

Ep. 21: Making A Solo Move With Ellis

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Matilyn Mortensen: Good morning friends. Happy Wednesday. I am really looking forward to today because the high is supposed to be in the low seventies. And also it's supposed to rain tonight. And looking at the forecast, it looks like temperatures in Salt Lake and in Utah are finally going to start dropping. And I am so ready for that. It truly, truly should not be over a hundred degrees in September in Salt Lake. So I'm really excited that we're trending in the correct direction of temperature for the time of year that we are in.

Matilyn Mortensen: Welcome back to the podcast, I just got back from visiting Southern Utah for work. Which was really fun. Also very tiring because it's a long days. But the red rock desert in Utah is such a magical landscape. And especially since it was starting to get a little bit rainy this week. You had the really pretty gray sky against the beautiful red rocks. And it's just kind of a magical. Other worldly experience that if you haven't haven't ever done or haven't ever visited is worth checking

Matilyn Mortensen: This week is the Utah Women in the Money conference. The first session is tomorrow evening that one's really targeted at young adult women starting their financial journeys. And then on Friday, there's a whole day conference and you can attend either one in person for free with the code Matilyn 22. So definitely check that out if you're interested and if you can't attend in person, You can sign up online to attend for free. And if you can't watch live, you'll be able to have access to those sessions later. So definitely a great tool to check out in helping yourself become more financially stable.

Matilyn Mortensen: At the end of August, I went to Montana to visit my friend Ellis who had just started a new job there earlier in the summer. And we had a lot of fun. We painted pottery. We ate dinner at this really, really cute little restaurant that had this balcony that was up above the city. So we could kind of like see all the parts of the city. And we were in the trees and looking at those really pretty mountain. We had breakfast at this wonderful little bakery. We went to cool bookstores. We went to a fun thrift store. We went to a music festival. We just had a super great time.

Matilyn Mortensen: And so this week, my guest is actually Ellis she's going to talk to us about her experience moving to a new state, a new city for a job alone. Her partner is living in a different city, getting a PhD and she is working remotely. So I really wanted to talk to her about what she's doing to help herself adjust to this place where she doesn't have natural connections that you might have if you moved somewhere. I mean, going somewhere for work means you have colleagues who can invite you to things or give you tips on what to go and what to try. And I think it's really exciting and a little bit terrifying to be figuring that out on your own. But I also feel like it would be really empowering. So I wanted to sit down with Ellis. I wanted to learn about what had been good, what had been hard and what she had been doing to become comfortable in the new place that she is calling home.

Matilyn Mortensen: Thank you so much for being here. I'm really looking forward to chatting with you.

Ellis: Thank you for having me. I'm excited to be part of this.

Matilyn Mortensen: Before we get started in our conversation, will you take a minute and introduce yourself?

Ellis: I'm Ellis. I just moved to Montana several months ago to start a Report for America job with Yellowstone Public Radio. So I'm the state house reporter based in Helena, Montana. And I am a wildlife biologist, turned journalist thanks, large in part to Mattie and my time at Utah Public Radio. I have two dogs that are my whole life. One more than the other. My border collie Finley is not my favorite creature on this earth at the moment. Mostly because he just keeps eating food off the table. But yeah, I don't know what else you want to know about me.

Matilyn Mortensen: No, that's perfect. Did Finley still get sent to live with someone else for a minute?

Ellis: Finley is going to his father's this weekend and he is not coming back with us. We are all going to visit his father this weekend and then Finley is staying there forever. There's a small gap in the fence at the new house that Matt has to like, fill in with fencing. So I gave him this week to do it. And then I said, whether or not the fence is done, he is going to live with you for the foreseeable. Forever. .

Matilyn Mortensen: Yeah, sometimes everyone just needs a little break. So hopefully that will be good for all parties.

Ellis: Yeah. I just feel like a, be believed single mother right now, and it's just really not a role I ever wanted in my life, given that I don't want children to begin with.

Matilyn Mortensen: I love that. Yeah. So your job at Helena is really cool. It's really exciting. It was like a very competitive application process. It's just really cool that you have it. However, it's also like a little bit of a tricky thing because you moved to Helena. Where you don't know anyone for a job where you are going to be remote because you're the state house reporter. So you're not with the rest of your team and then your partner is getting a PhD somewhere else. So tell me a little bit about deciding to do this exciting thing, but knowing that I would mean that you were going to be alone maybe a little bit more than you wanted to be.

Ellis: I think for me, what I do for work has always been really important to me. I've always been really driven and kind of on a set trajectory, whatever that trajectory may be. And granted I, switched completely after getting my master's in ecology this last spring to moving into this field of journalism, but it's really important to me to have a job that I find fulfilling and meaningful. As I was getting ready to graduate, my partner Matt was living in Logan with me going while I was going to grad school working a job that was just kind a job that allowed him to be near me in the same place as me, I guess I should say. And so when we were thinking about next steps and Matt got accepted into this grad program, it was a really constant kind of topic of conversation of just like we, we always have agreed that we never wanna limit each other and hold each other back from opportunities. And it's really important, I think, to have your own identity outside of your relationship and Matt and I often say we're only as good together as we are a part. And so I really wanted a job that was going to be meaningful and exciting and I feel really lucky, large in part to have gotten a position in Montana. Cause there were certainly jobs I applied for elsewhere where it was like, oh, this would be three flights for me to try to get to see Matt. And that might be a little too far, even though I'm willing to do the distance thing for a while.

Ellis: So yeah, I think deciding to come to Helena was definitely a big decision, especially after going through COVID and being with Matt 24 7 doing grad school from home. And he was working from home and really just being in my super, insulated, isolated family unit of me and my partner in our two dogs. And then just deciding to, pick up and move my life in a U-Haul with my mom's help to Helena where I had never been before and I'd never seen my apartment. I'd never been here and I just picked up and went. I'm excited to be here and I just. I was really excited about the Yellowstone Public Radio job and the

opportunities that it would provide me with. And I just decided to go for it. And here I am three months later.

Matilyn Mortensen: So just tell me a little bit then about what's been good and what's been hard what's been the adjustment process of being in a new place and doing the new things.

Ellis: The things that have been good have also been the things that have been hard in some ways. I think learning a new place is really fun. Helena has a ton of outdoor opportunities. I love to run and hike with my dogs, and there are so many different trails here that we're constantly exploring new trails every weekend and going out on cool adventures. And so that's really fun, but it's also intimidating to go to places, especially coming from Utah where we don't have things like grizzly bears and wolves. And obviously they're not like grizzly bears and wolves around every corner in Montana, but it's a legitimate threat. And I have to hike with bear spray with my two dogs by myself. And that's something I've never really had to consider or be worried about before. Things like that are definitely take some adjusting and then kind of along that same line, a lot of trails that I like to go and explore are in areas that take me out of cell service. And there are those moments of like, oh man, if I like blew a tire out, I'm in the middle of nowhere with no cell service and I don't even really know where I am and no one else knows where I am and it's just me and the dogs so that's been a intimidating and then just living alone again. It's been so long since I lived alone that took some getting used to and I would say I really hate cooking for one person. Like I just, I don't have the motivation to cook for myself in the way that I do when Matt's here. And I'll make dinner for the two of us. And even then I always make too much food. So with just me, it's I can eat the same thing for dinner for five nights in a row. If I cook a big meal and that's just not fun. You don't want the same thing after like night two.

Matilyn Mortensen: No. I often felt that as nice as leftovers are in theory, I have to be so careful because it's just so easy to be like, no, I can never eat that again.

Ellis: Yes. Yeah. I did that with a few dishes early on in the Helena days. And I hate wasting foods. Like I'm, I'll force myself to eat it, but normally Matt will eat anything. So in the past I rely on him to eat the leftovers. I don't wanna eat anymore, but now it's just me holding down the leftovers.

Matilyn Mortensen: Hey, Finley's tried to help you out.

Ellis: That's true. That's true. Finley would like the record to show that he is more than willing to eat the leftovers, but nobody needs that.

Matilyn Mortensen: No, nobody needs that.

Matilyn Mortensen: So tell me a little bit then about how you've been adjusting to the changes of living on your own again, and trying to find things to do as you're getting to know a new place. And you need to meet new people, you need to have new hobbies. What have you been doing to help yourself adjust to those changes?

Ellis: I think a big one for me is I'm pretty introverted. People don't believe me when I say that because I'm chatty, but they don't know that being chatty then requires me to go home and sleep for a day. But I think that for me, I have to be really proactive about getting out and about and doing things. And so building those things into my routine kind of way ahead of schedule can be really useful for me to not end up just like being at home all the time, because I live here and I work here and I could spend a lot of my day in this apartment that I live in.

Ellis: I joined a yoga studio when I first moved here and I try to like, look at the schedule, figure out when the classes are gonna be, and build those into my week and plan ahead so that I know I'm gonna go to that thing and I'm committed to it. And even if I don't want to, like I already signed up online or I already wrote it into my planner and. I have to go now kind of a thing. So definitely being like proactive about that sort of thing, because in the moment when I get off work and I'm tired and I've been sitting at my desk all day I don't really want to go anywhere, but if I don't go anywhere, I can, that's when I feel really like lonely and isolated and that's when it gets tough. And I think having the dogs is a huge help because I can't just stay home. They'll be crawling up the walls, wanting to go out and do something. So that's a good, like kick in the pants when I have the days where I don't wanna get up and do anything.

Ellis: I've done a lot of just looking at are happening. Like when is farmer's market going on? And is there a concert in the park or things like that, that I can build into my schedule too. And then another thing I did is when I first moved here, I kind sat down on the all trails app, which is like an app that has hiking trails near you listed and you can pick what you, or filter them by what you want and a bunch of other stuff. And so I sat down with that app and I made a list of all the trails that I wanted to go to in Helena. And then I wrote out like the mileage. So on days where it's like, oh, I got off work like a little early. I have like four hours of sunlight. And especially in the summer in Montana, it doesn't get dark till 10 o'clock at night, sometimes. So plenty of after work daylight to

take advantage of, and then I could go and pick a hike that was the mileage that worked for the time that I had. And then just building in like fun activities that I would probably do if Matt was here and just going and doing them myself. So I think I call it, like taking myself on a date when you and I have talked about it before, but yeah, like if there's a new restaurant, I wanna try, like maybe I'll, go there by myself with a book. And if you'd ask me a year ago, if I'd eat alone at a restaurant, I would just laughed at you and said like, no, why would I ever do that? But it can be fun and it's fun to get out and about and do stuff. Even though sometimes my introvert soul is maybe I should just stay home again and do nothing again. But I never feel that great when I do that.

Matilyn Mortensen: I really like what you say that it takes, like building it into your schedule and planning ahead because like you said, when the moment comes if you're tired, if you're feeling out of energy and sometimes you do need rest, but sometimes it's just getting over the hump. And so if it's a plan, if it's a habit, if it's something that's scheduled, that could be the ooph to get you over the hump to be doing what you wanna be doing.

Ellis: Yeah. And I have met a handful of people here. And so another thing I'll do is make plans to go to do something with someone. And then obviously I am held accountable and I have to go, but especially if it's something I've been wanting to do and maybe been like scared to do on my own, like there's this yoga class at my rock climbing gym that's really early on Thursday morning. So I was like really intimidated about going to o just cuz rock climbing gym yoga classes can be really hard. And I knew a girl here and she's a member at the gym and we got to talking and I was like, Hey, we should go. And we went one time and it got me up and got me out of bed at an early hour to get to the gym by 7:00 AM. And it was awesome and really fun. And now I go to that every week. So yeah, I think the first step is the hardest.

Matilyn Mortensen: So when it comes to meeting people, is it like through the yoga studio that you've met them? What are some of the different ways? Because you're not going to work. Like I feel like that's what you're in a do place a way you meet a lot of people. So where have you been finding the people that you've been becoming friends with or acquaintances with?

Ellis: Yeah, that's a great question. And I think I'm still figuring it out. There's a really cool bookstore here in Helena that I go and hang out at and have met some folks through that in the book world. And Helen's just not that big of a place. So odds are, if you like meet someone one time, you'll probably run into them at the grocery store or at farmer's market or whatever else. So that's useful. I also have a very outgoing friend, Max, who has been visiting and he just will

go up to people and be like, this is Ellis. Like she's new to Helena like you should be her friends, which I hate, but I'm thankful for after the fact, but during I want nothing more than curl into a ball and hide forever. But yeah, I think just like telling people I'm new here and being like transparent about that, people are always really welcoming and nice when I do say that, and then I actually, I like have met a few people on Twitter because the Twitter algorithm was just like, Hey, you're a young person who lives in Helena. Here's another young person who lives in Helena and we're gonna put this person in your feed, even though I don't follow them or like have any people in common, I guess we do really have people in common because in Montana it's five degrees of separation at any given time. So that's been helpful. And then, yeah, just like chatting with people at, in yoga classes or like at events that I might go to, but it is definitely something I have to be super proactive about because I work solo.

Ellis: So that's been a huge adjustment. Cause before this, I was in grad school where you just have a whole bucket of friends because you all start grad school together at the same time. And you're all going through the same experience. And it's like freshman year of college all over again where it's just like, here are all of these people that with a built in schedule that matches yours and shared interests and hobbies. And it's almost like too easy in grad school. With Matt now being in grad school, he's like meeting all these people and he keeps telling me like how easy it is. And I'm like yeah, cuz everyone's handed you on a silver platter. Like here's a person who is interested in all the same things as you who's also now starting grad school. Like it's very easy. But yeah, it's definitely been tough, but I think I'm getting there. I don't know. I sometimes I feel like should I know more people by now, but I'm not really an incredibly outgoing person by nature. So I think knowing a handful of folks is pretty good for me.

Matilyn Mortensen: It's three months that you've been working remotely. So I think it seems like you're going at what I would anticipate would be the pace one would be going at .

Ellis: Yeah. There's no like guidebook on this stuff, so I'm just figuring it out.

Matilyn Mortensen: There's not.

Ellis: I know, I wish that there was just like a community like co board or something where I could be like, Hey, I have, I love to hike with someone who can put up with my two crazy dogs if you are looking for. But that's not a thing in today's world.

Matilyn Mortensen: I mean it is, but I think usually people find it on Facebook, Ellis.

Ellis: Yeah. We all know how I feel about social media. I only have Twitter for work.

Matilyn Mortensen: Yeah. I'm not saying it works that great, but yes. Unfortunately I feel like Facebook is the closest thing there is to community cork board anymore, which really is too bad.

Ellis: Yeah. It is a tragedy nowadays with that being our only option.

Matilyn Mortensen: So I really love the idea of taking yourself on a date. I'm a very firm believer in that, and I just am a firm believer in it's important to do the things you want to do now and not wait to do them with other people. So I love like the trying restaurants on your own. Something we were texting you about was that you were like trying to, and. And maybe it hasn't been as formal as this, but you were trying to do like at least one new thing a week that you were trying to like, like you said, like consciously building into your schedule. So can you tell me if you're still trying to do like one new thing a week, or maybe you found the things that are your patterns, maybe what some of those favorite things are some of the ones you feel that are more unique or just that you're like, I'm gonna remember that I really enjoyed.

Ellis: Yeah. So my one new thing week thing was going really well until about late July when it started getting really hot. And I hate the heat, which is not great for the current world that we live in that is only getting hotter, but I really can't stand being hot. And so it's changed my kind of one new thing, a week thing in some ways, cause a lot of what I was doing was like outdoor stuff. So that's been difficult, but I did take myself to farmer's market just like completely solo the first time I went. And that was really fun. There's a big farmer's market here on Saturdays. And I found out that it's dog friendly. So now I'll take one or both of the dogs with me too, but I go to that pretty much every weekend if I'm in town. And then I've transitioned from like doing things on weeknights, just because it's been hot and work's been really busy to like planning big, like one big weekend event. So if it's like a hike that's a, two hour drive away or something a little more involved that's been what I've been doing lately, trying to explore like outside of Helena and some of these other areas, because I'm totally new to Montana and don't know anything outside of west Yellowstone where I went growing up a bunch, but that's it.

Ellis: So yeah, that's been fun. I'm trying to think what else I do. I've now visited every coffee shop in town. So I was doing like a coffee shop tour. And since I work remote, sometimes if I don't have interviews to do or audio to record, I'll go work at a coffee shop. So that's been fun and I've tried I try to try a new drink at each new coffee shop. So I just ask them what's really good, but also really sugary, because don't really like the taste of coffee that much. So Matt always says, I like a little bit of coffee with my sugar, which is accurate . But yeah, so I've done that a bit and then. Just like, I think, yeah. I had a list of new restaurants to try and I've tried a lot of them. So have some favorite coffee shops now that I like to go to. And there's one spot in town that doesn't allow laptops. It's like a electronics free cafe. And so a lot of times I will go there with a new book and just give myself like two or three hours to be there and they always are playing good music and there's always like colorful characters coming in and out. So it's like fun people watching and just like hanging out and they make a really great London fog, which is like my very favorite drink and not a lot of places make really fancy fun tea drinks. So I'll go there and with a book and curl up in a little booth, they have these like cool little booths and, and read or journal or do whatever and be out and about doing maybe what I would be doing at home, but out in a, in a new fun place with a fun drink.

Matilyn Mortensen: That is so fun. I love the idea of picking a category and doing all of the things in that category, like going to all the coffee shops or going to all the bookstores or going to all the thrift stores, like that's another great way to build it into your schedule, to like, make a rule of the thing you're doing. So you don't have to think about it too much, but then it adds a little bit of variety because there are different things in the category to try.

Ellis: Yeah. And I think it's a nice way to like, Get out and explore. I even did like a list of all the laundromats in town. Cause my apartment doesn't have a washer dryer, and I was like, I'm gonna go to a different laundromat for every load of laundry, just to see different parts of town and learn the area. And it's been fun. I definitely have a favorite laundromat now though. I will say.

Matilyn Mortensen: You could also do all the grocery stores, like depending on where you at do all the grocery stores and learn like what bakery items they carried and which one had a better vibe and which produce you felt was better quality. That would be another fun one to try all the things of

Ellis: Yes. And then when I'm homesick or missing Utah, I go to Crumbl Cookies and I always tell myself I'm gonna get something new. And I always get a chocolate chip cookie. And you know how I feel about Crumbl.

Matilyn Mortensen: I do I do. I think that was the sweetest. When we found out that the Crumbl was so close to your home, it's like, it's gonna be okay.

Ellis: Yeah. I do go there in the days where it's like, I'm missing home and I feel alone in this place. Like, Crumbl cookies are already the most comforting food you could ever eat. And then to have them, like in a new, strange place, just feels like a little piece of home.

Matilyn Mortensen: That's really fun. Not to get like sappy or like overly philosophical, but what do you feel like kind like if you were gonna identify like guiding principles that you feel like have really helped you with this adjustment and as you're learning to be learning to live alone again, and also just being alone in a completely new way, because you're in this, you're in just a completely unfamiliar city. What do you feel like the guiding principles or the threads that you've been starting to pull up from this experience are?

Ellis: Yeah, that's interesting. I think that I try to think about the things that I really like to do that maybe are not things that I'll do like when Matt is here or that I'll do with Matt. So I love yoga. Matt hates yoga. So I practice a ton of yoga. The living room is like nine times out of 10 all my furniture is push up against the walls and my living room is really just a yoga space and that's super fun. I could never do that at home cuz Matt would be like, what are you doing? Why is the furniture all over everywhere? That's been a common thread for me now, living alone again. When I met my partner, I was super independent. I was working seasonal jobs, living out of my Subaru with my one dog. And I used to like, kind of romanticize that time in my mind and look back on it and think, especially after we got engaged, it was like, wow, I'm never gonna be on my own like that like totally independent, like I was. And so it's been a kind of empowering to be like, hey, I can go and be on my own and do this stuff and figure it out. And I don't think I'll ever have the cooking for one thing down. And I'll like, willingly admit that. But I think in all other ways, it's been like, Hey, I can do this.

Ellis: And I really like to play music and just like dance around in my house, like a weirdo. And I really need to know that no one can see me when I'm doing that. So I do that a lot now, too. There's some really goofy YouTube dance workout videos that they'll do to like pop songs that are on right now or different things. They try to teach you the choreography, but I always just flail around through it cause I'm just tall and gangly, but it's fun to do the things that I wouldn't normally do when my partner is here and when I have just someone else or other people in my house. So that's been a big thing.

Ellis: And then I think too, just like really thinking about what I enjoy doing outside of my job. My job has been really demanding, trying to learn just the climate and the culture of a new state and learning my beat and figuring out the area has been a ton of work. And so it's been really important for me to have like a super clear like end of the work day and start of the like I'm off work now, even though I'm still in the same place that I was in all day while I worked, like now it's time to, close the laptop, put away all the papers, turn on some goofy music and dance or do whatever that is. So that transition has been like really important for me. And then just, yeah, like revisiting hobbies that I maybe have forgotten in my. I don't wanna say married likes we're not married, but in my, serious cohabitation life. So I love to cross stitch. I love doing puzzles. I love doing puzzles and I get really annoyed if my puzzle is moved or touched in any way, which is like impossible to not happen when you live with someone. So I have been doing puzzles, which is nice and yeah, just trying new recipes or cooking stuff that maybe Matt wouldn't necessarily like to eat.

Ellis: And. Yeah. Doing some different things. And then I've been reading a ton and giving myself complete total permission to only read fiction books. Because usually I feel like guilty. Like I should be reading the nonfiction or I should be reading something more intellectually stimulating. And it's like, no, you know what if I wanna read about dragons and like dungeons and moats and all of that for the next five books that I'm going to. So be it and it's fun and I enjoy it and I could take my book with me to try something new.

Ellis: And I always have a book to BA as a backup to hide my face in. If I don't wanna talk to anyone.

Matilyn Mortensen: Ah, oh, there are so many good things in there. On the book thing I saw this really like cute, I think it was a tweet that someone repurposed at Instagram that said they were a teacher and they were going to change how they were talking about fiction and non-fiction with their elementary students. And that they were gonna say non-fiction is learning through information and fiction is learning through your imagination. And I thought that was like a very good thing, because I don't think fiction reading is less than non-fiction reading.

Ellis: Yeah. Yeah. I like that. I also, my dad always says, he's like, you know, reading is better than not reading, so it doesn't really matter what you're reading because it's better than the alternative of you staring at the wall or watching TV or doing whatever else. And so love that. Yeah. It's been fun to have just a lot of unadulterated time to just read and get totally lost in a book, which I haven't done in a while.

Matilyn Mortensen: I love that what you're doing is focusing on what makes being alone, a rich and fun experience and not trying to recreate the experience of when you have your partner there, or when you're in a place where you knew more people. There's a podcast that I really liked where they started it during the pandemic, helping people with cooking from like what they had at their house. And so people would email them in and would ask about substitutions and the one woman on it who was a really good cook. She said, you know, sometimes you can do a substitution, but sometimes you look at the ingredients you have and you make a different recipe that makes sense with the ingredients you have, because it's better to make that recipe really well, instead of making something okay with the wrong ingredients. And I think that a lot with like gluten free cooking or any kind of cooking, that's like trying to accommodate for allergens, that it's true, that you can do substitutions and sometimes those work really well, but sometimes it's better to just make something that is good the way it is with the proper ingredients, rather than trying to change them. And I think about like single life, like there are things you sometimes wanna do to like have company or to do things that you like. But part of what makes it rich is recognizing that it is its own unique experience when you're like doing things on your own and that trying to recreate what it was when you have someone in your life or what it would be if there is someone in your life can lead to a, subpar experience, that's not satisfactory because it doesn't celebrate the richness of the experience you're having.

Ellis: Yeah. Yeah. I like that. That metaphor of making a different recipe with the ingredients that you have. And I think I've definitely tried to do that and been intentional about that. And I find that the hardest days and the hardest times are the times where I'm, I forget that. And I'm, cause it's certainly not all smile and trying to rainbow bows and solo adventures. There's definitely days where I wish nothing more than to have Matt here or to have close friends here that I could call up to go and do something with me, but I definitely struggle more with the way that my life is now when I'm, when I'm wishing for what I can't have. Rather than going out and enjoying the opportunities that are available to me in the form of kind of solo time.

Matilyn Mortensen: Yeah. Anything else you wanna add before we close?

Ellis: I don't think so. I think it's really important to have an identity outside of your relationship. And I always really felt that way, but definitely in the process of COVID I really lost that. And I don't think that was a bad thing. I don't think it was really possible for me to have a life outside of my relationship when my relationship was like the only other human being I saw for six or seven months. And that is what it is, but I think that, Matt and I always talk about like, you

bring so much more into your relationship when you have a rich and fulfilling independent life. And I think that's something that's been really exciting and interesting to like rediscover, even though Matt and I are more committed or together, so to speak than ever before being engaged, planning a wedding, all of that stuff. But also at the same time, I'm like rediscovering my solo life. So that's been, it's been cool and I think for anyone who is in a relationship, I think it's just really important to, to remember who you are outside of your relationship, and that only makes your relationship better and stronger. And, And when I do get to be with Matt again, now I get to share all the things I've been doing and tell him about stuff or take him back to a restaurant. I went to that I really liked that I thought he would like and experience it anew with him. So yeah, I think that's been cool and I'm a big big advocate of being your own person? I think it, it just makes you a better partner.

Matilyn Mortensen: I love that. I love everything you shared. It's been so much fun to hear more about your time in Montana. Thank you so much for joining me.

Ellis: Thank you for having me. It's been nice talking with you.

Matilyn Mortensen: Thank you for listening today and thank you to Ellis for her time. I am so glad that each of you are a part of my podcast community. I think this is a really, really cool space. We're having important conversations . That not only empower, but also celebrate. Single women and that's something I think we need more of in the world.

Matilyn Mortensen: If you're liking these conversations, the best thing you can do is rate and review the podcast on Apple Podcasts. When you do that, the podcast is recommended to other listeners, and then it helps other people who can benefit through these conversations find the podcast. And the podcast growing means that I will have the ability to ask more and more exciting and influential guests. I listened to a great podcast with Mindy Kahling this week about the stigma of being single. And I mean, I'm just saying, I think she would be one of the ultimate single women guests. So. I guess my plug is if you review this podcast, And if lots of people review this podcast, maybe Mindy Kahling will be on this podcast at some day in the future.

Matilyn Mortensen: Remember that you can follow me on Instagram @not.a.backup.plan.. You can find me on Twitter @ MatilynKay. I love interacting with you. And I love getting to hear from you. Next week, I'm going

to share an episode about buying a home. I have a few episodes around this topic planned. And they have lots of helpful information for you, whether you're thinking you want to buy a home soon or whether you're just trying to figure out when, and if that might be a good option for you.

Matilyn Mortensen: In the meantime, remember, this is your life. It's not a plan