

Desis of Silicon Valley Speak: An Oral History
Ravisha Mathur Interview

00:00:03.199 --> 00:00:06.319

Interviewer (I) Okay so, thank you very much Ravisha

00:00:06.319 --> 00:00:08.160

(I) for agreeing to do

00:00:08.160 --> 00:00:09.679

(I) the interview.

00:00:09.679 --> 00:00:12.240

(I) I'm Mantra Roy from the Dr. Martin Luther

00:00:12.240 --> 00:00:14.960

(I) King Jr., Library at San Jose State

00:00:14.960 --> 00:00:17.199

(I) University and we're interviewing you

00:00:17.199 --> 00:00:18.080

(I) for

00:00:18.080 --> 00:00:20.480

(I) "Desis of Silicon Valley Speak: An Oral

00:00:20.480 --> 00:00:21.280

(I) History."

00:00:23.279 --> 00:00:24.960

(I) Thank you for your time

00:00:24.960 --> 00:00:26.640

(I) and

00:00:26.640 --> 00:00:28.960

(I) I'll get started with the first question

00:00:28.960 --> 00:00:31.199

(I) which is, please tell us about

00:00:31.199 --> 00:00:33.600

(I) yourself and describe your journey up

00:00:33.600 --> 00:00:35.920

(I) until now.

00:00:35.920 --> 00:00:39.120

Ravisha Mathur (RM) Okay, thank you Mantra. So

00:00:39.120 --> 00:00:41.120

(RM) my name is Ravisha Mathur

00:00:41.120 --> 00:00:44.640

(RM) and I am an American-born

00:00:44.640 --> 00:00:47.360

(RM) Indian American, so Indian American,

00:00:47.360 --> 00:00:50.480

(RM) and I was born in Pennsylvania.

00:00:50.480 --> 00:00:53.360

(RM) Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Grew up there. My

00:00:53.360 --> 00:00:55.280

(RM) both my parents are immigrants. My dad

00:00:55.280 --> 00:00:56.640

(RM) came here

00:00:56.640 --> 00:00:59.120

(RM) from India, from Aligarh

00:00:59.120 --> 00:01:00.399

(RM) to

00:01:01.520 --> 00:01:03.680

(RM) to get an education, to get his PhD at Purdue

00:01:03.680 --> 00:01:06.159

(RM) University. He went back after he

00:01:06.159 --> 00:01:07.680

(RM) finished his PhD, he went back and got

00:01:07.680 --> 00:01:09.280

(RM) married to my mother

00:01:09.280 --> 00:01:11.119

(RM) and then moved to Pittsburgh,

00:01:11.119 --> 00:01:13.840

(RM) Pennsylvania in December--in January

00:01:13.840 --> 00:01:16.640

(RM) 1967.

00:01:16.640 --> 00:01:19.680

(RM) Or 1968, 1968.

00:01:19.680 --> 00:01:20.640

(RM) And so

00:01:22.479 --> 00:01:24.320

(RM) I grew up there. I had all of my

00:01:24.320 --> 00:01:26.400

(RM) schooling experiences,

00:01:26.400 --> 00:01:29.840

(RM) you know, from Pre-K nursery school all

00:01:29.840 --> 00:01:31.920

(RM) the way up until,

00:01:31.920 --> 00:01:34.479

(RM) and including my bachelor's degree at

00:01:34.479 --> 00:01:36.799

(RM) Penn State, I lived in Pennsylvania. And

00:01:36.799 --> 00:01:39.360

(RM) then I, after completing my bachelor's

00:01:39.360 --> 00:01:41.040

(RM) degree

00:01:41.040 --> 00:01:42.640

(RM) in psychology, I went to Purdue

00:01:42.640 --> 00:01:44.079

(RM) University

00:01:44.079 --> 00:01:46.960

(RM) to get my master's and PhD in, again,

00:01:46.960 --> 00:01:48.320

(RM) psychology.

00:01:48.320 --> 00:01:50.560

(RM) Right after I graduated, actually I came

00:01:50.560 --> 00:01:52.560

(RM) to San Jose State even before I had

00:01:52.560 --> 00:01:54.960

(RM) finished my doctoral dissertation and

00:01:54.960 --> 00:01:57.280

(RM) started a faculty position here in, I

00:01:57.280 --> 00:02:00.640

(RM) think, 2002.

00:02:00.640 --> 00:02:02.960

(I) Okay. (RM) And so I,

00:02:02.960 --> 00:02:05.280

(RM) that's my educational journey

00:02:05.280 --> 00:02:06.960

(RM) and that's pretty much where I

00:02:06.960 --> 00:02:10.560

(RM) started, back in Pennsylvania.

00:02:10.560 --> 00:02:14.560

(RM) Growing up there, yeah, in the 70s and 80s.

(I) Okay

00:02:14.560 --> 00:02:17.599

(I) so, that means your, your experience

00:02:17.599 --> 00:02:20.080

(I) with Silicon Valley started in 2002 when

00:02:20.080 --> 00:02:21.760

(I) you took up a faculty position at San

00:02:21.760 --> 00:02:24.080

(I) Jose State.

(RM) Correct.

00:02:24.080 --> 00:02:25.760

(I) So...

00:02:25.760 --> 00:02:27.599

(RM) Slightly before, because my sister, my

00:02:27.599 --> 00:02:29.520

(RM) older sister and her husband were living

00:02:29.520 --> 00:02:30.640

(RM) here.

00:02:30.640 --> 00:02:33.440

(RM) So I'd been here several times

00:02:33.440 --> 00:02:35.280

(RM) to visit them when they were, you know,

00:02:35.280 --> 00:02:36.640

(RM) they were married

00:02:36.640 --> 00:02:38.959

(RM) in 1997, so I've been here

00:02:38.959 --> 00:02:42.879

(RM) several times (I) Yes.

(RM) throughout that

00:02:42.879 --> 00:02:46.480

(RM) since the late 90s to now, yeah.

00:02:46.480 --> 00:02:48.720

(I) Okay. So you have seen Silicon Valley

00:02:48.720 --> 00:02:50.319

(I) change

00:02:50.319 --> 00:02:51.519

(I) quite a bit.

00:02:51.519 --> 00:02:53.760

(RM) Yes.

00:02:53.760 --> 00:02:55.519

(RM) I've seen some things stay exactly the

00:02:55.519 --> 00:02:57.680

(RM) same and some things obviously change. I

00:02:57.680 --> 00:02:59.920

(RM) think, so when you think about like the

00:02:59.920 --> 00:03:02.159

(RM) real estate market that has fluctuated

00:03:02.159 --> 00:03:04.560

(RM) here in my time, because we were here

00:03:04.560 --> 00:03:06.720

(RM) during the big recession of 2008. We

00:03:06.720 --> 00:03:08.640

(RM) were here at the downfall of the

00:03:08.640 --> 00:03:11.200

(RM) startups in 2002, that's when we moved here

00:03:11.200 --> 00:03:12.720

(RM) actually.

00:03:12.720 --> 00:03:15.519

(RM) And then in 2008, when the big recession

00:03:15.519 --> 00:03:17.280

(RM) hit we were living here

00:03:17.280 --> 00:03:19.920

(RM) as well, so we've seen fluctuations in

00:03:19.920 --> 00:03:22.400

(RM) the economy here. (I) Right.

(RM) So we've seen,

00:03:22.400 --> 00:03:25.200

(RM) we've always seen that like tremendous

00:03:25.200 --> 00:03:27.680

(RM) proliferation of the tech industry

00:03:27.680 --> 00:03:28.400

(RM) in

00:03:28.400 --> 00:03:29.840

(RM) this area,

00:03:29.840 --> 00:03:31.120

(RM) which has been

00:03:31.120 --> 00:03:34.239

(RM) very interesting to kind of see the

00:03:34.239 --> 00:03:36.720

(RM) maintenance and the continuation of that

00:03:36.720 --> 00:03:39.200

(RM) idea of "Silicon Valley,"

(I) Right.

00:03:39.200 --> 00:03:41.760

(RM) tech center of the world, yeah.

(I) Yes.

00:03:41.760 --> 00:03:43.599

(I) So, and that kind of said it, and you're already

00:03:43.599 --> 00:03:45.680

(I) talking about it, so what does Silicon

00:03:45.680 --> 00:03:48.720

(I) Valley mean to you?

00:03:49.200 --> 00:03:51.519

(RM) What does Silicon Valley mean to me? So,

00:03:51.519 --> 00:03:53.680

(RM) it does mean in fact that we are the

00:03:53.680 --> 00:03:55.519

(RM) tech center,

00:03:55.519 --> 00:03:58.319

(RM) but over the last 17,

00:03:58.319 --> 00:04:01.040

(RM) 18 years, what I've also began to realize

00:04:01.040 --> 00:04:02.319

(RM) is that is just

00:04:02.319 --> 00:04:04.799

(RM) really one sector

00:04:04.799 --> 00:04:07.760

(RM) and what makes our Valley successful are

00:04:07.760 --> 00:04:09.680

(RM) actually a lot of the people who are in

00:04:09.680 --> 00:04:12.480

(RM) the surrounding industry.

00:04:12.480 --> 00:04:14.319

(RM) And that includes people from my own

00:04:14.319 --> 00:04:17.600

(RM) field of education, so when you look at

00:04:17.600 --> 00:04:19.359

(RM) our own College of Education here at San

00:04:19.359 --> 00:04:22.160

(RM) Jose State, you know, it's our teachers

00:04:22.160 --> 00:04:23.600

(RM) who go out

00:04:23.600 --> 00:04:26.000

(RM) and staff the entire community

00:04:26.000 --> 00:04:29.759

(RM) of educators. And so, I think of it now, and

00:04:29.759 --> 00:04:31.120

(RM) you know, when I came here I had this

00:04:31.120 --> 00:04:32.479

(RM) very

00:04:32.479 --> 00:04:34.320

(RM) ...

00:04:34.320 --> 00:04:36.400

(RM) mono

00:04:36.400 --> 00:04:38.479

(RM) perspective of like "this is what Silicon

00:04:38.479 --> 00:04:40.800

(RM) Valley is," it's very focused on tech.

00:04:40.800 --> 00:04:43.280

(RM) But now, over the years, I've really seen

00:04:43.280 --> 00:04:44.479

(RM) a lot of

00:04:44.479 --> 00:04:45.280

(RM) the

00:04:45.280 --> 00:04:47.040

(RM) different sectors of people who live

00:04:47.040 --> 00:04:48.800

(RM) here. So it's become a much more

00:04:48.800 --> 00:04:50.800

(RM) differentiated place than when I first

00:04:50.800 --> 00:04:53.199

(RM) came here.

00:04:53.199 --> 00:04:54.400

(I) Right.

00:04:54.400 --> 00:04:55.840

(I) So,

00:04:55.840 --> 00:04:58.160

(I) now that you identified yourself as you

00:04:58.160 --> 00:04:59.840

(I) know,

00:04:59.840 --> 00:05:02.160

(I) a child of immigrants who came from

00:05:02.160 --> 00:05:03.759

(I) India,

00:05:03.759 --> 00:05:06.320

(I) do you identify yourself as a Desi of

00:05:06.320 --> 00:05:08.400

(I) Silicon Valley and what would that mean

00:05:08.400 --> 00:05:10.320

(I) to you?

00:05:10.320 --> 00:05:12.639

(RM) I identify myself as a Desi but not

00:05:12.639 --> 00:05:14.800

(RM) necessarily of Silicon Valley, because I

00:05:14.800 --> 00:05:17.280

(RM) wasn't born here. (I) Right.

(RM) My formative

00:05:17.280 --> 00:05:20.880

(RM) years were not here in Silicon Valley.

00:05:20.880 --> 00:05:23.280

(RM) So I do identify myself as a Desi but

00:05:23.280 --> 00:05:26.000

(RM) not necessarily of this area.

00:05:26.000 --> 00:05:26.639

(RM) And

00:05:26.639 --> 00:05:28.000

(RM) it does actually make a difference,

00:05:28.000 --> 00:05:30.240

(RM) because when I talk to

00:05:30.240 --> 00:05:32.880

(RM) ...

00:05:32.880 --> 00:05:36.320

(RM) to people who grew up here,

00:05:36.320 --> 00:05:38.320

(RM) they have had a very, they have had some

00:05:38.320 --> 00:05:40.240

(RM) very different experiences. I grew up in

00:05:40.240 --> 00:05:41.280

(RM) Pittsburgh.

00:05:41.280 --> 00:05:43.280

(RM) I grew up there in the, my formative

00:05:43.280 --> 00:05:45.520

(RM) years were in the 70s and 80s. I was the

00:05:45.520 --> 00:05:47.600

(RM) only Indian person in my neighborhood, my

00:05:47.600 --> 00:05:50.840

(RM) family was the only Indian family in my

00:05:50.840 --> 00:05:53.199

(RM) neighborhood. I was the only, we were

00:05:53.199 --> 00:05:55.280

(RM) the only Indian family in my elementary

00:05:55.280 --> 00:05:58.000

(RM) school. In high school where there was a

00:05:58.000 --> 00:06:00.400

(RM) class of 2,000,

00:06:00.400 --> 00:06:02.080

(RM) there were only about four or five

00:06:02.080 --> 00:06:04.400

(RM) Indians in that class of 2,000. One of

00:06:04.400 --> 00:06:06.800

(RM) them was my sister.

(I) Wow.

00:06:06.800 --> 00:06:09.199

(RM) Yeah so, you know, that experience is very

00:06:09.199 --> 00:06:10.880

(RM) isolating. I think

00:06:10.880 --> 00:06:12.720

(RM) the majority of my cousins and majority

00:06:12.720 --> 00:06:15.919

(RM) of my family are still back in India.

00:06:15.919 --> 00:06:17.360

(RM) It's very

00:06:17.360 --> 00:06:19.280

(RM) different, it was a very different

00:06:19.280 --> 00:06:21.360

(RM) experience I think on the other side of

00:06:21.360 --> 00:06:22.960

(RM) the country.

00:06:22.960 --> 00:06:25.360

(RM) Even our temple was like a house, somebody's

00:06:25.360 --> 00:06:26.400

(RM) house

00:06:26.400 --> 00:06:28.000

(RM) for a long time

00:06:28.000 --> 00:06:29.680

(RM) and then we were able to like do a lot

00:06:29.680 --> 00:06:31.280

(RM) of fundraising and actually build a

00:06:31.280 --> 00:06:32.880

(RM) temple.

00:06:32.880 --> 00:06:36.160

(RM) And so when I think about like

00:06:36.160 --> 00:06:38.240

(RM) where, you know, my formative experience

00:06:38.240 --> 00:06:39.600

(RM) is, it's not here in the Silicon Valley.

00:06:39.600 --> 00:06:41.520

(RM) Silicon Valley seems like people had a

00:06:41.520 --> 00:06:43.199

(RM) much more accepting experience, they'd

00:06:43.199 --> 00:06:45.440

(RM) seen a lot of Indians

00:06:45.440 --> 00:06:47.680

(RM) in their own communities and it was much

00:06:47.680 --> 00:06:49.599

(RM) more connected, even back in the 70s and

00:06:49.599 --> 00:06:50.720

(RM) 80s.

00:06:50.720 --> 00:06:51.599

(RM) So,

00:06:51.599 --> 00:06:53.280

(RM) you know, back in Pennsylvania when my

00:06:53.280 --> 00:06:54.560

(RM) dad would see somebody who was Indian,

00:06:54.560 --> 00:06:56.400

(RM) we'd be driving down the road, my dad

00:06:56.400 --> 00:06:58.560

(RM) would like pull over

00:06:58.560 --> 00:07:00.560

(RM) and like say oh, you're Indian, like where

00:07:00.560 --> 00:07:03.919

(RM) are you from? There was a lot of,

00:07:03.919 --> 00:07:06.400

(RM) a lot of like trying to build community

00:07:06.400 --> 00:07:08.720

(RM) in my formative years. Whereas there seemed

00:07:08.720 --> 00:07:10.240

(RM) to be a little bit more, when I talked to

00:07:10.240 --> 00:07:11.520

(RM) people who grew up here, they have more

00:07:11.520 --> 00:07:12.720

(RM) of a community.

00:07:12.720 --> 00:07:13.440

(I) Yeah.

00:07:13.440 --> 00:07:16.560

(RM) Other, other Indians in particular.

(I) Right.

00:07:16.560 --> 00:07:18.240

(I) Is it because of the tech sector's

00:07:18.240 --> 00:07:20.080

(I) presence which kind of

00:07:21.280 --> 00:07:23.520

(I) actively either recruited or was a

00:07:23.520 --> 00:07:26.160

(I) welcoming space for engineers from India?

00:07:26.160 --> 00:07:28.400

(RM) Yeah, I think that's exactly it, Mantra.

00:07:28.400 --> 00:07:30.400

(RM) I think because we are,

00:07:30.400 --> 00:07:32.000

(RM) I mean here in Silicon Valley, it is a

00:07:32.000 --> 00:07:33.759

(RM) stronger tech presence

00:07:33.759 --> 00:07:35.840

(RM) and that stronger tech presence

00:07:35.840 --> 00:07:37.280

(RM) where you have

00:07:37.280 --> 00:07:38.319

(RM) those

00:07:38.319 --> 00:07:41.199

(RM) companies that are actively

00:07:41.199 --> 00:07:43.680

(RM) recognizing the talent that is already

00:07:43.680 --> 00:07:46.240

(RM) located in India,

00:07:46.240 --> 00:07:47.840

(RM) and bringing it over here to the United

00:07:47.840 --> 00:07:50.080

(RM) States in one way or another. So, my dad

00:07:50.080 --> 00:07:51.440

(RM) worked for Westinghouse and then

00:07:51.440 --> 00:07:54.319

(RM) eventually worked for the U.S. government

00:07:54.319 --> 00:07:56.960

(RM) in the Department of Energy

00:07:56.960 --> 00:07:59.520

(RM) and, you know, he was hired because of

00:07:59.520 --> 00:08:01.520

(RM) where he went for his

00:08:01.520 --> 00:08:03.840

(RM) degree, and you know, recommendations but

00:08:03.840 --> 00:08:06.560

(RM) it wasn't necessarily like a tech,

00:08:06.560 --> 00:08:08.400

(RM) like an Indian hub, like he wasn't being

00:08:08.400 --> 00:08:09.440

(RM) hired

00:08:09.440 --> 00:08:12.080

(RM) because it was a knowledgeable thing.

00:08:12.080 --> 00:08:13.039

(I) Yeah.

00:08:13.039 --> 00:08:15.840

(RM) Like okay, you're the only Indian

00:08:15.840 --> 00:08:17.440

(RM) person who's working here.

00:08:17.440 --> 00:08:19.440

(RM) Westinghouse itself did begin to hire a

00:08:19.440 --> 00:08:21.599

(RM) lot of Indians and that's how he, that

00:08:21.599 --> 00:08:22.960

(RM) was one place where we started to build

00:08:22.960 --> 00:08:24.720

(RM) some community there, so my dad began to

00:08:24.720 --> 00:08:26.479

(RM) connect with others there.

00:08:26.479 --> 00:08:27.199

(I) Right.

00:08:27.199 --> 00:08:29.199

(RM) But that was like the biggest industry

00:08:29.199 --> 00:08:30.960

(RM) there in the 70s, because that was the

00:08:30.960 --> 00:08:33.680

(RM) downfall of the steel industry

00:08:33.680 --> 00:08:34.959

(RM) in Pittsburgh

00:08:34.959 --> 00:08:37.039

(RM) and the rise of other kinds of industry.

00:08:37.039 --> 00:08:39.120

(RM) So we have a lot of chemical companies

00:08:39.120 --> 00:08:40.479

(RM) in Pittsburgh,

00:08:40.479 --> 00:08:42.560

(RM) but not the tech that you have here.

00:08:42.560 --> 00:08:43.440

(I) Right.

00:08:43.440 --> 00:08:46.560

(RM) And you have India recognized as a tech

00:08:46.560 --> 00:08:48.880

(I) Yes.

(RM) competitor and so there's a lot of

00:08:48.880 --> 00:08:50.240

(RM) recruitment

00:08:50.240 --> 00:08:52.839

(RM) out of Asia in particular, but India

00:08:52.839 --> 00:08:54.560

(RM) specifically.

00:08:54.560 --> 00:08:56.080

(RM) Yeah, so it does look like a very different

00:08:56.080 --> 00:08:57.839

(RM) perspective.

00:08:57.839 --> 00:08:59.440

(RM) And I was talking to one of my Indian

00:08:59.440 --> 00:09:02.000

(RM) students who was,

00:09:02.000 --> 00:09:04.240

(RM) was from Livermore

00:09:04.240 --> 00:09:06.080

(RM) and she was talking about Livermore Labs,

00:09:06.080 --> 00:09:07.200

(RM) and she's like oh yeah, there's a big

00:09:07.200 --> 00:09:08.800

(RM) Indian community up there, it's always

00:09:08.800 --> 00:09:11.360

(RM) been there because of Livermore Labs.

00:09:11.360 --> 00:09:13.920

(RM) Right? Because of that industry

(I) Right. (RM) and I don't

00:09:13.920 --> 00:09:16.640

(RM) think we had that as well in Pittsburgh,

00:09:16.640 --> 00:09:19.360

(RM) for a long time.

00:09:19.680 --> 00:09:23.200

(I) Right. So, do you actively

00:09:23.200 --> 00:09:25.760

(RM) engage with the Desi community here in

00:09:25.760 --> 00:09:27.120

(RM) any capacity,

00:09:27.120 --> 00:09:29.120

(RM) or I mean not only of

00:09:29.120 --> 00:09:31.440

(RM) your personal interest but also out of,

00:09:31.440 --> 00:09:33.680

(RM) you know, maybe your work takes you there

00:09:33.680 --> 00:09:37.040

(RM) or your other, you know, your lifestyle

00:09:37.040 --> 00:09:39.680

(RM) or your friends, family whatever,

00:09:39.680 --> 00:09:41.760

(RM) do you engage with it yourself?

00:09:41.760 --> 00:09:44.880

(RM) So, you should know that yes, I do, but a lot

00:09:44.880 --> 00:09:46.480

(RM) of that has to do with the fact that

00:09:46.480 --> 00:09:49.120

(RM) both of my sisters live here,

(I) Uh-huh.

00:09:49.120 --> 00:09:51.760

(RM) and my brother-in-law lives here as well.

00:09:51.760 --> 00:09:53.839

(RM) So that means that there are 10 people

00:09:53.839 --> 00:09:55.279

(RM) all the time

00:09:55.279 --> 00:09:57.360

(I) Yes.

(RM) who are celebrating, we have family

00:09:57.360 --> 00:09:58.959

(RM) celebration, like we have a family

00:09:58.959 --> 00:10:00.560

(RM) celebration today.

00:10:01.360 --> 00:10:03.200

(RM) Somebody's birthday, somebody's something

00:10:03.200 --> 00:10:06.240

(RM) going on all the time. (I) Right.

(RM) And then

00:10:06.240 --> 00:10:08.160

(RM) I'm not an active member of the temple

00:10:08.160 --> 00:10:10.480

(RM) but I go to temple somewhat regularly,

00:10:10.480 --> 00:10:12.480

(RM) and so I do interact with people there.

00:10:12.480 --> 00:10:14.640

(RM) And then

00:10:14.640 --> 00:10:17.519

(RM) I have connected with, at my job,

00:10:17.519 --> 00:10:19.600

(RM) connected with those who are

00:10:19.600 --> 00:10:24.000

(RM) who identify as Indian or Desi.

00:10:24.000 --> 00:10:26.240

(RM) And so we've had like a few happy hours

00:10:26.240 --> 00:10:27.760

(RM) and other things like that.

00:10:27.760 --> 00:10:29.839

(I) Okay.

(RM) But that took a long time, I think

00:10:29.839 --> 00:10:31.519

(RM) at the beginning when I came to San Jose

00:10:31.519 --> 00:10:35.600

(RM) State I was a new faculty person,

00:10:36.640 --> 00:10:38.720

(RM) and I was also fairly newly married at

00:10:38.720 --> 00:10:40.160

(RM) the time.

00:10:40.160 --> 00:10:43.440

(RM) I was not really that like looking for a

00:10:43.440 --> 00:10:44.800

(RM) lot of people

00:10:44.800 --> 00:10:45.600

(I) Sure.

00:10:45.600 --> 00:10:48.000

(RM) to hang out with.

00:10:48.000 --> 00:10:50.079

(RM) And then, then I had my child and my

00:10:50.079 --> 00:10:54.000

(RM) whole social life just was destroyed.

00:10:54.160 --> 00:10:55.920

(RM) Not to be negative, but

(I) No no no, it

00:10:55.920 --> 00:10:58.640

(I) changes, yes.

(RM) It changes dramatically, but

00:10:58.640 --> 00:11:00.480

(RM) we still like do a lot of, we do

00:11:00.480 --> 00:11:02.480

(RM) do a lot of celebrations usually like to

00:11:02.480 --> 00:11:04.000

(RM) my religion.

00:11:04.000 --> 00:11:06.560

(RM) Like Diwali, yesterday was "Ganesh and Lakshmi/Laxmi"

00:11:06.560 --> 00:11:08.320

(I) Yes.

(RM) like those kinds of things we

00:11:08.320 --> 00:11:10.800

(RM) celebrate.

00:11:11.600 --> 00:11:14.320

(I) So...

(RM) But I have not gotten connected as

00:11:14.320 --> 00:11:17.200

(RM) I should, as I feel I should be.

00:11:17.200 --> 00:11:18.240

(I) Okay.

00:11:18.240 --> 00:11:20.160

(RM) And I feel like my academic life

00:11:20.160 --> 00:11:21.920

(RM) prevents that from happening.

00:11:21.920 --> 00:11:22.880

(I) Yeah.

00:11:22.880 --> 00:11:24.800

(RM) Because I'm, so we're in the tech center,

00:11:24.800 --> 00:11:27.040

(RM) but everyone else works from January

00:11:27.040 --> 00:11:30.480

(RM) to December,

(I) Yes. (RM) and in the

00:11:30.480 --> 00:11:32.959

(RM) academic world we work from August to

00:11:32.959 --> 00:11:35.519

(RM) June,

(I) Yes. (RM) and then we, then we have a

00:11:35.519 --> 00:11:38.079

(RM) space to breathe for two months,

(I) Yeah.

00:11:38.079 --> 00:11:41.760

(RM) but some of that is just recovery.

(I) Yes,

00:11:41.760 --> 00:11:43.680

(I) and prepping for the next year.

(RM) Prepping

00:11:43.680 --> 00:11:46.640

(RM) for the next fall, right? And so I think

00:11:46.640 --> 00:11:48.560

(RM) it's a very different life, an academic

00:11:48.560 --> 00:11:50.959

(RM) life.

(I) Yes, yes. The rhythm is very

00:11:50.959 --> 00:11:52.800

(I) different.

(RM) It's very different and then

00:11:52.800 --> 00:11:55.680

(RM) even your days are very different.

(I) Yes.

00:11:55.680 --> 00:11:57.279

(RM) Like a lot of people I

00:11:57.279 --> 00:11:58.639

(RM) know who work in tech, yes they have

00:11:58.639 --> 00:12:00.880

(RM) responsibilities, but most of them when

00:12:00.880 --> 00:12:02.399

(RM) they come home at 6 or 7 o'clock

00:12:02.399 --> 00:12:05.200

(RM) at night, they're not continuing.

00:12:05.200 --> 00:12:07.760

(RM) They kind of work a very long day but

00:12:07.760 --> 00:12:09.120

(RM) then they come home and then they just

00:12:09.120 --> 00:12:11.839

(RM) like watch TV or they hang out or,

00:12:11.839 --> 00:12:14.240

(RM) whereas like a lot of academics, their

00:12:14.240 --> 00:12:16.639

(RM) days are spent differently

(I) Yes. (RM) and they

00:12:16.639 --> 00:12:18.320

(RM) come home and they're grading, like

00:12:18.320 --> 00:12:19.279

(RM) they're still doing work.

00:12:19.279 --> 00:12:20.399

(I) Of course.

00:12:20.399 --> 00:12:22.079

(RM) They're preparing for the next day's

00:12:22.079 --> 00:12:24.320

(RM) lecture or something like that.

(I) Yes, and

00:12:24.320 --> 00:12:28.000

(I) sometimes when we even watch a movie

00:12:28.000 --> 00:12:29.920

(I) you know, we suddenly think of

00:12:29.920 --> 00:12:32.079

(I) a research project or something that one

00:12:32.079 --> 00:12:34.320

(I) has read, we observe something in that TV

00:12:34.320 --> 00:12:36.880

(I) series and it gets our mind working,

00:12:36.880 --> 00:12:38.800

(I) which probably doesn't happen with

00:12:38.800 --> 00:12:41.279

(I) other industries.

00:12:41.279 --> 00:12:43.200

(RM) Unless you work in R&D (Research & Development).

00:12:43.200 --> 00:12:44.079

(I) Yeah,

00:12:44.079 --> 00:12:45.519

(I) true.

00:12:45.519 --> 00:12:47.920

(RM) I'm sure that happens in R&D, but

00:12:47.920 --> 00:12:51.200

(RM) like my sister works in a, at a large

00:12:51.200 --> 00:12:54.639

(RM) tech company, well-known, and she works

00:12:54.639 --> 00:12:56.320

(RM) in manufacturing. So she's not thinking

00:12:56.320 --> 00:12:58.160

(RM) of R&D,

00:12:58.160 --> 00:12:59.839

(RM) she's thinking about like how to manage

00:12:59.839 --> 00:13:02.560

(RM) the manufacturing process.

00:13:02.560 --> 00:13:05.120

(RM) My younger sister does that, yeah.

00:13:05.120 --> 00:13:08.480

(I) Okay, right. So one thing that I have

00:13:08.480 --> 00:13:10.160

(I) noticed, because I've been here like

00:13:10.160 --> 00:13:12.240

(I) living in Silicon Valley since about

00:13:12.240 --> 00:13:14.560

(I) about one and a half years now, and

00:13:14.560 --> 00:13:16.800

(I) you know, like you, I have a sister who

00:13:16.800 --> 00:13:18.480

(I) has been here for almost 10, 11 years.

00:13:18.480 --> 00:13:19.760

(I) So I've visited

00:13:19.760 --> 00:13:21.200

(I) many times before, but this is the first

00:13:21.200 --> 00:13:23.600

(I) time I'm living here. So one thing that I

00:13:23.600 --> 00:13:25.600

(I) noticed when coming, after moving here

00:13:25.600 --> 00:13:28.000

(I) and also during my past visits, was just

00:13:28.000 --> 00:13:31.600

(I) the shure, A) the...

00:13:31.600 --> 00:13:34.320

(I) the population density, you know, of Desis

00:13:34.320 --> 00:13:36.959

(I) in general. So the footprint and then

00:13:36.959 --> 00:13:40.160

(I) the food and then the music classes,

00:13:40.160 --> 00:13:41.600

(I) and everybody's teaching this Raga

00:13:41.600 --> 00:13:43.519

(I) school of music, somebody, I mean almost

00:13:43.519 --> 00:13:45.680

(I) every Indian kid is doing something

00:13:45.680 --> 00:13:47.600

(I) related to music

(RM) Right. (I) in either

00:13:47.600 --> 00:13:49.680

(I) Carnatic or Hindustani, or they're taking

00:13:49.680 --> 00:13:52.000

(I) Bharatnatyam classes, or something of the

00:13:52.000 --> 00:13:53.120

(I) other, right?

00:13:53.120 --> 00:13:56.240

(I) And it happens in many cities today,

00:13:56.240 --> 00:13:58.079

(I) and I've seen that in other cities as

00:13:58.079 --> 00:13:58.800

(I) well.

00:13:58.800 --> 00:14:02.959

(I) But it seems like the...level

00:14:02.959 --> 00:14:05.279

(I) at which it happens here

00:14:05.279 --> 00:14:08.079

(I) is almost, I mean it's not possible

00:14:08.079 --> 00:14:10.079

(I) in any other city. Seattle comes a

00:14:10.079 --> 00:14:11.360

(I) little close

00:14:11.360 --> 00:14:14.320

(I) to what happens here. Why, why is Desi

00:14:14.320 --> 00:14:16.240

(I) culture so vibrant here? I mean

00:14:16.240 --> 00:14:18.639

(I) engineering workspace I understand,

00:14:18.639 --> 00:14:20.800

(I) but the rest of it?

(RM) I think a lot of it

00:14:20.800 --> 00:14:23.519

(RM) has to do with population density,

00:14:23.519 --> 00:14:26.000

(RM) but a lot of it also has to be, is the

00:14:26.000 --> 00:14:27.600

(RM) idea that we're validated for our

00:14:27.600 --> 00:14:30.399

(RM) cultural identity.

00:14:30.399 --> 00:14:33.360

(RM) You know, I think like when I grew up, no

00:14:33.360 --> 00:14:36.079

(RM) one was saying like how great,

00:14:36.079 --> 00:14:37.440

(RM) you're Indian.

00:14:37.440 --> 00:14:39.199

(RM) Nobody was saying like

00:14:39.199 --> 00:14:40.720

(RM) how do you celebrate your, nobody was

00:14:40.720 --> 00:14:42.560

(RM) asking me, do you celebrate your culture?

00:14:42.560 --> 00:14:44.399

(RM) Nobody would ask me, what are your

00:14:44.399 --> 00:14:46.079

(RM) religious holidays?

00:14:46.079 --> 00:14:47.920

(RM) But even asking it wasn't part of

00:14:47.920 --> 00:14:50.720

(RM) our daily conversation in our American

00:14:50.720 --> 00:14:52.959

(RM) world.

(I) Right, right.

00:14:52.959 --> 00:14:54.720

(RM) And so

00:14:54.720 --> 00:14:55.600

(RM) but

00:14:55.600 --> 00:14:57.040

(RM) here, I've had a lot of people who've

00:14:57.040 --> 00:14:59.040

(RM) said like oh, what is your, what does your

00:14:59.040 --> 00:15:01.120

(RM) name mean or what's, what holidays are

00:15:01.120 --> 00:15:02.800

(RM) you celebrating?

00:15:02.800 --> 00:15:04.240

(RM) People are more interested in and so that means that

00:15:04.240 --> 00:15:05.600

(RM) people feel more comfortable reaching

00:15:05.600 --> 00:15:07.120

(RM) out to other

00:15:07.120 --> 00:15:09.199

(RM) Indians

00:15:09.199 --> 00:15:12.959

(RM) in particular to really celebrate and

00:15:12.959 --> 00:15:15.040

(RM) create those joint spaces.

00:15:15.040 --> 00:15:17.440

(RM) And you know, again, when I was growing up

00:15:17.440 --> 00:15:18.800

(RM) and you're talking about like dance

00:15:18.800 --> 00:15:21.120

(RM) class or music class,

00:15:21.120 --> 00:15:22.639

(RM) that usually happened through the like

00:15:22.639 --> 00:15:25.040

(RM) an organized temple activity,

00:15:25.040 --> 00:15:26.480

(RM) and like I said, we did not have a

00:15:26.480 --> 00:15:27.920

(RM) formalized temple. We had, it was

00:15:27.920 --> 00:15:30.240

(RM) somebody's house for a long time and

00:15:30.240 --> 00:15:32.880

(RM) the pandit-ji (teacher in Hindi) lived at that house

00:15:32.880 --> 00:15:35.040

(RM) the back room.

00:15:35.040 --> 00:15:37.759

(RM) And then once the temple was built, we

00:15:37.759 --> 00:15:39.759

(RM) have two temples, two major temples. We

00:15:39.759 --> 00:15:41.440

(RM) actually have a few temples, but two

00:15:41.440 --> 00:15:43.920

(RM) major temples in India--I mean, in

00:15:43.920 --> 00:15:45.360

(RM) Pittsburgh.

00:15:45.360 --> 00:15:47.759

(RM) And...

00:15:48.560 --> 00:15:50.800

(RM) once the temple was built up, that's

00:15:50.800 --> 00:15:52.880

(RM) where you begin to see a lot of like

00:15:52.880 --> 00:15:55.519

(RM) that's where the dance class started.

00:15:55.519 --> 00:15:57.519

(RM) And then now with the access of everything

00:15:57.519 --> 00:16:00.240

(RM) online,

(I) Yes. (RM) it's easy to find those

00:16:00.240 --> 00:16:02.320

(RM) spaces, right?

(I) Yes.

00:16:02.320 --> 00:16:03.759

(RM) Because everything back then was word of

00:16:03.759 --> 00:16:05.360

(RM) mouth, so if you were a new Indian moving

00:16:05.360 --> 00:16:07.440

(RM) into town, you were going into a company

00:16:07.440 --> 00:16:09.759

(RM) that had no Indians

00:16:09.759 --> 00:16:11.519

(RM) or very few Indians, like how did you

00:16:11.519 --> 00:16:13.600

(RM) know like how to sign your daughter up

00:16:13.600 --> 00:16:14.959

(RM) for

00:16:14.959 --> 00:16:17.839

(RM) dance class or where?

00:16:17.839 --> 00:16:19.440

(RM) Right, so I feel like

00:16:19.440 --> 00:16:21.279

(RM) here, because there are there's a huge

00:16:21.279 --> 00:16:23.839

(RM) number of Indians, a huge number of Desi

00:16:23.839 --> 00:16:26.160

(RM) population

00:16:26.160 --> 00:16:27.440

(RM) and those are people who are looking for

00:16:27.440 --> 00:16:29.120

(RM) connection also.

00:16:29.120 --> 00:16:30.160

(I) Yes.

00:16:30.160 --> 00:16:32.240

(RM) Yeah, right, so I think that's like a

00:16:32.240 --> 00:16:34.560

(RM) natural community for many people.

00:16:34.560 --> 00:16:36.560

(RM) But you don't have to say,

00:16:36.560 --> 00:16:38.720

(RM) like when I tell people I have to I call

00:16:38.720 --> 00:16:42.000

(RM) my parents every single day,

00:16:42.160 --> 00:16:44.880

(RM) they're just shocked, right?

00:16:44.880 --> 00:16:47.120

(RM) If I say I call my parents, and if I don't call

00:16:47.120 --> 00:16:48.560

(RM) then they call me,

00:16:48.560 --> 00:16:50.720

(RM) and if you can't get a hold of me for

00:16:50.720 --> 00:16:52.320

(RM) one reason or another, then they call my

00:16:52.320 --> 00:16:55.519

(RM) husband saying, where's Ravisha?

(I) Yes, yes.

00:16:55.519 --> 00:16:56.720

(RM) You don't

00:16:56.720 --> 00:16:58.639

(RM) you know, and when I tell people this

00:16:58.639 --> 00:17:00.160

(RM) they're just like, oh how intrusive and

00:17:00.160 --> 00:17:03.959

(RM) I'm like no, it's just part of life.

00:17:04.959 --> 00:17:07.600

(RM) So I think it's those kinds of things,

00:17:07.600 --> 00:17:09.360

(RM) there's a shared language of shared

00:17:09.360 --> 00:17:10.720

(RM) understanding

00:17:10.720 --> 00:17:12.400

(RM) that makes it so much more

00:17:12.400 --> 00:17:13.439

(RM) comfortable

00:17:13.439 --> 00:17:15.360

(RM) when you're with other Desis, because

00:17:15.360 --> 00:17:18.000

(RM) you don't have to explain

00:17:18.000 --> 00:17:19.600

(RM) a lot of things. You don't have to say

00:17:19.600 --> 00:17:21.039

(RM) like

00:17:21.039 --> 00:17:22.559

(RM) you don't have to explain so many things,

00:17:22.559 --> 00:17:24.880

(RM) so many parts of the hidden,

00:17:24.880 --> 00:17:26.720

(RM) the hidden parts of our language or

00:17:26.720 --> 00:17:30.079

(RM) hidden parts of our experience.

00:17:30.240 --> 00:17:31.120

(I) Right.

00:17:31.120 --> 00:17:32.960

(RM) Right, or when you

00:17:32.960 --> 00:17:35.200

(RM) even you talk about like when someone

00:17:35.200 --> 00:17:37.120

(RM) asks the question where are you from and

00:17:37.120 --> 00:17:38.480

(RM) I say that to another Desi, they're

00:17:38.480 --> 00:17:40.880

(RM) like oh, I hate that question too.

00:17:40.880 --> 00:17:44.000

(I) Yes, yes.

(RM) So, you know, I don't have to

00:17:44.000 --> 00:17:47.840

(RM) explain those kinds of things.

(I) Right,

00:17:48.160 --> 00:17:51.039

(I) right. So...

00:17:51.039 --> 00:17:52.640

(RM) But I also think that my experiences may

00:17:52.640 --> 00:17:54.400

(RM) be different because I do not, I am not

00:17:54.400 --> 00:17:57.039

(RM) married to somebody who's Indian.

(I) Okay.

00:17:57.039 --> 00:18:00.720

(RM) My husband is Caucasian/White.

00:18:01.760 --> 00:18:03.919

(RM) His ethnicity is

00:18:03.919 --> 00:18:07.280

(RM) Eastern European and Italian, and so

00:18:07.280 --> 00:18:08.720

(RM) his experience,

00:18:08.720 --> 00:18:10.559

(RM) I mean I think in some ways

00:18:10.559 --> 00:18:11.840

(RM) if I was married to somebody who was

00:18:11.840 --> 00:18:14.240

(RM) Indian or you know Desi themselves

00:18:14.240 --> 00:18:16.400

(RM) then it would be very different.

00:18:16.400 --> 00:18:17.600

(I) Sure.

00:18:17.600 --> 00:18:20.080

(I) Sure, yeah.

00:18:20.080 --> 00:18:21.440

(I) Yeah,

00:18:21.440 --> 00:18:23.520

(I) right.

00:18:23.520 --> 00:18:25.039

(I) So do you think

00:18:25.039 --> 00:18:28.400

(I) your, your being Desi or maybe

00:18:28.400 --> 00:18:31.360

(I) living in this place and given your, your

00:18:31.360 --> 00:18:34.320

(I) profession, do you think it informs

00:18:34.320 --> 00:18:38.000

(I) your work in any way?

00:18:38.400 --> 00:18:40.400

(RM) Yeah it does actually.

00:18:40.400 --> 00:18:42.240

(I) How would you say that?

(RM) In my role as the

00:18:42.240 --> 00:18:44.480

(RM) senate chair.

00:18:44.480 --> 00:18:46.240

(RM) Well, I would just say in any leadership

00:18:46.240 --> 00:18:48.880

(RM) role I've had because I feel like,

00:18:51.120 --> 00:18:52.960

(RM) you know when, I don't know how to explain

00:18:52.960 --> 00:18:55.280

(RM) this. Maybe I'll just try.

(I) Yeah. (RM) Sometimes

00:18:55.280 --> 00:18:58.320

(RM) like when you meet somebody as an

00:18:58.320 --> 00:19:00.960

(RM) Indian person you try to,

00:19:00.960 --> 00:19:03.039

(RM) especially as a woman,

00:19:03.039 --> 00:19:04.880

(RM) you are encouraged to like make sure

00:19:04.880 --> 00:19:07.520

(RM) that the other person's needs are met. So

00:19:07.520 --> 00:19:10.559

(RM) somebody comes to your house,

00:19:10.559 --> 00:19:12.240

(RM) you say would you like some chai, would

00:19:12.240 --> 00:19:14.000

(RM) you like, can I get you a snack or, you

00:19:14.000 --> 00:19:14.720

(RM) know,

00:19:14.720 --> 00:19:16.640

(RM) you're trying to meet the other person's

00:19:16.640 --> 00:19:18.720

(RM) needs.

00:19:18.720 --> 00:19:20.880

(RM) And I think that does inform like when I

00:19:20.880 --> 00:19:22.880

(RM) when I'm talking with other leaders on

00:19:22.880 --> 00:19:25.760

(RM) campus and I, I'm trying to navigate

00:19:25.760 --> 00:19:27.280

(RM) something, I'm trying to also very

00:19:27.280 --> 00:19:29.520

(RM) carefully make sure that I'm attending

00:19:29.520 --> 00:19:31.200

(RM) to or trying to listen for what their

00:19:31.200 --> 00:19:33.679

(RM) needs are, so that I can be responsive to

00:19:33.679 --> 00:19:34.320

(RM) it.

00:19:34.320 --> 00:19:35.600

(I) Right.

00:19:35.600 --> 00:19:37.600

(RM) And I feel like it also just might be

00:19:37.600 --> 00:19:39.840

(RM) that, you know, trying to please others

00:19:39.840 --> 00:19:41.919

(RM) personality

00:19:41.919 --> 00:19:42.720

(RM) that

00:19:42.720 --> 00:19:45.520

(RM) that does inform how I operate.

00:19:45.520 --> 00:19:46.799

(RM) I also don't,

00:19:46.799 --> 00:19:49.760

(RM) I, that also makes me operate away

00:19:49.760 --> 00:19:51.360

(RM) from a transactional model, I don't

00:19:51.360 --> 00:19:53.760

(RM) believe in that transactional model.

00:19:53.760 --> 00:19:55.919

(RM) So I work on a more relational,

00:19:55.919 --> 00:19:57.360

(RM) transformational

00:19:57.360 --> 00:19:58.320

(RM) way

00:19:58.320 --> 00:19:59.840

(RM) and trying to say like how, like even

00:19:59.840 --> 00:20:01.360

(RM) with my Zoom backgrounds I'm trying to

00:20:01.360 --> 00:20:04.000

(RM) figure out how can I educate people

00:20:04.000 --> 00:20:07.360

(RM) about who I am and

00:20:07.360 --> 00:20:08.880

(RM) how can I build a relationship with

00:20:08.880 --> 00:20:10.559

(RM) people.

00:20:10.559 --> 00:20:12.480

(RM) And not just so that I can get XYZ

00:20:12.480 --> 00:20:14.000

(RM) down, but so that I can relate to the

00:20:14.000 --> 00:20:16.159

(RM) person as a human being.

00:20:16.159 --> 00:20:17.919

(I) Yes.

(RM) Yeah.

00:20:17.919 --> 00:20:20.559

(I) Yes, no I think that is very important,

00:20:20.559 --> 00:20:23.280

(I) yeah.

(RM) And I'm not trying to be, I'm

00:20:23.280 --> 00:20:24.480

(RM) just trying to say that I feel like when

00:20:24.480 --> 00:20:26.559

(RM) I meet Indians,

00:20:28.240 --> 00:20:29.600

(RM) whether it's here in the United States

00:20:29.600 --> 00:20:30.799

(RM) or whether it's in India, you know, we're

00:20:30.799 --> 00:20:32.159

(RM) always trying to accommodate for each

00:20:32.159 --> 00:20:34.400

(RM) other.

(I) Yes. (RM) Like so if you say let's, where

00:20:34.400 --> 00:20:35.679

(RM) do you want to go for dinner, like oh

00:20:35.679 --> 00:20:38.640

(RM) why don't you choose? Like, you know.

(I) Yeah.

00:20:38.640 --> 00:20:41.200

(RM) Like, oh no how about you choose?

00:20:41.200 --> 00:20:42.880

(RM) Or like even paying for the bill, no

00:20:42.880 --> 00:20:44.559

(RM) I'll you know, you know I'll pay for it,

00:20:44.559 --> 00:20:46.000

(RM) not you.

00:20:46.000 --> 00:20:47.760

(I) Yes.

(RM) We're always trying to accommodate

00:20:47.760 --> 00:20:49.760

(RM) for the other person.

00:20:49.760 --> 00:20:50.960

(I) Yes.

00:20:50.960 --> 00:20:52.320

(I) I think that's why the joint family

00:20:52.320 --> 00:20:54.460

(I) structure has worked in India.

00:20:54.460 --> 00:20:55.760

(RM) Uh-huh, right.

00:20:55.760 --> 00:20:58.000

(I) Because we really do take multiple

00:20:58.000 --> 00:21:00.240

(I) perspectives constantly, we constantly

00:21:00.240 --> 00:21:01.440

(I) juggle them.

00:21:01.440 --> 00:21:04.400

(RM) Right. (I) That is true, yeah. Wow.

(RM) Right. (I) Yeah, that

00:21:04.400 --> 00:21:06.799

(I) that's very interesting way of

00:21:06.799 --> 00:21:09.440

(I) thinking how it informs your work, yeah.

00:21:09.440 --> 00:21:11.600

(I) That's great. So

00:21:11.600 --> 00:21:14.159

(I) does the Silicon Valley

00:21:14.159 --> 00:21:18.159

(I) influence your identity as a Desi?

00:21:18.640 --> 00:21:20.880

(RM) I think it does because I re-- you

00:21:20.880 --> 00:21:23.200

(RM) know I've lived mostly in places where

00:21:23.200 --> 00:21:25.360

(RM) the majority was not,

00:21:25.360 --> 00:21:28.640

(RM) where the majority has been white.

00:21:28.640 --> 00:21:31.039

(RM) And this is, and I'm also in an inter-

00:21:31.039 --> 00:21:33.760

(RM) racial, interethnic relationship and I've

00:21:33.760 --> 00:21:36.240

(RM) been in both Pennsylvania, in Indiana

00:21:36.240 --> 00:21:38.799

(RM) where I went to school, and here.

00:21:38.799 --> 00:21:41.039

(RM) And it does, it makes me feel a

00:21:41.039 --> 00:21:42.480

(RM) little bit more comfortable in my

00:21:42.480 --> 00:21:44.480

(RM) identity because there are other Desi

00:21:44.480 --> 00:21:46.720

(RM) around me.

00:21:46.720 --> 00:21:48.000

(RM) So when we,

00:21:48.000 --> 00:21:49.919

(RM) and I feel that and because we're in

00:21:49.919 --> 00:21:52.159

(RM) this industry where, we're in a place

00:21:52.159 --> 00:21:53.440

(RM) where

00:21:53.440 --> 00:21:56.400

(RM) a lot of the industry supports Desi

00:21:56.400 --> 00:21:57.679

(RM) people,

00:21:57.679 --> 00:22:00.159

(RM) you know, it is there's a comfort level

00:22:00.159 --> 00:22:01.200

(RM) you know,

00:22:01.200 --> 00:22:03.760

(RM) to...even go out to dinner, to go out to

00:22:03.760 --> 00:22:05.120

(RM) the mall,

00:22:05.120 --> 00:22:08.000

(RM) because we're in a place where it is

00:22:08.000 --> 00:22:10.559

(RM) that diversity is encouraged, and we know

00:22:10.559 --> 00:22:12.480

(RM) that companies are not hiring people

00:22:12.480 --> 00:22:14.480

(RM) just based on

00:22:15.440 --> 00:22:17.520

(RM) the fact that they're white.

00:22:17.520 --> 00:22:18.640

(I) Yeah.

00:22:18.640 --> 00:22:20.880

(RM) And so that makes it, it makes it easier

00:22:20.880 --> 00:22:23.280

(RM) I think for us to navigate those.

00:22:23.280 --> 00:22:26.720

(RM) And then sometimes it gives you strength

00:22:26.720 --> 00:22:28.559

(RM) in terms of negotiating, so like I've

00:22:28.559 --> 00:22:30.640

(RM) seen with both my sisters

00:22:30.640 --> 00:22:32.799

(RM) who are, you know, both full Indian like

00:22:32.799 --> 00:22:34.159

(RM) myself,

00:22:34.159 --> 00:22:35.840

(RM) they're able to navigate some spaces

00:22:35.840 --> 00:22:39.720

(RM) because they are in fact Indian.

00:22:41.280 --> 00:22:42.080

(I) Right.

00:22:42.080 --> 00:22:44.880

(I) I've heard this from one of my

00:22:44.880 --> 00:22:46.480

(I) interviewees who, you know, like both

00:22:46.480 --> 00:22:48.080

(I) husband and wife, they're both like in

00:22:48.080 --> 00:22:49.760

(I) the high tech sector

00:22:49.760 --> 00:22:51.760

(I) and they've always lived

00:22:51.760 --> 00:22:53.360

(I) here. Like, you know, they came here around

00:22:53.360 --> 00:22:55.919

(I) 2002 or four from India and then they

00:22:55.919 --> 00:22:57.360

(I) have lived here all their life, like

00:22:57.360 --> 00:22:58.880

(I) their life in America has always been

00:22:58.880 --> 00:23:00.799

(I) Silicon Valley, and they're raising

00:23:00.799 --> 00:23:03.600

(I) children, and both of them said that

00:23:03.600 --> 00:23:06.960

(I) I think we have, we have missed out

00:23:06.960 --> 00:23:09.280

(I) on the American experience because we

00:23:09.280 --> 00:23:11.039

(I) live in Silicon Valley.

00:23:11.039 --> 00:23:12.080

(RM) Right.

00:23:12.080 --> 00:23:14.640

(I) Because of the, of the Desi presence

00:23:14.640 --> 00:23:15.840

(I) here.

00:23:15.840 --> 00:23:17.440

(RM) Exactly.

00:23:17.440 --> 00:23:19.280

(RM) So just to bring it, I mean I don't mean

00:23:19.280 --> 00:23:21.679

(RM) to mention politics,

(I) Sure. (RM) but I'm going

00:23:21.679 --> 00:23:24.799

(RM) to mention politics and talk about

00:23:24.799 --> 00:23:26.640

(RM) you know, why would people vote for the

00:23:26.640 --> 00:23:28.320

(RM) president that they voted or why is

00:23:28.320 --> 00:23:29.919

(RM) there a chance that the president is

00:23:29.919 --> 00:23:32.480

(RM) going to continue to be in office,

00:23:32.480 --> 00:23:34.080

(RM) because when you live here, you live in a

00:23:34.080 --> 00:23:36.720

(RM) little bit of a bubble of safety.

00:23:36.720 --> 00:23:38.960

(RM) And like, you know, common thought about

00:23:38.960 --> 00:23:41.279

(RM) the importance of identity.

00:23:41.279 --> 00:23:43.600

(RM) And everywhere else, not everywhere else

00:23:43.600 --> 00:23:46.000

(RM) but many places else, and if you've lived

00:23:46.000 --> 00:23:49.440

(RM) in those places, you recognize

00:23:49.440 --> 00:23:51.600

(RM) you can, you recognize and have

00:23:51.600 --> 00:23:52.799

(RM) experiences not just with

00:23:52.799 --> 00:23:56.080

(RM) microaggression, but with overt racism,

00:23:56.080 --> 00:23:58.320

(RM) is a common part of your experience. And

00:23:58.320 --> 00:24:00.159

(RM) so

00:24:00.159 --> 00:24:01.520

(RM) you know, it's a little bit different

00:24:01.520 --> 00:24:03.600

(RM) when you just are here in Silicon Valley

00:24:03.600 --> 00:24:05.919

(RM) the whole time.

(I) Yes. (RM) And I think when

00:24:05.919 --> 00:24:07.840

(RM) they say like oh, it's a bubble, it is

00:24:07.840 --> 00:24:10.000

(RM) sometimes a bubble because of the fact

00:24:10.000 --> 00:24:10.960

(RM) that

00:24:10.960 --> 00:24:11.840

(RM) you

00:24:11.840 --> 00:24:12.960

(RM) you know,

00:24:12.960 --> 00:24:15.520

(RM) you have it, you do have racism here,

00:24:15.520 --> 00:24:17.360

(RM) you do have

00:24:17.360 --> 00:24:19.919

(RM) particularly a lot of microaggression,

00:24:19.919 --> 00:24:22.559

(RM) but you have overt racism where people

00:24:22.559 --> 00:24:24.320

(RM) feel safe to walk up to you on the

00:24:24.320 --> 00:24:26.320

(RM) street and say things to you in certain

00:24:26.320 --> 00:24:29.039

(RM) parts of the country.

(I) Yeah.

00:24:29.039 --> 00:24:31.120

(RM) And you have to be very concerned

00:24:31.120 --> 00:24:35.200

(RM) about your physical safety all the time.

00:24:35.520 --> 00:24:36.559

(I) Right,

00:24:36.559 --> 00:24:38.480

(I) yeah.

00:24:39.440 --> 00:24:41.200

(RM) So Silicon Valley gives you that safety

00:24:41.200 --> 00:24:43.600

(RM) I think.

00:24:44.000 --> 00:24:46.960

(RM) And because we are, we are not just at

00:24:46.960 --> 00:24:49.120

(RM) the, in terms of like the worker bees

00:24:49.120 --> 00:24:51.520

(RM) we're in management.

00:24:51.520 --> 00:24:53.039

(RM) That gives you

00:24:53.039 --> 00:24:54.159

(RM) stronger,

00:24:54.159 --> 00:24:56.400

(RM) it gives you power actually. We're in, we

00:24:56.400 --> 00:24:58.840

(RM) have a lot of

00:24:58.840 --> 00:25:01.919

(RM) power in the Valley.

00:25:01.919 --> 00:25:04.159

(I) Yeah.

(RM) That power...

00:25:06.559 --> 00:25:08.559

(RM) gives you a lot. It just gives you a

00:25:08.559 --> 00:25:09.760

(RM) lot of power.

00:25:09.760 --> 00:25:12.000

(I) Yeah.

00:25:12.159 --> 00:25:14.720

(I) Right. So this is my last formal

00:25:14.720 --> 00:25:16.320

(I) question, but you know we can

00:25:16.320 --> 00:25:18.159

(I) talk about other things as well. So how

00:25:18.159 --> 00:25:20.559

(I) do you foresee your future or your

00:25:20.559 --> 00:25:22.960

(I) family's future in Silicon Valley, like

00:25:22.960 --> 00:25:25.919

(I) given the context of Desi identity

00:25:25.919 --> 00:25:27.039

(I) and

00:25:27.039 --> 00:25:29.520

(I) how the Desi identity is probably, you

00:25:29.520 --> 00:25:31.600

(I) know, I think it's it evolves constantly

00:25:31.600 --> 00:25:33.520

(I) right?

00:25:33.520 --> 00:25:36.240

(I) How do you see that

00:25:36.240 --> 00:25:37.440

(I) in the future?

00:25:37.440 --> 00:25:39.200

(RM) So I think that we will always have strong

00:25:39.200 --> 00:25:40.320

(RM) presence, the Desi community

00:25:40.320 --> 00:25:41.919

(RM) will always have strong presence in

00:25:41.919 --> 00:25:44.960

(RM) Silicon Valley. I mean when you look at

00:25:45.919 --> 00:25:49.120

(RM) like CEO of Google,

(I) Yeah.

00:25:49.120 --> 00:25:51.360

(RM) we will have strong presence in the

00:25:51.360 --> 00:25:52.480

(RM) Valley

00:25:52.480 --> 00:25:54.080

(RM) and I think that's a good thing. I

00:25:54.080 --> 00:25:56.320

(RM) think, not just our communities, but other

00:25:56.320 --> 00:25:58.080

(RM) communities of color having strong

00:25:58.080 --> 00:25:59.600

(RM) presence

00:26:00.559 --> 00:26:04.799

(RM) will be very important moving forward.

00:26:04.799 --> 00:26:06.240

(RM) I think

00:26:06.240 --> 00:26:07.919

(RM) you know, having a child in Silicon

00:26:07.919 --> 00:26:10.640

(RM) Valley is a very interesting thing

00:26:10.640 --> 00:26:12.720

(RM) because I feel like my son walks

00:26:12.720 --> 00:26:14.480

(RM) around like himself because he's never

00:26:14.480 --> 00:26:16.480

(RM) had to experience

00:26:16.480 --> 00:26:18.880

(RM) real overt racism,

00:26:18.880 --> 00:26:21.440

(RM) that he has a sense of safety and he

00:26:21.440 --> 00:26:23.200

(RM) will be able to grow up more secure in

00:26:23.200 --> 00:26:24.559

(RM) his own identity.

00:26:24.559 --> 00:26:26.960

(RM) I think when you don't grow up here

00:26:26.960 --> 00:26:28.880

(RM) and you don't have a lot of role models

00:26:28.880 --> 00:26:31.039

(RM) in leadership,

00:26:32.240 --> 00:26:34.559

(RM) that your perspective is a little

00:26:34.559 --> 00:26:36.080

(RM) different. I think you feel like you

00:26:36.080 --> 00:26:37.840

(RM) might be always struggling or you always

00:26:37.840 --> 00:26:40.159

(RM) have some doubt

00:26:40.159 --> 00:26:41.600

(RM) in who you are

00:26:41.600 --> 00:26:43.200

(RM) because you get those messages more

00:26:43.200 --> 00:26:45.039

(RM) constantly

00:26:45.039 --> 00:26:47.039

(RM) from your settings. Like if you're celebrating,

00:26:47.039 --> 00:26:48.559

(RM) like if you told your teacher here I'm

00:26:48.559 --> 00:26:50.799

(RM) celebrating Diwali,

00:26:50.799 --> 00:26:52.159

(RM) that teacher will be like oh, great

00:26:52.159 --> 00:26:53.520

(RM) that's a wonderful holiday blah blah

00:26:53.520 --> 00:26:55.279

(RM) blah.

00:26:55.279 --> 00:26:57.279

(RM) If you're in West Lafayette, Indiana

00:26:57.279 --> 00:26:59.120

(RM) where I lived before and you say my

00:26:59.120 --> 00:27:01.360

(RM) family is celebrating Diwali,

00:27:01.360 --> 00:27:03.360

(RM) they they might be understanding but

00:27:03.360 --> 00:27:05.360

(RM) they like, you know,

00:27:05.360 --> 00:27:06.880

(RM) supportive but they don't have a lot of

00:27:06.880 --> 00:27:08.240

(RM) understanding of what that actually

00:27:08.240 --> 00:27:09.440

(RM) means.

00:27:09.440 --> 00:27:10.240

(RM) Or

00:27:10.240 --> 00:27:11.840

(RM) you know, like when I have to go to India

00:27:11.840 --> 00:27:13.679

(RM) for one month,

00:27:13.679 --> 00:27:15.600

(RM) they're like one month? Like are you, your

00:27:15.600 --> 00:27:17.600

(RM) child will be missing school and; but you

00:27:17.600 --> 00:27:19.760

(RM) don't have that kind of experience here.

00:27:19.760 --> 00:27:20.720

(I) Right,

00:27:20.720 --> 00:27:23.039

(I) right.

00:27:23.120 --> 00:27:24.640

(RM) Right, so I think

00:27:24.640 --> 00:27:28.720

(RM) my, in terms of my own personal future,

00:27:28.720 --> 00:27:32.000

(RM) the Silicon Valley for people I, I am not

00:27:32.000 --> 00:27:34.720

(RM) in the tech industry, so I mean

(I) Yeah.

00:27:34.720 --> 00:27:37.679

(RM) it's a very expensive place to be and to retire.

00:27:37.679 --> 00:27:39.840

(I) Yes.

(RM) So I even though I love the fact

00:27:39.840 --> 00:27:41.679

(RM) that it's so diverse,

00:27:41.679 --> 00:27:43.039

(RM) there might be other places in the

00:27:43.039 --> 00:27:46.840

(RM) country that I move to once I retire.

00:27:46.840 --> 00:27:50.240

(I) Yes.

(RM) And that's something, but this

00:27:50.240 --> 00:27:51.919

(RM) isn't true just for Desi family, I've

00:27:51.919 --> 00:27:53.919

(RM) talked to a lot of people

(I) Yes.

00:27:53.919 --> 00:27:55.600

(RM) who work in education

00:27:55.600 --> 00:27:57.039

(RM) and they are saying like when they

00:27:57.039 --> 00:27:59.679

(RM) retire, they may not be able to afford

00:27:59.679 --> 00:28:01.120

(RM) to live here.

00:28:01.120 --> 00:28:04.240

(I) Yeah.

(RM) So they make that, we already see a

00:28:04.240 --> 00:28:05.279

(RM) shift

00:28:05.279 --> 00:28:06.720

(RM) with people moving out of the Bay Area

00:28:06.720 --> 00:28:08.880

(RM) due to this COVID

00:28:08.880 --> 00:28:11.440

(RM) and being able to work from anywhere.

(I) Right,

00:28:11.440 --> 00:28:13.039

(I) right. Yeah.

00:28:13.039 --> 00:28:15.360

(I) Yeah, we have some I mean,

00:28:15.360 --> 00:28:17.120

(I) I have, I know people in the library who

00:28:17.120 --> 00:28:18.080

(I) are doing that. Like you know they're

00:28:18.080 --> 00:28:20.159

(I) very young so they move back to

00:28:20.159 --> 00:28:21.360

(I) their parents' house actually in a

00:28:21.360 --> 00:28:23.120

(I) different state,

(RM) Right.

00:28:23.120 --> 00:28:24.640

(I) because they don't want to,

00:28:24.640 --> 00:28:28.080

(I) they can't afford rent like this here so

00:28:28.080 --> 00:28:30.080

(I) yeah.

(RM) And also there's the other issue since I'm

00:28:30.080 --> 00:28:31.360

(RM) in an

00:28:31.360 --> 00:28:33.679

(RM) interracial, interethnic

00:28:33.679 --> 00:28:36.880

(RM) partnership/marriage,

00:28:36.880 --> 00:28:39.919

(RM) that even when I go to the temple,

00:28:39.919 --> 00:28:41.360

(RM) not a lot of people

00:28:41.360 --> 00:28:43.360

(RM) are running up to me

00:28:43.360 --> 00:28:46.720

(RM) to meet and say like oh, let's hang out.

00:28:46.720 --> 00:28:48.480

(RM) And so

00:28:48.480 --> 00:28:50.640

(RM) many of the people that I spend time

00:28:50.640 --> 00:28:52.480

(RM) with because I'm in

00:28:52.480 --> 00:28:57.360

(RM) this relationship are interracial.

(I) Sure.

00:28:57.360 --> 00:28:58.480

(RM) And so

00:28:59.520 --> 00:29:02.240

(RM) like, I have friends I, most of my

00:29:02.240 --> 00:29:04.080

(RM) close friends are

00:29:04.080 --> 00:29:05.840

(RM) in interracial relationships or

00:29:05.840 --> 00:29:08.480

(RM) interethnic relationships.

00:29:08.480 --> 00:29:09.440

(RM) Because

00:29:09.440 --> 00:29:11.840

(RM) and this is, this might be the ugly side but

00:29:11.840 --> 00:29:12.799

(RM) you know,

00:29:12.799 --> 00:29:14.720

(RM) if you're in a, you know, two Indian

00:29:14.720 --> 00:29:16.720

(RM) family, they're not as acce-- I feel that

00:29:16.720 --> 00:29:18.480

(RM) they don't, I don't feel as much as

00:29:18.480 --> 00:29:20.880

(RM) acceptance.

(I) Yes. (RM) Like,

00:29:20.880 --> 00:29:22.720

(RM) my husband doesn't know exactly what it

00:29:22.720 --> 00:29:24.159

(RM) means and he,

00:29:24.159 --> 00:29:25.679

(RM) even though we've been together for 30

00:29:25.679 --> 00:29:26.799

(RM) years,

00:29:28.559 --> 00:29:30.720

(RM) it has a lot of experience, it doesn't

00:29:30.720 --> 00:29:33.039

(RM) mean he grew up, he grew up with that.

00:29:33.039 --> 00:29:34.799

(I) Correct.

00:29:34.799 --> 00:29:36.320

(RM) Right.

(I) Yes.

00:29:38.000 --> 00:29:40.960

(RM) You know, it's just a very different

00:29:40.960 --> 00:29:42.799

(RM) perspective.

(I) Oh no, I completely hear that.

00:29:42.799 --> 00:29:45.279

(I) Yes absolutely. I mean

00:29:45.279 --> 00:29:47.440

(I) I'm from India, my husband is also

00:29:47.440 --> 00:29:48.640

(I) from India, but we don't come from the

00:29:48.640 --> 00:29:50.480

(I) same community for example.

00:29:50.480 --> 00:29:52.640

(I) Like, you know, I'm Bengali he is not.

00:29:52.640 --> 00:29:55.279

(I) He's from Hyderabad and

00:29:55.279 --> 00:29:57.120

(I) I myself have faced so many things from

00:29:57.120 --> 00:29:58.399

(I) the Bengali community in different

00:29:58.399 --> 00:30:00.520

(I) cities.

(RM) Yeah.

00:30:00.520 --> 00:30:02.880

(I) You know it's like oh okay, whatever.

00:30:02.880 --> 00:30:04.320

(RM) I mean so I think that's like the hidden

00:30:04.320 --> 00:30:05.679

(RM) part that we don't even talk about in

00:30:05.679 --> 00:30:07.360

(RM) the Desi community.

00:30:07.360 --> 00:30:09.679

(RM) And we don't, we, it's not as noticeable

00:30:09.679 --> 00:30:12.240

(RM) here I have to say

(I) Yes, that's true.

00:30:12.240 --> 00:30:13.120

(RM) in the Bay Area,

00:30:13.120 --> 00:30:16.480

(RM) but there's still differences there.

00:30:16.480 --> 00:30:18.399

(RM) And so

00:30:18.399 --> 00:30:22.480

(RM) it's just an interesting experience

00:30:22.480 --> 00:30:24.960

(RM) to be in that setting. My younger sister,

00:30:24.960 --> 00:30:27.039

(RM) she's not married,

00:30:27.039 --> 00:30:29.120

(RM) and so

00:30:29.120 --> 00:30:31.200

(RM) and she's, you know getting, she's in her

00:30:31.200 --> 00:30:33.039

(RM) early 40s

00:30:33.039 --> 00:30:34.240

(RM) not getting married so that's the

00:30:34.240 --> 00:30:36.399

(RM) problem all right already right there.

00:30:36.399 --> 00:30:39.919

(I) Yeah, that's another yeah.

00:30:39.919 --> 00:30:41.840

(RM) But you know, I keep saying to, I keep thinking in

00:30:41.840 --> 00:30:43.840

(RM) the back of my head,

00:30:43.840 --> 00:30:46.159

(RM) that wow, you know, if she marries somebody

00:30:46.159 --> 00:30:48.960

(RM) hopefully that person's Indian,

00:30:48.960 --> 00:30:52.159

(RM) because that person won't have to

00:30:53.279 --> 00:30:56.080

(RM) learn all of the things that I've had, my

00:30:56.080 --> 00:30:58.960

(RM) husband has had to learn like,

00:30:58.960 --> 00:31:00.720

(RM) just you know,

00:31:00.720 --> 00:31:02.880

(RM) the many many things that you have to

00:31:02.880 --> 00:31:04.559

(RM) learn when you're married to somebody

00:31:04.559 --> 00:31:06.320

(RM) who's Indian.

00:31:07.760 --> 00:31:08.880

(I) Yeah.

00:31:08.880 --> 00:31:11.120

(RM) Yeah.

00:31:11.360 --> 00:31:13.200

(RM) And then how to work with Indian parents

00:31:13.200 --> 00:31:15.120

(RM) and how to

00:31:17.039 --> 00:31:19.600

(RM) do things that seem to be illogical and

00:31:19.600 --> 00:31:21.760

(RM) you know, learning how to

00:31:21.760 --> 00:31:25.919

(RM) operate your whole day around "kana" (food in Hindi) like when you eat.

00:31:26.159 --> 00:31:29.120

(RM) And so, you know and my brother-in-law,

00:31:29.120 --> 00:31:30.880

(RM) my husband's brother, came with us in

00:31:30.880 --> 00:31:33.039

(RM) December, he came to my parents' house. He

00:31:33.039 --> 00:31:34.320

(RM) normally doesn't come to my parents'

00:31:34.320 --> 00:31:36.799

(RM) house at that time of the year.

00:31:36.799 --> 00:31:38.320

(RM) And then he was just like,

00:31:38.320 --> 00:31:40.320

(RM) does our whole day have to center around

00:31:40.320 --> 00:31:41.360

(RM) food?

00:31:41.360 --> 00:31:45.519

(RM) Like I'm sorry, yes it does.

(I) Yeah, it does.

00:31:45.519 --> 00:31:47.679

(RM) It does, I'm sorry. So, but when you

00:31:47.679 --> 00:31:49.440

(RM) marry a person who's Indian and you say that they

00:31:49.440 --> 00:31:51.200

(RM) understand, oh yeah of course.

00:31:51.200 --> 00:31:53.440

(RM) It does, it centers around like

00:31:53.440 --> 00:31:55.039

(RM) you've had lunch now but now you must be

00:31:55.039 --> 00:31:56.720

(RM) getting hungry it's two o'clock. It's

00:31:56.720 --> 00:32:00.159

(RM) time for chai and some appetizer.

00:32:00.159 --> 00:32:01.840

(RM) Right? And so

00:32:01.840 --> 00:32:04.080

(RM) you know, it's just a very different,

00:32:04.080 --> 00:32:05.360

(RM) it's just a very different family

00:32:05.360 --> 00:32:08.960

(RM) dynamic too.

(I) Yeah.

00:32:08.960 --> 00:32:10.240

(RM) And so

00:32:10.240 --> 00:32:12.000

(RM) I keep saying like I hope you, you know,

00:32:12.000 --> 00:32:13.519

(RM) we live in Silicon Valley you should be

00:32:13.519 --> 00:32:16.559

(RM) able to meet somebody who's Indian.

00:32:16.960 --> 00:32:18.080

(RM) And so

00:32:18.080 --> 00:32:19.600

(RM) yeah, and I feel like that would make it

00:32:19.600 --> 00:32:21.200

(RM) easier for her.

00:32:21.200 --> 00:32:23.039

(I) Yeah, yeah.

00:32:23.039 --> 00:32:25.200

(I) Yeah, I think I personally also, I mean in

00:32:25.200 --> 00:32:27.279

(I) this short time too, I think I've felt

00:32:27.279 --> 00:32:29.120

(I) that a couple of times that,

00:32:29.120 --> 00:32:32.159

(I) it's great to feel that comfort

00:32:32.159 --> 00:32:34.080

(I) because, you know, see or like you

00:32:34.080 --> 00:32:35.440

(I) said, you don't have to explain so many

00:32:35.440 --> 00:32:36.480

(I) things.

00:32:36.480 --> 00:32:38.960

(I) But on the other hand, you can see their

00:32:38.960 --> 00:32:40.480

(I) expectations,

00:32:40.480 --> 00:32:41.360

(RM) Yeah.

00:32:41.360 --> 00:32:43.679

(I) which you can, you can sense even if it's

00:32:43.679 --> 00:32:45.760

(RM) not being articulated in front of you.

00:32:45.760 --> 00:32:48.640

(RM) Right, right.

(I) Right? So yeah.

00:32:48.640 --> 00:32:51.279

(RM) And then, you know, being raised by

00:32:51.279 --> 00:32:53.279

(RM) Indian parents you just know.

00:32:53.279 --> 00:32:55.120

(RM) So sometimes people would say to have

00:32:55.120 --> 00:32:57.120

(RM) said to me like, why don't you just not

00:32:57.120 --> 00:32:59.200

(RM) do that like, you know, you need to be

00:32:59.200 --> 00:33:01.440

(RM) independent of your parents,

00:33:01.440 --> 00:33:05.919

(RM) and it's just not in my

00:33:05.919 --> 00:33:08.000

(RM) identity, like I can't even think about that

00:33:08.000 --> 00:33:10.799

(RM) because I'm not, that's not my experience.

00:33:10.799 --> 00:33:12.640

(RM) We are very, Indians are very

00:33:12.640 --> 00:33:15.200

(RM) interdependent with their families.

(I) Yes.

00:33:15.200 --> 00:33:16.720

(RM) And your identities are tied up with

00:33:16.720 --> 00:33:19.039

(RM) your family identity, you know, and being

00:33:19.039 --> 00:33:21.039

(RM) respectful to your parents and so

00:33:21.039 --> 00:33:22.840

(RM) I've never, it's very

00:33:22.840 --> 00:33:26.159

(RM) unusual experience to be in a room

00:33:26.159 --> 00:33:28.000

(RM) with people who haven't been

00:33:28.000 --> 00:33:29.440

(RM) raised by Indian parents and then they're

00:33:29.440 --> 00:33:31.440

(RM) saying things like the importance of

00:33:31.440 --> 00:33:34.000

(RM) being, you know, independent or

00:33:34.000 --> 00:33:36.399

(RM) you know, when I was telling one of my

00:33:36.399 --> 00:33:38.320

(RM) colleagues like oh, my mom really wants

00:33:38.320 --> 00:33:39.679

(RM) me to

00:33:39.679 --> 00:33:42.799

(RM) do this thing with my son

00:33:42.799 --> 00:33:44.559

(RM) and so I'm trying to look for a place

00:33:44.559 --> 00:33:46.240

(RM) where I can do this and they're like, why

00:33:46.240 --> 00:33:48.000

(RM) don't you just not do it?

00:33:48.000 --> 00:33:50.159

(I) Yeah.

(RM) I'm like no no,

00:33:50.159 --> 00:33:53.679

(RM) I think you don't understand you have to do it.

00:33:53.679 --> 00:33:55.360

(RM) And when you talk to somebody who's

00:33:55.360 --> 00:33:56.880

(RM) Indian they definitely, they understand

00:33:56.880 --> 00:34:00.559

(RM) that point immediately.

(I) Yes, yes.

00:34:00.559 --> 00:34:03.679

(RM) And so I think that is about I mean

(I) Yeah.

00:34:03.679 --> 00:34:06.559

(RM) the density of Desi here in the

00:34:06.559 --> 00:34:08.159

(RM) Silicon Valley

00:34:09.440 --> 00:34:10.639

(RM) is very

00:34:10.639 --> 00:34:12.240

(RM) critical for feeling like you can

00:34:12.240 --> 00:34:14.159

(RM) actually express your identity more

00:34:14.159 --> 00:34:15.440

(RM) seriously.

00:34:15.440 --> 00:34:17.760

(I) Yeah, that's true. Correct, correct. Yeah, I

00:34:17.760 --> 00:34:19.440

(I) agree with that. Yeah and I think that's

00:34:19.440 --> 00:34:21.520

(I) what makes Silicon Valley such an

00:34:21.520 --> 00:34:23.440

(I) interesting place to study

00:34:23.440 --> 00:34:24.720

(I) as well.

00:34:24.720 --> 00:34:27.040

(I) And yeah, right. Is there, is there

00:34:27.040 --> 00:34:28.399

(I) anything else you would like to say

00:34:28.399 --> 00:34:30.079

(I) about the Desi

00:34:30.079 --> 00:34:33.200

(I) identity or community or, and even your

00:34:33.200 --> 00:34:35.440

(I) your self-reflection about, you know,

00:34:35.440 --> 00:34:37.839

(I) being who you are in terms of your

00:34:37.839 --> 00:34:39.839

(I) profession, personal life.

00:34:39.839 --> 00:34:41.760

(RM) So I think there's two things for sure,

00:34:41.760 --> 00:34:44.639

(RM) if it could be translated somewhere,

00:34:44.639 --> 00:34:47.599

(RM) is that when you are in a like inter-

00:34:47.599 --> 00:34:50.159

(RM) inter-Desi family, I don't know what we are.

00:34:50.159 --> 00:34:52.800

(RM) Interethnic family,

00:34:52.800 --> 00:34:55.200

(RM) multiethnic family.

00:34:55.200 --> 00:34:56.879

(RM) One of the challenges I'm so worried

00:34:56.879 --> 00:34:58.800

(RM) about for my own son

00:34:58.800 --> 00:35:00.800

(RM) is retaining that part of his Indian

00:35:00.800 --> 00:35:03.359

(RM) identity,

00:35:03.359 --> 00:35:06.240

(RM) and becoming way too Americanized. I

00:35:06.240 --> 00:35:07.680

(RM) don't know if that's a, it's not

00:35:07.680 --> 00:35:09.920

(RM) politically correct but I want him to

00:35:09.920 --> 00:35:11.119

(RM) retain

00:35:11.119 --> 00:35:13.359

(I) Yeah.

(RM) that sense of identity. I want him

00:35:13.359 --> 00:35:15.200

(RM) to understand the struggles that his

00:35:15.200 --> 00:35:16.640

(RM) grandparents had

00:35:16.640 --> 00:35:18.560

(RM) moving into that community where they

00:35:18.560 --> 00:35:20.560

(RM) were the only Indians.

00:35:20.560 --> 00:35:22.240

(RM) They were not trusted because they were

00:35:22.240 --> 00:35:24.240

(RM) Indian.

00:35:24.240 --> 00:35:26.079

(RM) I want him to understand that and really

00:35:26.079 --> 00:35:26.960

(RM) have,

00:35:26.960 --> 00:35:28.960

(RM) make that part of his identity. I want

00:35:28.960 --> 00:35:31.839

(RM) him to speak the language well.

00:35:31.839 --> 00:35:33.760

(RM) Right, and I think,

00:35:33.760 --> 00:35:36.320

(RM) I mean the actual language Hindi

00:35:36.320 --> 00:35:38.400

(RM) is on him to learn the language and have

00:35:38.400 --> 00:35:41.440

(RM) that as part of his identity.

00:35:41.440 --> 00:35:43.839

(RM) And so that is something I'm, I worry

00:35:43.839 --> 00:35:47.680

(RM) about most as the parent of this child.

00:35:47.680 --> 00:35:49.200

(RM) And then the second thing,

00:35:49.200 --> 00:35:52.079

(RM) that's in my, you know, my personal

00:35:52.079 --> 00:35:53.680

(RM) sphere, but in my professional sphere

00:35:53.680 --> 00:35:55.680

(RM) I've recognized that

00:35:55.680 --> 00:35:58.800

(RM) as I've found opportunities to use my

00:35:58.800 --> 00:36:01.359

(RM) voice through leadership experience,

00:36:01.359 --> 00:36:03.599

(RM) that I've been able to

00:36:03.599 --> 00:36:06.000

(RM) feel more comfortable and have strength

00:36:06.000 --> 00:36:09.839

(RM) in expressing that identity and calling out

00:36:09.839 --> 00:36:11.599

(RM) places where we need to think about

00:36:11.599 --> 00:36:14.400

(RM) diversity and think about equity.

00:36:14.400 --> 00:36:15.760

(RM) I'm in a,

00:36:15.760 --> 00:36:18.079

(RM) I think I'm what, in a somewhat powerful

00:36:18.079 --> 00:36:19.119

(RM) position

00:36:19.119 --> 00:36:20.880

(RM) on the campuses, the chair of the senate

00:36:20.880 --> 00:36:22.320

(RM) right now.

00:36:23.200 --> 00:36:25.520

(RM) But I do think that that is, that gives

00:36:25.520 --> 00:36:27.040

(RM) you know, as I've moved up in my

00:36:27.040 --> 00:36:29.200

(RM) leadership, starting in 2002 where I was

00:36:29.200 --> 00:36:30.240

(RM) just

00:36:30.240 --> 00:36:31.040

(RM) a

00:36:31.040 --> 00:36:34.160

(RM) assistant professor with no power at all

00:36:34.160 --> 00:36:35.920

(I) Yes.

(RM) to now,

00:36:35.920 --> 00:36:38.160

(RM) the more leadership I've seen, the

00:36:38.160 --> 00:36:39.839

(RM) more it's given me opportunity to kind

00:36:39.839 --> 00:36:41.920

(RM) of say, why don't we do this or why don't

00:36:41.920 --> 00:36:43.839

(RM) we do that? Or I have been able to

00:36:43.839 --> 00:36:44.960

(RM) connect

00:36:44.960 --> 00:36:46.880

(RM) and do other work

00:36:46.880 --> 00:36:49.200

(RM) that really empowers other women or

00:36:49.200 --> 00:36:50.480

(RM) empowers

00:36:52.240 --> 00:36:54.079

(RM) Desi women or empowers women who

00:36:54.079 --> 00:36:56.880

(RM) have inner, other intersectionalities.

00:36:56.880 --> 00:36:59.359

(RM) And I think that is the, that is the

00:36:59.359 --> 00:37:01.520

(RM) value of leadership.

00:37:01.520 --> 00:37:03.920

(RM) That's the power of leadership, right?

00:37:03.920 --> 00:37:05.359

(RM) That when you have somebody who really

00:37:05.359 --> 00:37:06.480

(RM) values it

00:37:06.480 --> 00:37:08.640

(RM) and it allows me to express my

00:37:08.640 --> 00:37:10.240

(RM) identity, and it allows me to actually

00:37:10.240 --> 00:37:14.079

(RM) say in meetings, because I grew up Indian.

00:37:14.079 --> 00:37:16.160

(RM) Whereas most people try to not, like

00:37:16.160 --> 00:37:18.079

(RM) suppress their ethnic identity or don't

00:37:18.079 --> 00:37:20.960

(RM) even refer to it, I actually try to make

00:37:20.960 --> 00:37:24.480

(RM) it as more central in

(I) That's great, yeah.

00:37:24.480 --> 00:37:27.680

(RM) I try, I'm not always successful.

00:37:27.680 --> 00:37:29.119

(RM) It also puts an additional pressure

00:37:29.119 --> 00:37:31.599

(RM) though that I am representing a whole identity.

00:37:31.599 --> 00:37:33.040

(I) Yes.

00:37:33.040 --> 00:37:35.839

(RM) I do so and so I feel like, you know, but

00:37:35.839 --> 00:37:37.599

(RM) I just want to make sure that that's

00:37:37.599 --> 00:37:38.800

(RM) also a piece

00:37:38.800 --> 00:37:42.320

(RM) somewhere in this history that

00:37:42.320 --> 00:37:43.680

(RM) like by

00:37:43.680 --> 00:37:46.240

(RM) looking for people who have that

00:37:46.240 --> 00:37:49.040

(RM) diversity, in this case talking about

00:37:49.040 --> 00:37:51.440

(RM) those who have Desi identity,

00:37:51.440 --> 00:37:53.040

(RM) we're actually empowering those people

00:37:53.040 --> 00:37:55.119

(RM) to use their identities to make better

00:37:55.119 --> 00:37:58.560

(RM) decisions or to connect people

00:37:58.560 --> 00:37:59.680

(RM) better.

00:37:59.680 --> 00:38:00.800

(I) Right.

00:38:00.800 --> 00:38:02.720

(I) Yeah. This is, this is great. Thank you so

00:38:02.720 --> 00:38:05.599

(I) much Ravisha for your time.

(RM) Oh, you're welcome.

00:38:05.599 --> 00:38:07.920

(I) Yeah. Thanks a lot. I'll stop recording

00:38:07.920 --> 00:38:09.359

(I) now, okay.