more distractions is a good general thing.

Interviewer 37:42

Yeah. Great. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P8 37:58

Definitely far fewer.

Interviewer 38:00

Yeah.

P8 38:01

Yeah, because and like part of it is me because I have, like, I have a candy bowl, so that people like feel encouraged...because I want people to, like, feel as...I mean, you know, HR again is a facet of the company. But I want employees to feel as comfortable as they can, you know, with HR. So I try to have that. And I even if I'm busy,

Interviewer 38:21

Mm hmm

P8 38:27

I would like some...I will take a minute or two to talk to whoever has like come up to my desk just to make sure that they feel welcome and okay. And then my...okay so this is not something that I've mentioned before, but that is relatively pertinent, at least to the workplace right now that is getting a little bit into office politics. So, I'll try to keep it relatively brief. So our HR manager, she is very she's great at getting her job done, but she used to be a controller apparently, in her previous job, which means she is very like demanding, very urgent with every, pretty much everything that she does. Um and again for the most part, the things get done, but because of this, she is very used to coming up to me and interrupting me and saying, "hey, this needs to get done, this needs to get done, this needs to get done." And honestly like I don't mind it that...I don't mind it that much because it's literally my job to like assist with HR and administrative stuff. So I don't really mind it. It's just the way I think...the way that she does it in which it could be literally any time of the day where she can tell me, oh, this needs to get done and this needs to get, and this needs to get done. And she doesn't really give me a timeline, so I assume it has to be done very urgently.

Interviewer 39:45

Mmhmm.

P8 39:46

So that is a big part of not a big but that's a decent part of my interruptions in the in office workspace. Um. I'm so sorry, can you repeat the question? I had a...I was going somewhere with this that was relevant.

Interviewer 39:59

Yeah. How would you describe your boundaries in your in office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P8 40:04

Boundaries, thank you. OK. Yes. So it is a known problem with the rest of the HR team as well because they do feel similarly. So we're trying to like figure out a way to mitigate that because the thing is, she's very she's very smart. She's been in the company for 15 years. She, like pretty much knows the company inside and out, and she has a lot of information. And she's like a, she's a good person. It's just like the way in specifically that she has us doing things leads to us not getting stuff done and even like our HR director has like talked to me about how she pretty much feels the exact same way because obviously she's handling more even more urgent things

Interviewer 40:28

Yeah.

P8 40:43

than I am. But being...what's it called? Being remote means that I do not have as many interruptions from her. Because even if she, like I, I tend to...I typically respond to messages very quickly, and so I will respond to her messages immediately. But like I said, I don't see messages being as much of an interruption as people coming up to me in person, which is like big in that, you know, in person versus remote thing.

Interviewer 41:18

Mm hmm.

P8 41:18

[Coughs]. Pardon. And of course, if I'm if I'm actually working on something else, I can just leave her message for a little bit as opposed to, you know, her coming up to me in the office. So the boundaries are a lot easier to maintain in my office...or sorry in my remote workspace versus being in the office.

Interviewer 41:40

And how does your ability to disconnect from work on the days when in the office compare to the days working from home?

P8 41:48

It's definitely a longer disconnect process because of the commute and I am still more tired at the end of the day, even on days I would say that I don't have a lot to do, like a month or two ago when there wasn't as much for me to

Interviewer 41:54

Mm hmm.

P8 42:06

do at the time. Even when I commute, or even if I didn't have as much to do, I still felt a little more, I still felt more tired when I commuted

Interviewer 42:13

Yeah.

P8 42:14

as to when I got home. So the disconnect process is definitely longer

Interviewer 42:17

Yeah.

P8 42:18

when I'm in office and then it, I still feel more tired at the end.

Interviewer 42:22

Yeah, great. And do you feel that it is easier or harder to detach from work on the days when you're in the office compared to the days that you work from your remote workspace?

P8 42:34

Yes, I would say it's harder, yes.

Interviewer 42:36

It's harder on the days in office?

P8 42:39

Oh, sorry. Yes, it's harder on the days in office, yes.

Interviewer 42:41

Or. OK. Great for any reason in particular?

P8 42:46

Just the I just the longer disconnect process I think.

Interviewer 42:52

And of the two, lastly, I guess of the two pictures that you shared here, which feels more like a workplace to you, like if I use that term workplace?

P8 43:04

I would actually, I would say the office definitely feels more like a workplace just because for me, so for me specifically, like when I was a kid, I was not very socially adept, like I basically

had to study how the people around me interacted to, like, look like a normal human being, I suppose. It's not that I didn't feel everything that everyone else did. I just was very bad at, at communicating that.

Interviewer 43:30

Mm hmm.

P8 43:32

So, so when I'm in the office, in addition to like being in my work clothes and doing the same work, I also have...not have to, but I will maintain that like level of professionalism slash... error of... I don't it's a little hard to describe, but there's definitely more going on in terms of maintaining that...myself, like just how I'm acting, how I'm looking, how I'm communicating with my coworkers. So I consider that like I consider all of that. I guess the best way to put it would be “the act”, even though I don't feel like it, maintaining that “act” to me is a big part of working, and so because of that I feel

Interviewer 44:08

Mm hmm.

P8 44:20

that my in person workspace is more of a workplace.

Interviewer 44:24

Yeah, that's great. And so now I lastly wanted to move on to this photo where I asked if you could please share either a space or an object that helps you disconnect from work and you shared this photo. So can you just tell me again a bit about this photo?

P8 44:33

Mm hmm. Yeah. So these are, this is my Pokémon card collection. I've recently gotten into Pokémon card collecting. I've been a huge Pokémon fan since I've been a kid, but recently my sister and I have been watching like the Pokémon anime together, the newest one, and I guess just because of that and I keep for for whatever reason, I keep seeing Pokémon stuff come up on my feed, I got back into Pokémon card collecting. So yeah. So these are my two binders and my deck box. I don't actually play, but I just like collecting the cute ones. My, the pre evolution to my favorite Pokémon Gumi is on the deck box and then my favorite Pokémon is Goudre, which is like the big form of it later on. But even, because there is a lot of like, I'll be right back. I'll get it. It'll just to get provide a visual thing. I'll be back.

Interviewer 45:39

Yeah.

P8 45:41

I'm wearing pajamas sorry..... Okay I'm back. I just thought it would be easier to do it with visual cues. So, I am a person who tends to appreciate art a lot. And so, between the Pokémon cards being very pretty and me liking Pokémon, I just find it's a very fun way to like stress relief.

And just to give you an idea...Oh my God, it's not...Okay give me a second. Just to give you an idea of what they look like real quick. Yeah. So yeah.

Interviewer 46:58

Oh wow.

P8 46:59

So you'll basically just see a Pokémon and then like cool art. But like I said, because I like Pokémon, and because I appreciate art, that's like something that I've been into lately as Pokémon card collecting and something interesting that I've noticed is I'm the type of person who

Interviewer 47:04

Yeah.

P8 47:18

likes kind of brainless things to do sometimes.

Interviewer 47:22

Yeah.

P8 47:22

And so which is kind of funny because even though sometimes I'll be doing that type of thing at work, which is like mostly like data entry relevant things, sorting your Pokémon cards is like it uses like the same part of the brain or at least it feels like it. But because it's with Pokémon and not with work, I enjoy it a lot more, even if it's like the same type of thing.

Interviewer 47:38

Mm hmm. No yeah. And how exactly does this object help you mentally disconnect from work?

P8 47:50

I'm just thinking about Pokémon because it's a it's something that I've liked since I was a kid, so I like the games. I like the spin off games. I didn't really like the anime, but you know, whatever. I just liked it since I was a kid, so it definitely has, like, it almost has like its own space in my like childhood.

Interviewer 48:04

Mhmm.

P8 48:12

And then especially recently, it's been something like I've gotten my sister and one of my best friends into collecting Pokémon. Actually, two of my best friends into collecting Pokémon.

Interviewer 48:22

Oh, nice.

P8 48:22

And so, because I have that connection of it not just being something that I enjoy, but something that my family and my friends enjoy, it definitely helps me disconnect as well.

Interviewer 48:31

Yeah, and this object and its ability for it to help you disconnect from work, does that depend on whether on a day that you're working from home or in the office? Like how effective that is? Or how you use it?

P8 48:46

I I say it's it's fairly effective. It's equally effective both when I am in the office and when I am at home.

Interviewer 48:51

Mhmm.

P8 48:54

But like I said, I'm definitely less tired if I'm looking at them on a remote day.

Interviewer 49:00

Yeah. And you and you use it everyday like...depending on... it doesn't depend on where you like, where you worked for the day?

P8 49:08

I would say like probably almost every day. Yeah. Like, I just like to look at them or like or looking online to see if there are any, you know, deals.

Interviewer 49:10

Yeah.

P8 49:17

I would say I definitely, like right now at least I'm doing that everyday.

Interviewer 49:20

Yeah. And I guess my last thing being out of, you know, the prompt that I gave you and anything you could have shared. Why did you choose this photo in particular?

P8 49:33

So two, two reasons. One because it was something that was in front of me at the time that I was looking to take a photo because I was looking at it earlier that day. And then two, it's this is like recently, this is recently for me this is like a big thing. Like you know how like sometimes you'll hop from hobby to hobby or whatever. Like this is like just what I'm on right now. And even like, whenever I stop being interested in, like, actually getting new cards, I'll still be able to look at these ones and be like, "Oh my God, they're so pretty."

Interviewer 50:03

Oh yeah. Amazing. So lastly, I wanted to talk about just your general experiences about, of being able to disconnect and switching between workspaces.

So this section doesn't pertain to any particular picture, but if it does for any reason, let me know. I can always toggle back into the presentation. But my first question being, are there certain times of either the day or the week in which it is easier or harder to disconnect?

P8 50:20

Umm I mean, I don't think this is groundbreaking, but I think Mondays are harder to disconnect and Fridays are easier to disconnect. I'd say...well for me in particular, also because I have to do timesheets and because I have like duties relating to our monthly meetings which we have on Mondays. Mondays definitely tend to be my busiest days. And then Fridays are the days that I have at least interruptions. So I think that is also why it's harder for me to disconnect on Mondays and easier for me to disconnect on Fridays.

Interviewer 51:05

Yeah, that's great. And can you describe how you typically move between different spaces during different workspaces during the week?

P8 51:14

Um really the only thing that I actually do to move between these spaces is I will bring my...I'll bring my laptop and my work mouse to me or to home with me on Thursday nights, and then I'll bring them in with me on Monday mornings. Very occasionally I'll have other stuff that I have to bring with me, not very often, but like. So for [name of event extracted], last year I had to bring with me a lot of like, you know, little meal tents, that I had to like put out and and stuff.

Interviewer 51:47

Uh huh.

P8 51:48

So occasionally I'll I'll have stuff like that that I have to bring in between. But for the most part, it's just bringing my work laptop and my work mouse to and from.

Interviewer 51:56

Yeah. And I know you mentioned earlier that on the days that you go into office, you obviously commute by car. And I was just wondering how does that commute make you feel?

P8 52:08

Um. Bad. It's not.

Interviewer 52:10

Mm hmm.

P8 52:11

It's not that bad. I just, I have never been a fan of driving and without getting in too much into it,

I've developed this like weird anxiety about driving over the past few months. Not necessarily triggered by anything, but it's. It's just been something that I've been struggling with. And I've never been a big fan of driving just in general. So it doesn't make me feel great.

Interviewer 52:35

Yeah.

P8 52:36

I guess is the best way to put it.

Interviewer 52:37

Yeah, no, totally fair. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?

P8 52:45

No. I I don't like I I strongly dislike commuting, especially because I do it by car, I think.

Interviewer 52:49

Yeah.

P8 52:52

When I commuted to work by public transportation, which I did in Blacksburg, I think the commute helped me disconnect from work. But now that I am actually driving and you know the one making the commute as opposed to like riding along, it does not help me disconnect anymore.

Interviewer 53:11

Yeah. And how does the movement between these spaces influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P8 53:23

Umm...I...I don't. Could you give me an example?

Interviewer 53:34

Yeah, I guess just like or maybe maybe talk about how working in these different spaces during the week, um, does that influence your ability to disconnect from work do you feel?

P8 53:48

Umm.

Interviewer 53:49

So the days working in office versus at home.

P8 53:54

Um I mean, like I said before, it's easier to disconnect when I work remote. I'm not sure if I have anything additional to put there, not off the top of my head at least.

Interviewer 54:03

Yeah. No, that's totally fine. Yeah. And I guess in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day?

P8 54:13

[Sneezes.]

Interviewer 54:15

Oh, bless you.

P8 54:16

Thank you.

Sorry can you repeat that.

Interviewer 54:18

Yeah, in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day? So maybe expanding upon what you were just talking about?

P8 54:27

Yeah. I think for me it like the big thing is like one the act or like the mai, the maintenance of the professional air that I have to do at work and the commute... I mean, those are really the big things I think because I'm in like a heightened, I suppose, work state mind

Interviewer 54:55

Mm hmm.

P8 54:56

during the in person days it's harder for me to disconnect.

Interviewer 55:03

Mm hmm.

P8 55:03

I guess to put it psychologically, maybe a higher state of arousal, during my in person workdays.

Interviewer 55:08

Mm hmm.

P8 55:10

So it takes longer for me to come down from that state and then it's not as high on my remote days. So it doesn't take as long to come down from that state.

Interviewer 55:18

Yeah. Yeah. No, that's great. And what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to like successfully and fully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P8 55:31

I just wish I had...we had public transportation here, man. Like, I'm not gonna lie.

Interviewer 55:34

Yeah.

P8 55:37

And and because we work at like an ITS solutions for public transportation, this is honestly to something that like a lot of my coworkers feel similarly to, especially like the remote employees that we have who live in like Atlanta or Seattle or somewhere, that actually has a public transportation system. So for background purposes, I am from [location extracted]. I work in [location extracted]. It's not that long, it's about a 15 minute drive each way, but our, our area has absolutely abysmal public transportation. It is...It essentially does not exist unless you like, unless you honestly, unless you are desperate.

Interviewer 56:18

Yeah.

P8 56:20

Around here like I know in [location extracted], it's fairly common to get your driver's license late or to not even have it at all. In my area it is...it's essentially...yeah, it's essential. It's basically to get your driver's license pretty much as soon as you are able to. Even just like as a small example, my area of how non walkable my area is I guess, I live about a mile into my neighborhood and there is just... without a car or without a bike it'll take you like a while to just get out of the neighborhood. It's not walkable. Like you basically just need a car to get around this area.

Interviewer 57:07

Yeah.

P8 57:08

So I think public transportation or even more walkable communities,

Interviewer 57:14

Yeah.

P8 57:15

would be a huge boom to helping me disconnect.

Interviewer 57:21

That's great. So I guess my, my last question is just, is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to share either regarding your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or just anything else about your general ability to disconnect from work?

P8 57:44

I...I don't think so. Nothing that I can think of.

Interviewer 57:47

Yeah. No, that's great. Well, thank you so much for your time.

I really appreciate it. And before we end, do you have just any other last-minute questions?

P8 57:59

No, if I think of anything else, should I just like e-mail you or something?

Interviewer 58:02

Yep, that'd be great.

P8 58:03

OK.

Interviewer 58:04

All right. Well, thank you so much.

P8 58:07

Of course.

P9 Interview Transcript

53m 54s

Interviewer 0:04

All right. So, hello! I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain anonymous and all aspects of the photos you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P9 0:44

Mhmm. Sounds good.

Interviewer 0:45

Great. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P9 0:48

No. I'm good.

Interviewer 0:50

Great. So to start out, can you please tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P9 0:56

Sure. So I'm [name extracted] and I work for [company name extracted], which is a security company and we have different kind of functions within the company. So I work for a specific software part of the company and it's a video management system software and I am a technical writer for them. So that just means I write a lot of documentation for them which can include like end user manuals, but it also can be internal documentation. So I'm doing a lot of editing. And I've been working for this company for, since October, so I'm still under a year. So I'm still kind of new, but it's going well. And yeah, I like working hybrid for this company. It's like, really flexible, so I'm able to get my work done, but also like if I need to work from home for whatever reason like it's really open to do that. And the only times I have to come in, like absolutely have to, are if like very important people are visiting from somewhere and then they're like okay, you need to come in the office and dress up or whatever. But besides that, it's really relaxed. It seems to work well for most people.

Interviewer 2:10

Yeah. Amazing. And can you tell me a little bit more about your current hybrid work schedule, what that looks like and how that's decided?

P9 2:19

So right now it's kind of up to me like what days I come in. And I actually live with my parents

and one of my siblings, and that sibling goes to like a high school that's close to my office, like my in-person office. It's like a special school, so they only go every other day. So most of the time when school's in session, I take them to school on those, every other day and since it's so close to my office I'll just take them to school, go to my office, and I'll be in my office from like 7:45 'cause I can drop them off at 7:30, and then I'll leave somewhere before or after three to go pick them up. And those are my in office days. And then the other days if I don't have a reason to go out 'cause it's, it can be up to an hour and a half. It's like if there's no traffic, there's 30 minutes, if there's a lot of traffic, it's an hour and a half. If I have no other reason to go out there and like no one important is in office I'll just work from home cause it's the easiest thing to do and my coworkers are kind of similar where they'll sort of, if they live farther, they won't come in office unless they have a reason to. And I think for the company, like leadership, it's more like as long as you're getting your work done and it's working for everyone, they're going to keep this hybrid schedule and let us stick with it. I do know like I have heard of people in the company like working from home...It's not that they're working from home too much, it's that they work from home and then they don't necessarily get all the things they need to do done. So, if I was in that situation and they were seeing that I wasn't getting enough done, they probably asked me to come in more just to be like...accountability sort of thing. Um. Yeah, it's ultimately up to the person, it seems like, unless there's some sort of issue.

Interviewer 4:07

Yeah, that's great. And did you have any previous roles or internship experiences and if so, what did that look like and were they hybrid, in person, or remote?

P9 4:19

Mhmm. So when I was in grad school, I had a couple different experiences. I had one that was...mostly remote, but I had some things in person, and that was for a nonprofit that was local to [location extracted] when I was doing my grad school there. And then I also had a fully remote internship, and that one was like, that was my longest internship. It was 7 months. And that one was fully...sorry I already said that, but it was fully remote and that's because the rest of the team was based in Istanbul, so I wasn't going to commute there. That would take a really long time. But that was good. There were...I think having hybrid is helpful in a lot of ways, because if there's something that's like not quite clear sometimes being in person and like talking to the person or drawing it out of the whiteboard or whatever can be really helpful. And with the remote, there were sometimes where communication felt a little bit more difficult and the time difference, of course, if you're working with a time difference can be also difficult. And then I did have one full in person job that was full time and that was between college and grad school. And that was, I worked for the entomology lab. I worked for the beekeeping group at [workplace name extracted]. And that was, had to be fully in person because we're working with, like, live insects. Um, you can't really take those home. I guess you could, but it wouldn't go well and that was good, but also like tiring because you had to be there 8 hours every day and you didn't have an option to work from home. So like if I had a cold or something, I couldn't work from home that day.

Interviewer 5:53

Right.

P9 5:57

I had to just take off and lose that money because I was an hourly position.

Interviewer 6:01

Yeah. Amazing. So now I wanted to move on and share my screen. Umm. Let me know if hopefully you can see that all right.

P9 6:12

Yeah, that works.

Interviewer 6:14

Great. So, before the interview, I asked if you could please share an image of your remote workspace and of your in-office workspace. So, we'll start here with your remote workspace and I just kind of want to ask you some questions about it and talk about your experience within it. So to start out, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P9 6:32

Sure. Yeah. So this is my at home workspace. I am lucky enough that I have some extra space in my home, so I have like a separate office from my room. So this is actually two stories up from where I like spend most of my time. So it's pretty separated from my like relaxed time in the day. The only thing in this picture that's like provided by the company is the laptop and the mouse. The monitor and the keyboard I already had before. Um I think...I'm pretty sure if I needed a monitor and a keyboard I could ask and they would provide it. But what I have works fine, so I'm good with using it. And I also have like an Ethernet hookup for this room. So the Internet is like great. I never have any problems connecting. I do have it propped up on like a tablet box. Eventually I'll probably get a riser. But it works so. Yeah, that's my setup usually.

Interviewer 7:32

Yeah. Amazing. And how do you feel working in this space?

P9 7:39

Um. It's good. I feel more relaxed I think, working from home. When I'm in person, I do share my office with one other person. So when I'm here, I feel less watched. Not that it's a bad thing to work with other people, but sometimes I can get like, I get stressed about looking like I'm working, almost. So I like working from home because I can do what I need to do in the way that works for me. And like that way if I get my work done really fast, I don't have to sit here for like 8 hours or however many hours I need to be in the office. I can kind of just get it done. And I also like I have pets at home, so sometimes it's nice if one of them's sick or something, I can like work here and step away to like, take care of them or whatever and come back. Generally I think it's like good though because my office space isn't directly in the same space as the rest of my house. So like, I don't have distractions from the pets. Which I would if I worked in the same space as them.

Interviewer 8:42

Yeah, definitely. And can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but specifically on a day like this when you would work remote?

P9 8:50

Yeah, yeah. So I usually start like kind of around the same time if I'm at home versus in office like around 7:30 – 7:45. And like when I start on every day, I like check my e-mail and my messages and see what comes in. And sometimes I have stuff that's come in from the day before because I work a little earlier than most people. So sometimes people send me things that like 3:00 PM the day before, so I'll check on that when I get in. And then I often have meetings around like 10:30 or so...10 or 10:30. So between like logging on and that I'll do some of the tasks that I have ongoing, writing tasks or editing tasks, and then I'll have my meetings and then I'll usually like take a quick break for lunch, because sometimes those meetings go from like 10:30 to like noon or so. And those will be with like the development team or something.

Interviewer 9:46

Right.

P9 9:47

And then I don't usually like to take a long time for lunch because I like to just get my work done. So then I'll come back and finish up whatever I need to do and then plan for the next day. And on an ideal day, I can probably finish by around 2 when I work from home and then I have the afternoon to do whatever else I need to do. But sometimes, like if I have a meeting, sometimes people will wanna meet later. So occasionally I'll have to do meeting at 3:00 or 4:00, but usually not past then when I'm working from home.

Interviewer 10:17

Yeah. Awesome. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P9 10:26

Do you mean like to myself or to my coworkers, or both?

Interviewer 10:30

Maybe both.

P9 10:32

Usually....so usually I check in with my team. I work on a team with two other people, so it's very small and like almost tight knit I guess. So usually I'll tell them like, oh, I'll give him a summary of what I did today and then say, okay that's it for today, I'm gonna, like, log off now. And then for myself, every day I restart my computer, so I'll just like shut everything down, restart it, and then I'm done for the day. And then I don't usually come up here again until the next day or when I go to the office so I'm able to like walk away from the computer, which is nice.

Interviewer 11:08

Yeah, definitely.

So you like physically leave the space when you're done working?

P9 11:11

Yeah.

Interviewer 11:13

Nice. And how effective is that for you?

P9 11:16

I think it's good because I'm also lucky that my job isn't too like they don't push you to work outside of your like general hours, or if you're taking time off, it's like that's your time off. Like you don't have to be checking your e-mail, or your phone, or anything which is really nice. But yeah, I think having it in a separate room is like one of the most beneficial things, um, so I'm very lucky to have that.

Interviewer 11:39

Yeah, definitely.

And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P9 11:45

Umm. It depends on the day. I mean, sometimes it can be like frustrating with work or like if I know I have like a lot of stuff to do the next day, sometimes I'll get a little nervous thinking about that. But because I'm able to like turn off my computer and like not look at messages for the period of time until I log back in again, I'm usually able to like shut off my work mind if that makes sense. Um and it works pretty well.

Interviewer 12:15

Yeah, that's awesome. And so you already kind of talked about kind of your shutdown process, but can you expand a little bit and kind of just describe the end of your workday in this space?

P9 12:27

So when I like...like restart the computer and shut it down, I do like close the laptop and then like in these pictures I have my notebook. So usually at the end of the day, I'll write down like whatever I did that day and whatever I need to do the next day. So then it's not like sitting in my brain and then I close that too, and I'm done.

Interviewer 12:47

Yeah. And how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P9 12:56

Umm. I mean, we talked about before how I kind of like leave the space, which helps a lot.

Interviewer 12:59

Yeah.

P9 13:01

And then a lot of times in the afternoons and stuff, all like volunteer or sometimes I'm helping with my siblings with something or I also like take piano lessons. I'm in a book club, sometimes I read. So I try to have like stuff going on outside of work, so like I have something to look forward to. So I'm not always just like logging off and going to do errands. Sometimes I have something fun planned which helps.

Interviewer 13:31

And how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P9 13:35

Umm. I think like writing down stuff helps me a lot, like in this, like my work notebook. For me, like if I don't write things down, I'll hold on to it in my mind 'cause, I don't want to forget it, but for some reason, like writing it down helps a lot, and I feel like that's like the most beneficial thing for me. That and just like making sure I have like other stuff to do that's fun, not necessarily just like grocery shopping.

Interviewer 14:06

Yeah, absolutely. And so obviously you described how this is its kind of own physical designated workspace in your home. But I guess what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in the space to maintain that separation between your work and home life?

P9 14:24

So it's kind of a different space which helps. Like in the past when I've worked from home, I haven't always had like a separate office. So in those cases, like, I would make sure not to face the desk towards my bed or something, because I know like if I was, if my bed was in my like line of sight, that would, I don't know, even if I wasn't consciously thinking of it for some reason the bed being there is like I really want to just like go to bed. But also, I would kind of like...like in this picture, I try not to have like other random stuff on my desk, so it's like more work focused. And I think that helps. And it was the same when I was like in a space where I had to be in the same room as like other living items and stuff. I'm lucky that I don't have pets. If I have the pets, that is one thing that kind....they can kind of....like I have cats. They can climb on stuff. So you have to also be careful in those cases not to give them access to your keyboard when you're not there. Because I'm going to be moving in the next year or so and I'll probably be back in a space where I have to have, like, my bed and my desk in the same area. So I'm already kind of preparing for how to like set that up that it like makes sense for my brain. But yeah, I've also in the past I've like, split my room almost where I have like like a little corner or something that's my office and I think that helps.

Interviewer 15:51

Yeah. No, that's really great. And I guess lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P9 16:00

So one thing is like I, because I live with my family sometimes like my parents will be like, "oh, you're working from home, can you meet the, like, washing machine tech or something?" And I'm like no, I actually have, like I have meetings all day too, which is funny but. Um like my dad will work from home and he has meetings all day so, I don't know why he thinks that I don't do the same thing as he does when he works from home.

Interviewer 16:27

Right.

P9 16:28

But I guess distractions, mostly the distractions are very minimal because it's in a separate room and it's not near like the kitchen or bedrooms or anything...or any bedrooms that I'm in anyways, so that helps. But yeah, if there's like people coming in and out of the house sometimes that can be loud or like my parents have dogs. So sometimes they bark. But for the most part it's pretty minimal, which is good.

Interviewer 16:53

Yeah, that's great. So now I wanted to move on to the second slide here which shows the images that you provided of your in-office workspace and these next kind of questions and experiences will be specific to your time in this space.

P9 16:59

Mm hmm.

Interviewer 17:09

So similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about this or these photos?

P9 17:15

So this is my desk at my office and it's the same laptop I do carry it back and forth and then I have like a USB hub that I can connect to these two monitors. So I can use like all three screens at the same time. And then I also am provided with like a keyboard and a mouse at my office. Umm. And I am connected to Ethernet at the office as well. So the Internet is really fast and I've had minimal issues with that. It's also like technology... I'm in the technology office. So if there's ever any issues with Internet, it's not hard to either figure out or find somebody who knows. And I do have like on my desk, I have a little container like a little dog container that has my pens in it and I have a little painting of a bee by my sister. And I don't have it pictured here, but like behind me at my office I have some little paintings and drawings. And then I have like a sticky note board where I put my notes. So it's pretty like customizable and the desk I don't...I forget if I said, but it's like a it's a standing desk too. So I can raise it up or lower it.

Interviewer 18:27

Oh, nice.

P9 18:28

The only problems I have with the standing desk part is I'm short, so like it doesn't go as low as I quite need it to, but I just prop my feet up so that's fine. But yeah, everything...all the monitors and stuff are provided by the company. When I started I didn't have this nice of a desk. They had to like order them. But yeah, it's it's pretty nice. And then in the background, we have this huge whiteboard. It takes up almost the whole wall. And so we have a lot of our like our plans for each quarter on there. And then when I'm sitting on my desk to my left there's a desk that's similar to mine, on the other side of the room and my coworker sits there, and she has a similar set up. And then there's actually two doors in our office. So there's the door that you can see to the right and then there's a door that's like mirrored on the other side in front of my coworker's desk, and the door next to my coworker's desk will go into the hallway. It's like next to the kitchen and some other offices. And then the door next to my desk goes out into the warehouse. So we have like, we'll test cameras and stuff out there. So only thing is like sometimes when people are like in a rush, they'll run through our office because it's fast to get out that way. We can also go

through the kitchen. So usually people are polite and they won't go through. Or if we're like in a meeting we'll leave a note on the door that says like, "please don't open this right now."

Interviewer 19:52

Yeah, great. And how do you feel working in this space?

P9 19:58

It's pretty good. I, honestly, since a lot of people work at home most of my days at the office are pretty productive because there's not too many distractions. I also get in early, and my coworker gets in early as well. So we usually have like at least an hour or two before anybody else gets into the office, minus like a couple HR people get there early. And that means that like it's silent. So, we can like get whatever we need to get done really early or we have time to like chat before anyone else is coming and asking us questions. Because we're both, we're kind of on a training slash documentation team, so we're doing a lot of different things. Which means there's a lot of people coming in and asking us questions sometimes. So that is one thing that is like if we have someone important coming to the office like the CEOs coming to visit or something, everyone will come to the office because they usually ask us to and those days are a lot harder to get things done because there's a lot more people and then a lot of people wanna meet with us because we're like the only we're the the sole documentation and training team and we have one other guy and that's it. So if anybody has any questions like I I can't really push them on someone else to answer them. So it can be kind of distracting. But if I like absolutely need to lock in on something I can like, put my headphones on and be like...leave a little note like I'm working on this please don't distract me.

Interviewer 21:30

Yeah.

P9 21:33

And people are pretty respectful of that. I do feel like working in the office, I sometimes feel like pressure to like only work, if that makes sense. Like even though other people, like...a lot of other people in the office will come in and they get less done on their office days too. Like, they'll just kind of wander around for a while, usually, or they'll go get a cup of coffee and then go talk to somebody on the other side of the office. So, nobody is like making me sit there and do the work, but my brain is a little like, "no, you're in the office, you have to sit here and do your work." Which is why I like working from home because I feel like less pressure to like sit there and lock in. But I think that's just a me thing. I don't think most people think that in the office, at least at our location.

Interviewer 22:18

Yeah, definitely. And does that make you feel a certain way at the end of the day, whether, physically, emotionally?

P9 22:26

Yeah. I think sometimes like my office days, I feel more tired because, like, I feel like I have to, like, try to get more done. It doesn't necessarily happen, but like I want to like look productive. It's really weird 'cause it's not like anybody's watching me. It's just it's all in my head. But um... Like some days I'll work for like.... I'll stay for like five or six hours and I'll work for almost the

entire time I'm there. I'll just like, go to the bathroom and come back and keep working. And there are occasional days where I need to do that because I write the release notes for the company and there's a quick turnaround from when I get them versus when I get all the tickets and I get about like, I get like up to 50 tickets like every other week and then I have to turn around and turn them into release notes pretty quickly.

Interviewer 23:13

Wow.

P9 23:17

So those days, if I'm in the office, I I put on my headphones and I like, sit down. And usually I can get them done in like 4 hours if I just like go. But that's not so great for like eating and drinking water. So, I try not to do that other days. It's just like if I have a really tight deadline, I'll, I'll try to do it that way. But I feel like I I'm better at, like eating and drinking water and stuff when I work from home.

Interviewer 23:42

Yeah, definitely. And can you tell me how you spend a typical working day, but a day like this when you would go into office?

P9 23:50

So usually... um. Like I mentioned earlier, I drive my sister to school, so I'll drop her off at like 7:30 at her school and then I'll get to my office by 7:45. And then if my coworker's there, usually we do like a like a kind of debriefing or something. 'Cause we're not always in there on the same days. So if she's there, I'll talk to her and sometimes that's like for up to up to an hour or something just like talking, 'cause, she goes to different meetings and I do too, so we have to make sure we're like on the same page for everything.

Interviewer 24:24

Right.

P9 24:24

So we'll talk for that. And then sometimes we'll like on the whiteboard like map out what we're doing and stuff or if she has some tasks that she needs me to do really quickly for her, I'll do those. If she's not there, it's similar to at home. Like I'll check my messages and then work on my normal tasks and I normally don't like go out to lunch or anything when I work at the office. I usually just eat like at my desk or like occasionally I'll go get food, but usually I just eat at my desk. Unless we have, like when we have important people come to the office, we walk to this brewery that's like a 5 minute walk from the office and we'll get lunch there. But that's like maybe every two or three months or something? It's not too often.

Interviewer 25:08

Mm hmm.

P9 25:09

And my coworker is the same actually. She usually just eats like snacks or something at her desk or goes out quickly and comes back. And then for the afternoon or like if I have one of those 10:30 meetings, I'll do those. And then sometimes we have meetings for we manage a learning

management system. So, we'll have meetings with those pretty often and sometimes those are in office, but they'll be in the afternoon. So, we'll sometimes go to the same meetings. I like when one of us works from home for those meetings because the echo from like being in the same room on the same meeting with someone can be distracting for me.

Interviewer 25:47

Yeah.

P9 25:49

But yeah, we'll usually have meetings and then she usually gets there a little earlier than I do. So she will leave around like 2 or so, and then I'll stay like another hour. Or if I have like...if I'm done by the time she leaves, I'll just go run an errand before I pick up my sister. Otherwise, I'll stay till around 3:00 and then I drive back to my sister's school and pick her up and then come home. So...but the problem is there's traffic on those days, so usually I don't get home until like 5 because I have to go pick her up and then we don't usually get out of that parking lot until like 4 and then it's another hour to go home. So those things are definitely longer.

Interviewer 26:30

Yeah, definitely. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P9 26:36

So I it's similar in some ways to the, when I'm at home, like if my coworker isn't in the office, I'll message her like I do when I'm at home and say like, here's what I did today. Or if I'm in the office, I'll be like, okay, here's what I got done today, when she leaves, or if I'm leaving earlier than her. And I'll usually ask her, because she's at like a higher level than I am, so I'll ask her if there's anything I'm missing or anything she needs me to do for her 'cause she's sometimes busier than I am. And we have the one other coworker that we work with, so if he's not in the office, I'll message him and say, like, do you need me to do anything else for you tomorrow? Like not asking for more work today, but for the next day. And then the same thing, I'll just tell him I'm logging off and then restart my computer. But when I'm at the office, I'll pack it away, bring it in my...like I have a work bag. And then...Yeah, usually I leave. Usually there's not that many people in the office. So if I see someone, I'll say bye on my way out, but otherwise I'm just heading out.

Interviewer 27:44

Yeah, definitely. And how effective is that for you?

P9 27:48

It's good, I mean. I always make sure I'm not...I try not to leave any like loose ends when I leave the office 'cause I don't like having to like go home and like log back on or anything. So, it's very rare that something like that happens, but occasionally someone, something kind of urgent will come up and I'll have to like very quickly fix something when I get home, but that's pretty rare. So for the most part, it's like I'm able to shut it off and then by the time I commute home like it's...my mind's clear of the work and everything.

Interviewer 28:20

Yeah, absolutely. And how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P9 28:26

For these days, like when I'm in office, I think I'm more like tired, like brain wise. Like I have less mental energy. But generally, I'm like satisfied, like, I'm not usually too frustrated or anything and I usually am happy 'cause I know I have a plan for the next day, so I'm not like stressed thinking about stuff like that.

Interviewer 28:50

Yeah, definitely. And so you kind of already described the end of your workday in this space and what that looks like. So I guess how would you transition...how do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P9 29:06

Like do you mean when I...like after I leave the space?

Interviewer 29:10

Yeah.

P9 29:11

So since I live pretty far from here, the commute can help. And if I'm driving my sibling, usually she talks about school and stuff, so it's like my my brain is like immediately going somewhere else. Sometimes, like I volunteer and I volunteer close to my office as well...or like 20 minutes from my office. So I'll go there. And then it's like my brain is shifting into volunteer mode. So it's pretty like distinct switch.

Interviewer 29:44

Yeah, definitely. And I guess if you have anything else to add, but if not, that's all right, but how do you mentally disconnect from work? I guess on these days.

P9 29:56

So if I'm like by myself and I'm trying to like disconnect, like driving home or something, I do like listen to audiobooks and stuff, which I think helps to think about something else. But I also, like my other picture for disconnecting from work, I volunteer at the animal shelter, which I think is like has been a really good way for me to disconnect, and I also volunteer to teach English classes so. Those can change like semester by semester when I'm teaching them, but sometimes those are after work, so I'll have to like switch into teaching mode. But generally I have like something going on, so I'm usually not like ruminating on work or anything.

Interviewer 30:42

Yeah, absolutely. And lastly, I guess what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P9 30:49

I think it's just like distraction mostly and maybe like expectations I'm putting on myself from working in an office. But as time goes on, I think the expectations I'm putting on myself are like making...I don't...relaxing, like making more sense. But yeah, if there's a lot of people in the office, it's hard for me to get a lot done because it can be noisy with people walking by and talking and stuff. But generally I think that's really it, yeah.

Interviewer 31:21

Yeah, great. And so now moving on, I wanted to put kind of your photos side to side of your in person and remote workspaces and just kind of talk about you know comparing these different workspaces and you've kind of already done a great job of speaking about that already. But I guess my first question is just how does your in office workspace compare to your remote workspace?

P9 31:47

I feel like my in office space feels like fancier kind of. [Coughs] Sorry. 'Cause, I do have like the two or two monitors so I'm able to use like 3 screens. So on the days where I'm like writing release notes for example, I do prefer to be in office because I can have like all the tickets in one, one monitor and then I have like a spreadsheet where I like track what notes I'm doing in another monitor and then I'll have the actual notes in it on my like computer screen, laptop screen or something. So that's pretty nice. But it's like not necessary. Like I can do the same thing just with split screen at home. When I'm at the office, my monitors do have better like resolution than my laptop or my monitor at home. So if I need to look at something like in detail, I probably need to look at those. But they're, I mean, they're pretty similar, honestly, like in the way I'm working in them with the like keyboard and mouse and the the like monitors. I guess when I'm at the office I mainly use the monitors and not my laptop screen, which is why when I'm at home I have the laptop like raised up so it's more parallel with the monitor.

Interviewer 33:04

Yeah. Awesome. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P9 33:15

Can you like expand on that question a little?

Interviewer 33:17

Yeah, absolutely. You can talk about anything boundary related, whether that be physical boundaries, time-based boundaries or any kind of mental or emotional boundaries you hold in both spaces.

P9 33:30

Mhmm. [Coughs] Sorry, I still have a cough. So, I think when I'm in office, like physical boundaries are pretty easy 'cause, I just like walk away. And when I'm at the at home like because I'm able to log off and I don't have too much on my phone or anything, it's also pretty easy.

Interviewer 33:48

Mm hmm.

P9 33:52

Mentally, I mean, I guess the same 'cause I can just like turn everything off and it's fine. But, the only thing is at the office, sometimes people like walk through, like physically, so that can be distracting.

Interviewer 34:06

Yeah, definitely. And I guess how does your ability to disconnect from work when days in the office compare to the days when working from home?

P9 34:12

[Coughs] Sorry. I think it's about the same

Interviewer 34:20

Mhmm.

P9 34:22

because I can, like walk away from my in home office almost the same way the commute's like a lot shorter though. So sometimes like...sometimes I think being in office can help me connect more because I have like more of a time gap almost so that can be helpful. But it's not like...it's not like enough for me to want to work in the office all the time or vice versa.

Interviewer 34:48

Right, definitely. So I guess, do you feel at all that it is easier or harder to detach from work on a certain day, whether that be on in office days or when working from your remote workspace?

P9 35:00

Umm. I think sometimes it can be harder working in the office versus at home because like when I'm at the office, I don't take breaks as regularly.

Interviewer 35:06

Mm hmm.

P9 35:15

So like sometimes I'm leaving the office, and this is like kind of more of a me thing. I don't know if this happens to many other people, but like I won't drink enough water or something or like I didn't eat a big enough lunch. So I'll be leaving the office and I'm feeling kind of like not quite right 'cause, I didn't drink enough water or something. So then it's like, even though I'm not necessarily thinking about work, I'm kind of feeling like not as well as I would if I had worked at home and, like, been on top of drinking water or something.

Interviewer 35:47

Yeah definitely. And I guess of the set of photos that you shared here, which feels more like a workplace to you? So if I use that term workplace.

P9 35:59

Umm. I mean... They're both my workplaces 'cause I work at both of them, I guess. But if, like I was thinking about a stereotypical workplace, I probably would say the office. Um. But I feel like the home office like works. Like it's not... It doesn't look like a gaming office or anything, if that makes sense. Like it still feels like a workplace to me.

Interviewer 36:28

Yeah, definitely for any reasons in particular?

P9 36:34

I mean when I'm at the office... It's maybe in some ways it's just like the room itself is like because it's very office, like the walls are grey and the carpet is like grey also.

Interviewer 36:49

Right.

P9 36:50

It's kind of boring. So maybe it's just that it feels more boring and that's that feels officey to me. But yeah, I I guess that's really it. Maybe I should get a whiteboard for home and then it'll feel more the same because I'll be looking at the whiteboard.

Interviewer 37:02

Yeah. True, yeah. Okay, great. So I guess we can move on to the last slide here where I asked if you can share either kind of a space or object that helps you disconnect from work and you shared this photo. So similar to the last time

P9 37:16

Mhmm.

Interviewer 37:20

can you just tell me about this photo?

P9 37:22

Sure. So these are not my cats. They are cats that are currently at the [name of animal shelter]. So I volunteer at the animal shelter and in this photo you can kind of see I'm like wearing the volunteer shirt and I have a name tag on. So, I volunteer there 8 to 10 hours a month, and I've been volunteering there since, like, November. So usually I'm going at least once a week. And when I go, I work in the cat area. So, for the most part I'm working with like, there's different levels of cats. So there's we have like green cats and those are the easiest. Like you need the...you only need two hours of training to work with them. And then there's yellow cats, which are in the middle. And then there's blue cats, which are like behavioral modification, like they need behavioral modification. So I'm still working with the yellow cats. I'm qualified to work with the blue cats, but they haven't done any trainings yet, so I have to wait for that to come around before I can do those. But the yellow cats also have behavioral modification things sometimes. So, the two in this picture they're yellow cats, but they're very like, they're obviously very loving cats, so they don't have too many like behavioral issues or anything. So sometimes, like hanging out with the cats is literally just like going in there and you sit and they lay on top of you, or you can play with them. And then sometimes, like they need to be trained, how to like, accept medication or just to be around people. So it takes a lot of patience and stuff, but I have my own cats at home too, so I just really like animals and cats especially. And I think like doing the volunteer work and stuff is helpful for me because it's like something else that I'm doing away from work, like it's totally separate. And it's like, I'm not doing any writing at the volunteer facility. Not now at least.

Interviewer 39:26

Right.

P9 39:28

So it's like my brain is doing something totally different by working with animals. So I think it's a good way for me to like, compartmentalize. I don't know if that's the word I'm looking for. But you know, like, do something else and feel good about it.

Interviewer 39:42

Yeah, definitely. And I guess out of anything you could have shared, why did you choose this specific photo?

P9 39:50

I think...so when I was like thinking of photos I was thinking like of one of my volunteer things that I do. So I do this and I volunteer teach English classes.

Interviewer 40:03

Mm hmm.

P9 40:04

The reason I went with this one is kind of like I didn't want to like include pictures of people 'cause I'd have to contact them and ask if I can include them. But I also volunteer with the animals a little bit more, so it was like I'm a little more involved with that. But yeah, I've just really been enjoying volunteering a lot, especially since I left school. It's like I have some more free time. Not that you need to fill all your free time, but like I like doing something that like helps some sort of person or creature in this case.

Interviewer 40:36

Yeah.

P9 40:38

But yeah, but I I this photo I thought was just really cute 'cause it was like they both wanted to sit in my lap at the same time.

Interviewer 40:45

Yeah. No, it's it's such a cute photo. They're super cute. And I guess how does this space or object or I guess cats, you know, working with them, how does that help you mentally disconnect from work?

P9 40:59

So when I volunteer at the animal shelter itself, it's very like...it's very structured, I think. So like when you come in, every time you sign in and you get your name tag and you have to like clock in on a little app and put your stuff away and then you go wash your hands and then you can go hang out with the cats, or sometimes you need to do like pet laundry or something when you're there. But I think the fact that it like there's specific steps that I do every time. The structure helps me a lot 'cause it's like okay, I'm, my brain is like transitioning into this task or this like set of tasks that I'm doing and then it's like okay well, I'm here, I'm only thinking about what I need to do for the volunteering with the cats. And I don't really think about like writing my release notes or anything at the same time. So it's like a good separation.

Interviewer 41:53

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And I guess you did mention this is something that you usually do once a week, correct?

P9 42:12

Mhmm.

Interviewer 42:15

So I guess does this space and its ability to help you mentally disconnect, does that at all depend on whether you're working from home or in the office?

P9 42:16

Umm. Not really, I don't think 'cause it's like I'm so going to the shelter. Maybe like when I work from the office

Interviewer 42:20

Mm hmm.

P9 42:23

the effect is a little bit less 'cause I'm like...the drive is shorter when I come from the office versus when I come from home. Because the shelter's only 20 minutes from my office.

Interviewer 42:33

Yeah.

P9 42:35

But I feel like it's the same like 'cause you're you're leaving...I'm leaving my workspace, whichever one that is, and going into like a different space to do something totally different.

Interviewer 42:46

Yeah, definitely. And I guess lastly, you made some really great points so if there isn't anything else, that's all right. But does this space or interacting with these animals, does that hold any other sort of meaning for you?

P9 43:03

I mean I have, so I have like three of my own like cats at home and they're all special needs of some sort. So like one is blind, one is blind and deaf, and then one of them is just old and he has all sorts of health issues. So, I really like working with pets and I like helping like cats that might not get us adopted as fast. So, when I'm like at the shelter it's nice 'cause like I can't adopt all the animals because I don't have the money or space...resources for that.

Interviewer 43:37

Right.

P9 43:38

So instead of adopting all of them, I can go and help at a place where like when people come in to look for cats, as a volunteer, you can kind of point out the cats that might not get adopted as

fast and be like, “well, this was really nice.” Like they're missing an eyeball, but like that's it, they're a really nice cat. So I, I like helping getting like animals adopted faster. I think that's really,

Interviewer 43:56

Great.

P9 44:03

I don't know important to me.

Interviewer 44:04

Yeah, definitely great. So lastly, I wanted to move on and talk about just kind of your general experience of disconnecting and your experience of switching between these workspaces.

So these questions don't particularly pertain to the images, but if you did want to toggle back to any of them, please let me know. So, I guess my first question being, are there certain times of the day or the week in which it is easier or harder for you to disconnect?

P9 44:33

I mean, I think on like Fridays, it's easier. I think that's like generally true for most people in my office is... 'cause honestly, most people in my office log off a little early on Fridays, so it's like you go and you do your weekend and you're like done for the weekend. So no one's really bothering you like after, like, Friday at 1:00 PM or 2:00 PM or something. So that's really nice. Harder days, I think... Oh, probably like Tuesdays, because those are the days that I usually have meetings with like developers or something. So there can be more going on or maybe like Monday nights I guess 'cause I'm sometimes thinking about Tuesday. So on days that I have a lot of meetings, sometimes it can be a little harder. But yeah, but my office is pretty good about not not pushing you to, like, do stuff outside of work hours. So they make it pretty easy. I think when I first started working at the company, it was a little harder for me personally

Interviewer 45:35

Mm hmm.

P9 45:40

just because I was like, anxious about making sure I got everything done. But as you settle into a workplace, it gets easier.

Interviewer 45:47

Yeah, absolutely. And can you describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the week?

P9 45:57

Do you mean like commuting? Or...okay. So usually like if I'm going into the office, like those days, I'll pack my bag the night before so I don't have to like do it the morning of 'cause I get up pretty early to get there. So, I'll pack everything but like my lunch and then in the morning I'll pack my lunch and then I'll go to the office. So usually on the days that I'm going in, we have to leave by like 6:40 AM to get...to drop my sister off at 7:30, to get to the office at 7:45.

Um and then once I'm there, I like unpack my laptop and my notebook and whatever else I have

to unpack. And then at the end of the day I pack it all up. So, I think when I'm going into the office, the packing things up and unpacking it is helpful.

Interviewer 46:49

Mm hmm.

P9 46:50

And because I'm like alternating days, most of the time, I'm still packing things up when I work from home. So that's also helpful for transitioning.

Interviewer 46:59

Yeah, definitely. And I guess how does the commute or transition make you feel?

P9 47:06

Sometimes...sometimes I don't like the like physical commute like the driving because it's pretty far and it's also in the like [location extracted]. So, it's like lately been a little bit more busy on the roads, so the commute is only getting longer. Eventually I'm planning on moving closer, so I'll have a little bit shorter for a commute consistently, but for now it's like fine. I just like have to kind of mentally prepare myself that the commute might be an hour or more on a bad day.

Interviewer 47:46

Yeah.

P9 47:49

But I mean on on like Mondays and Fridays, the commute is really short. So if I'm going to go into the office on Monday or Fridays, honestly, the best day to do it.

Interviewer 47:57

Yeah, definitely. And I guess, do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from like work mode? And if so, how?

P9 48:06

I think sometimes. I think like if the traffic isn't too bad...because if the traffic's really bad, then I just start thinking about the traffic and the fact that I'm like having to sit there for work. But if the traffic's not too bad, I think like

Interviewer 48:08

Mm hmm.

P9 48:21

that time in the car, like if it's like 30 or 40 minutes, that's like a good window of time where I can, like, listen to a book or podcast or call someone...like one of my friends and kind of like decompress a little bit. So the timing can be nice, yeah.

Interviewer 48:40

Yeah. Great and I guess how does the movement between these different spaces like working in office versus at home influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P9 48:53

I mean, I think when I'm at home, like if I wasn't so careful about like having a work desk and like leaving it when I'm not working, it would be a little harder to like mentally disconnect. But the way that I'm moving back and forth and almost doing every other day is really helpful.

Interviewer 49:16

Yeah.

P9 49:18

'Cause it's so it's almost like a big transition everyday, so I think that really helps a lot, but...

Interviewer 49:21

Yeah.

P9 49:26

I mean like one example is this week, I'm actually gonna be working from home most of the week.

Interviewer 49:30

Mm hmm.

P9 49:31

So I just in those weeks all like I try to be more mindful about, like shutting down my computer and not...not like hanging out in the office or anything.

Interviewer 49:42

Right.

P9 49:43

And like if I need to do something I don't know outside work on the computer I have like my personal laptop, so I can do it on there.

Interviewer 49:51

Yeah, absolutely. And can you expand a little bit more about what you just said about how those...going in one day working from home one day, how that's kind of like a big transition for you? Can you talk a little bit more about that?

P9 50:07

Yeah, I think it's just because I have like...the days I work from home I, I don't have to put as much time into work.

Interviewer 50:17

Mm hmm.

P9 50:17

Not necessarily the time I'm actually working, but like the commute can add like up to three hours, like if you're counting both ends.

Interviewer 50:24

Right.

P9 50:27

So it feels really different when I'm working from home because the day will feel a lot shorter since I'm not having to like drive out and drive back. So I guess, yeah, like flipping back and forth, I kind of like that 'cause, it's I don't get like it doesn't feel too monotonous 'cause, you're like, okay it's different, it's kind of a different schedule today, so it feels different.

Interviewer 50:47

Yeah, yeah, definitely. And I guess in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you are in for that day?

P9 51:06

Ummm. I mean...I think...well, I don't know. I guess it's really it kind of is for me is more based on like my company and my team and the way that we like do the work and stuff.

Interviewer 51:21

Yeah.

P9 51:23

Cause I have a lot of friends that work for companies that aren't so like respectful of boundaries.

Interviewer 51:29

Mm hmm.

P9 51:29

So I think the fact that my company is really good about that helps a lot.

Interviewer 51:32

Yeah.

P9 51:34

And they're like, they're very supportive of you, like logging off and like, like, they don't want you to be doing extra work. Like it's kind of like do what you're paid for. Like you don't, you don't have to go above and beyond that far because it's just gonna hurt you in the long run.

Interviewer 51:54

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. And so I guess what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to like fully and successfully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P9 52:05

Hmm. I think for me like having...like it doesn't matter as much like if I'm in office or not um...especially if I have like an office space in my home that like I can like shut the door to. So I think just having some sort of, I guess, literal door is helpful, to kind of like put it "out of out of sight out of mind" almost. Ideally, like personally, I would like my commute to be shorter,

but I think that's just true for a lot of people in this like [location extracted]. But yeah, I mean, if I like work from home all the time, for example, and I didn't turn off my computer and just like I don't know, hung out here around my computer a lot or something, I think it would be a lot harder.

Interviewer 53:02

Yeah, definitely. And I guess for any reasons in particular why you think that'd be harder?

P9 53:10

Just cause like if I left...like I'm thinking about like literally leaving the computer on like I could hear the emails or something, I would be tempted to like look at them when I'm not working.

Interviewer 53:15

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. OK, great. So I guess just lastly, is there anything that we did not cover that you would like to share either regarding your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or just on your general ability to disconnect from work?

P9 53:36

No. I don't think I have anything.

Interviewer 53:38

Great. And before we end, I guess just do you have any other questions for me?

P9 53:45

Ummm. No, I'm good.

Interviewer 53:46

Great. All right. Well, thank you so much for taking the time to participate today.

P9 53:51

Yeah, of course.

Interviewer stopped transcription

P10 Interview Transcript

41m 3s

Interviewer 0:03

So hello, I wanted to begin by thanking you for taking the time to participate in this interview today. To remind you, this research is focused on exploring the experiences of hybrid employees as they transition between different workspaces throughout the work week. The research aims to understand how this may impact their ability to disconnect from work and how the physical and temporal elements of these spaces may play a role in this. Before we begin, I just wanted to let you know that you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. You can also stop or pause the interview at any point. I also wanted to reassure you that your name and everything that you say during this interview will remain completely anonymous and all aspects of the photographs that you provided today will be anonymized as well. Does that all sound alright to you?

P10 0:40

Sounds great.

Interviewer 0:42

Great. And before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

P10 0:44

No, I don't.

Interviewer 0:46

Great. So to start out, can you please just tell me a bit about yourself and about your employment history?

P10 0:51

Yeah, absolutely. So I graduated from my master's program in public administration in spring 2024 and I came on full time at the company that I was interning at previously. So I was there as an intern for about a year and I'm now, I'm like 3 days past my one year mark as full time employee. So this is the main like big girl job I've had and it's only about a year into working full time. But yeah, that's most of my kind of employment history there. Anything to elaborate on?

Interviewer 1:27

Yeah, I guess, can you just...um that past internship, was that hybrid, remote, in person? What did that look like?

P10 1:34

Yep. So the internship was hybrid as well. I was on basically the same hybrid schedule that I am now which is Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday in the office, Thursday, Friday at home. But previous to that I also had another internship that was um...I was hybrid. I was there all the time in the summer and then I was fully remote in spring and fall. So it wasn't hybrid on day-to-day basis, but it did kind of switch back and forth

Interviewer 2:02

Gotcha.

P10 2:06

between that in person and remote.

Interviewer 2:08

Yeah, super interesting. And the current hybrid schedule that you're on, how is that decided?

P10 2:14

That is, I guess, like orders from company policy kind of thing.

Interviewer 2:20

Mm hmm.

P10 2:21

It is at manager discretion. Like if I need to get my car fixed or something like that, I can always reach out and that's not too big of a deal. But yeah, it's, it's company policy.

Interviewer 2:32

Yeah, great. And I guess can you tell me a little bit more about your current job role?

P10 2:37

Yeah. So I'm an economic development specialist. I work at a real estate development nonprofit in [location extracted], and we essentially work to remediate really old buildings and get them back to productive use. Within that, I do a lot of the data and policy work and a lot of mapping stuff like that, so it's a good mix of kind of digital stuff and I'm also out in the field talking to people a good amount.

Interviewer 3:06

Yeah. Amazing. So now we can move on to the image portion of the interview.

And before we began, I asked if you could please share a photo of your remote workspace and in-office workspace. So I'll go ahead and share my screen now. Let me know if you can hopefully see that all right.

P10 3:27

Yeah.

Interviewer 3:28

OK, great. So we'll start here with your remote workspace and specifically talk about your experience in this space and asking questions particularly pertaining to this. So to start out, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P10 3:42

Yeah. So this is a photo of um my desk at home. It is technically my boyfriend's monitors.

He has a fancy quantitative job and it's the two of these monitors. You can see the one on top is stacked on top which goes just as high up. Um. They are even bigger than they look in this picture, so the kind of experience of them like swallowing up the picture, you can't really see much of the desk, all that stuff it's actually fairly accurate to what it feels like to sit there. And I'll usually work on my laptop in front of them. Really only use the bottom one. But yeah, that kind of all-encompassing wall of screen is pretty representative of what my work from home space is like.

Interviewer 4:31

Yeah. And is this its own kind of dedicated room or space, or is it within a larger living space?

P10 4:38

So this is, yeah, we think of this as like our office.

Interviewer 4:41

Mm hmm.

P10 4:42

It has a little day bed, guest bed thing as well. But yeah, this is very much the dedicated working space. I don't really sit at this desk if I'm not working.

Interviewer 4:50

Yeah, great. And how do you feel working in this space?

P10 4:54

Feel pretty good. Um. It's nice to have the big screens to kind of have everything organized out and I can see everything in one place. I'm often working on things where you know, I'm looking at numbers in three different places and comparing them, so having them all in front of me is good. Um. I sometimes feel stressed because it's work and generally it is fairly easy to focus, um because there's not a lot of other distractions in the room.

Interviewer 5:24

Yeah, definitely. And can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but on a day like this, when you would work remote?

P10 5:31

Yeah, absolutely. So I'll usually wake up around 7:30-ish. I'll have breakfast and tea and kind of hang out in the living room for a little bit. Then I'll make my way to the office at probably you know 8:45 – 9. Get signed on and then I usually have a good number of meetings in a day. So I will, you know, start working whenever I can. Have a meeting. Work for a little bit longer. Have a meeting. I'm often coming in and out. I'll work...I'll do laundry and stuff at the same time. But this is very much the the home base for all that stuff.

Interviewer 6:12

Yeah, great. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working from this space?

P10 6:18

I tend to leave it.

Interviewer 6:20

Yeah.

P10 6:21

Which I guess is kind of interesting in the work from home context but, I am pretty meticulous about at the end of the day, I will close up all of my tabs and close out all of my like e-mail and stuff like that. And I think my reason for that is that when I log in the next day, I'm not just like, you know, immediately shown all the things I didn't finish yesterday. But I have like my notebook, I'll keep notes on what I have to do, and then it's a nice blank slate when I open up the next day. But I think kind of closing everything out in turn does make for a nice like it's closed it's...I will close my laptop and then I will get up and go on a walk or go have a snack or something like that.

Interviewer 7:05

Yeah. So you'll usually immediately leave the workspace?

P10 7:09

Yeah.

Interviewer 7:10

Great. And I guess how effective is all that for you?

P10 7:14

I would say fairly effective. Um. I think the biggest issue is like sometimes I will just go and continue to like be on my phone or whatever. I think it's a lot more effective when I leave the workspace and I start doing something with my hands or I go outside and go on a walk, whatever it is. But generally, I do feel like I'm pretty able to disconnect at the end of the day. Things kind of rarely have like a long tail in that way.

Interviewer 7:43

Yeah. No, that's great.

And I guess how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P10 7:50

Also stressed.

Interviewer 7:51

Yeah.

P10 7:53

Um. But...Generally...I would say these are all like terrible adjectives, but I would say maybe

like resigned. Like it's if it's like a frustrating day, it will...I will stop working at a point usually like around 4:30 or five. I don't really tend to work like over my hours.

Interviewer 8:15

Mm hmm.

P10 8:15

I will stop working at a point where it's like OK, I have done all the things that were the most pressing. Everything else, like whatever, I'll do it tomorrow. I'll figure it out then.

Interviewer 8:24

Yeah. And so you kind of described kind of what you do at the end when you leave the workspace, but I guess can you maybe expand a little bit and talk about just kind of describing the end of your workday in this space?

P10 8:37

Yeah. Umm. Yeah so...Again, I'll like finish up whatever tasks I have. I will close my tabs in order and kind of finish things as I go. If I'm like...if I start to close and I see another one that still has something to do, I'll just finish it up. Um. I will close all of that. I will make my To Do List for the next day. Um. I will unplug my laptop, and, you know, push in the chair and everything like that. And then again like leave and start doing something else.

Interviewer 9:18

Great. And I guess going into that. So how exactly do you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P10 9:25

Yeah. So one wrinkle that has been a little bit more interesting recently is we're fostering a cat and we've been fostering the cat in this space.

Interviewer 9:39

Gotcha.

P10 9:40

So that has kind of blurred the lines for me a little bit more where I do find myself less willing to like go back in and hang out with the cat after I have been working in the space. For that, I do think I generally transition again kind of on my phone.

Interviewer 9:59

Mm hmm.

P10 9:59

Like I will start texting people back or I'll go on Instagram and scroll or whatever it is, and really use like distraction as the point of demarcation. Um. Where I've been telling myself and like making myself focus for the whole day,

Interviewer 10:10

Yeah.

P10 10:16

it's kind of the fact that I'm able to pick up my phone and just like turn my brain off that makes the end of the day clear regardless of whether I'm in the space or not.

Interviewer 10:22

Yeah. Yeah. No, that's great. And I guess this next question, if there's anything else to add to that, but I guess how do you mentally disconnect from work?

P10 10:39

I think um it's...Unless I still have those kind of like lingering...if there's like a frustration or something, it's not especially hard for me for that reason that I said earlier, like I'm trying to focus all day.

Interviewer 10:50

Mm hmm.

Yeah.

P10 10:54

I have ADHD and so like I think it's, that kind of informs it as well where...I...it is a much more active thing for me to be trying to think about work than it is for me to be trying not to think about work, and I think the most kind of operative thing I do for that besides like okay, little like, I'm letting

Interviewer 11:08

Yeah.

P10 11:14

go to whatever is bothering me, is the screenshot I sent of the like...I have my phone to automatically stop sending me any notifications from teams or outlook at 5:15. So it's like anything will be finished up by that point. Anything that happens past it like I will deal with it the next day. That is like my mechanism for kind of removing myself from that mindset.

Interviewer 11:32

Yeah.

Yeah, that's awesome.

And I guess what objects or arrangements, if any, do you utilize in this space to maintain that separation between your work and home life?

P10 11:46

Yeah, I mean, I do um...I think I'm pretty specific about like closing up my notebook and like I will, you know, cap my pen and put it in the page I'm in and close that and like put it to the corner.

Interviewer 11:54

Mm hmm.

P10 12:02

And same with my laptop. Like I never leave my laptop open. I always will close it, and that's like a thing. I think that if I was going to like walk by and see the space with my notebook open my laptop open, it would be stressful again. So I think that is kind of the visual signal for me of like my laptop's closed. My phone is on do don't disturb. My notebook is closed. Like that is the "I am off for the day" thing.

Interviewer 12:29

Yeah, great. And lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P10 12:38

Um. I think it can be harder to focus like, especially during meetings and stuff like that, just because it is less, you know, in person collaborative I...if I have my camera off, I'm not gonna be like nodding and, you know, actively listening and stuff like that. But I think it's also to, easy for me to hyper focus on the other things, where I if I'm working on like a data project or something I can find myself like not drinking enough water or eating enough

Interviewer 13:00

Mm hmm.

P10 13:07

food because there is no outside distraction. I'm just doing exactly what I'm doing and um there's less to kind of pull me away from it.

Interviewer 13:16

Yeah, definitely. Great. So now moving on, we'll go to the second slide here that has your in-office workspace and now focusing more on your experience in this space. Um. So similar to last time, can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P10 13:32

Yeah. So this is my office cubicle. I am in kind of a little island with some of my other team. You can see the other ones that are kind of abutting in the corner there and this picture obviously does not have my laptop. It was taken I think while I was getting ready to go. I have a couple little things. I have like a little reference map. I have some stuff up for my own, like just kind of a little idea chart for a project I'm working on. I have a caricature of myself and my partner that was made at a company event that we had. But yeah, I...you can see also the notebook that I'm talking about there where I keep all my To Do List and stuff like that. But this is uh...it's a pretty like wide space to spread out and I tend to use most of it when it comes to having my laptop out, my notebook, I have a little whiteboard where I keep some other To Do List stuff.

Interviewer 14:27

Yeah. Awesome. And how do you feel working in this space?

P10 14:31

Umm. I think I feel better working in this space just because there's kind of the inherent productivity of like being in the office like it's, I think it's just a mental thing of like well, I'm in here, like of course I'm trying to work.

Interviewer 14:43

Mm hmm.

P10 14:48

I think I give myself a little bit less...I think I give myself a little bit more slack when it comes to getting briefly distracted by other things, whatever it is. But yeah, I generally feel pretty productive, also stressed often, because again, work. Pretty consistent across all this. Definitely more distracted than at home.

Interviewer 15:14

And can you expand on those distractions? What those are? What they look like?

P10 15:18

Yeah, that would be, you know, people coming over to ask questions. I manage 2 interns actively, so they're coming over to, you know, say hi and get clarification on things. My manager sits directly to the left of me, so she'll pop up every now and then and ask me things. There's, you know, people talking behind me in the office that like, I actually kind of like that part. I'm like, this is a podcast. But there's always, like other things to overhear. And you know, I think I'm a lot more consistent with when I have lunch, for example, because I see everyone starting to mobilize toward the lunch table at noon. And I'm like, okay well, I should probably go do that too.

Interviewer 15:59

Great. And now can you tell me about how you spend a typical working day, but on a day like this when you would go into office?

P10 16:06

Yeah, so similar deal. I'll wake up around like 6:30 for this, have breakfast, have some tea. Then I have, like, a twentyish minute commute in, so I'll usually be in by around 8:30. Um and... I will start off by going through all of my To Do List stuff from the day before. Um. And kind of transferring around to that whiteboard I mentioned, like that's where I keep like the the most pressing stuff. Um. And that is something I use only when I'm in the office versus at home. I will go around the office and chat with anyone that I need to catch up with on specific things, and then I'll usually sit down and start working pretty, you know, like not specifically, but in a pretty focused way until like noonish. I'll go grab lunch with the rest of my coworkers. I usually pack, just at our lunch table. We'll chat for about an hour and then I'll get back to it and work on whatever else I can. Kind of finish things up for the day, and then I'll usually head out around 4:30 and, yeah, get back home by, like, five ish.

Interviewer 17:16

Yeah. Amazing. And how do you signal the end of a workday when working in this space?

P10 17:21

Yeah. So I do the same thing with closing all my tabs and e-mail and all that. I'll also, you know, physically put away my laptop in the backpack, all of that. Um I... if I'm not coming in the next day. So for example on Wednesdays when I won't be in the next time until the next Monday, I will switch off the like battery for the keyboard and mouse that you see there. That's like a, make sure those are off for the weekend. And then otherwise again, it's just it's physically leaving the place and just being in my car on the way home. I like, do not ever work once I get home. That's like a very hard line for me. So it is just the kind of physically leaving the space again.

Interviewer 18:09

Yeah, great.

And how effective I guess is all that for you?

P10 18:15

I would say pretty effective. I think I tend to carry more of the residual stress home on days that I work in the office. Like I'll find myself more often coming home with like a headache or something on days that I'm in. I...it might just be that I'm drinking less water, it

Interviewer 18:22

Yeah.

P10 18:30

might be like you know any manner of things. But I'm almost never still thinking about a specific project by the time I get home, but I'm often kind of feeling the like ugh I've just been on for the whole day more than I do when I'm working from home.

Interviewer 18:48

Right. Yeah, definitely. And does that kind of being on make you feel a certain way fatigue wise, have you found?

P10 18:57

Yeah it does. It definitely makes me feel more fatigued. I feel like I have to rest for a lot longer on days when I'm in the office afterwards. Like I said, I'll often get like a headache or just feel very tired and like when I do get home, I don't want to do any of the rest of like I don't like, bring myself to make dinner or whatever, but yeah.

Interviewer 19:20

Yeah, definitely. And I guess how would you describe your mindset at the end of the workday?

P10 19:28

I think it is a little bit different than when I'm working from home because it's a little bit more strategic for when I'm trying to be home. I find that it's very easy for me to do just like one more

thing, one more thing and then suddenly it's 5. So, I try to be pretty strategic about like I will set kind of a time for myself and then try and get done as much as I can before that time. But it's a little bit less like uh resigned to "whatever I'm not gonna get anything done today" and more like "I'm making the decision to push these projects to tomorrow" um because I know that I need to get home or else it's gonna drag on forever.

Interviewer 20:07

Yeah, definitely. And so you kind of already described the end of your workday in this space. Um. So could you talk about how you transition from work mode into your personal time in this space?

P10 20:19

Yeah. So again, a lot of it is kind of the the physically leaving side of things like once I walk out the building, I'll have that 20 ish minute drive home to listen to music. I often put on a podcast and similar to the being on my phone thing I will just kind of turn my brain off a little bit and stop trying to like actively make myself think about things. So yeah, I would say that's still my phone in a way. It's just like I'm driving so, so it's music or podcast is the audio element, but still kind of using that as a tool.

Interviewer 20:53

Yeah, definitely.

And that shutting off of your brain is that kind of how you mentally disconnect from work? Is there anything else you do there on those days?

P10 21:02

I will try to like take a walk whenever I can, just like physically move my body. I have good friends that are neighbors, so they're...we'll...I'll go with them sometimes. But I don't have any like very specific routine when it comes to that. It's sort of just the the pattern of rest.

Interviewer 21:20

Yeah, definitely.

And I guess lastly, what challenges, if any, do you experience when working in this space?

P10 21:27

Yeah. I think the biggest one is distraction and kind of like prioritizing my tasks. That it's a lot harder to work on the things that are longer range for me when I'm in the office, it's a lot more like I'm gonna do this thing and then this thing and then this thing. Whereas from home I think I'm more able to sit down and like really strategize something out.

Interviewer 21:49

Yeah.

P10 21:51

But yeah, then just like the distraction stuff in general.

Interviewer 21:54

Yeah, definitely. Okay great. So now we can move on to this third, third slide here where I kind of put your remote workspace and office workspace photos side by side because I kind of wanted to talk about comparing these two workspaces and you've already done a great job along the way of kind of pointing out things in in both spaces. So, I guess my first question and as I mentioned, you've already talked a bit about this so you can pick something to expand on or add on to anything you've already talked about, but how does your in-office workspace compare to your remote workspace?

P10 22:28

It's definitely a lot bigger.

Interviewer 22:31

Mhmm.

P10 22:31

I have a lot more room to spread out. My monitors are actually smaller, but I yeah, I only really use that much of the the other one anyway...the remote one. It's a lot more collaborative in terms of teamwork and...Yeah, a little bit more like holistic and fast moving when it comes to like specific tasks versus the remote one is more long range and strategic.

Interviewer 23:00

Yeah, definitely. And how would you describe your boundaries in your in-office workspace compared to your remote workspace?

P10 23:07

Yeah, that's really interesting. I think remote, the number one boundary that I have to actually like negotiate on a day-to-day basis is just if someone has asked me to do something like do I have time or do I not? And if someone's sending me a teams message, I can choose to delay my response to that to kind of figure out either like go check my priorities list that I'm making for myself, or just have a minute to kind of take a beat and decide. And I am able to kind of protect the boundaries of my own priorities a little bit better. Versus in the office, if someone comes over and ask me for something, I, I kind of have to make that slit decision and I feel like I tend to default to "yeah, sure, I can help with whatever this is." So that's probably the number one thing that comes up.

Interviewer 23:55

Yeah, definitely. And how does your ability to disconnect from work on the days when in the office compare to the days when working from home?

P10 24:03

I think it's...That's interesting. I think um mentally, it is easier to disconnect on the days that I'm in the office because it's just like, again, it's such a different thing like...I'm it's like...okay well, I'm finally home. I can like watch TV or I can eat a snack or I can, like, do things on my own time. I can change into like PJS if I wanted to. But physically, I think it's actually harder when I'm in the office because it's just like I tend to come home more physically tired. So, I will have

like more kind of mental hang on time from the remote work, but I'll have more physical hang on time from the in-office work.

Interviewer 24:45

Yeah, definitely. So I guess in general would you say, do you feel it's easier or harder to detach from work in the in-office workspace compared to the remote workspace? Or is it the same kind of?

P10 24:58

Yeah, I would say. Detaching from work, specifically, rather than just like, oh, it's like, you know, fatigue or whatever, I I would say it's easier to detach umm in-office.

Interviewer 25:11

Yeah. For any particular reason?

P10 25:15

I think just the sense of like...I don't literally leave my laptop in the office like I take it home with me, but the sense that, like everything, is packed away and it would take like a real, you know, emergency for me to have to bring everything out again. Like it's just like my day is done. I'm home. I'm in a different place like...this particular day is over.

Interviewer 25:39

Yeah, definitely. And I guess of the two pictures you shared here, which feels more like a workplace to you?

P10 25:47

Definitely the the right. Um the cubicle. It's just a cubicle. It's the most workspace thing you can have.

Interviewer 25:53

Yeah, I was gonna say, is there anything else besides just like the elements of it or how it makes you feel?

P10 26:00

I think part of it is like a slightly...just like the associations I already have built up with workspace. Like if someone were, you know, an online freelancer or something, there's absolutely nothing wrong with the workspace looking like the left, and I'm sure there's many, many people that that is the case. But when I think of workspace, I think of something more officey and corporate to start with. So I think I tend to learn more toward the the cubicle, but I mean both make me feel productive. Like both of these images

Interviewer 26:28

Yeah. Yeah.

P10 26:32

have good associations with like getting tasks done.

Interviewer 26:36

Definitely. All right. So lastly, we can move on to the last slide here where I asked if you can please share an image of either a space or object that helps you disconnect from work and you shared this screenshot. So can you just tell me a bit about this photo?

P10 26:57

Yeah. This is just like an automation that I have set on my phone to, at a specific time, it doesn't show it on here, but it's 5:15. It automatically will stop giving me notifications from teams and outlook. So no emails, no messages, none of that. It will still give me, like my friends texting me and stuff like it's not completely off. But my reasoning for that is like I kind of alluded to this earlier, but I think I'm not super naturally suited to work life balance. I think I'm much more sporadic of like there are times I don't wanna do anything and there's times where like it's impossible to get myself to stop working on a problem. I'm also just very problem solving oriented, so like when I see something like a notification come up, I want to just immediately deal with it before I forget. So this is like a tool that I very much use to help myself not do that is like if I don't even see the notification come through, I'm not gonna feel like I have to deal with it. So rather than trying to, you know, reverse engineer my own

Interviewer 27:56

Right.

P10 28:01

mind so that I don't feel like I have to just deal with every issue right away, it's just like not encountering the problem to start with and kind of, I guess, like sheltering myself from that and building in the literally automatic work life balance.

Interviewer 28:15

Yeah, definitely. And I guess given the prompt out of anything you could have shared, why did you choose this in particular?

P10 28:23

I think it's because it's the closest thing I have to a routine with disconnection that it feels like every day. Like there's a variety of objects that I was thinking about like from as general as like my car or like shoes to go on a walk or, you know, like TV remote or something. It feels like all of them were kind of structured around this idea of like this is what I do after work is done rather than like telling myself like, OK, this is when it's over.

Interviewer 29:02

Yeah.

P10 29:02

So I chose this as like the most specific demarcation point because I could be doing the other things I think I would still be kind of thinking about work if I had these notifications coming through. So this is like the end all be all for that.

Interviewer 29:12

Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And besides, all of that, does this hold any other meaning for you?

P10 29:20

I would say not specifically. I try to be pretty available when people wanna text me, and so it's like I wouldn't want to go on just like do not disturb because I'd want to see if my friends were saying something.

Interviewer 29:32

Yeah.

P10 29:33

Um. Also tells me I'm probably on my phone a little bit too much in the first place if it's like I will always see these emails coming through.

Interviewer 29:37

Mm hmm.

P10 29:40

But yeah, otherwise no. No specific meaning.

Interviewer 29:43

Yeah, great. And so I, I mean, you've already kind of described how this helps you, but is there anything else on how exactly this helps you mentally disconnect from work or anything you want to expand on?

P10 29:57

I think um...Yeah, I think one kind of remaining element of it, like I talked about the automatic nature of this, but I think that's very useful for my own brain because there is also kind of an associated level of like guilt, if I'm not doing something, I'm very much like teacher's pet type and I've been...I'm only I've been like working real world proper for like a year. I'm still kind of used to that homework mentality of like there's always something you could be doing. Um. So this is like...I think having it be automatic helps me think of it as neutral, where it's like I'm not...If I were to tell someone like, oh, sorry, I didn't see your e-mail, the reasoning wouldn't be "yeah, I saw your e-mail and I decided I didn't want to respond to it." Like that feels bad to me still. So it's this idea of like is just an automatic, "sorry I didn't see your e-mail, my phone does not give me emails past 5:15." It's my phone's doing it, it's not even me. Like that kind of thing.

Interviewer 30:56

Yeah.

P10 30:57

So I think that neutrality is something that's important to me.

Interviewer 31:00

Yeah, absolutely. And I guess that this...Um... the do not disturb feature that you use here and its ability to help you disconnect from work, does that depend on the days that you're working from home or in the office? Is it effective both ways?

P10 31:17

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's effective both ways and if anything, I think it's a little bit less effective on the days that I am working from home because I'm sometimes like I will wrap up like I said, like at 4:30 or whatever, this doesn't go until 5:15. I have it set that way just so I don't have to think about it like I could always just turn it on at 4:30 when I'm done or something. But there's times that something slips through the crack. Like I'll be like trying to disconnect at 4:45 and then like this won't be on yet and something will come through and I'll be like "uh, okay this is annoying," but yeah.

Interviewer 31:51

Yeah, definitely. OK, great. So lastly, I wanted to talk about just again your general experience of disconnecting from work as well as kind of switching between these different...these different workspaces during the work week.

P10 32:04

Yeah.

Interviewer 32:05

So these questions don't really have to do specifically with any of the photos, but if you did want to relate to them, talk about them, let me know. I can always toggle back to them. But I guess to start out, are there certain times of either the day or week in which it is easier or harder for you to disconnect?

P10 32:25

Yeah, that's interesting. I think it is harder for me to disconnect in that kind of physical sense that I mentioned on Mondays and Tuesdays. It's the like first days of the week that I take my meds and it tends to just like kind of throw me off mentally a little bit. But aside from that, like day of the week wise like it's probably easiest on Friday because it's like I don't...it's the same thing I mentioned earlier, like I'm trying to get myself to do this in the first place. I just have to stop doing that. Um...But....Yeah I, I think that's most of it. It can also be harder when I'm working from home like in the mornings to get myself on in the first place versus like, well, I have to be in at a certain point, like I'm going to be in my car 20 minutes before that anyway. It's more of a mental preparation versus just walking into the room.

Interviewer 33:20

Yeah, definitely. And I guess...That...talking about that experience and kind of the reconnecting to work aspect, can you expand a little bit about that and the experience in both spaces?

P10 33:32

Yeah. So like the reconnecting being switching between or just like starting again each morning?

Interviewer 33:37

Starting again each morning.

P10 33:40

Yeah, I think it is harder in the remote workspace because again, there's less of a demarcation point and it's a little bit more like, well, no one's making me do anything to start with. It's just purely self-motivated. Whereas like I mentioned, with the kind of going through the day thing in the office like often I'll come in and there's like immediately things I have to start doing.

Interviewer 34:03

Right.

P10 34:04

So that does kind of launch me in a little bit more. So yeah, I think it is harder in the remote space to kind of reconnect in that way.

Interviewer 34:12

Yeah, definitely. And now can you describe how you typically move between different workspaces during the work week?

P10 34:19

Yeah. So, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday I'm always, always...I'm almost always working in the office. Thursday and Friday I'm almost always working from home. The exception to that is I'm often also out on-site visits, so sometimes any day of the week it could be like a Monday. It could be Friday. I'll be out either like at a partial day or full day event. So that will sometimes like change things a little bit. But when it's just like a regular Wednesday into regular Thursday um I...think I definitely try and start like strategically picking up the longer range projects on Thursday mornings because I know I've just been kind of like running around doing stuff for Monday to Wednesday. So it's like I will do longer range stuff Thursday and Friday and then the inverse is true on Mondays, where the first thing I'll do is like go through my flagged emails and kind of check like, what did I maybe miss that is like of import to respond to.

Interviewer 35:20

Right, definitely. And so earlier you mentioned that you have about a 20 minute commute the days that you go into office. How does that commute make you feel?

P10 35:31

Yeah. It's not that bad as commutes go, but still it's, I would say...More, it's like neutral to frustrating. I occasionally will have a nice time driving it if I'm listening to a really good song or podcast or something, but generally when I'm driving home it's like I get stuck at a light and I'm just like annoyed by everything.

Interviewer 35:46

Right.

P10 35:55

But yeah, it's it's never like too strong of an emotion.

Interviewer 35:59

Yeah, definitely. And do you ever feel like your commute helps you switch off from work mode?

P10 36:05

I do think that's true, yeah. I think especially just like the external input and distraction and all that like it may be it's own annoyance in some way, but like when I get home, it's like I'm done thinking about all of that.

Interviewer 36:19

Yeah. And do you think like the actual, not the actual disconnect, but like it's solidified then when you get home, not like during the transitionary period?

P10 36:26

Yes. Yeah, I think that's true. I feel like I'm not like completely done with it until I'm home.

Interviewer 36:32

Yeah, great. Um. And how does the movement between these different spaces during the work week influence your ability to disconnect from work?

P10 36:43

Yeah I think um...I think it does add a little bit of variety that actually does help me disconnect like even though there's not a consistent routine, I get to kind of try different things throughout the week...and um like on Mondays and Tuesdays and Wednesdays, whatever, like I can know ahead of time like, OK, I'm probably gonna need a little more time to drink enough water and eat enough food and like, you know, let myself rest. Whereas Thursdays and Fridays I can know that I can put a little bit more time and effort into the work itself because I have a little bit more to give in the first place.

Interviewer 37:24

Yeah, definitely. And I guess in your experience, how does your ability to disconnect from work depend on the workspace that you're in for that day?

P10 37:33

Yeah. I think it depends mostly on like the type of work I'm able to get done and so I guess I'd not hit on that specifically before, but like I mentioned, there is kind of this dichotomy for me of like the the short tasks versus the longer range projects. I think I'm more able to like emotionally disconnect from the longer range projects, but also I think it's easier to leave the short range tasks like...like I'm not remembering them at all. I'm not, not feeling like frustrated by them at all, whereas sometimes the long range stuff I'm not like frustrated by it, but I am still kind of turning the projects over in my head a little bit throughout the rest of the day.

Interviewer 38:15

Yeah, yeah, definitely. And this is something that you actually mentioned earlier, but I've been reflecting on. When you mentioned when you're in-office and you kind of have this feeling of, you know, "always being on" or you know people working around you. Can you expand on that a little bit?

P10 38:33

Yeah. I think I'm a very expressive person, naturally, and so I'm always like I have to kind of think a little bit more about just like how I'm physically holding my face when I'm in the office and I'm, you know, my, my listening face doesn't have to just be like slack jawed into like what are they saying right now into sad or happy whatever it is. It has to be like consistent. So, I am like physically thinking about the way I'm holding myself and my body, and that really contributes to being on, but also it's a more kind of mental, social, emotional thing of like, how am I responding to people? Where am I able to like quickly respond and kind of improvise situations and all of that is a little bit more like difficult in the office. There's just less time to do it.

Interviewer 39:27

Right, definitely. And I guess what would your ideal arrangements both in and out of the office be to kind of successfully disconnect from work at the end of every day?

P10 39:37

Yeah, I think ideally, I would always have the time and energy to like, go on a walk or a run or something and like, just do a complete reset of my body. I think even though like mentally letting go of what was happening is useful, it is not as useful if I'm basically doing the same stuff. Like if I'm, I'm on my laptop all day at work and then I get home and I'm like looking on my laptop for Facebook marketplace stuff like it's still the same posture. It's still the same like eye movements and stuff. So, I think ideally it would be like I'm able to move a little bit more at the end of every day.

Interviewer 40:18

Yeah, definitely. Great. So I guess lastly, is there just anything that we did not cover that you'd like to share regarding either your experience as a hybrid worker transitioning between workspaces or just on your general ability to disconnect from work?

P10 40:34

I don't think so. Yeah, nothing comes to mind.

Interviewer 40:36

Yeah, okay great. Before we end, do you just have any last-minute questions for me?

P10 40:42

No, this is super interesting. I'm excited to see where this goes.

Interviewer 40:46

Yeah, definitely. OK, great. Well, thank you so much for your time.

P10 40:50

Of course. Have a great rest of your day.

Interviewer 40:52

Thanks, you too.

P10 40:54

Bye.

Interviewer 40:55

Bye.