

## **“Where Are They Now” Series: Korrbyn Haines**

**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:** Well, hey everybody. Welcome back to the Work-At-Home Heroes podcast. We are back and we've decided to mix it up and bring you a series of 10 episodes, each with a different topic all related to working at home. This series is called “Where Are They Now?” because we are re-interviewing previously featured guests to explore their progress and hear their journey since we last spoke. You'll find a link to their previous interview in the show notes. So join us now. We follow up with our work-at-home heroes and today I'm re-visiting Korrbyn Haines. She's an administration ninja with over 10 years of administrative experience in a wide range of industries based in Brisbane. Am I saying that right, Korrbyn?

**Korrbyn:** Yep.

**Caitlin:** Yeah, Brisbane. And founder of Encore Admin Consulting. She provides virtual assistant and administration process consulting services to micro and small businesses. Welcome back to the show Korrbyn. I can't wait to get an update from you.

**Korrbyn:** Thank you. Yes, it's been rather the ride. I think it's been two years now since I was last on here, so.

**Caitlin:** Yeah, yeah, a lot has changed for me as well and so I'm loving having previous guests back on to see what the last two years have brought them. And so give us a little snapshot to those who maybe haven't heard your first interview yet -- where you were the last time we spoke?

**Korrbyn:** I actually sat down to do this and had the realization that this feels very similar to last time we spoke, because it's very early morning, but at this time I've got two little bit older young ones. Last time, I think my youngest was three months old so I was just coming out of that newborn fog when we had our last interview, just started coming back into my business. Yeah, I think I was on the first week back from maternity leave. So it's a different time this time. But yeah, I was still in that haze, I've just had all my clients come back online with me. And funnily enough, a lot of my clients are still ... I'll talk about that later, but a lot of those same clients are still with me now, which is awesome.

**Caitlin:** That is awesome. And remind us what it is, you had started originally as a virtual assistant business and now you've got a special service that you're providing; remind us what that is.

Korryn: Oh, I'm sort of niching down into more tech side of things. I've just created my first online course. So I'm doing a lot more teaching and process consulting rather than doing the nitty gritty, which was where I started. I'm taking a little bit of a shift in helping businesses understand the processes and that sort of thing, rather than just jumping the deep end and doing it for them.

Caitlin: Yeah, I think you did things the right way in building your own business and learning how to do the techie stuff and the nitty gritty stuff yourself, and that allowed you to learn the processes and learn what works and what doesn't. And that gives you the expertise you now have and can command a higher price point for it as well, to help people understand the processes and maybe who aren't as tech savvy as you were.

Korryn: And I find a lot of my clients -- they're very switched on with where they want to go with the business, but aren't as strong in the tech side, but once I actually hold their hand and show them how they can do what they want to do, a lot of them are pretty self sufficient and just go running. So it's really cool being able to help them expand their thought processes, because a lot of times they come up with harebrained ideas, but then when the practicalities come in, they go, "Oh, I have no idea where to start or how to even approach this." It's interesting. It's taken a good shift, that's for sure.

Caitlin: Boy, can I relate to that in terms of having an idea and getting stuck on the implementation process and needing someone who can manage that and break it down for me and set milestones. And as the years have gone by, I've been able to develop some of those skills myself, but in terms of me implementing it, it's just not a wise use of my time. I'm much better as the idea person and then being able to have a team of people or someone that I can consult, someone like yourself, who can let me know whether or not I'm on the right track or point out potential holes that I maybe don't see, because I'm so up close and personal for real, with my business in a way that maybe someone on the outside looking in would just have a much better vantage point.

So one thing I found really interesting in your application -- and we just don't really have an application process, but something to give us an update before you come back on the show, help us get a better picture of where you were and where you are now, so we basically know how to structure the show -- And probably the most interesting thing that I saw on yours was that you're earning about the same amount of money, but you're working fewer hours than before, and I love that and I want to know more specifics on that and how you made it happen. How did you reduce the number of hours without reducing your income?

Korryn: It's funny, I've been watching my numbers, especially with the weird climate that's going on. I thought, "Oh, here we go." But the numbers actually have stayed consistent. And my eldest is now at school and you think, "Oh yeah, my kids go to school. Yay, more time." No. The days are shorter and also my youngest is now two and she is just a hundred mile an hour, and you can't take eyes off her for a second. So having one at school and one in that next phase,

initially I thought, "Oh yeah, more hours." No, that's not the case. So I've had to be really, really strict with boundaries with my time, just so I'm there for pickup and drop off for my eldest and being just really more structured and that's kind of where my online course has come out of because I've had to be so structured and so diligent with boundaries around, these are my working hours, now I have to really squeeze the most out of my time for me and my clients. Because as I mentioned previously, all my same clients are on board with me, but I've got a handful of four or five that are just always there. And then there's others that sort of dip in and out as they need the help, and previously, I would be able to do nights and all that sort of thing, but it just isn't sustainable, so I had to really drill down and okay, how can I get most done with my time? And that has also turned around in that I now have a package rate with some of my clients where previously, I was doing an hourly. But like I said, these are clients that I've had coming on four years with -- they know what they can get from me and how much value I bring to the table. So I've sort of implemented a different pricing structure in that way, and then also I've created an online course. So that's sort of that passive income air-quotes thing that you hear around the place a lot. It's new, but it's still a little bit of an income and it's helping tick things along without me having to do an hourly rate kind of thing for.

Caitlin: It's really exciting to hear that you've added on the online course element. And that really indicates to me that you've made a lot of progress despite you say you find yourself feeling like it's the same, because you have a lot of the same clients and you're making the same income. But having the online course means you are expanding and you're trying to create some of that passive income, which does happen pretty naturally for a lot of freelancers. I've found it has happened for me and for many of my friends where we do the very same thing, we have a freelance service that we offer and then we end up teaching other people how to do it, and that becomes the business and it flows from there. And I've seen that exact pattern play out so many times, and so it's exciting to see that something like that's unfolding for you. So tell me about this online course and how long have you had it and what are you teaching in the online course and what kind of results are you seeing so far and what are you learning in the process?

Korryn: Because I've spent so much time building out courses for my clients, I had the tech side down pat, so it was really about teasing out the content. And it came from my onboarding process basically, I've been having the same conversations with different various clients as they come through, helping them out, where they're at with their admin, why are they doing things a certain way, what tech are they using? And I just tease it out to a two week, the drip feed course that you sort of step through. And it's basically my onboarding process with my clients. And I also have done a few admin audits for a couple of clients, which is the consulting side of things. A lot of that is in there as well, that I help them sort of tease out, okay, what are you doing now and how can we streamline that? Because sometimes they're not quite ready to bring on an actual VA. So I found that even just that process of sitting down with them and going through that brought a lot of value to them. So there's only one of me and so many hours. So that's where I thought, "Okay, this is actually doable in an online course format." It's been out in

the wilderness for, I think three months now. I think I've had about 10 people through it. That's nothing to sneeze at.

Caitlin: No, it's certainly not.

Korryn: Yeah. And just all the feedback I've had is and especially the moment that is been said, okay, that's really given me something to make a plan of attack on where I'm falling down for my admin and then they'll eventually have that plan of attack to take to a VA, which is usually a lot of the legwork that they need upfront anyway.

Caitlin: Yeah, I'm curious how you can help someone find out when they're ready to hire a VA versus them doing the admin themselves?

Korryn: And I find a lot of my clients, they start out saying, "Oh, I need a VA." And then once we step through what it is they're actually needing help with, it's usually just a refining of what they're doing, not so much they're needing extra hands on deck, which is the interesting part. They go, "Oh, I can manage that myself if I stop doing this, this, and this. And just use this tool here." And one less client for me, which is okay, because then they actually got their head around the mechanics of what they're doing. But then other times they'll go through and like, "Oh, okay, this is much bigger than I thought. All right, I'm going to have to outsource some of this for me to do this side of it." It's all different variations I've found.

Caitlin: I think it's a really valuable service. I know for me, I recently hired a new assistant here on location. I've got an amazing team that nobody lives anywhere closer than 90 minutes away. And so it was a little hard to have some help on location. And so I just brought someone on and the reason why I finally did it and sat down, wrote down all the things that the assistant could be me with was because I spend enough time doing it myself, to where I enjoyed it, I felt like I had good control of my environment and a good schedule and some discipline and some pride in my work, keeping the house clean and it's a lot to manage and I've been divorced for a year. And so, and I wasn't used to or planning on living in this house by myself. So it's been a lot to learn how to manage. It's a big responsibility to take on and I resisted it for a long time. But now what I'm finding is that I'm using that administrative management stuff that I've learned to enjoy as an excuse to procrastinate doing things in my business that I might be afraid of. And so the source of real growth is going to be realizing, "Hey, I've got to outsource some of this admin stuff so I can make time for the things that are really going to move things forward in my business and ultimately help most people, including the person I hire as my assistant, who's also going to learn a lot." She's younger than me, she is wanting to start a freelance business of her own with some skills that she already has. So she's going to learn a whole lot. I don't know if she knows what she was in for, but we're going to have some fun and learning from each other and I'm looking forward to it. So I think it's a very valuable service and something that's in demand and sometimes people may find themselves in situations like I find myself and now, and maybe just don't realize it yet. But when they do, then you're going to be the first person that they go to, to figure out what kind of stuff they can offload.

Korrbyn: Yeah. A lot of the time people are running around with their hair on fire, and then when they actually sit down and they go, "Actually no, I need not so much that, but I need more of this." So asking the right questions is ... and unless you've actually been in the trenches doing it, that's what I find that a lot of people go, "Oh yeah. So that's not quite what I need." But it's a process that, I just found having the conversation over and over and over again. So that's just how it evolved.

Caitlin: Is this the first time that you've had a baby at home, or since you've been working from home or have your other children also been this age while you've had your business?

Korrbyn: I started my business roughly when my eldest was the same age. But he was going to Kindey a lot more and two is completely different to one. So it's been an interesting juggle -- thankfully, the school's gone back recently, so that's sort of helping things along again. But having the two of them home and homeschooling my eldest has proved to be a really big time sucker.

Caitlin: Yeah, and at this time, just to let our audience know we're recording this in the week after things have started opening back up, at least here in the US and I think heard also for Australia after this coronavirus thing, and things are really starting to wake up in the world and people are remembering how to participate in society and hopefully with more open eyes about things that they can feel grateful for in their lives and businesses.

Korrbyn: Things have just started opening up here in Queensland, other parts of the country up sort of moving along. So yeah, my eldest has just gone back to school, so I've been doing this with him at home, homeschooling as well. So that was another interesting moment with hubby also working from home, who's not lonely at home. So it really puts you in laser focus, "Okay. What can I manage today?" And that's kind of, what's --

Caitlin: What's it been like with your husband at home as well? Is he going back to work soon in the office? Can he work from home on an extended basis now? Or does he not want to do that?

Korrbyn: Yeah, he's worked from home here and there previously, but this is the first time we've both been in the same office or same room for an extended period of time. It's interesting; he's really struggled with that adjustment of coming home, whereas I kind of thrive in it. Hence why I've been in business now, nearly four years. Yeah, there's no talk yet of when they're going to let them go back to the office or anything like that. Thankfully, I had the office set up because I'm running from home. So it was kind of a quick transition for him to be home, but it's interesting that he's missing that social aspect so much, which I didn't expect from him. But yeah, it's interesting, we've really tagged him with the kids too. So I've been doing a lot of nights while he's been in the office during the day, because he's full time. So yeah, it's been keeping the kids away from him because they can be little interrupters at the best of times. But that's been really

good for my business too in that I can shift things so easily as well. It was kind of a sliding scale of, "Okay, I can fit this work in these hours." I was doing a lot of afternoons, evenings. So yeah, it's been an interesting transition.

Caitlin: Yeah, it's certainly a growth opportunity. And I would definitely say you've improved your mindset from what you've been sharing over the last two years. And you mentioned that for you, it wasn't about the money, your business, it was about the trust and connections that you have in your business. It's more important for you. And I really like that it's keeping those ongoing relationships with your clients that you so value. That's really the bread and butter of life, right? And people say bread and butter in more of a financial context, but in the lessons that I've learned from being in business and building something and getting burned a couple of times, and of course getting divorced, the bread and butter of life, isn't money, it's those and connections with people that you actually trust. And you also had said that those connections and your mentors are the main thing that you attributed to your growth since the last time you spoke. Can you tell us more about that?

Korryn: I am thankful to be a part of a couple of really close knit networks here in Australia and look all online, of course. But the business owners that have sort of got ahead in business that just can't help but follow along with what they're doing, what works for them and what could work for you. One's specific to the virtual assistant industry, which is always good to be amongst your peers. Just that having that and working virtually you need to have those connections to keep in the loop, current times have just proved that even more. So just keeping that angle, it's sort of opened my eyes to possibilities more so, because you can very easily get into your own little silo when you're working home and on your own. It just makes things a little bit more bearable when you can bounce ideas off people who get it as well. And then on top of that, my clients are also my mentors, like I said, I've still got the same clients. I've picked up a few extra on the way, but where they are and their businesses, I'm learning a lot from them too. And they actually come back to me with feedback as well. So when they say, "Oh, there's an opportunity here for you." They actually do that as well, which is nice because you sort of think, "Oh, but I'm just a service provider." But it's a two way street when they say, "Oh yeah, you could so do that. Why don't you go after that opportunity?" So, it's quite good that I've got that relationship all around to keep me out of my own head, so to speak.

Caitlin: Yeah, definitely. And from what it sounds like you are growing internally and you know it, it's an internal growth thing and that's going to manifest an external growth very soon from what you're telling me, it's what it sounds like to me. And that's exciting to think about, because I think a big mistake people make when they want to get into freelancing or online business in general, is that's going to happen really fast. And then all of a sudden they've got this business and everything's hunky dory. Well, sometimes it doesn't always happen like that and they aren't making the money that they want. So they quit and give up. And they're not focusing on the inner stuff that you've been focusing on. And that's a huge mistake because if you don't focus on that, that's why the three steps in my book are break free, level up, and launch. If you skip the breaking free from the lies that hold you back and you don't become

aware of those things, then leveling up is going to be a whole lot harder and actually launching your business and being successful, earning money and your business is going to be so much harder. And a lot of people think you just have to take action and launch and not really caring about what's going on in the inside and why you don't already have what you say you want so badly, right?

Korryn: Yeah, absolutely. One of my clients is a mindset coach and I think we've been working together about 18 months now, everything you just said, it's really interesting that yeah, I've sort of been really working on that. I'm really good at doing the do, but I really need to make sure that I'm enjoying doing the do. And that's where my shift in services came too, because I can do the admin until the cows come home. I did hit a patch of where I was just on the treadmill running and sort of looking around and going, "Well, this isn't ticking a lot of boxes for me right now." But I've managed to make that shift with my current clients too -- it's not like I've just burned all the bridges and gone, "Okay, I'm changing up everything in how I do." I've actually said to my clients, "Okay, this is the way I see things working. Do you want to say, we can keep going with where we are? We can shift it." And all of them have said, "Yep. Okay. Yeah, I'll get you to do that sort of thing more so now." It does take a lot of internal dialogue with myself to be brave enough to say that too, because --

Caitlin: I bet there's a lot of people who would never dream of thinking they could reach out and have that kind of conversation with their clients. So, excellent example you're setting for sure. And I can imagine the nerves that you might feel when you're kind of wondering how the client's going to react, but that's where those strong relationships I think come into play where you know you guys have that kind of relationship and they can appreciate the fact that you've thought this through and you're actually making your systems more efficient. And you take some time to lay out the plan before you just email them haphazardly because things aren't going the way you want them. And then a week later, you didn't foresee something happening as part of your plan that you implemented and now you have to retract it and then it becomes annoying and you don't become a pleasure, you become a displeasure to work with at that point. Well, Korryn, We've got to wrap this up. I wish I could keep talking to you. I want to give people a chance to find out more information and to ask you some questions. So of course, we're going to tag you in the Work-At-Home Heroes Facebook group. Where else online can our listeners connect with you and just say hi and congratulations, or maybe ask you some questions?

Korryn: I'm on Instagram at Encore admin, E-N-C-O-R-E-A-D-M-I-N. My website, which will be tagged in the notes later, [encoreadminconsulting.com.au](http://encoreadminconsulting.com.au) And Facebook, same [encoreadminconsulting.com.au](http://encoreadminconsulting.com.au). Yeah, the main culprits.

Caitlin: Awesome. Well, it's been a pleasure. Thank you so much. And guys listening at home, you can get the first five chapters of my book, *Work at Home*, for free by going to [workathomeschool.com/book](http://workathomeschool.com/book). And if you like and follow this podcast, please give us a review on your preferred podcast platform. It really helps us reach more people and bring more great content. Finally, you can find more episodes at [workathomeschool.com/podcast](http://workathomeschool.com/podcast).