

Intro: This is the Work-At-Home-Heroes podcast. Your host, Caitlin Pyle, digs deep with people from all over the world who make money from home. Get ready to wake up to a world of possibility for freedom, flexibility, and a life you'll love.

Caitlin Pyle: Well, hey, everybody. Welcome back to another episode of the Work-At-Home-Heroes podcast. I am here with Emily Milsom, and my name is Caitlin Pyle in case you don't know. I'm the host of the show. Emily is a lover of tea, talking, and travel, so it's very appropriate. She's here to talk to me today. She lives a nomad lifestyle visiting and working in new locations, and while she's in the UK now, she just came back from some time in Chiang Mai, Thailand, so we're definitely going to get into that.

She is a life blogger, and she does a lot of social media projects, and her main keep is as a social business enabler contractor for Tribal Impact. So we're going to talk about what that is because I have no idea, so I'm excited to have Emily on the show. She's been working on the go for one and a half years now. Welcome to Work-At-Home-Heroes, Emily.

Emily Milsom: Hi, thank you for having me.

Caitlin Pyle: Yeah, so you're in the UK now. You were in Chiang Mai, Thailand until just recently, right?

Emily Milsom: Yeah, I was there for about two months from beginning of March towards the end of April, so I just went over there to work and live, which was fantastic.

Caitlin Pyle: But you didn't have to go there. You chose to go there, right? You got to make that choice for yourself.

Emily Milsom: Absolutely.

Caitlin Pyle: I love it. I love it. So what made you choose Chiang Mai? A lot of people probably think Thailand – they're like, I don't know anything about Thailand. So what made you choose Chiang Mai?

Emily Milsom: So I've always really liked hot places. I think that's something – lots of people do, but I am attracted to that hot kind of country, and I wanted somewhere that had a community of people who were doing what I was doing. I think if you can see that a lot of people are going to one place, it obviously means that the place is

supportive of your kind of lifestyle, so that was really something that was really important to me.

And I just read so much stuff about it. There were so many videos, so many blog posts all about this place called Chiang Mai in Thailand, so I just kind of went, Right, that's for me. I did a bit of research, and I kind of booked my ticket, and away I went.

Caitlin Pyle:

I love that, and that's funny that you mentioned that you just read a lot about it, and you're like, I need to go there. That's exactly how I ended up in Ecuador for three months myself a few years back. I kept hearing about this little town called Cuenca. In fact, I had heard about it on *House Hunters International* maybe two years prior to that on an airplane. I just watched on airplane TV, and I was like, Oh my gosh, Cuenca sounds amazing. It's on the US dollar. It's really inexpensive. And then a few years later, I was like, Well, why don't we just go there? And I started reading about it, and I was like, I need to go to this place.

And so Chiang Mai is on my list for the very same reasons, and there a lot of entrepreneurs there, a lot of people doing freelance work, and it's just a really well-connected, modernized, and the food. Oh my goodness, I love Thai food. And the price is right. It's really a low cost of living, and so it really makes it accessible for normal people, right? You don't have to – I mean you live in the UK, and I'm guessing that the prices are higher there than in Thailand.

Emily Milsom:

They absolutely are, but what's quite surprising is I don't really live anywhere at this point in my life. I am truly nomadic, so I sort of – even when I'm in the UK, I'm sort of going from place to place, exploring whilst I work. The two really need to complement each other for me, so I do that out of my whole life, and so I'm always on the go, always working wherever I am. So that's a bit different I think.

Caitlin Pyle:

Well, I know it's a dream that a lot of people have, so let's talk about how you made it happen. So you are a social business enabler for a company called Tribal Impact. Can you tell us more about what that entails?

Emily Milsom:

So Tribal Impact is a company that works in the realm of social business, which is where you're doing business online now. There's social platforms. A lot of companies are having their

accounts. You have all these employees who have got accounts, and it's about enabling them to build their personal profiles, and then the company can empower those employees to speak for them because it's much more authentic. There's no forcing. The employees have to do it by choice.

So what I do is basically help companies help their employees to sort of build their own professional brands. And what's amazing about the company that I work for, Tribal Impact, is that it's a remote company. Everybody within the company works from home. I just love the fact that I can do that and work for a company I'm passionate about at the same time. I didn't have to sacrifice anything.

Caitlin Pyle: Wow, I really, really enjoy hearing that, that you made the choice to work for a company that also supports the way you want to live your life, and it's really living the dream is what I call it. And so an employee advocacy program is what you're helping these companies develop through your company, Tribal Impact, so basically making employees walking advertisements for their companies. Am I understanding that correctly?

Emily Milsom: Yeah, it's like that, but I think the most important thing is that it's done in authenticity, no forcing. It's about them sharing content they want to share, so there's loads of stuff on there that's really interesting for me because I feel very strongly about living an authentic life in my own life, so it's really great doing work that talks about that.

Caitlin Pyle: Yeah, that's really, really cool. So how did you get into doing this? Was there a moment where – and I'm talking about working at home specifically. How did you get into wanting to work for yourself and this nomadic lifestyle? Was there some back story there where you were working in a corporate job where you're like, I'm done with this? Or was it just something that you have always just wanted to do and so you just did it?

Emily Milsom: About a year and a half ago, so just before I started all this, I was working for a marketing agency. I enjoyed some of the work I was doing, but it just wasn't fulfilling enough, and I just felt quite restrained by being in one place all the time. So like you said, just one day I just said, I've had enough. And I had this part of me that really wanted to kind of work for myself, so the first thing I did

was sort of I handed in my notice, and I took the leap into owning my own business.

And I actually did this for near on a year, but I realized after a while that that wasn't quite for me. I think sometimes when people want to sort of support themselves to work from home, we don't know all the options that are available to us, and for me, one of the ones I only knew about were sort of to start a business, so I kind of went for it. And it was only sort of mid last year when I suddenly realized that I didn't quite enjoy working on a team of one. So that's when the contract that I'm doing now, working with Tribal Impact, sort of came up, and it was this perfect balance between able to work from home, live the life I wanted, but work within a normal wage we were talking about earlier and just having that sort of job but not a job from home. It was kind of the perfect balance.

Caitlin Pyle:

Yeah, and I think that's great because there are so many people I know that are listening to this show right now that are like, I don't really know that I want to start my own business. I kind of want to put out some feelers first and work with the company. Some people just jive in that environment better in general, and I started as a business of one, and it can be lonely, especially at first. And then you grow, but the road to get to where you can add on people can be long sometimes. And so it's just not for everybody, and so I love that you found that balance, and probably a lot of people that were just like you, they had a full-time job, and you quit. And so that's really exciting because – was that scary, making that decision to quit the stable, full-time job?

Emily Milsom:

I think it was one of the scariest things I ever did at that point, but since then, I've done other scary things. But it just – for me, life is too short to not do the things you need to do. I knew I wasn't happy and I had to do something about it, so although it was really scary, I just had to do it.

Caitlin Pyle:

Yeah, I mean you hit the nail on the head. Life is too short to sit there and be scared because – and you're never going to feel ready, and we always talk about that on the podcast. I always talk about that in my books and Facebook Lives, whatever. You're never going to feel ready. You just have to do it. You're just sitting there trying to understand every single step of how it's going to work or – I mean it's great to do research.

It's great to have an understanding of what kind of work goes into starting your own business or being nomadic or living in Chiang Mai or whatever the thing is, but you're never really going to know everything until you just go and do it. It's like making a new friend. You're not going to know whether you're going to click with a person until you just kind of sit down and get to know them and have a conversation. You can't really make a decision until you just do it, and so facing that fear.

And you also talked about – you've done scarier things since, and I can really relate to that, and looking back on the scary things I've done, any time I want to do something new that's scary and I think, Oh, maybe I don't want to do it because it's scary, I think, Wait, okay, every time in the past I've done some things that are scary, it's turned out great. And that doesn't mean that everything is going to turn out great and that it was all hunky dory the entire way. But you always grow from facing your fears even if things don't turn out the way you wanted them to. Any time you have a friendship breakup or a romantic relationship breakup or- I got fired. That all turned out – I mean it was not fun, but it made me a better person, and so all the scary things, even all the bad things that happen to us that we think are just the worst thing ever, we always come out of them better, stronger, more resilient human beings. It's just part of life, and so just being able to embrace that I think is just a valuable skill, and it's just something that the more you do it, the better you get at it I think.

So you mentioned in your application—we have all of our guests fill out an application before they come on the show—that you were selling vintage homewares. Tell us a little bit about that. I love vintage homewares.

Emily Milsom:

It's crazy really. I think I've always been entrepreneurial, and sort of – I had sort of a mainstream job. I graduated university, gosh, eight years ago now, and ever since then, I've always had sort of a steady job if that's what you'd call it. But I always felt like something was missing for me, and I would always do these little projects. I would have a blog or something, and it got to the point where I think I was kind of ready to step into the unknown, but I wasn't ready enough to quit my job.

So I started up a vintage homeware business. It was kind of like a side business. In the UK, we have quite a second-hand feel kind of culture, so we can go and pick up vintage items quite easily. So I

started to do that, and then I got a little unit. So I was – I had already started my entrepreneurial journey I think quite a long time before I ended up quitting my job, which I think really helped me grow because I think you learn a lot about the things you need to learn about before maybe you quit your job.

But I absolutely, absolutely loved the vintage business, and one of the only reasons I really decided to stop doing it is because I realized it wouldn't fund the life I wanted. So I had to make some choices about what I was doing to be able to work from home, to work on the go, to travel, and having a business like that wouldn't support traveling on the go, one of the many decisions I made to get to the point where I am today.

Caitlin Pyle: Yeah, for sure, and I can definitely feel you on that. Knowing that you want to travel, and it was calling to you, Chiang Mai was calling to you, and the nomadic life was calling to you. And lugging around a bunch of vintage homewares just was not going to make that easy.

Emily Milsom: It was not.

Caitlin Pyle: I know our listeners are curious, and I usually ask this a little bit earlier, but I just got caught up in vintage home wares and all kinds of stuff. So income wise, working for yourself, being able to travel, what kind of income are you generating each month working for yourself, working nomadically?

Emily Milsom: So at the moment, I earn anywhere between £1 to £3,000. Now, at the moment, it kind of errs on the lower side, but that is actually a personal choice. It's not I couldn't get more, but I really value a health life-work balance. I have a lot of other interests and mainly writing, and one of the things I wanted to do when I was working from home was to have a better balance between working and doing the things that really fulfilled me. I mean work that I do fulfills me, but I think there are other creative projects that may not always pay the same, so I love that balance in my life. So some months I can work less. If I'm in one place, I can do loads more hours, but then maybe when I'm exploring, I do a little less when I'm traveling. So I've actually got a great amount of flexibility within how many hours I do and how much money I earn to support that lifestyle.

Caitlin Pyle:

I think that's excellent, and I'm a big proponent of the work-life balance as well, and we might get a chance to talk a little bit about how you do that later. But I'm a huge fan of that because I feel like burnout is probably the thing that makes most beginning entrepreneurs, people who start working at home, quit the fastest because they're just like, Oh, this just isn't worth it, or they're trying to do too much at one time, and they're not taking time to take care of themselves first. So I am a big fan of starting your day off right, and I mean you were kind of saying you could make more or whatever, but you make what you need, and so – and it sounds – just in your voice I can tell that you're happy. You're doing exactly what you want with your life, and so that is what matters.

And I often will say that it's not about the money because me versus four years ago, five years ago – I make a lot more money now, but I'm not happier now because of the money I make. I'm happier now because I'm taking care of myself, and I've got a good work-life balance, and that's what this kind of lifestyle is about. Working at home isn't always about the money. It's about the freedom and the flexibility to be able to enjoy our life and create a life that you enjoy living, that you're proud of living, that you don't get to the end of where you're like, Dang, I should have done all the things that I wanted to do, but I was too scared or too – to take the leap and actually do what I wanted to do.

And that's probably the scariest thing is to think about waiting – that's what I want to invite people listening now. Maybe if you're scared to get started, think about where you're going to be in five, ten, fifteen years if you don't do something now. Will you be exactly where you are, wishing you had gotten started? So in listening to Emily, I'm hoping that you're getting inspired to just say, Hey, enough is enough, and taking the first step. Don't worry about step fifty-eight is what I always say until you've done step one, and then step two will make sense. And then you'll get to step fifty-eight eventually.

And that's life-changing money, Emily. I mean I did the math while I was sitting here. I just went onto Google. I mean £1,000 a month – that's like \$1300 for US listeners who were wondering. That's a much better exchange rate than when I was in the UK back in 2008, but I'm not bitter; £3,000 is – that's life-changing money. I mean \$4,000 a month is a great amount of money.

And many people write to me, and they're like, I just want to make an extra \$500 or an extra \$1,000, and so it's absolutely possible, and you're able to do it and travel at the same time. So I think sometimes we get ourselves into a tizzy thinking that we've got to make a ridiculous amount of money or it's not going to work. But really we need to look at our priorities and what are we actually spending our money on. Do we need all the things? Do we need \$100 phone bill and all that? So that's a whole other conversation that we can get into when we're not on the podcast.

So we talked a little bit about being scared, and you said that – in your application that you're living so far in the future that you couldn't make progress in the present. Can you explain a little bit more about what that means for you in terms of the demons that you were fighting when you were getting started?

Emily Milsom:

I think one of the problems I faced before now was basically that I always had this idea of what something would look like. I had always envisioned what a booming business would look like, what a career-driven, successful Emily would be, and I lived so far in the future that I couldn't think about or do anything in the present day because it was such a far distant thing that it kind of froze me. I was unable to – I was kind of living in these big dreams and not doing anything in the present to get me there.

I mean you just said that about how we kind of have to just take one small step, and that's something I really learned about how to just be in the day. I have a screen saver on my laptop, which basically says focus on the things that you want to and do everyday, and that's why I try to do everything that I want to achieve and build, so I do some work everyday. I do some writing everyday. I walk everyday because I know over time that builds into something. So that's how I sort of took myself out of the future of this person I was imagining and came back to who I was today.

Caitlin Pyle:

Yeah, wow. That's – I've got to unpack that for a hot minute here. So the little things that you do everyday add up is what I'm hearing you saying, and that is how you're going to become or you are the successful Emily, and that's how you're going to get to where you want to go eventually, future you, right? And so I think I talked about in previous episodes where we do the things today, everyday, we do them for the future version of you.

And so instead of trying to be exactly who you want to be and take these big bites that overwhelm us and get us burnt out, we take small steps that are almost imperceptible to – if you just look at it in the span of one day. I started doing the plank experiment where I do a plank everyday. I do a protein shake everyday, and it's just those little things that are so easy to fit into my day, but it makes me a better person in the long run, and then before you know it, I'm like, Whoa, I'm a lot healthier. I'm a lot stronger. I didn't even realize I was doing that much, but you were because it's incremental changes.

It is that focusing too much is really the same exact analogy is step fifty-eight versus step one. If you're in the future thinking about step fifty-eight – how do I get there? How do I get there? Hey, you have to do steps one through fifty-seven. That's how you get there, and so it sounds like that's what you've done exactly, and so I'm interested. You said you walk everyday. What does your life look like now? What is it that you do everyday that has improved your life and is getting you on your pathway to where you want to be?

Emily Milsom:

So sort of an average day for me means I wake up around sort of 8 to 9ish. I tend to start every day with writing or editing just to do something that really fulfills me. I then move on to work. I'll do work for a few hours, and then I'll normally sort of either go for a walk to a coffee shop or something in the afternoon just to get me out of the house. For me, it's quite important not to be inside all day long. It's not that I miss the office environment, but I just need to sort of get moving and make sure I felt like I've accomplished something in my day.

So I might spend a few hours in the afternoon either writing or working in a coffee shop. I love to support local businesses. It sort of ties in with some of the things I'm passionate about. And then in the evening if I'm abroad, I might end up working in the evening because when I was in Thailand, obviously the evening was a great time to work with people back in the UK. And then I tend to try to go to sleep 10, 11 o'clock, trying to keep healthy routines because I think when you work from home, it can be difficult to merge between your work life and your home life, so it's about creating really good habits for you, things that build the life that you want.

Caitlin Pyle:

Yes, absolutely. That's been a big stride for me as well is nixing the social media, nixing the email before I've had my morning routine, which it's always a little different, but I like to take care of myself in the morning. So I get my caffeine going. I make my fitness routine. I make sure I know what I'm doing, and I actually do the workout, and I get myself feeling really good, set myself on a really positive trajectory for the whole rest of the day. And then I can focus on work because I've got to get myself in a good mood. I seldom wake up in a good mood, but I know that if I don't wake up in a good mood and the first thing I do is check email, that's not going to help.

But if the first thing I do is get hydrated and start moving my body, then I will change the way I feel, and it has 100% success rate. I can tell you that. It's like getting out of bed and doing something that makes me feel good always works, and so I've gotten myself into the habit of doing that everyday, and it sounds like you have as well and being able to just separate and turning off the computer at a certain time at night or just saying, Hey, I don't want to check email past a certain time. It's definitely taken me a while to get there, and it's not easy, especially when you're first starting out.

You just feel like you've got to be productive. You've got to be moving towards your goals, but it's also important to take care of yourself because if you don't, then it's going to have a negative ripple effect into your life versus a positive one. You've got to take care of yourself. So when you were first getting started, I'm just curious about your friends and family. Did you have any unsolicited feedback from them, and how did you navigate that?

Emily Milsom:

I'd say definitely got a lot of feedback. It wasn't necessarily unsolicited. I got their interpretations of the world, which was why it was so difficult to take it because I didn't really know anyone that was doing what I've done. And when I spoke to the people who had started businesses, their perspective seemed so different.

So it was about listening to what the people in my life and who are important to me, what they were saying and just taking the bits that sort of resonated or meant something and then absorbing that into what I was learning from maybe the people who were doing what I wanted to do so that I didn't just completely alienate them from what I was doing, but I didn't let

their fears or their worries or their perceptions of the way the world should be affect how I wanted to live my life too much.

Caitlin Pyle:

That's so smart because I think there are so many people that they just consult their immediate sphere of influence, and you hit the nail on the head again. You said you don't know anybody or you didn't at that time know anybody who was doing what you wanted to do, and so you knew that if you went and talked to them about it, they probably wouldn't have necessarily – not that they wouldn't be excited for you or positive, but they wouldn't have the grasp of it that you had. They didn't have that same dream, and so they weren't – you knew you shouldn't limit yourself to just talking to the people that you know.

And I think that's a big mistake a lot of people make is that they go and they talk to the people that they know who aren't doing the thing they want to do. And if they get negative feedback, they're like, Well, I guess I can't do that. But you found people that were doing what you wanted to do, and you listened to them as well, and so yeah, you just kind of have to take what works and throw out what doesn't. I think that's super, super smart. And I think a big mistake newbies make for sure—I did the same thing—is just you give too much clout to the people who don't have any authority. They're like, Oh, you want to go live in Ecuador? You want to go live in South America? I heard that's dangerous. I'm like, Well, have you been there? I'm like, How do you know?

And so just really evaluating for validity the things that people say, and also evaluating yourself because you know what you want better than anybody else, and just because you're 65-year-old mother-in-law wouldn't go to Ecuador for a year doesn't mean you can't or doesn't want to go to Chiang Mai or whatever. It doesn't – I mean you want to respect what they have to say and listen to them but, ultimately, you get to make the decision, and it's your life, so you don't want to live your life for other people.

And I think moms, women especially, we struggle with that. I'm not a mom myself. I have a dog and a husband so that kind of counts, a lot of the same tasks. But just being a woman I think sometimes we get ahead of ourselves and being people pleasers and feeling like we don't get to make decisions for ourselves. And so I love that you are making decisions for yourself, just listening to people around you that are just ultimately doing exactly what

you want to do. So how many hours a week do you work typically?

Emily Milsom: So I work anywhere between eight to twenty-four, and they can be sort of morning, evening, night, weekends. I'm quite flexible. I just – I tend to live my life quite in flow.

Caitlin Pyle: Me too, me too. I kind of do – when it comes my way, I'm like, I'll do it, and if – I have bursts of energy where I'm just like, All right, if I feel like working, I'm going to work. If I can't sleep at night, if I want to get up and work, I'll work, and I don't beat myself up or try to fit myself into a box. I've been there, done that, doesn't work. So you've just got to do what works for you, so I dig that, really cool. So what's next for you? Are you planning on trying to grow your business? Are you happy where you are? What's in the future for Emily?

Emily Milsom: I think for now, the contracting work – I mean the company that I'm contracting for – it's just something I'm really passionate about, so for the time being, I think I'm going to remain doing that, and travel is such a big focus for me. I mean I'm going to Portugal in the summer, and I'm actually going to head back to Asia at the end of the year. And it's just – it's really enabled me. I'm doing other things in my life. I'm adopting more of a minimalistic lifestyle and just really exploring what it means to be nomadic, to work on the go, to live your life in balance. It's kind of a discovery of myself as well. I turn 30 in January, so the goal really is to be in another country on my 30th birthday.

Caitlin Pyle: Woo hoo! That's so exciting, and I'm super jealous about Portugal. That's one – has been on my list for a while. I lived in Europe for a year and just never made it that far, but I want to go because it looks so beautiful. So I'm excited for you in the future. It sounds like you're just loving life and so – and that's really what it's all about is making sure that you're enjoying exactly where you are on the way to wherever you're going, and you get to pivot at any time.

And so I'm talking to people listening at the moment, but if there's ever a time where you're just not digging what you're doing, then change direction. It's totally okay. It's just as important to figure out what you don't want to do as it is to figure out what you do want to do. And often, you find out what you want to do on these stepping stones, and what you don't want to

do. That's how you figure out what you like is figuring out what you don't like. And so it's just process of elimination.

So final question, and it's a question I ask every guest at the very end because there's people listening right now that are like, Okay, that works for Emily. That worked for Caitlin. That worked for all the other episodes and people on the show. But I'm still so scared to get started. What advice do you have for somebody who is just shaking in their boots, and they want to take that first step on the way to step fifty-eight, the future version of them, but they're just scared to get started? What would you say to that person or people?

Emily Milsom:

I think my advice kind of ties into some of the things we've been saying about these sort of small steps that you can take. There's no rush for you to suddenly go from what you're doing to the perfect dream version of what you're doing. It's kind of a journey in a way, and there's loads of twists and turns that you won't know about.

So my top thing is thinking about how you might switch your income stream to sort of balance out what you've got now to what you can get coming in to support it so that you can maybe ease off your job so that it's not such a cliff jump. Some people thrive, like me, just kind of go heads in, but I still had some savings for three to four months and made some big sacrifices like moved in with some family. So it's about being brave but maybe doing it in a way that works for you, so give yourself a chance to breathe really and just focus on that, creating something that fills you with passion without the scary, scary line of having to get money come in from the thing you really want to do straight away. So it's giving yourself some time really.

Caitlin Pyle:

Absolutely, managing your own expectations. I think that's probably another mistake I see a lot is that people expect overnight success. They expect this online course they're taking to just magically turn them into a money-making machine, and it takes time. And so I think that's excellent advice is just figure out something that you can do on the side, and you had this side hustle going for a while, so you did exactly that. So it doesn't feel like you're jumping off a cliff, right? It's just something that's gradual, and really the journey is the reward.

We think that the reward is the place that we're going, and that's a mistake as well because the reward is the person you become along the way. It's the journey, so being able to enjoy the journey is super, super important, and it sounds like you're doing just that, Emily.

I want to say thank you so much for being on the Work-At-Home-Heroes podcast. Where can people reach you if they've got extra questions? We're going to tag you in the Work-At-Home-Heroes Facebook group so we can talk about the episode right there in the group. So if you're listening, you can go and check that out. If they'd like to reach out to you personally and just to see, Hey, want to meet up in Chiang Mai or whatever, where can they reach you?

Emily Milsom: So they can find me on LinkedIn. If they just search my name, they should be able to find me, but I'm also on Twitter @joyful_nomad, and they can just reach out to me there if they want to say hi.

Caitlin Pyle: Fantastic. Joyful Nomad. I love that. Well, thank you again so much, Emily, for joining me on the Work-At-Home-Heroes podcast.

Emily Milsom: Thank you for having me.

Caitlin Pyle: Well, thanks, guys. I sure hope you're enjoying the Work-At-Home-Heroes podcast. I sure enjoy hosting it, and I would love it if you'd leave us a review if you've been enjoying it and, of course, you are all invited to join the Work-At-Home-Heroes Facebook community where we will continue the conversation about working at home and finding your fit. Thanks again, and we'll talk to you next time.

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