

**Desis of Silicon Valley Speak: An Oral History**  
**Sakti Das Interview**

00:00:01.370 --> 00:00:10.409

Interviewer (I) Good morning Dr. Das. Thank you very much for agreeing to do the interview for the "Desis of Silicon Valley Speak: An Oral History" project.

00:00:12.380 --> 00:00:13.870

Sakti Das (SD) Thank you.

00:00:14.120 --> 00:00:16.549

(SD) I'm glad to be involved in this.

00:00:16.620 --> 00:00:17.860

(SD) Hopefully, we will

00:00:18.690 --> 00:00:19.380

(SD) get

00:00:19.410 --> 00:00:22.369

(SD) some of the, my perspectives in this matter.

00:00:22.390 --> 00:00:36.289

(I) Yes, yes, and I think we'll get to know of the Silicon Valley, as it is understood widely from you and your experiences. So I'll start with the first question, and I'm going to turn my video off.

00:00:38.040 --> 00:00:45.330

(I) So my first question to you is, tell us a bit about yourself and describe your journey up until now.

00:00:47.920 --> 00:00:50.790

(SD) Oh, it's a long journey.

00:00:51.860 --> 00:00:53.600

(SD) Because I am,

00:00:54.460 --> 00:01:00.170

(SD) in another couple of months I'm going to be 83 years old.

(I) Oh, wow! Okay.

00:01:00.370 --> 00:01:01.699

(SD) I came to

00:01:02.130 --> 00:01:03.520

(SD) United States.

00:01:05.310 --> 00:01:10.970

(SD) Actually, if I go back, if you want me to speak about my life, then

00:01:11.670 --> 00:01:17.920

(SD) I graduated in medicine in 1961.

00:01:18.970 --> 00:01:20.239

(SD) Then I went to

00:01:22.310 --> 00:01:25.590

(SD) University of Delhi to do my master's in surgery.

00:01:25.660 --> 00:01:27.360

(SD) Then,

00:01:27.700 --> 00:01:29.130

(SD) then I went to

00:01:29.230 --> 00:01:30.179

(SD) England

00:01:30.510 --> 00:01:35.560

(SD) to do my fellowship in surgery, FRCS (Fellowship of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons) in surgery.

00:01:36.460 --> 00:01:43.009

(SD) And then eventually, after a couple of years, I decided to come to United States, and I came to United States and

00:01:43.780 --> 00:01:44.699

(SD) spent

00:01:45.000 --> 00:01:48.749

(SD) one not very pleasant year in

00:01:48.800 --> 00:01:50.369

(SD) Brooklyn, New York.

00:01:50.660 --> 00:01:55.759

(I) Why do you say it was not pleasant?

00:01:56.250 --> 00:01:57.179

(SD) Well, there was...

00:01:58.170 --> 00:02:03.450

(SD) we better not get into that. Yeah.

(I) Okay.

00:02:02.450 --> 00:02:05.590

(SD) There's a lot of

00:02:05.590 --> 00:02:06.710

(SD) clashes

00:02:06.830 --> 00:02:09.240

(SD) regarding...

00:02:09.949 --> 00:02:11.509

(SD) I felt that I was

00:02:11.740 --> 00:02:13.200

(SD) being pulled down,

00:02:13.410 --> 00:02:16.110

(SD) despite my background in England.

00:02:16.430 --> 00:02:17.170

(I) Hmm.

00:02:17.220 --> 00:02:19.180

(SD) The local, my, my

00:02:19.260 --> 00:02:23.550

(SD) so-called mentors, were not being able to accept me that way.

00:02:23.650 --> 00:02:26.170

(SD) So in any case,

00:02:26.360 --> 00:02:30.149

(SD) from there I went to, I was very lucky

00:02:30.430 --> 00:02:35.120

(SD) to be accepted at UCLA for a resident fellowship.

(I) Okay.

00:02:35.200 --> 00:02:40.500

(SD) And I, I spent four wonderful years

00:02:41.400 --> 00:02:42.470

(SD) learning

00:02:42.940 --> 00:02:46.519

(SD) urology as my specialty.

00:02:46.540 --> 00:02:47.280

(I) Okay.

00:02:47.480 --> 00:02:49.589

(SD) And then 1978,

00:02:51.070 --> 00:02:53.140

(SD) we moved to Bay Area.

00:02:53.340 --> 00:02:55.870

(I) Okay.

(SD) And

00:02:56.760 --> 00:02:57.730  
(SD) I

00:02:58.100 --> 00:02:59.659  
(SD) I took a

00:02:59.740 --> 00:03:01.279  
(SD) job as a

00:03:01.530 --> 00:03:03.350  
(SD) urologist in

00:03:03.960 --> 00:03:07.009  
(SD) in Kaiser Hospital Walnut Creek.

00:03:08.020 --> 00:03:09.540  
(SD) And

00:03:10.460 --> 00:03:14.599  
(SD) I had a wonderful time, for about 20 years, I worked there.

00:03:14.720 --> 00:03:17.930  
(SD) And at the end of 20 years, I decided, okay,

00:03:18.190 --> 00:03:20.210  
(SD) I would like to get into

00:03:20.800 --> 00:03:23.300  
(SD) more fully into academics.

00:03:23.410 --> 00:03:25.570  
(SD) So from there I

00:03:25.740 --> 00:03:26.950  
(SD) moved to,

00:03:27.000 --> 00:03:30.519

(SD) I became a Professor of Urology at

00:03:30.710 --> 00:03:35.600

(SD) University of California, Davis, and I spent

00:03:36.000 --> 00:03:39.190

(SD) five wonderful years in Davis.

00:03:40.420 --> 00:03:42.860

(SD) But staying away from

00:03:42.890 --> 00:03:46.370

(SD) home, which is in Lafayette, Bay Area,

00:03:46.780 --> 00:03:52.110

(SD) was not being very comfortable for me. Leaving my wife home,

00:03:52.160 --> 00:03:55.800

(SD) coming home for three days, and then working for four days.

00:03:55.910 --> 00:03:58.110

(SD) So after five years I decided

00:03:59.030 --> 00:04:01.230

(SD) to discontinue

00:04:01.420 --> 00:04:02.530

(I) Hmm.

00:04:02.780 --> 00:04:06.050

(SD) from Davis and

00:04:06.190 --> 00:04:12.779

(SD) I came down to Bay Area in Alameda County, there is an East Bay

00:04:13.450 --> 00:04:15.410

(SD) UC San Francisco

00:04:15.450 --> 00:04:17.180  
(SD) branch there.

00:04:17.200 --> 00:04:18.329  
(SD) And

00:04:18.450 --> 00:04:20.260  
(SD) the chairman there

00:04:20.490 --> 00:04:22.029  
(SD) called me to

00:04:22.420 --> 00:04:24.560  
(SD) asking me if we could join them,

00:04:24.860 --> 00:04:27.060  
(SD) and I joined them there.

00:04:27.120 --> 00:04:28.340  
(SD) And I spend

00:04:28.400 --> 00:04:30.650  
(SD) 12 wonderful years of my life

00:04:31.080 --> 00:04:33.090  
(SD) there working with my

00:04:33.140 --> 00:04:34.900  
(SD) young residents, and

00:04:35.590 --> 00:04:40.370  
(SD) many of them were Desis, but

00:04:41.270 --> 00:04:45.820  
(SD) I had a wonderful time. And after 12 years I

00:04:46.210 --> 00:04:47.830  
(SD) decided to

00:04:48.000 --> 00:04:49.270

(SD) hang my hat

00:04:49.310 --> 00:04:50.630

(SD) and

00:04:51.350 --> 00:04:52.530

(SD) retired.

00:04:52.800 --> 00:04:55.910

(SD) Of course, even after retirement

00:04:56.170 --> 00:05:01.470

(SD) I do keep in involve-- involved in mission works

00:05:01.810 --> 00:05:03.919

(SD) in urology.

00:05:04.020 --> 00:05:06.200

(SD) I go to

00:05:06.860 --> 00:05:11.349

(SD) several countries in different times of the year. I

00:05:11.840 --> 00:05:17.369

(SD) I work in India. I work in Kenya. And I

00:05:17.560 --> 00:05:20.910

(SD) almost consistently work in Mexico.

00:05:21.050 --> 00:05:24.409

(I) Okay.

(SD) in a, in a little village called San Blas.

00:05:24.520 --> 00:05:28.149

(SD) [inaudible] two urologists, one week



00:05:29.740 --> 00:05:30.640

(SD) they

00:05:30.710 --> 00:05:32.350

(SD) I'm sorry, one week

00:05:33.160 --> 00:05:34.850

(SD) a month.

(I) Hmm.

00:05:35.870 --> 00:05:39.300

(SD) And I've been doing this for a little over 30 years now.

00:05:39.620 --> 00:05:41.490

(I) One week a month,

00:05:41.570 --> 00:05:46.149

(I) like every month?

(SD) No I'm sorry, one weekend, the first weekend of the month

00:05:46.700 --> 00:05:50.220

(SD) I go to San Blas, and

00:05:50.420 --> 00:05:52.210

(SD) essentially,

00:05:52.350 --> 00:05:53.709

(SD) we have a team

00:05:53.870 --> 00:05:55.799

(SD) called "Liga International."

00:05:55.910 --> 00:05:59.009

(SD) And this, this team comprises of,

00:06:00.080 --> 00:06:01.940

(SD) comprises of

00:06:02.050 --> 00:06:05.849

(SD) volunteer pilots. They have their own little plane,

00:06:06.130 --> 00:06:08.719

(SD) 4-seater, 5-seater, or something like that.

00:06:09.200 --> 00:06:11.249

(SD) And they fly us down,

00:06:11.610 --> 00:06:14.140

(SD) and then we work from Friday,

00:06:14.440 --> 00:06:18.250

(SD) Saturday, and then Sunday afternoon we come back.

00:06:18.900 --> 00:06:21.390

(SD) And during that weekend,

00:06:21.620 --> 00:06:28.930

(SD) there are multiple specialties from dentist to medicine, to gynecology, urology, surgery,

00:06:29.110 --> 00:06:31.950

(SD) and we have good operating setup.

00:06:32.380 --> 00:06:34.609

(SD) And on a weekend we see

00:06:35.040 --> 00:06:42.950

(SD) between the, all the specialties combined, we see about 2,000 patients that weekend. It's very busy and

00:06:42.970 --> 00:06:44.410

(SD) very gratifying

00:06:44.700 --> 00:06:46.280

(SD) weekend we spend there.

00:06:46.810 --> 00:06:52.080

(I) So you're saying you do this every, every month, first weekend?

00:06:52.350 --> 00:06:54.940

(SD) Let me modify, the, the

00:06:54.990 --> 00:06:57.610

(SD) couple of summer months like

00:06:57.840 --> 00:06:59.820

(SD) July, August,

00:06:59.840 --> 00:07:10.059

(SD) the, because the heat is extreme, the little planes cannot land. So we don't work those two months.

00:07:10.190 --> 00:07:14.039

(SD) And then we resume our work in September, October goes on like that.

00:07:14.530 --> 00:07:18.230

(I) Wow, amazing.

(SD) Yeah, it's interesting.

00:07:18.300 --> 00:07:20.800

(I) Yes, it's oh! Oh, wow.

00:07:20.870 --> 00:07:23.130

(SD) Yeah.

(I) So wonderful.

00:07:23.650 --> 00:07:30.119

(SD) Yeah, I totally enjoyed it. I treat many children there, and the adults,

00:07:30.300 --> 00:07:31.300

(SD) and

00:07:31.470 --> 00:07:33.910

(SD) and I have done some exciting

00:07:34.320 --> 00:07:40.389

(SD) surgeries there, much needed surgeries, because they have no facility. They cannot

00:07:40.620 --> 00:07:43.960

(SD) have don't, they don't have to have the money to go

00:07:44.100 --> 00:07:44.950

(SD) to

00:07:45.060 --> 00:07:45.920

(SD) the

00:07:46.570 --> 00:07:48.650

(SD) private hospitals for

00:07:49.000 --> 00:07:51.419

(SD) but we serve as we can

00:07:51.440 --> 00:07:53.229

(SD) and they appreciate it.

00:07:53.690 --> 00:07:56.719

(SD) And the villagers there are very.

00:07:57.270 --> 00:07:58.010

00:07:58.070 --> 00:07:59.430

(SD) very grateful.

00:07:59.830 --> 00:08:00.680

(SD) The

00:08:00.750 --> 00:08:02.020

(SD) that weekend,

00:08:02.150 --> 00:08:04.579

(SD) they host us there. We have a

00:08:04.870 --> 00:08:07.060

(SD) two-story building that we have built

00:08:07.360 --> 00:08:09.029

(SD) with the help of the rotary.

00:08:09.450 --> 00:08:10.430

(SD) And

00:08:10.640 --> 00:08:13.660

(SD) we...sleep in a dorm there.

00:08:14.120 --> 00:08:15.840

(SD) And the villages feed us,

00:08:16.230 --> 00:08:20.809

(SD) they come and cook for us, and it's an interesting family-like atmosphere.

00:08:21.530 --> 00:08:25.319

(I) Wow, that's (SD) I love it.

(I) Yeah, it's so wonderful.

00:08:25.710 --> 00:08:30.960

(I) Yeah, wow. So from what you have been telling us,

00:08:31.000 --> 00:08:35.940

(I) so you have been on the West Coast of California for quite a while now.

00:08:36.880 --> 00:08:38.060

(SD) Yeah,

00:08:38.159 --> 00:08:41.370

(SD) except in one year of my, of my

00:08:42.980 --> 00:08:47.150

(SD) residency, residence in the United States.

00:08:47.320 --> 00:08:48.000

(SD) Yeah,

00:08:48.000 --> 00:08:55.880

(SD) I've been since...1978,

00:08:55.960 --> 00:08:58.000

(SD) I've been in Bay Area,

00:08:58.000 --> 00:09:00.120

(SD) greater Bay Area.

00:09:00.440 --> 00:09:01.200

(I) Okay, wow.

00:09:01.900 --> 00:09:08.500

(I) Oh, so you have seen this area change and evolve in multiple ways, over all these years.

00:09:08.550 --> 00:09:14.690

(SD) Oh, yes, I mean, when we first came here

00:09:15.390 --> 00:09:17.200

(SD) and what I see now,

00:09:17.240 --> 00:09:19.130

(SD) it's astronomic

00:09:19.560 --> 00:09:22.390

(SD) development, improvement,

00:09:22.530 --> 00:09:25.700

(SD) all the infrastructure, facilities,

00:09:26.240 --> 00:09:31.660

(SD) and the, and the population has grown immensely.

00:09:32.320 --> 00:09:33.949

(SD) You know when...

00:09:34.490 --> 00:09:39.129

(SD) when we have to go, like sometimes I have to go, we have to drive down to

00:09:39.470 --> 00:09:43.159

(SD) Los Angeles, and we'll go to San Jose, and we will

00:09:43.230 --> 00:09:51.889

(SD) we will say, oh, this is nice village coming up. We didn't think that was a town, it was a city even.

00:09:51.950 --> 00:09:58.669

(I) Oh.

(SD) And same thing, the new areas like Danville, Pleasanton, they didn't exist.

00:09:58.710 --> 00:10:00.530

(SD) Those are all orchards.

00:10:00.740 --> 00:10:03.060

(I) Oh, really.

(SD) Yeah.

00:10:03.630 --> 00:10:07.010

(I) Wow.

(SD) Even Walnut Creek, the name Walnut

00:10:07.250 --> 00:10:08.030

(SD) Creek,

00:10:08.460 --> 00:10:11.599

(SD) it probably came from Walnut Grove,

00:10:11.740 --> 00:10:19.639

(SD) and the, and the main avenue here, the Ygnacio Valley Road.

00:10:19.639 --> 00:10:22.170

(SD) Ygnacio Valley Road was a

00:10:22.170 --> 00:10:25.319

(SD) was a two-lane road lined by

00:10:26.380 --> 00:10:27.890

(SD) walnut orchards, mostly. (I) Oh.

(SD) It's an entirely,

00:10:32.140 --> 00:10:38.150

(SD) entirely different than what we see nowadays, and, and I like it, the way

00:10:38.400 --> 00:10:41.689

(SD) things have developed. We have

00:10:41.940 --> 00:10:43.339

(SD) we have lost the

00:10:43.680 --> 00:10:46.500

(SD) villages, but we have gained the

00:10:46.850 --> 00:10:48.459

(SD) beautiful

00:10:49.110 --> 00:10:52.499

(SD) urban area here and urban developments, and

00:10:53.290 --> 00:10:54.129

(SD) when I,

00:10:54.800 --> 00:10:57.960

(SD) when we first came here, I remember my

00:10:59.750 --> 00:11:05.019

(SD) sister-in-law was visiting us from England, and that was her birthday.

00:11:05.060 --> 00:11:05.830

(SD) So

00:11:06.310 --> 00:11:08.610



(SD) I went around looking for a restaurant

00:11:08.770 --> 00:11:10.080

(SD) in Walnut Creek.

00:11:10.150 --> 00:11:16.910

(SD) You know, there were only two restaurants, even then those could not, I couldn't take us because they were closing.

00:11:17.090 --> 00:11:22.429

(I) Oh.

(SD) So that was interesting experience. And now you have

00:11:22.640 --> 00:11:36.660

(SD) everything you can imagine. (I) Too many to choose from.

(SD) I'm not complaining. It's nice, it's fun, there is good schools, (I) Yes.

00:11:36.660 --> 00:11:38.180

(SD) and good

00:11:38.400 --> 00:11:39.420

(SD) development.

00:11:39.720 --> 00:11:40.510

(I) Right.

00:11:40.610 --> 00:11:51.789

(I) So I will bring you back to one of the comments that you made, that when you came to the Alameda side, and you started the UC San Francisco

00:11:51.830 --> 00:12:10.229

(I) branch, when you started teaching there and working with students over there, and you said that there were quite a few Desi students who worked with you there.

(SD) Yeah. (I) So, is that one of the first times that you saw or you noticed the, you know, another generation of Asian Indians

00:12:10.240 --> 00:12:16.359

(I) coming into the area? Because this place, as it has grown into what is known as Silicon Valley,

00:12:16.460 --> 00:12:23.520

(I) you know, has seen the tech sector being dominated by Asian Indians, but we don't hear much from other sectors.

00:12:23.560 --> 00:12:27.250

(SD) No, absolutely. I don't if you know or not, I get

00:12:27.650 --> 00:12:28.839

(SD) pleasantly

00:12:29.790 --> 00:12:30.810

(SD) amazed

00:12:30.930 --> 00:12:41.389

(SD) by the number of Indian doctors in the UC System, at Stanford. And in Alameda, I was working at Highland Hospital,

00:12:41.430 --> 00:12:43.270

(SD) and

00:12:43.940 --> 00:12:45.889

(SD) I walk in and I see this

00:12:46.540 --> 00:12:48.760

(SD) young, beautiful woman, and I thought

00:12:48.780 --> 00:12:51.189

(SD) she looks Desi to me, and I said,

00:12:51.400 --> 00:13:10.750

(SD) so I asked her, Desi? She said, yes uncle. And we became, we became an uncle-niece forever after, now, after 20 years, she still calls me, and we have kept in touch. There are quite a few like that, you know.

00:13:10.760 --> 00:13:11.610

(I) Hmm.

00:13:12.200 --> 00:13:20.479

(I) So that has grew, and this is, what time did you start in Alameda in the Highland Hospital, and compared to now, the growth?

00:13:21.030 --> 00:13:25.839

(SD) I'm talking about the 80s. (I) Okay.

(SD) I think it was

00:13:26.080 --> 00:13:28.349

(SD) let me see, '78

00:13:29.660 --> 00:13:30.400

(SD) to

00:13:31.040 --> 00:13:35.050

(SD) yeah, it's 80-- 1988, I went there.

00:13:35.700 --> 00:13:38.609

(I) Okay, and that number has grown consistently?

00:13:39.000 --> 00:13:42.430

(I) It has. I see a lot more

00:13:44.720 --> 00:13:46.820

(SD) residents there

00:13:47.660 --> 00:13:50.220

(SD) from Desi background.

00:13:50.800 --> 00:13:53.720

(SD) Some are Bangladeshi, like there was a

00:13:53.760 --> 00:13:59.319

(SD) there was a woman who was not getting anywhere in residency training

00:13:59.760 --> 00:14:00.690

(SD) and

00:14:01.250 --> 00:14:02.560

(SD) she was a qualified

00:14:02.880 --> 00:14:05.779

(SD) girl, and I, I felt for her.

00:14:05.970 --> 00:14:07.860

(SD) And she was

00:14:08.360 --> 00:14:13.089

(SD) she approached me, she said, can you help me? I'm not getting any residency anywhere, and I'm

00:14:13.410 --> 00:14:16.149

(SD) I'm doing MBA and

00:14:16.180 --> 00:14:20.420

(SD) so I said, well, let me see. So what happened, I spoke to

00:14:20.650 --> 00:14:28.000

(SD) Mini. Mini was the residency coordinator at Highland Hospital, and she was a Desi.

00:14:28.040 --> 00:14:31.590

(SD) I said, Mini, can you help this girl? [She said] oh, let me see.

00:14:31.780 --> 00:14:34.129

(SD) And she went in there and now she is a

00:14:34.400 --> 00:14:40.070

(SD) qualified internist in practicing in Bangladesh.

(I) Wow, very nice.

00:14:40.660 --> 00:14:43.679

(SD) Yeah. So there were quite a few like that.

00:14:44.230 --> 00:14:56.180

(I) Hmm. So from your experience in the field of medicine and that growing number of doctors that you have been noticing, from that perspective, what does Silicon Valley mean to you?

00:15:03.400 --> 00:15:05.959

(SD) What, what probably it means that

00:15:07.510 --> 00:15:09.690

(SD) more Desis are

00:15:09.780 --> 00:15:10.889

(SD) coming to

00:15:11.410 --> 00:15:12.640

(SD) Stanford,

00:15:12.680 --> 00:15:14.530

(SD) UC San Francisco,

00:15:14.580 --> 00:15:17.660

(SD) working in San Francisco, and working in

00:15:19.540 --> 00:15:21.400

(SD) UC San Francisco,

00:15:21.650 --> 00:15:27.439

(SD) and even going up to Davis all this way. But they're, they're coming

00:15:28.440 --> 00:15:29.500

(SD) seeking

00:15:29.580 --> 00:15:30.530

(SD) jobs

00:15:31.370 --> 00:15:33.960

(SD) for, in a place that they

00:15:34.090 --> 00:15:37.219

(SD) that they...like to be. They like to

00:15:38.700 --> 00:15:45.530

(SD) have their children grown up here, get educated here. There are good schools, good colleges, etc. In fact,

00:15:45.630 --> 00:15:46.750

(SD) when I first

00:15:47.060 --> 00:15:48.879

(SD) was offered a job

00:15:49.360 --> 00:15:51.770

(SD) in 1978,

00:15:52.260 --> 00:15:53.300

(SD) a job

00:15:53.320 --> 00:15:54.730

(SD) at Walnut Creek,

00:15:54.790 --> 00:15:58.289

(SD) I had no idea what where Walnut Creek is. I asked my

00:15:58.700 --> 00:16:02.759

(SD) one of my mentors, one of the assistant professors, I said, Stan,

00:16:03.940 --> 00:16:05.410

(SD) what is Bay Area?

00:16:05.590 --> 00:16:12.229

(SD) So he laughed, he said, no, no, Bay Area is a very highly sought after, coveted

00:16:12.500 --> 00:16:15.709

(SD) area to live. You would really love it.

00:16:15.890 --> 00:16:17.100

(SD) I said, oh, okay.

00:16:17.280 --> 00:16:18.190

(SD) So

00:16:18.300 --> 00:16:19.639

(SD) then I came and

00:16:20.780 --> 00:16:23.969

(SD) when you do, easy to fall in love with Bay Area.

00:16:24.350 --> 00:16:27.839

(I) Yes, so why was it sought after? Why was it so coveted?

00:16:30.140 --> 00:16:31.430

(SD) Good question.

00:16:31.760 --> 00:16:32.639

(SD) I think,

00:16:34.010 --> 00:16:35.299

(SD) in those days,

00:16:35.330 --> 00:16:36.120

(I) Hmm.

00:16:36.380 --> 00:16:37.170

(SD) the

00:16:37.630 --> 00:16:41.650

(SD) area was pretty geographically wonderful. You can

00:16:41.780 --> 00:16:50.439

(SD) I learned how to ski and I took my son skiing. I could go to Tahoe, ski,

00:16:50.510 --> 00:16:53.580

(SD) or I could go to further north

00:16:53.660 --> 00:16:54.500

(SD) and

00:16:54.740 --> 00:16:59.270

(SD) go to the volcanic Lassen Volcanic Park or something, and

00:16:59.530 --> 00:17:02.960

(SD) I could drive two hours to Oregon

00:17:03.240 --> 00:17:04.130

(SD) to

00:17:04.339 --> 00:17:12.120

(SD) we could see the Shakespeare festival there. So many things and if necessary I could drive another four or five hours and

00:17:12.230 --> 00:17:14.119

(SD) go back to my

00:17:14.500 --> 00:17:15.609

(SD) UCLA

00:17:16.670 --> 00:17:20.040

(SD) college. So,

00:17:20.859 --> 00:17:23.929

(SD) and you could, I also tried

00:17:23.960 --> 00:17:25.080

(SD) water skiing.

00:17:25.579 --> 00:17:29.160

(SD) So, those were activities that I

00:17:29.360 --> 00:17:31.149

(SD) I never could imagine I could do.

00:17:31.400 --> 00:17:36.020

(SD) When I spent one year in New York,

00:17:37.350 --> 00:17:43.770



(SD) all we could do in New York, which is not bad, was go to the museums, you know, which I love.

00:17:43.940 --> 00:17:46.989

(SD) But this kind of activity, this kind of

00:17:47.050 --> 00:17:48.410

(SD) recreation

00:17:48.430 --> 00:17:54.369

(SD) was not available to us in the, in the East Coast as it is in Bay Area

00:17:54.820 --> 00:17:56.600

(I) Right.

(SD) West Coast, yeah.

00:17:57.020 --> 00:18:01.160

(SD) I, I have a feeling, I have a theory.

00:18:01.720 --> 00:18:07.809

(SD) When I, when I was working in New York, I was, I felt so

00:18:07.980 --> 00:18:09.329

(SD) closeted with

00:18:10.960 --> 00:18:12.640

(SD) the people

00:18:13.290 --> 00:18:17.560

(SD) were really not very friendly, in my opinion, and I hate to say it.

00:18:17.580 --> 00:18:22.400

(SD) And then, when I moved to West Coast,

00:18:22.790 --> 00:18:31.050

(SD) I was amazed by the, nobody cares whether you come in with a tie or not to work, and even the faculty members

00:18:31.480 --> 00:18:35.529

(SD) we could address them with the first name basis.

00:18:35.610 --> 00:18:37.570

(SD) So my theory was that

00:18:37.680 --> 00:18:38.810

(SD) probably

00:18:38.840 --> 00:18:40.140

(SD) it is the

00:18:40.320 --> 00:18:41.470

(SD) it is the

00:18:42.160 --> 00:18:44.109

(SD) deleterious effect of

00:18:44.410 --> 00:18:45.290

(SD) weather.

00:18:45.450 --> 00:18:46.970

(SD) It's so cold

00:18:47.090 --> 00:18:56.600

(SD) that you, you are not opening up yourself. Whereas when you move to West Coast or Bay Area,

00:18:57.070 --> 00:18:59.139

(SD) the weather makes you cheerful,

00:18:59.430 --> 00:19:04.410

(SD) makes you, and maybe makes you more liberal that way.

00:19:05.490 --> 00:19:07.660

(I) Right. Wow, yeah.

(SD) So that's my theory.

00:19:08.170 --> 00:19:11.119

(I) Yeah no, sounds, makes sense, makes sense.

00:19:11.170 --> 00:19:19.420

(I) Yeah, because I think what you were describing, right, you know the mountains, the snow, the water, the roads, to be able to drive through and

00:19:19.460 --> 00:19:26.630

(I) access this huge state, right? So that kind of, it opens your heart, right, to...

(SD) Exactly, yeah.

00:19:26.860 --> 00:19:43.059

(I) Yeah. Right, so now, because we have been talking about, you know, noticing the number of the growth in the number of people in the med, field of medicine from you know India, or you know, around the surrounding areas. So do you, in your years' work here, and as a

00:19:43.070 --> 00:19:53.580

(I) as a very active community member, right, in this area, do you identify yourself as a Desi of Silicon Valley and what does that mean to you?

00:19:54.970 --> 00:19:57.229

(SD) I have always identified myself

00:19:57.470 --> 00:19:58.270

(SD) as

00:19:58.340 --> 00:20:05.230

(SD) as Desi. I, I keep identifying myself and I will always identify myself as Desi, because

00:20:05.340 --> 00:20:06.210

(SD) because

00:20:06.630 --> 00:20:18.349

(SD) "desh," the word "desh" comes from Sanskrit like, yeah, your country, and "desh matrika" is the motherland. And of course, you know,

00:20:18.530 --> 00:20:21.430

(SD) I am always connected to my roots,

00:20:21.800 --> 00:20:23.890

(SD) even when I first started

00:20:24.260 --> 00:20:26.740

(SD) some of my philanthropic activities.

00:20:27.360 --> 00:20:28.510

(SD) My first

00:20:28.750 --> 00:20:29.540

(SD) work

00:20:29.830 --> 00:20:32.429

(SD) was in my "desh" in

00:20:32.460 --> 00:20:34.290

(SD) in India, in Bhopal (city in Madhya Pradesh).

00:20:34.600 --> 00:20:37.889

(SD) So, I used go there every

00:20:37.910 --> 00:20:39.879

(SD) year, for a week,

00:20:40.110 --> 00:20:40.980

(SD) and

00:20:41.230 --> 00:20:45.949

(SD) take a bunch of residents with me and other friends, and we will go and

00:20:45.970 --> 00:20:53.120

(SD) we will go and serve the people down there with our knowledge, with our expertise.

00:20:53.160 --> 00:20:54.000

(SD) So

00:20:54.930 --> 00:20:57.040

(SD) the...I mean,

00:20:57.610 --> 00:20:59.390

(SD) I will always be a Desi.

00:21:01.110 --> 00:21:12.579

(I) Yes.

(SD) You can't take that away from me. You may have moved the "desh" away from me by 2,000 miles or so, but

00:21:13.520 --> 00:21:15.199

(SD) the Desi

00:21:15.730 --> 00:21:17.480

(SD) identity in me,

00:21:18.310 --> 00:21:19.910

(SD) that will never go.

00:21:19.930 --> 00:21:36.670

(I) Right. Yes, and does that have anything in particular, do you think with over, you know, all these years of experience here, does it have to do with your being present in the Silicon Valley, like broadly speaking, the Bay Area and then Silicon Valley?

00:21:37.000 --> 00:21:40.889

(I) Because it seems to be a hub or a magnet for a lot of talent.

00:21:42.200 --> 00:21:42.900

(SD) Yeah.

00:21:43.920 --> 00:21:48.630

(SD) I mean in my, in my field of medicine,

00:21:49.070 --> 00:21:53.070

(SD) this it allows me to mingle with people

00:21:53.650 --> 00:21:56.019

(SD) that have same pursuit as I have,

00:21:56.420 --> 00:21:59.769

(SD) you know. I...I'm very

00:22:01.950 --> 00:22:05.820

(SD) very committed to, to service.

00:22:05.930 --> 00:22:07.859

(SD) From early in my life,

00:22:08.130 --> 00:22:09.200

(SD) my mother,

00:22:09.430 --> 00:22:15.259

(SD) you know, pushed me into service in her own subtle manners, and I have always

00:22:15.350 --> 00:22:17.120

(SD) loved helping others.

00:22:17.680 --> 00:22:18.520

(SD) So

00:22:19.410 --> 00:22:21.500

(SD) I, in...

00:22:21.520 --> 00:22:24.130

(SD) in Bay Area,

00:22:25.100 --> 00:22:29.320

(SD) I met quite a few like-minded young people

00:22:29.740 --> 00:22:30.620

(SD) who

00:22:30.650 --> 00:22:31.810

(SD) joined me

00:22:32.020 --> 00:22:32.920

(SD) and

00:22:32.960 --> 00:22:34.849

(SD) we started our own

00:22:34.880 --> 00:22:36.769

(SD) non-profit organization.

00:22:37.040 --> 00:22:40.329

(SD) My first organization was "Foundation for Freedom."

00:22:40.800 --> 00:22:48.230

(SD) And our, my mission was to educate, to empower, and emancipate people.

00:22:48.520 --> 00:22:51.409

(SD) And our, our focus was

00:22:51.500 --> 00:22:52.990

(SD) girls' education.

00:22:53.010 --> 00:22:55.880

(SD) So in two areas, I

00:22:57.620 --> 00:23:05.029

(SD) focused my attention. One was girls' education, other was medical service. And both these things

00:23:05.580 --> 00:23:07.420

(SD) I could do better, I think.

00:23:07.640 --> 00:23:12.970

(SD) I have no way of comparing now, but I got a lot of help

00:23:13.130 --> 00:23:16.130

(SD) from the local community, the Desi communities,

00:23:16.240 --> 00:23:18.420

(SD) who championed me

00:23:18.450 --> 00:23:21.030

(SD) and helped me, promoted me.

00:23:22.470 --> 00:23:24.199

(SD) My, my first

00:23:25.350 --> 00:23:28.039

(SD) non-profit "Foundation for Freedom,"

00:23:28.280 --> 00:23:30.870

(SD) we were all Desis, except one British guy.

00:23:30.930 --> 00:23:32.470

(SD) I'm sorry, two.

00:23:32.550 --> 00:23:35.149

(SD) One from Ireland, one from

00:23:35.200 --> 00:23:38.450

(SD) England. But rest of them, we were all Desis.

00:23:38.620 --> 00:23:39.580

(SD) And

00:23:40.790 --> 00:23:42.860

(SD) we, we had similar

00:23:42.890 --> 00:23:45.639

(SD) principle in life with how to help people,

00:23:45.820 --> 00:23:51.579

(SD) and we also tried to focus more on India side than others, though we

00:23:51.720 --> 00:23:56.419

(SD) built school in...you know, Bangladesh, in

00:23:56.570 --> 00:23:59.589



(SD) other areas also. But our main

00:23:59.660 --> 00:24:01.300

(SD) primary attention

00:24:02.060 --> 00:24:03.060

(SD) happened

00:24:03.280 --> 00:24:05.700

(SD) in India, in our "desh."

00:24:06.040 --> 00:24:07.570

(I) Right.

(SD) So

00:24:08.580 --> 00:24:09.849

(SD) that's how

00:24:10.470 --> 00:24:13.950

(SD) we, and now, I'm with another

00:24:14.010 --> 00:24:18.590

(SD) NGO that's called "Caring Hands." And in "Caring Hands,"

00:24:19.280 --> 00:24:21.409

(SD) we are 100% Desis.

00:24:21.580 --> 00:24:22.860

(SD) You know.

00:24:23.030 --> 00:24:26.480

(SD) The only two, in the board, there are only two of us male.

00:24:26.540 --> 00:24:34.719

(SD) rest are women, and we are Desis, and we are doing a lot of work in Odisha, in West Bengal,

00:24:34.780 --> 00:24:35.950

(SD) in Andhra.

00:24:36.090 --> 00:24:36.920

(SD) So

00:24:37.250 --> 00:24:38.899

(SD) we build school.

00:24:39.190 --> 00:24:48.269

(SD) I will lead this project. Go ahead. (I) Yeah, I'll just interrupt. So, so both these organizations are founded in the Bay Area?

(SD) In Bay Area, founded, (I) Okay.

00:24:48.370 --> 00:24:52.360

(SD) and they're, they're still active in Bay Area.

00:24:52.400 --> 00:25:03.490

(I) Right. So now my, I think it leads to my next question is, you know, you have traveled so far and wide, right, you know in professional capacities, and you know, in your you know, community work. So,

00:25:05.370 --> 00:25:14.429

(I) do you think there is a difference between the Desis of the Bay Area or the Silicon Valley, and the Desis who live in different parts of the United States?

00:25:15.160 --> 00:25:16.759

(I) Do you notice a difference?

00:25:17.920 --> 00:25:29.750

(SD) You know, my answer to that will be influenced by my bias, so it probably will not be fair for me to answer that, but I would say that,

00:25:29.790 --> 00:25:31.390

(SD) when I compare

00:25:31.480 --> 00:25:40.999

(SD) Desis in the other parts of the country. Like I have, my brother lives in New Jersey. My...

00:25:41.630 --> 00:25:42.550

(SD) my

00:25:43.970 --> 00:25:47.990

(SD) my grandniece is a professor in New York,

00:25:48.100 --> 00:25:49.070

(SD) and

00:25:49.520 --> 00:25:52.099

(SD) I don't see them as active

00:25:52.230 --> 00:25:55.749

(SD) in Desi culture

00:25:55.780 --> 00:25:57.410

(SD) than and

00:25:57.510 --> 00:25:59.009

(SD) than what do we have

00:25:59.260 --> 00:26:01.360

(SD) exported to here, you know.

00:26:01.770 --> 00:26:02.560

(SD) I mean,

00:26:02.690 --> 00:26:03.690

(SD) think about "Durga Puja,"

00:26:03.780 --> 00:26:06.030

(SD) we had 21 "Durga Puja"

00:26:06.150 --> 00:26:11.010

(SD) this year in Bay Area, in our

00:26:11.140 --> 00:26:22.719

(SD) relatively small area. Whereas in New Jersey, there is only two or three, and New York, I don't know how many, but never nowhere is as many as we have.

00:26:23.070 --> 00:26:23.940

(I) Hmm.

00:26:24.190 --> 00:26:26.060

(SD) We have, we have the

00:26:26.100 --> 00:26:27.470

(SD) we have the

00:26:29.070 --> 00:26:31.549

(SD) second Bangla library

00:26:31.920 --> 00:26:36.150

(SD) in...the country in here. One is in Atlanta

00:26:36.220 --> 00:26:48.790

(SD) "Seba" and the other one is "Dishari" in Bay Area. So that's a tremendous laurel to, to the Desis of Bay Area.

00:26:48.830 --> 00:26:49.570

(I) Right.

00:26:50.070 --> 00:26:51.630

(I) Right, yeah.

00:26:52.250 --> 00:27:03.479

(I) So now, again, I think it's a very good segue to my next question. Why and how is Desi culture so vibrant in Silicon Valley? What is the difference?

00:27:09.420 --> 00:27:10.360

(SD) I think

00:27:10.470 --> 00:27:12.030

(SD) probably,

00:27:12.080 --> 00:27:12.940  
(SD) to

00:27:13.980 --> 00:27:15.510  
(SD) establish yourself

00:27:15.930 --> 00:27:16.790  
(SD) in

00:27:16.900 --> 00:27:17.840  
(SD) the

00:27:18.070 --> 00:27:19.420  
(SD) in the vibrant

00:27:20.760 --> 00:27:25.049  
(SD) technology and economy in Bay Area,

00:27:25.790 --> 00:27:27.949  
(SD) you automatically have to be,

00:27:28.240 --> 00:27:34.149  
(SD) have to be good. You have to be the crÃ©me de la crÃ©me of the

00:27:34.380 --> 00:27:35.510  
(SD) of the

00:27:36.270 --> 00:27:38.410  
(SD) your occupation, and

00:27:38.570 --> 00:27:39.370  
(SD) so

00:27:40.140 --> 00:27:41.210  
(SD) probably,

00:27:43.540 --> 00:27:44.590  
(SD) probably

00:27:44.810 --> 00:27:46.250

(SD) those kinds of,

00:27:47.280 --> 00:27:50.229

(SD) again, it's not fair for me to

00:27:50.530 --> 00:27:53.430

(SD) say like that, but probably for selected

00:27:53.620 --> 00:27:56.399

(SD) good Desis, accumulate in Bay Area.

00:27:56.660 --> 00:27:58.170

(I) Hmm.

00:27:58.660 --> 00:28:12.640

(I) Because, you know, there is this tendency that I have noticed, like you know, like this has been published somewhere, and I'm quoting, like quoting in a sense like paraphrasing from published research, that apparently Carnatic music

00:28:12.690 --> 00:28:14.820

(SD) Yes.

(I) is practiced

00:28:15.000 --> 00:28:18.329

(I) and performed and cultivated most

00:28:18.490 --> 00:28:22.199

(I) in the Bay Area, and it's only second to Chennai.

00:28:22.510 --> 00:28:27.719

(SD) Wow.

(I) No other area in the world practices and cultivates and performs Carnatic music

00:28:27.890 --> 00:28:30.710

(I) like the Bay Area does, after Chennai.

00:28:31.030 --> 00:28:37.840

(SD) Wow!

(I) So I mean, that says a lot about. (SD) That says a lot, yeah.

00:28:38.080 --> 00:28:44.730

(I) Yes, and I've always wondered what is, what is it? What is it that drives people here to cultivate these art forms?

00:28:45.290 --> 00:28:49.010

(SD) I...I don't know if this drive, I think

00:28:49.230 --> 00:28:51.580

(SD) people of quality

00:28:51.820 --> 00:28:54.020

(SD) who will be good teachers,

00:28:54.050 --> 00:28:56.640

(SD) and it's that they have accumulated more

00:28:56.990 --> 00:28:58.120

(SD) in Bay Area

00:28:58.340 --> 00:29:04.380

(SD) because of the attraction of Bay Area, I think, and the attraction to Bay Area comes from

00:29:04.830 --> 00:29:07.899

(SD) it's a good area to live,

00:29:08.010 --> 00:29:09.440

(SD) it's a, it's a good

00:29:10.150 --> 00:29:12.600

(SD) liberal population where you can,

00:29:13.510 --> 00:29:15.340

(SD) you know, convey your

00:29:15.530 --> 00:29:17.989

(SD) your messages well.

00:29:18.290 --> 00:29:20.370

(SD) And I mean, my wife

00:29:21.120 --> 00:29:22.610

(SD) learned "Kathak" (form of Indian classical dance)

00:29:22.640 --> 00:29:26.240

(SD) in her adult age, from

00:29:28.510 --> 00:29:31.549

(SD) from a Caucasian-American woman,

00:29:31.610 --> 00:29:33.820

(SD) Kathryn.

00:29:34.010 --> 00:29:35.330

(SD) Kathryn and her husband,

00:29:35.550 --> 00:29:37.200

(SD) who passed away since then,

00:29:37.290 --> 00:29:38.769

(SD) learned from "Kalakshetra"

00:29:40.840 --> 00:29:47.300

(SD) in Madras and built a school there, and that school after 30 years or so, is still running,

00:29:47.660 --> 00:29:48.530

(SD) still going.

00:29:48.890 --> 00:29:51.849

(SD) And then, then we have a fantastic

00:29:52.020 --> 00:29:52.940

(SD) Kathak,



00:29:54.210 --> 00:29:55.180

(SD) several

00:29:55.640 --> 00:30:06.210

(SD) excellent Kathak teachers. So it's not just Carnatic music, I'm very happy to know that there's so much of Carnatic music there. Other areas also,

00:30:06.250 --> 00:30:08.620

(SD) Kathak dance, the

00:30:08.920 --> 00:30:11.340

(SD) we had Tagore music

00:30:11.630 --> 00:30:12.600

(SD) school,

00:30:12.830 --> 00:30:13.710

(SD) and

00:30:14.330 --> 00:30:17.969

(SD) a lot of Desi activities are being nurtured

00:30:18.490 --> 00:30:19.650

(SD) and promoted

00:30:19.740 --> 00:30:27.160

(SD) in the Bay Area, because we go back to, we want to see our Desi culture flourish.

00:30:27.440 --> 00:30:36.550

(SD) Like, like I was instrumental in establishing the Tagore program in Bay Area, in the UC Berkeley.

00:30:36.780 --> 00:30:41.970

(SD) And that is fantastic, I mean, it's going so well that I feel very

00:30:42.640 --> 00:30:43.980

(SD) happy and

00:30:44.770 --> 00:30:46.360

(SD) gratified that we

00:30:46.730 --> 00:30:47.660

(SD) we have

00:30:47.750 --> 00:30:49.450

(SD) been allowed to do that.

00:30:51.240 --> 00:30:52.030

(SD) So

00:30:52.960 --> 00:31:00.549

(SD) does that answer your question? (I) Yes, yes.

(SD) I veered away somewhere. (I) No, no, absolutely not, because I think, I mean understanding why it

00:31:00.800 --> 00:31:13.009

(I) is flourishing so much, and why are people so committed to it, right? I mean, like you're saying, a lot of talented people who want to see this flourish and continue through the next generations.

(SD) Yes, yes. (I) So, right.

00:31:13.090 --> 00:31:15.650

(SD) If you see, you remember we had,

00:31:15.930 --> 00:31:17.090

(SD) we still have it,

00:31:17.160 --> 00:31:22.899

(SD) Ali Akbar Khan had his school in the

00:31:23.030 --> 00:31:28.070

(SD) Bay Area, in Marin County, and so any

00:31:28.490 --> 00:31:34.749

(SD) he has trained so many super musicians in his time.

00:31:35.440 --> 00:31:37.440

(SD) And why did he,

00:31:38.850 --> 00:31:42.800

(SD) when he came in the same year that I came to United States,

00:31:43.780 --> 00:31:44.820

(SD) and

00:31:45.370 --> 00:31:48.469

(SD) I don't know the background history, what attracted him to

00:31:48.590 --> 00:31:51.390

(SD) to Bay Area. But

00:31:51.790 --> 00:31:52.809

(SD) Bay Area

00:31:53.000 --> 00:31:54.000

(SD) can boost

00:31:54.230 --> 00:31:55.200

(SD) about

00:31:55.530 --> 00:31:56.499

(SD) that kind of

00:31:57.690 --> 00:31:59.610

(SD) artist, [inaudible].

00:31:59.950 --> 00:32:01.890

(I) Yes, absolutely. Yeah.

00:32:02.440 --> 00:32:09.630

(I) So now, another question is, and you have touched upon this in various ways, but I'm still going to ask you this.

00:32:09.760 --> 00:32:13.129

(I) How does being Desi

00:32:13.390 --> 00:32:14.660

(I) help you

00:32:14.710 --> 00:32:17.500

(I) succeed in your work in Silicon Valley?

00:32:18.020 --> 00:32:18.959

(I) As a

00:32:19.060 --> 00:32:24.419

(I) as a practitioner, like medicine practitioner, as a teacher, as a community member,

00:32:24.590 --> 00:32:25.809

(I) how does it help

00:32:26.110 --> 00:32:28.889

(I) your Desi identity, how does it help you in this work?

00:32:30.660 --> 00:32:34.180

(SD) I don't think my Desi identity

00:32:34.340 --> 00:32:36.720

(SD) has anything

00:32:37.280 --> 00:32:40.169

(SD) or has a lot to do with my...

00:32:43.610 --> 00:32:46.109

(SD) to do with my professional career.

00:32:48.800 --> 00:32:50.220

(SD) As a

00:32:50.360 --> 00:32:51.330

(SD) I mean,

00:32:51.830 --> 00:32:53.160

(SD) I didn't need

00:32:53.850 --> 00:32:56.630

(SD) my Desi friends or Desi family

00:32:56.820 --> 00:33:00.400

(SD) to promote me or nurture me in my

00:33:00.600 --> 00:33:03.070

(SD) professional career. That is something

00:33:03.310 --> 00:33:06.210

(SD) I have to build myself.

(I) Right.

00:33:06.500 --> 00:33:08.280

(SD) The what helped is

00:33:08.540 --> 00:33:10.129

(SD) being in the Bay Area,

00:33:10.170 --> 00:33:15.209

(SD) I was, I was exposed to premier institutes,

00:33:15.470 --> 00:33:16.250

(SD) good

00:33:16.270 --> 00:33:18.960

(SD) hospitals, good

00:33:18.990 --> 00:33:24.079

(SD) universities to go to, listen to the lecture, join them in the conversation,

00:33:24.190 --> 00:33:28.329

(SD) and thereby develop myself and promote myself so.

00:33:28.800 --> 00:33:31.969

(SD) That is, that is the only thing I could

00:33:32.360 --> 00:33:35.629

(SD) say that Bay Area helped me in that. Otherwise,

00:33:35.960 --> 00:33:37.250

(SD) Bay Area

00:33:37.580 --> 00:33:38.570

(SD) didn't

00:33:40.590 --> 00:33:44.269

(SD) push me or made me a better doctor, or something like that.

(I) Sure.

00:33:44.290 --> 00:33:46.919

(SD) It's not like that, but those helps count.

00:33:46.960 --> 00:33:50.329

(SD) Being recognized in Bay Area

00:33:50.650 --> 00:33:53.839

(SD) from the Desis, or as a Desi,

00:33:54.130 --> 00:33:56.870

(SD) is, is something

00:33:57.000 --> 00:33:57.860

(SD) helpful.

00:33:58.440 --> 00:33:59.260

(I) Sure.

00:33:59.280 --> 00:34:01.890

(I) Again, like for example, your support

00:34:02.110 --> 00:34:07.309

(I) to work like, you know, the Bengali school, the Bengali Library

00:34:07.450 --> 00:34:14.639

(I) right? And, you know, all of us who are involved in that work, we'd recognize that your support

00:34:14.739 --> 00:34:19.079

(I) brings so much weight and inspiration to the community.

00:34:19.310 --> 00:34:22.500

(I) So why do you think, why do you do that?

00:34:22.530 --> 00:34:24.400

(I) Why is it important to you?

00:34:25.949 --> 00:34:28.000

(SD) Essentially, because I'm a Desi,

00:34:28.270 --> 00:34:32.410

(SD) I would like to see my culture

00:34:32.429 --> 00:34:34.479

(SD) grow and spread,

00:34:34.870 --> 00:34:35.859

(SD) and

00:34:36.310 --> 00:34:40.049

(SD) and also, this is...this is a culture

00:34:40.159 --> 00:34:42.559

(SD) to be proud of.

00:34:42.580 --> 00:34:47.740

(SD) Desis have a lot to give to the world, and, and that's why

00:34:47.800 --> 00:34:49.660

(SD) I promote

00:34:50.449 --> 00:34:57.359

(SD) Desi learning, I promote Desi music, promote Desi dance, Desi culture, Desi activities.

00:34:57.440 --> 00:34:58.410

00:34:58.460 --> 00:34:59.350

(SD) Because

00:34:59.650 --> 00:35:02.849

(SD) these are something to be cherished, something to be proud of,

00:35:02.960 --> 00:35:03.839

(SD) and

00:35:03.980 --> 00:35:06.120

(SD) I feel it is my duty,

00:35:06.380 --> 00:35:11.029

(SD) as it is yours and others, to promote this culture

00:35:11.160 --> 00:35:13.810

(SD) amongst the Desis itself, at least,

00:35:13.840 --> 00:35:18.179

(SD) and then maybe spread from there, you know. Like,

00:35:19.700 --> 00:35:21.609

(SD) even my

00:35:21.820 --> 00:35:30.419

(SD) I believe that if I love Tagore, then I have to spread Tagore's words, and Tagore's music, Tagore's poetry

00:35:30.680 --> 00:35:31.490

(SD) to



00:35:31.490 --> 00:35:32.229

(SD) the

00:35:32.310 --> 00:35:34.170

(SD) to the non-Desis as well.

00:35:34.190 --> 00:35:35.029

(I) Hmm.

00:35:35.470 --> 00:35:38.179

(SD) And I...I continued to do that through

00:35:38.240 --> 00:35:40.810

(SD) through the university and through my

00:35:41.020 --> 00:35:42.940

(SD) other activities.

00:35:43.690 --> 00:35:50.490

(I) Right. Yes, yes, and we are so thankful for that.

(SD) You're welcome.

00:35:50.490 --> 00:35:52.829

(I) So when you look back at your journey,

00:35:53.930 --> 00:35:59.780

(I) do you think the Silicon Valley, the general atmosphere, the

00:35:59.850 --> 00:36:00.459

(I) the

00:36:00.780 --> 00:36:11.779

(I) the energy, the energy and the spirit of innovation, right, that is the...creativity that, you know, these are terms associated with the Silicon Valley right?

(SD) Yes. (I) Do you think these

00:36:11.910 --> 00:36:15.619

(I) these factors have influenced your identity as a Desi?

00:36:22.120 --> 00:36:23.669

(SD) You mean the...

00:36:23.950 --> 00:36:26.749

(SD) Silicon Valley is the

00:36:27.440 --> 00:36:32.090

(SD) is a dominant center for innovation, as you said, and

00:36:35.870 --> 00:36:36.729

(SD) that

00:36:38.930 --> 00:36:47.859

(SD) that has attracted me to Silicon Valley, that that has attracted me to the Silicon Valley community,

00:36:49.030 --> 00:36:50.670

(SD) and I have gained from it.

00:36:51.150 --> 00:36:56.569

(SD) I don't know how much I've contributed to Silicon Valley, because as you know in my profession,

00:36:56.590 --> 00:36:57.910

(I) Hmm.

00:36:58.110 --> 00:36:59.430

(SD) I'm not a techie.

00:36:59.790 --> 00:37:01.310

(SD) So

00:37:02.050 --> 00:37:03.749

(SD) I...don't

00:37:03.780 --> 00:37:06.570

(SD) know if I have contributed to, or much,

00:37:06.850 --> 00:37:08.270

(SD) to the Silicon Valley

00:37:10.290 --> 00:37:12.970

(SD) economically or professionally, etc.

00:37:13.250 --> 00:37:15.190

(SD) But Silicon Valley itself

00:37:15.440 --> 00:37:16.720

(SD) has definitely

00:37:16.780 --> 00:37:17.720

(SD) helped me

00:37:18.620 --> 00:37:19.879

(SD) as a Desi,

00:37:20.100 --> 00:37:21.160

(SD) and to

00:37:21.940 --> 00:37:25.180

(SD) and to develop and promote and spread

00:37:26.440 --> 00:37:27.290

(SD) my

00:37:27.350 --> 00:37:29.709

(SD) Desi culture and Desi identity.

00:37:30.790 --> 00:37:31.520

(I) Hmm.

00:37:31.550 --> 00:37:32.430

(SD) I,

00:37:32.930 --> 00:37:33.769

(SD) I don't know

00:37:33.790 --> 00:37:43.390

(SD) how to answer your, that question of your's.

(I) No, no, you are but I'm also thinking that, is it because a number of factors come together

00:37:43.520 --> 00:37:44.890

(I) and which, you know,

00:37:45.350 --> 00:37:47.860

(I) it helps you in a way, or

00:37:48.560 --> 00:38:02.950

(I) makes you take certain decisions to go in and support or initiate something? Is it because of the factors that are, are available? You know, sometimes, you know one is motivated, but the factors around you don't, are not conducive.

00:38:02.960 --> 00:38:09.080

(I) But in this area it seems to be that, you know, people come together. There is a synergy that happens between talented people.

00:38:09.560 --> 00:38:13.250

(SD) Yes, you said it quite correctly that

00:38:13.360 --> 00:38:14.220

(SD) it is

00:38:14.480 --> 00:38:15.919

(SD) something in you,

00:38:16.430 --> 00:38:18.079

(SD) always, that

00:38:18.300 --> 00:38:22.230

(SD) but the atmosphere, the ambience

00:38:22.780 --> 00:38:31.070

(SD) helps you promote, because, because I want to do something. I want to do, I want to build a school. I want to build a hospital, I want to, and

00:38:31.560 --> 00:38:32.950

(SD) and if I have a

00:38:33.040 --> 00:38:34.359

(SD) a...

00:38:34.680 --> 00:38:37.410

(SD) surrounding, if I have a community

00:38:37.770 --> 00:38:38.660

(SD) that

00:38:38.750 --> 00:38:40.109

(SD) recognizes

00:38:40.410 --> 00:38:44.949

(SD) that need and recognizes the urge that is in me.

00:38:44.970 --> 00:38:51.670

(SD) So, so they help us definitely, and so that way,

00:38:53.360 --> 00:39:00.739

(SD) the Desi community in Bay Area has helped me in promoting my ideals, my passions,

00:39:01.000 --> 00:39:02.920

(SD) and I'm grateful to them for that.

00:39:03.560 --> 00:39:12.790

(I) Right, just as you have returned the favor to so many initiatives in the Desi community by helping them, supporting them, promoting them.

00:39:12.810 --> 00:39:16.629

(I) So that yeah, yes.

(SD) Yeah. Go ahead.

00:39:16.810 --> 00:39:17.960

(I) No, no, please, please.

00:39:19.770 --> 00:39:24.709

(SD) No, I'm and I continue to do that. This is...something I

00:39:25.140 --> 00:39:27.160

(SD) you know, I thrive

00:39:27.490 --> 00:39:31.999

(SD) in my "seva," in my service, and it is so much fun

00:39:32.040 --> 00:39:33.880

(SD) to, to join

00:39:34.060 --> 00:39:35.800

(SD) my Desi sisters

00:39:35.890 --> 00:39:38.910

(SD) who have the same ideologies, same passion,

00:39:39.180 --> 00:39:40.069

(SD) and

00:39:40.220 --> 00:39:43.299

(SD) we work together to achieve something.

00:39:43.560 --> 00:39:45.349

(SD) And these are not,

00:39:46.060 --> 00:39:48.250

(SD) these are not material achievements, but

00:39:48.810 --> 00:39:58.460

(SD) it's very gratifying to put smile on a child's face, to educate a little girl in India.

00:39:58.570 --> 00:39:59.660

(SD) They did

00:39:59.810 --> 00:40:01.880

(SD) wonderful things that I could do

00:40:02.300 --> 00:40:05.459

(SD) with the help of my Desi sisters here.

00:40:05.620 --> 00:40:06.379

(I) Hmm.

00:40:06.510 --> 00:40:07.889

(I) Yes, wow.

00:40:07.940 --> 00:40:13.279

(I) So I'll come to the last question. How do you foresee your future

00:40:13.320 --> 00:40:16.610

(I) or your family's future in Silicon Valley?

00:40:18.040 --> 00:40:32.510

(SD) Well, I have a son. He lives here, and he doesn't want to go anywhere else. He wants, he's totally committed to being in Silicon Valley-- being in the Bay Area. And so the same thing with me, I

00:40:32.600 --> 00:40:33.950

(SD) I have

00:40:34.240 --> 00:40:35.420

(SD) no plan

00:40:35.740 --> 00:40:48.629

(SD) on leaving Silicon-- leaving Bay Area. My wife is very active in her, in her writing and in publishing. She's an author, as well as she is a doctor. So

00:40:48.830 --> 00:40:50.279

(SD) we have

00:40:50.710 --> 00:40:51.890

(SD) no reason,

00:40:51.990 --> 00:40:54.720

(SD) no desire, to leave

00:40:55.280 --> 00:40:58.120

(SD) Silicon-- Bay Area. We want to,

00:40:59.640 --> 00:41:00.859

(SD) we want to

00:41:01.560 --> 00:41:02.540

(SD) be here

00:41:02.760 --> 00:41:03.920

(SD) as long as we

00:41:05.370 --> 00:41:06.850

(SD) as long as we live.

00:41:06.900 --> 00:41:12.050

(I) And where do you think the direction of Silicon Valley is headed?

00:41:13.520 --> 00:41:16.359

(SD) I think Silicon Valley is heading

00:41:16.630 --> 00:41:17.870

(SD) wonderfully

00:41:17.960 --> 00:41:19.019

(SD) in the

00:41:20.250 --> 00:41:27.930

(SD) I cannot comment on technology, but I get awed by all the techie development that is going on,

00:41:28.460 --> 00:41:29.229

(SD) so



00:41:29.530 --> 00:41:32.329

(SD) it is, it is making a lot of good, good progress.

00:41:32.860 --> 00:41:36.939

(SD) And, hopefully, they will also address

00:41:37.730 --> 00:41:38.870

(SD) philanthropy,

00:41:39.260 --> 00:41:40.270

(SD) which

00:41:40.290 --> 00:41:42.920

(SD) which many of them do. You know, Silicon Valley has

00:41:43.060 --> 00:41:47.719

(SD) so many strongholds in philanthropy, and

00:41:48.060 --> 00:41:50.780

(SD) I think they will do more and more of those,

00:41:52.260 --> 00:42:01.060

(SD) because basically that feeling, that passion is, is in all educated people-- in all people, I should not just say educated.

00:42:01.880 --> 00:42:02.799

(SD) And

00:42:03.310 --> 00:42:05.889

(SD) and the, and Silicon Valley gives you

00:42:06.020 --> 00:42:08.290

(SD) the jobs,

00:42:08.390 --> 00:42:10.260

(SD) the income and everything

00:42:10.320 --> 00:42:13.609

(SD) that gives you the bricks and motors

00:42:13.920 --> 00:42:14.919

(SD) needed

00:42:15.590 --> 00:42:16.390

(SD) to

00:42:16.710 --> 00:42:20.210

(SD) achieve your philanthropic goals and activities.

00:42:20.560 --> 00:42:22.329

(SD) Your, your "seva."

00:42:22.960 --> 00:42:23.720

(I) Right.

00:42:24.230 --> 00:42:25.240

(SD) That's what I think.

00:42:25.370 --> 00:42:38.909

(I) Yes, that's, that's great. Is there anything else that you would like to say about, generally about Silicon Valley, or observations about Silicon Valley that, you know, may not have come up in my list of questions?

00:42:40.590 --> 00:42:43.309

(SD) No, I, sometimes I

00:42:44.020 --> 00:42:45.379

(SD) I

00:42:46.750 --> 00:42:48.620

(SD) I worry about any

00:42:48.980 --> 00:42:53.979

(SD) political dissensions going on, going in the wrong direction, etc., because I

00:42:54.540 --> 00:42:56.979

(SD) I grew up in those

00:42:57.220 --> 00:43:05.960

(SD) liberal movements of Berkeley, you know, in those days, and now, when I notice in a very small manner some of

00:43:06.640 --> 00:43:08.289

(SD) rightist

00:43:08.430 --> 00:43:15.189

(SD) political in some new insinuations in those areas, that makes me feel

00:43:15.530 --> 00:43:18.389

(SD) sad and concerned. But I think we'll

00:43:18.860 --> 00:43:20.940

(SD) we'll thrive through those

00:43:21.050 --> 00:43:25.269

(SD) those nudges, and we will, we'll continue to

00:43:25.620 --> 00:43:27.930

(SD) do what we think is good

00:43:28.170 --> 00:43:31.040

(SD) for our children, for our future.

00:43:31.940 --> 00:43:33.060

(SD) I think we will,

00:43:33.730 --> 00:43:36.149

(SD) we will maintain our ideology

00:43:36.460 --> 00:43:38.330

(SD) in Silicon Valley.

00:43:38.860 --> 00:43:39.520

(I) Right.

00:43:39.570 --> 00:43:40.299

(I) Wow.

00:43:40.360 --> 00:43:44.640

(I) Thank you very much Dr. Das for, for this time that you have spent with us.

00:43:44.670 --> 00:43:48.160

(SD) You're welcome. Thank you so much for

00:43:48.200 --> 00:43:49.560

(SD) inviting me to

00:43:50.110 --> 00:43:54.209

(SD) discuss things with you like this. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot also.

00:43:54.250 --> 00:43:59.000

(SD) Oh, it's our learning, it's our gain.

(SD) All the best to you.

00:43:59.000 --> 00:44:00.800

(I) Yes, I will just stop the recording.

00:44:00.800 --> 00:44:01.549

(SD) Okay.