

Thanks to Becca of Escape The City, a career transition organisation based in London, for her generous thoughts and words.

“My identity is so bound up in work, it actually makes it quite an emotional place to be, I'm easily thrown in the work place because it's so.. and I attribute that to being so closely tied to my sense of worth and my sense of identity, who I am and what I, what I am worth to the world, so if something's going wrong I'm really feeling it, and if something's going well I'm also really feeling it.”

“I've always worked sort of harder than what is healthy, and it's sort of exhausting. And I've never known how to break that. And I don't know what the drive is, I've never known what the drive is, particularly, and the routine holds it together, somehow, I can fall off completely, do nothing, (I'm kind of a creature of extremes) and then feel really guilty, and then work way too hard to overcompensate. So routine sort of holds everything in balance, umm and I'm not someone who particularly likes to work from home, I prefer to go into the office. I don't really like my day to be thrown too much, because I can just fall into it and feel comfortable, and then come out of it at the end of the day. That said, I'm not really a creature of habit - I don't identify as a creature of habit, clearly I am a bit by that - but I, I don't like too much familiarity - I like being in new places, new countries, new cities on my own, and throwing myself into that - it's more about being a creature of extremes and needing something that's going to anchor me, umm, and yeah leaning on routine a lot for doing that, to keep me kind of on track, and actually not going too far in either direction.”

“The classic for me (that I hear of) is a, doing a presentation, spending hours on a power point, that you do for your boss because your boss tells you that you have to do it, but, actually, it never gets seen, it never gets presented, and that happens all the time, that you're literally just pushing papers around, and you're getting paid to do it. and I mean apart from indicating horrible bloating in the system, and questioning of why is this working, why is there money for anyone to do that? - and they're probably earning quite a lot of money to do that.”

Thanks to Elizabeth, a director arts producer based in London, for her generous thoughts and words.

"It's a huge part of people's identity, and I think it's a part of my identity you know, I really feel that if people were to say, you know, "what do you do?", you know I'd never say I don't work - the thought of it, you know is sort of.. but I realise that's probl- , you know, I see how I've got to that place and I think it's problematic, you know we all - I spent years working like a bloody maniac! too much! you know and was - it's insane - why do we have to do that when there's not enough - you know there's plenty of work, if we could just employ more people we could all work a little bit, and have more fun playing, you know, but the economy isn't made like that is it... because we live in such a consumerist, capitalist sort of lockjam, that it can't be like that."

Thanks to Kelin who works at Aldgate Coffee House, for her generous thoughts and words.

Kelin : "I enjoy the feeling of making the other looked after, you know, and welcome, and, it's not much but it's, I think it makes a little difference to them, to their day. Because usually, well if I talk about here, there are people that come three, four times a week, there are people that come Monday to Friday. it's a bit of a, it's kind of a relationship let's say...."

Me : "It's a type of community, right? ... but do you think it's enough of a form of community? it is a form of community, and it's the sort of community you find in London, but in a way, ha, compared to what's possible in human relationships it's quite - "

Kelin : "Yeah there is a big gap there"

Me : "There's a distance, right?"

Kelin: "There is a distance, yes, because somehow there is a boundary, where you will never cross that boundary, you know, there is a limit for the communication I'm having with them every day, I don't go over that, d'you know? no-one says I can't go, but somehow I feel I shouldn't go over that, you know so it's the same, it's the same kind of communication every day kind of - yeah I could say that."

Me : What's your relationship with being hardworking?

Kelin : I don't know, it makes me feel good.

Thanks to Isidora, a print maker, who also works at Aldgate Coffee House, for her generous thoughts and words.

Isidora : "It's like you are in love, and you want to spend time with the one with whom you are in love, that's the case. Ok maybe print making is not in love with me.. but still.. she is good to me"

Me : "and are you good to her?"

Isidora : "I'm trying"

Thanks to Dan, Manager of The Small Axe, a non profit communications company based in Whitechapel, for his generous thoughts and words.

"I don't feel any great sort of pride in the fact that... I mean obviously I've had to work hard to get here but , you know, you start something and then it becomes part of what you're doing, and then it becomes a habit almost... I mean other people work harder in other jobs for less reward, so I don't feel any particular great pride in the idea that I'm a hard worker, I mean if it's something that comes naturally to me I don't see why I feel particular pride in it anyway. But also I don't think I am actually a very hard worker - I think it's something I've learnt a bit, from necessity actually, rather than it being... I mean I think I'm actually quite a lazy person, so it's good - I appreciate I've learnt to force myself. I mean the thing is that hard work - it's a constant battle with yourself that's the thing.. It's only work if it requires effort, and if it requires effort to make yourself do something it's because you don't want to do it, right? or, part of you doesn't want to do it. So it's just a part of that ongoing internal struggle you could say, in order to say, well, I've got to do this thing even though I don't want to do it, or it's unpleasant, or there's no prospect of reward, or whatever, you know, that's the constant thing you need to keep doing is pushing yourself in order to work hard"