

Duration: 0:52:16

Date: 17/08/2015

START AUDIO

Respondent: ...on a computer. And [simply on 0:00:02] the iPhone. So before I had to go to Evernote. I don't know if you know Evernote?

Interviewer: Yes, yes, I'm a big user of Evernote, yes.

Respondent: To type my diaries when they were longer and then put them in Momento. But now I do it all in Day One. And I kind of record everything in it.

Interviewer: Yes. Can you say about, sort of, how often and when do you write? And how do you go about keeping a diary?

Respondent: How often? I write in my diary several times a day.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Sometimes just three times, other times it can be fifteen times a day. I don't do it when things happen at the moment, so I try

to enjoy and absorb the moments first. Then either when I get home, or on the way when I'm travelling in the car or on the bus, I start writing. And for longer diaries I wait until I have something more valuable to type on my computer.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm, okay, yes. And is there any sort of things in particular you are trying to record or is it just what happens in the everyday? What are you trying to record?

Respondent: Well I have both Evernotes and Day One. Day One I use for my personal experiences, what I did in a day. Evernote I use for my more things that aren't related to what I have done that day. So I kind of record everything. Sometimes when I take a shower for instance I even write that. Not always of course but sometimes. And then the most important things are of course the biggest occasions and feelings. I try to capture the feelings of the moments, and I find it easier to remember when you get into the detail of things.

Interviewer: Yes. And just in terms of Momento, could you say a little bit about how you were using that? I know that has some sort of more automatic features, how are you using that for the..?

Respondent: Yes, I was a bit Twitter fan at the time so I tweeted a lot. So I picked Momento because it was very easy to get all the tweets imported into my diary.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: And tweets are just a part of the diary mostly. I found that very interesting. But I've stopped tweeting for about a year and a half and since then I've been thinking about moving to Momento- to Day One and now I'm using Day One instead.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: So I tweeted about all kinds of things, the daily things. Also opinions and things in the news. And it all went automatically into my diary, even the mentions.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And what other data was there in Momento? Was it just for your tweets or were you writing a diary in there as well? Were there photographs or anything or..?

Respondent: Also just normal diaries. Several entries a day, of greetings, texts, locations, Uber Imports, Foursquare.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Instagram, at the time, yes.

Interviewer: And so in that sense, was Momento kind of like the main place you were doing diary-keeping? Or were you still using

Evernote at that time as well? I'm just trying to get an idea of what, you know, what [Crosstalk 0:03:28].

Respondent: No, Momento was the main place for everything that happens in my life.

Interviewer: Right, yes.

Respondent: For me personally.

Interviewer: Okay. So why have you stopped using Momento now then?

Respondent: Because it doesn't offer sync solutions.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Which they have promised since 2012.

Interviewer: Right, yes.

Respondent: And I really kind of need it. So I need to switch to Day One and I am very happy because it's real easier to write on a computer.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. So have you stopped recording some of those other [streamings 0:03:58]? You know, like you talked about doing Instagram and tweets and things like that. Have you stopped recording them?

Respondent: I stopped recording them also because I don't use any of them anymore.

Interviewer: Right, okay.

Respondent: So I don't have an Instagram account anymore, no more Twitter. So I don't really miss the ____ [0:04:15] anymore.

Interviewer: Okay, cool. So in terms of Day One as well, could you just say a little bit- are you including photographs in that still? Things like the weather? What other sort of detail is there in Day One apart from what you write?

Respondent: Especially photographs. Since Day One I use more photographs than in Memento because it's more attractive to do so. The content looks more beautiful when you take photos in Day One than when you do it in Memento.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm.

Respondent: And I also keep my weather, automatic locations, the songs I play. At the moment a variety of things so it's far more interesting.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. So you said you had the songs. How are they incorporated into Day One? Do they come in automatically or do you have to write them or..?

Respondent: Well there's a setting in Day One where you can choose to automatically include the song you are playing. And I enabled the option because I think it's very interesting. A song can keep strong memories too.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: And all these little things like the weather, your location can help you relive the moments better.

Interviewer: Mmm, mmm. And is there any particular way in which you organise- you said you do several entries a day, are they editing the same entry or is it a new entry each time and do you..?

Respondent: A new entry every time, yes.

Interviewer: Okay, and so for each day then you have a number of different entries?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: And are there photographs with each of them? Do you use many things like tags and things? I'm just sort of thinking, how is it overall? And coding as well, things like Evernote and Momento, how is that all organised? Do you have somewhere you store that?

Respondent: Excuse me, what's the question?

Interviewer: Within Day One itself, how is it organised? And do you have things like tags? And you said you used things like Momento and you use Evernote as well, so how is it organised all of those things?

Respondent: Well I stopped using texts for about two months because I found it too complicated. I'm kind of over-organised sometimes. So when I make a ____ [0:06:24] [writing] it's too complicated to keep adding text for everything I write about. So I just stopped doing that and I find the Day One search to be much better than the one in Momento. I find the use of texts less interesting right now.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: I did used to keep a lot so I have about 250 texts I used in Momento.

Interviewer: Right, yes, okay. Again, yes, is there any of the records you had in Momento- now that you've stopped using the app, do you still have the app on your phone or have you-

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Moved them somewhere else? I mean, even though you're not recording in there are you still looking back at Momento?

Respondent: I imported all the notes from Momento to Day One.

Interviewer: Okay, great.

Respondent: Because I found that very important. I would have never made the switch if I couldn't get all the info into my new diary.

Interviewer: Yes, yes, absolutely.

Respondent: I want it all together but yes, I kept Momento on my phone so it's still there. I can still look back. The photos that are in Momento can't be in Day One.

Interviewer: Ah, I see, okay.

Respondent: So I kind of keep it double just in case I won't lose any data.

Interviewer: Did you say you've got photographs, you've got the writing, and some other details of location as well. I mean how much of it for you is about writing and how much of it is about those other things as well? I mean how important is the writing to you?

Respondent: How do you mean exactly?

Interviewer: So within that diary you have lots of different things. You have the things that you've written about, and then you have some photographs and you have other sort of data. For you, how important is the writing? Is that the main way that you remember or is it just a little bit of an annotation or a little bit to help you with the other things?

Respondent: No, it's the main thing. The writing is the main thing. I like to write. I kind of write a lot. So the photos are actually the extra.

Interviewer: Right, okay.

Respondent: But it's also something I do sometimes for the aesthetics of things. Just because it looks more beautiful with a photo. So I

kind of edit the photo to make it more beautiful but the text is definitely the most important part.

Interviewer: Yes. And then the other things like the location and the weather, what do they add do you think?

Respondent: Well I haven't had much experience of it because it wasn't part- in Momento.

Interviewer: Right.

Respondent: I think it's a very important part of it so I enabled all of these features. Because these are little things that help you remember it more clearly. It's also nice to have a look back. You have maps in Day One so you can see all the entries on a map, where you took them. So I'm very pleased to see how it works out in the future and how it will benefit the writing and remembering.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. And how much time would you say you spend each day in sort of looking at and writing in your journal? I mean how much time and effort is it?

Respondent: It depends. Sometimes that can be ten minutes.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: But lately I think it's more like an hour maybe.

Interviewer: And is that..?

Respondent: So it's very time-consuming.

Interviewer: Yes. And that's throughout the day or more so at the end of the day?

Respondent: Right now I don't have a job.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: So right now it's more during the day. And the times when I had a job it was more at the end of the day.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: I prefer it in short pieces every time, not too long after it happens, because first, you remember things more and second, it's just easier to write. Because the more I have to write, the less I want to write.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: I start to get a bit lazy when I have to write too much so it kind of loses a lot of detail and I'm not so motivated to write.

Interviewer: Yes. So how much do you sort of look back at things within the app? How often would you say that you look back at a past entry?

Respondent: Well not often. But I have to say that's the reason I keep a diary because it always can be interesting to look backwards a bit later. I have to admit I don't do it often. Sometimes I think it's a waste of time to write all this down, but it's not because when I do I always remember this is why I do it, it's very interesting.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. What would make you look back? What sort of reason or occasion would you have to look back at in your diary?

Respondent: Well it just depends. Mostly I just go one year back so today one year back.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: I always find it very interesting, what did I do last year?

Interviewer: Yes, okay. And is that something you get notifications about? Or is it something that you choose to go in and look at yourself?

Respondent: Yes, I choose to go in and look at it myself, yes.

Interviewer: Yes. And how do you do that then? Do you go back to that particular day or do you search something like a place you've been or people you've seen? How do you actually navigate things when you look back?

Respondent: Mostly I just go to the calendar section of the app and switch back one year. Then I pick the day and I just read through it of all the things I've done. Sometimes it's also when I have to remember something I search for a person or a location and then I find the entry back and I read it.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. And what are the sort of things you find that interest you the most? What are the things you most like to look back at?

Respondent: Well nothing specific really, just everything.

Interviewer: Okay. I mean are there things that surprise you or you find that you've forgotten or..?

Respondent: Well forgotten sure, yes. I don't have the best memory so I've forgotten a lot of things.

Interviewer: Yes. We can come to some examples in a minute. The other thing as well, is it ever something you talk about with friends? Do you ever use the diary socially? Do people ask you, "Oh, do you remember when we did this?"

Respondent: Yes, yes, I have some friends who asked me to make exports for all the occasions I did with them. So I export it and I send it to them.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And then they read through it and sometimes it can be very funny and very surprising.

Interviewer: And what sort of entries were they? What sort of examples were they?

Respondent: Well there was this girl once who wondered if I was in love with her, which wasn't the case. So I kept all the diaries of when I learnt to know her. When we became kind of best friends we read back through those diaries I wrote and it was just very funny to read.

Interviewer: Funny in what way?

Respondent: Because we were both surprised of what I was writing, and she was wondering, "Are you in love with me?" I wrote everything I felt because a diary is very personal so you don't lie, you don't hide anything.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: So yes, it's just cool.

Interviewer: Do you feel that it's something that is quite private? When you say it's quite personal, do you feel it's something you don't share very much, or do you feel there's parts of it which you are very happy for people to look at?

Respondent: Well sometimes I am ashamed because there are some things I don't want to share with other people.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm.

Respondent: I'm quite open about everything so I share a lot but some things are just not sharable with other people. So too private - then I may scratch it out of the exports.

Interviewer: Okay, so you say you don't export those things or you take them out before you export them, is that what you mean?

Respondent: Yes, I take them out before I export them.

Interviewer: Has there ever been anything you've gone back and just deleted or edited in any way?

Respondent: No, I've never done that.

Interviewer: Okay. Why wouldn't you? Why do you think it's important not to do that?

Respondent: Because it's a diary, it's supposed to keep track of your life. If you keep track of your life it must have everything in it. Not just the positive or the negative things, just everything, the combination, and that's what makes it interesting to look back. It's life as it was, without lies, without hiding. It's just very open, very private, [very 0:15:17] secrets.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: You can be totally honest with yourself.

Interviewer: In that sense, is there anything you think that's missing from it at the moment? Are there things that you wish you had been able to record? You know, what's missing from it for you?

Respondent: Yes, it's like the worst and the best experiences are harder to write down. Sometimes when you're- I had a negative phase with an ex-girlfriend I had, and a lot of data wasn't recorded then in the toughest times because I simply didn't feel like writing.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: I didn't want to hide it or escape from it so it would be very valuable to read it back, knowing what I would have written.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: I was just not in the mood to write so it's a pity.

Interviewer: Yes, and now that's something you've kind of forgotten quite a lot about now or do you still remember that clearly?

Respondent: No, I haven't forgotten about it but ____[0:16:13] about it. And it's a shame because ____ [last].

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: And looking back on these things I would have remembered more of the situations, more of the things that went wrong. It would just have been interesting for me personally.

Interviewer: Yes, I know, very much so. And just on looking back a minute, in over a year say, how often would you say that you look back at your diaries? Is it just a few times a year or a few times a month of something like that?

Respondent: No, a few times a week, yes.

Interviewer: A few times a week you'd say you'd-

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: -Look back at things? Okay.

Respondent: Especially the year things. So one year back, and also searches. Like when I remember something I can look back at it, search for it and I read it.

Interviewer: Okay, and is that kind of just like based on- you talk about it being one year ago, but I mean do you do that with people? I mean, do you search for people in it? Or when was the last time that I saw them? Or places that you've been? Things like that. Do you do that at all or is it really just mostly about a year ago today or something?

Respondent: Well a combination of both. Like I know that [depression 0:17:23] was going to come. When I knew the call was coming from you I looked back one year and I found something very interesting, like the first time I was in Los Angeles.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: And I visited the grave of a famous person who is very important to me. It was very nice to see that back.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And I mean is that something that you remembered anyway but this has just kind of reminded you just now? Or is it some things like that that you've actually quite forgotten and they're really, you know, a ____ [0:17:59]?

Respondent: Well things like that I remember very well, like the day it was yesterday actually. But of course there are a lot of things I have forgotten about.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. And when you sort of talk about looking back, at the moment are you looking back entirely within Day One or do you still look back at Momento or do you look back on Evernote as well? I mean, where are you doing that at the moment?

Respondent: No, just Day One.

Interviewer: Just Day One. So that at the moment is the centre for everything that you're doing?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Right, yes.

Respondent: So Day One is more of a personal thing. The activities are done throughout the day and Evernote is more opinions. Sometimes extreme; sometimes just thoughts that I don't agree with myself. I find it interesting to write things like these down just for inspiration.

Interviewer: Yes, I know, absolutely. I'm just sort of thinking more about the motivation for keeping a journal. I mean how did you start keeping a diary?

Respondent: Well I never kept a diary written.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. Okay.

Respondent: I always found [diaries 0:19:08] quite feminine. I don't know why. But when Momento came I signed on the App Store and I thought it was a beautiful app.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: So I downloaded it and to my surprise I started using it in the beginning just a few times. I'd say two or three times a week. But it evolved quickly into using it daily and I haven't stopped writing every day since the end of 2010.

Interviewer: Really, wow. And did you know anyone else that kept a diary or this was just your own motivation, your own idea?

Respondent: Yes, it's just my own motivation. I was also very philosophical back in the day so I found it necessary to keep one.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And what's the thing you get the most out of it? What do you feel you get out of by keeping a diary? What's the best thing about it?

Respondent: What's the best thing about it is reading back on all the memories and it's just a great thing. When you learn to know a lot of people, it's great to look back at the early days and you can't imagine it was ever like that. So now it's all evidence. You've known each other like for years and it's hard to imagine the early days when you learned to know each other so it's great to look back on things like that.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And again, is this something you do quite a lot with friends? How important is that sort of social aspect? If that makes sense.

Respondent: For diary not too important because I don't share too much of my diary but everyone knows I keep one. But it's not one of the reasons why I keep one, it's just for personal reasons to remember stuff and I just like writing so I keep on [there 0:21:09] going.

Interviewer: And what do you think keeps you motivated to write every day? You know, what excites you about it?

Respondent: Just I like to write, that's the main points. And I like to collect data and keep track of my life in Day One as well as in Evernote. So it's kind of like just everything. I mean your search history, your messages, your calendar, it's all part of what you've done, who you are, how you spent your time, and I always find it very interesting to look back on it.

Interviewer: I mean why do you think it's important to remember all these things? Why do you think it's helpful and important to have all of that detail?

Respondent: Well I asked the question myself too because I really don't have an answer. I don't know why it's important. It's probably not and sometimes I think of it as a waste of time because it's not all that important.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: And I choose to live in the now because I don't write diaries as moments happen because it's too important to enjoy the now.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: But on the other hand, when I do have the time to write I do so and I love doing so. I love to look back. I love to remember and I love to dream.

Interviewer: Yes, absolutely. And at the moment, at the time that you write, how do you decide what you're going to write about?

Respondent: I only write when something important happens so, like I said, when I say I'm going to take a shower I don't just write, "I'm going to take a shower." Something must have happened [along 0:23:05] or before. So it matters to keep track of the things. It gives a sense of context. So context is the most important thing.

Interviewer: How do you mean?

Respondent: Like the tiny details helps you remember the bigger picture.

Interviewer: Oh, okay. Right, okay. Yes, sure. And are you including things like photographs and including other sort of details like the location and things? I mean how do you decide what to include from that? How does that come into it? When you've got

something you want to write about, you say something's happened and you want to write it down, then how does the other stuff become included?

Respondent: When I try to tap the plus button to make a new entry so it automatically adds the location.

Interviewer: Right.

Respondent: At the moment and at the time it's happening so it's got the exact location and the exact weather. The photos, I just collect the photos that I've taken during the events and I choose the best one to get into my diary.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. How much do you look back at things like the location? You know, when you're looking back, how much do you pay attention to things like location?

Respondent: Less often. Not too much. But, as I said, I only used location since Day One, which I only had for two weeks.

Interviewer: So, yes, okay.

Respondent: So I'm curious how it evolves.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. How is it different when you look back at like things that you've written versus looking back at say some of your old tweets and things like that? You know, is there a big difference between that?

Respondent: I would say yes because tweeting is a very different thing than writing diary. It meant for the public so it's written differently.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm.

Respondent: And also I used to tweet like sometimes 80 tweets a day, which is quite a lot, and it's very different than writing a diary, yes.

Interviewer: Yes. So you used to send about 80 tweets a day?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: And what sort of things would you tweet about?

Respondent: Everything, the things that went on. It was kind of like a combination between Day One and Evernote. So it involved the things that I did during the day, as well as opinions, as well as chats with other people.

Interviewer: So why do you think you were doing that at the time and why did you stop?

Respondent: In the beginning I found Twitter to be nonsense really. I didn't know why it was so attractive. I didn't think anyone would be interested in anything you have to say. But just like the diary I started doing it and I started doing it more often every day. So my following was growing and I tweeted a lot more. And I kind of preferred poetic tweeting, so often poetry and small lines, some commentary to news events and everything that went on in the world.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. So for this next bit of the interview, what would be really great is if you could look back at just a few of your entries. I mean you said you had a little look back before I called. And maybe just give me, or pick out, you know, some interesting examples that you'd be happy to talk to me about or tell me about, just to kind of get a flavour of the kind of things that you like to record. So maybe look at something from a few years ago and something maybe more recently, just to give me some examples of the sorts of things that you like to record.

Respondent: It's a difficult thing to pick right now.

Interviewer: Just something-

Respondent: Is it possible to send it later, no?

Interviewer: It's just really to have something just to talk about. It really doesn't matter what it is, it's really just to- I mean if you're happy to just scroll through and just maybe just pick something at random. Something that strikes you as interesting or you think that I might be interested in knowing about.

Respondent: Let me see.

Interviewer: Feel free to take your time. You know, I'm just interested in how people talk about their past entries, that's the thing really.

Respondent: [Silence 0:27:37 – 0:28:03]. It's all written in [another language] so should I read it or..?

Interviewer: Maybe not so much read it, but maybe just tell me what it's about. Like is it something that you've been doing? Is it someone you've been speaking to? Is it a story? I'm just kind of interested in what are the types of things that you like to record?

Respondent: Well like after I knew we were going to have this conversation about diaries I remember thinking- going one year back every day. So I wrote on June 11th that I looked back at One Year Back and that's where I saw the photo that I was in Los Angeles so I kind of remembered. It was the first time. I was in Los Angeles one year ago and I loved it so much so it was just great to read back on it. So it's a strange thing because it doesn't really matter that it's exactly one year. Somehow you

relive the feelings and you remember exactly what you did one year back so it's very strange.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: It's probably all in the mind.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And sort of what level of detail do you write? You know, are you describing every little thing that happened or what sort of detail would you say that you write in? I mean how long is each entry?

Respondent: Well it depends on the situation. Sometimes I feel like writing, other times I don't. But when I write for a long time- my record is 12 pages typed A4.

Interviewer: Wow.

Respondent: So that's very long.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: But that's the record. So that goes into very much detail as well as the things I felt and the things that happened in great detail.

Interviewer: And is it kind of proper sentences or do you write sort of in notes or is the writing quite kind of carefully thought about, would you say?

Respondent: Yes, it's in proper sentences and I try to make it poetic because it helps you remember it better. And it's just more cool to read it.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. When you read it back do you like the way it's written when you read it back or do you think it sounds..?

Respondent: Sometimes I think it's rubbish. So I'm not always happy with the results. It also depends on when I wrote it. So if I have to write it when I'm on my way from one thing to another I sometimes quickly write something that's less well written. But when I'm at home and have all the time in the world I try to write carefully, choose carefully, and just be honest and make it nice to read.

Interviewer: Yes. Do you ever sort of take quick notes and then go back and write them more thoroughly? Or is it just what you write at the time and then that's it?

Respondent: No. [Very often 0:30:54].

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Since Day One I make the notes in Day One and when I have the time I write them in detail.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: When I use Momento I try to take the notes in Evernote and then type them down on the computer in Evernote.

Interviewer: Yes. And when you're looking back at it, what sort of feelings do you have when you look through your journal? What does it make you feel?

Respondent: It all depends on what you look back on so [at worse 0:31:24] times it's probably weird to read it and sometimes I prefer ____ to read these things. For the negative parts I'm more in avoidance sometimes. So I quickly scroll through and remember what happens but I don't read it thoroughly. While the happy feelings I try to read thoroughly and it brings a smile to my face.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And is it something that you'd say you try and learn from you or is it just something that interests you? When you look back, is there anything in particular you're trying to achieve or is it just looking back to look back?

Respondent: Both, both. Sometimes I'm just looking back to look back. But like my travels to Los Angeles, I travel often nowadays. It just interests me very much and I relive the moments.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm, yes. And when you say relive the moment, do you mean you can very clearly remember it or you feel the same feelings again? What do you mean by relive the moment?

Respondent: Yes, remember the feelings. And sometimes the feeling happens again in reading them. And it's easier to get the feelings when you've written your diary in detail.

Interviewer: Yes, okay.

Respondent: So the context I've been talking about, all the small details, help you remember in the longer term.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. So for you, are trying to kind of just record as much as you can or is there a limit on what you try and record, do you think?

Respondent: No, as much as I can. And sometimes it's over the top because it's very time-consuming to do so. So I often ask myself why am I doing this? Because I don't read back too often. Like three times a week isn't all that much because sometimes you spend an hour a day writing. At the end I'm always very happy to look back.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And so when you look back as well what would you say are the things that are most interesting and meaningful to you? What are the things that tend to stand out the most?

Respondent: The feelings. So reliving the feelings, the deepest ones. Just to remember and also how you met people, what you did.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. And do you remember writing them? Is it something where you read it and remember the writing of them as well or have you..?

Respondent: No, it's a good question but I've never thought about it so I don't think I remember writing them most of the time. It's just a small amount of times I do remember it but most of the time I never think about it.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: And I think I just have forgotten about it.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. And how does it compare to be looking back in Day One compared to looking back in Momento?

Respondent: Well I found Day One to be much handier to search so I'm going to look back more regularly.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And how does it compare to looking back on Facebook, or even like compared to looking back at photo albums and things that you have? How is it different looking back at your diary?

Respondent: Well I don't have a Facebook account. Well I have one but I don't use it often. So the diary is mainly a replacement for that.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm.

Respondent: But looking back at my photos I try to combine it as much as possible so I sometimes look back at my diary, at my calendar, at my photos. It brings a greater picture. But photos are cool but I think I prefer to look back on the diary.

Interviewer: Okay. Why do you think that is?

Respondent: Because I'm really an avid writer and I try to make it something interesting to read.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: And a picture can say a thousand words but when you write about your feelings it helps you to remember the bigger picture.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. It seems like you put a lot of time into writing, and then also looking back as well. You do look back reasonably frequently, a few times a week.

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Why do you think the past is so important? Some people would say, "Well I just live in the present and I'm not really interested in what happened in the past." Why for you do you think it's important to look back?

Respondent: It motivates me. It inspires me. In tougher moments, which I don't have lots, I read back and it helps you remember the things you did back then. So you try to build it again in your life so that you- I think it helps you to get back to the reality that helps you shape.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: If you know what I mean. So in positive times you did this and that, you can do this and that again, and I often found it will have positive results.

Interviewer: Could you imagine not having your- how do you think you'd feel without having the diary?

Respondent: I think I would be lacking something. It's just a comfort and it helps me. It's strange to say but sometimes it helps me feel safe. I'm not complete if I haven't written my diary for the day.

Interviewer: Really? So has there been any days that you feel that you've not managed to write anything or..?

Respondent: Excuse me?

Interviewer: Have there been any days you've not managed to write anything?

Respondent: Yes, there have been a few but not many. Either there was nothing interesting to write or I just didn't feel like it. But these are the days that are less important to write about too, so I don't miss too much.

Interviewer: Okay, yes, absolutely. I mean do you feel there's anything in the past that you've kind of recorded too much or reflected upon too much or do you think that you-

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: You know, everything you have is good and kind of good to have a record of?

Respondent: Yes, I think so. I don't think I've ever written too much. Sometimes too little, especially on the big events where there's too much to write, so you can't write it all or you spend the whole day writing. So then sometimes I miss things. But it can't be your life. I mean also you must live in the present, you must enjoy it now.

Interviewer: Yes, of course.

Respondent: It's just things to look back on and it's also really nice to have but it can't be your life. You must live the life and write about the life but it must never become the life. From the moment it would become an obligation I would stop writing.

Interviewer: Okay. Yes, that's interesting. Is there anything else that you record in your life? Even things like do you have any sort of ____ [0:38:48] things? Do you record your physical activity or anything else? Like my dad, for example, recorded the weather for a long time. Is there anything else that you record?

Respondent: I'm not recording anything specifically just the Apple health app.

Interviewer: Okay, yes.

Respondent: It keeps my steps. What else does it keep? My heart rate. So I do keep things like that but not on a regular basis.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Apple does it for me so at the end of the day in Day One I do add my steps to my diary.

Interviewer: Yes, and what does that give you? Why do you think they are important?

Respondent: Well it wasn't possible in Momento so I can't answer the question right now because I don't- I'm not experienced in looking back at the Day One entries right now.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: So I'm very interested to see how it will help me remember things. It's just nice to keep track of these things I think. It interests me.

Interviewer: And do you like having all of these things together? So rather than having- you know, you could imagine looking at a graph of your steps over the whole year and that just being a graph on its own. And maybe it shows some times when you're

spending more time in the house and other times when you're maybe outside more. But, you know, do you like having all of these things together?

Respondent: Yes. Like also it would be very interesting to see. It's part of the context so it will help me learn about which things I did when I was happy or when I was less happy and things like that.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm, yes. I'm sort of interested as well into what all those- do you think the writing will always be the main part for you? Where do all those other elements kind of come in? Can you think of an example when it's been really interesting to know where you were or to know the music you were listening to? Those specific details. Can you of any examples when they've been really useful as context?

Respondent: Yes, like I was in Los Angeles again three weeks ago and I very well remember writing on a bus just after a great time I'd had like a ____ [0:41:07]. So I wrote that in Momento which didn't record my location but I still remember writing it very much. So I would have loved to have known where it was written, what the temperature was.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: But I don't have that data so it lives in my mind but not in my diary.

Interviewer: Yes, yes. And we're coming to the end of things now. What do you think your plans are for the future? Do you intend to keep recording like this or is there other things you hope to record or use as well?

Respondent: How do you mean, use as well?

Interviewer: So I mean, do you think you're going to use any other apps or do you think you've got anything else you're going to start recording? Is this something you think you'll do for the rest of your life or..?

Respondent: I see myself doing this the rest of my life, yes. I've been doing it for five years non-stop. And I still don't feel obliged to write so I think it's here to stay. In the future with digital enhancements like the Apple Watch, I might consider the Apple Watch too to record more personal detail. Also, health records which I sometimes now keep in Evernotes manually.

Interviewer: Right, okay. Like what sort of things do you keep there?

Respondent: So I even have a happiness meter in my Evernotes. It's quite nonsense but it keeps track of some main important things in life. Then I keep an emoji to how I feel about that subject in my life right now.

Interviewer: Yes, okay.

Respondent: And other stuff like health, fitness, how many workouts I do a day, stuff like that.

Interviewer: And is that something you look back on very much as well?

Respondent: Yes. So I mail it through every month so I keep it for a month, then I mail that to myself and I look back at it regularly, yes.

Interviewer: Okay. And what does that give you? How does that help you?

Respondent: Well it helps me to keep track of the things and to improve. So if I am doing it the next month what I have been doing the month before I'm not really making any improvements. I should get better.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm.

Respondent: So it helps me keep track of things I wouldn't remember, and it reminds me to go into a higher gear.

Interviewer: Go into a higher gear, did you say?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay, cool.

Respondent: I don't know how you say it in English.

Interviewer: No, no, that makes sense, that makes sense. I just wanted to make sure I heard you. Well I think I've asked you most things. It seems like that time has just flown by but maybe that's just me. But I think I've asked you most things. Are there any questions you had or anything else I should have asked you about or something you want to add?

Respondent: No. I'm just interested, do you journal?

Interviewer: I've kept some travel journals and at the moment I've been not so much journaling but I have a five-year diary I'm recording. I really like cooking and I've recently moved in with my partner and so we've been cooking a lot together. I've been recording what we eat, not like calories and things but recording what we have for dinner together. So I've become interested in doing that.

I haven't kept a kind of sort of detailed journal of where I've been and what I'm doing. I think it's really interesting talking to so many different people who have lots of different motivations and things. And it does make you feel- I'm actually going on holiday next week and, you know, I think I will definitely try and write some things down of what we did or what we do there.

Respondent: Really? Because of the research also?

Interviewer: Yes, I mean my whole PhD in general is about memory and remembering your life. So, it's funny, it definitely does make you more reflective about the importance of perhaps recording more things and how much you don't record. Or at least it makes you- seeing people who have recorded things and the value and the pleasure they get out of it, sometimes makes you think, "Maybe I should do that too."

Respondent: Yes. You can see if it's there to stay or...

Interviewer: Yes. I know from my own- I travelled a few years ago and I did keep a travel journal but it was somewhat intermittent. I'm a bit frustrated because I stopped doing it for a few weeks and then I found it hard to start doing it again when I should have and so I stopped.

Respondent: That's true. Whenever there's a [lack 0:45:49] in what you're doing sometimes it's hard to start again.

Interviewer: Yes, I know, definitely. So I think that's something I do regret a bit but then I think I have other ways. I don't think I want to have too much, you know. For me I think I want to have some things which are representative. So for example that year when I was travelling, while I was away from home, I did keep a blog as well. It's much less text but it's a really nice way of writing things and although it's much less detailed, it still sort of, to me, is a nice sort of summary so...

Respondent: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: I think that's maybe [Crosstalk 0:46:28].

Respondent: I understand what you mean.

Interviewer: Yes.

Respondent: It's also dangerous to keep too much because in these digital times I mean. Now with Day One your diary is somewhere, on some server.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Respondent: So I wonder about the dangers.

Interviewer: Hmmhmm. I mean that's one of the things that is interesting about all the data that we collect now. It has a very present usefulness but what will be the long-term use of it and what will it mean to be able to see how your heart rate's changed over 20 years? That's kind of a...

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: You know, it's something that we've never really been able- well, people haven't really done before and now it will become quite common. I don't think anyone's really considered what that means in a personal way, you know. It's obviously good for our health and it's obviously a good way of kind of making people active. But I'm really interested in what it means to people and how they express themselves and such and that's [Crosstalk 0:47:26].

Respondent: Yes, that's true. It's going to be interesting like Apple pushing the health business to the masses.

Interviewer: Yes. I know, absolutely.

Respondent: It's never been done on such a big scale so-

Interviewer: Completely.

Respondent: Everybody is moving more to the collecting.

Interviewer: Yes, I think so many people now at least keep their steps or something like that. Whereas before it would be things like your weight and you maybe know your shoe size and you know the trousers that fit but you don't know much more.

I mean in the research my question is 'What's it Like to Have a Quantified Past?'. We talk about a quantified self but what does it mean to have a past that is very much in records and

data rather than perhaps in photographs, in stories? You know, you think about the way that people usually talk about the past, how will that change? These are the kind of big questions that I'm trying to answer, and which, you know...

Respondent: It's very interesting. Where can we get the results so ____[0:48:26] it?

Interviewer: Yes. Actually you're nearly the last person I'll interview and then I am doing some analysis. Sort of thinking things through in the summer and will hopefully be writing something towards the end of summer. The academic process is very slow so if things are successful then hopefully at the beginning of next year we'd have a paper that's published. The best thing to do is just to contact me in a few months if you remember and I'd be more than happy to share some of those things with you.

Respondent: If I don't remember by the beginning of next year I might remember it through my diaries so...

Interviewer: Yes, yes, well exactly. Good, good.

Respondent: It will be exactly a year.

Interviewer: Yes. My research generally involves doing these kind of interviews with people and I really appreciate the time people take. We end up discussing quite personal things and the way people live their lives. So I'm always really happy if I can give something back and people are interested in how the research

as a whole has evolved. And it helps me to understand as well how have I interpreted things and taken things the right way, so yes, please do get in touch. Have you got any other sort of questions at all about the research or..?

Respondent: No.

Interviewer: Nothing at all? Okay. Well thanks again very much for your time. I will email you an Amazon voucher shortly and with that as well there'll just be another little confirmation form. If you are able to just confirm that you received that from me that would be great. It's just so that the university know that I haven't taken the money myself and that I've given it to you.

Respondent: Yes, okay. That's very good.

Interviewer: Yes. And the other thing is if you're happy to, but don't feel obliged to, if you can send me one or two screen shots of the sort of things, you know, just to get a sense of what they look like and how they're organised and things like that. I mean it will be in [another language] anyway I guess so I won't be able to read it but...

Respondent: I used to write in English a few times too so I'll check on the English writings and I'll get some good moments for you.

Interviewer: Okay.

Respondent: Because it's not easy to find one.

Interviewer: Cool. I mean just in your own time. Yes, I'll say that in an email as well. So thanks again, and, unless there's anything else, I think I'll probably sign off.

Respondent: No, no, everything's good.

Interviewer: Cool. Thanks again and thanks for your time.

Respondent: Thank you and good luck with your ____ [0:50:58].

Interviewer: Yes, you too as well. Thanks a lot. Bye.

Interviewer: Bye.

Respondent: Bye. [Background noise 0:51:02 – 0:52:16].

END AUDIO

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