

Name of the interviewee: Raj Vattikuti and Padma Vattikuti

Date of interview: September 8th, 2014

Name of the Interviewer: Steve Velasquez

Steve Velasquez: Today is September the 8th, 2014. We're in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Okay, so if you could begin by telling me your names.

Raj: Raj Vattikuti.

Padma: Padma Vattikuti.

Steve Velasquez: Okay, and where were you born?

Raj: Born in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Steve Velasquez: Okay.

Padma: I also was born in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Steve Velasquez: Okay and did you grow up there?

Raj: Yes, grew up in Andhra Pradesh and then went to college in Madras which is in Tamil Nadu.

Padma: I was born and raised and lived in Hyderabad all of my life.

Steve Velasquez: Okay and what are some of your memories growing up?

Raj: It's uh, some great memories about the family and the great vacations, summer vacations in our grandfather's place and then visiting all over India, learn a lot of things, different things. Third is the college education. I learned a lot and then it really helped when I came to this country.

Padma: Very similar experiences. Vacations were always, the summer vacations were always at grandparents' home, got 39 cousins from the maternal side and equally about the same number on the paternal side so we didn't need to go out anywhere else to have fun and do things. The memories of college education, school and college were fantastic. It was all free. The education is free in India so we really reaped the benefit of the Indian government for getting educated.

Then you know, just family holidays, family friends, all of that had a great impact on me. I was married in 1977, we were married. Ours was an arranged marriage so I followed Raj a year later and came to this country where I had no friends and no relatives and a husband who was practically a stranger to me but if I have to marry him all over again now, in a blink of an eye, I would do it.

Raj:

Same thing, even I came as a student, first two days I was very depressed in Detroit, the campus, a lonely campus and but then I had to make the best use of it because education was the most important. So I had made a lot of friends from not only people here but also people from other parts of the world and really enjoyed the most past time during the college, this is every Friday night folk dancing at the university, Saturday night the discos, you know besides education so really had a great time and with limited money we have but we used to go to the Greek town in Detroit where we could for \$5.00 a nice meal. We could even take a date for \$5.00 in those days. So I really enjoyed the education.

I was lucky right after the graduation I had a good job and working with the, in the automotive industry and learned a lot of things, how to manage a business, how to run a business, and that technology is just coming in those days and felt that was a great opportunity for me personally because I always wanted to be an entrepreneur and so then it was difficult because I had a great products from the company, the company cars and everything else but I had to give up all that and then to start from the beginning with five employees.

Mainly at that time, the technology industry was not matured to the level. Everything they had to be people, very experienced people and it has to be and in terms of details, projects are very expensive to do technology. I felt that the better way of doing it, you don't need all experience. You can take your college graduates, train them quickly and then do it. So basically I wanted to change the whole technology [inaudible][00:04:59] model and that's what has helped to revolutionize the whole IT industry or the time frame.

I saw the great talent in India and how do we make sure that, so what's important was they need to understand how the customers think in the culture. Because of my experience here, combination of that really helped to bring the, blend the cultures, understand how to do technology and the talent was there. So, that has really helped to, that time industry in India was only half a billion dollars. Today it's over \$100 billion. It's a benefit for both the countries in terms of US, Silicon Valley able to scale up, grow, come up with a lot of innovation by leveraging their skill sets and then India was really able to leverage the education.

People came out, that really the middle classes close to 300 million, it's all came through the government providing the re-education. Then 1977, I went for three weeks' vacation and the family was always, because they always wanted me to get married and I was almost 26 years old so the, basically they would check the family background and identified six girls for me to look and see and understand each other and who we would like to, it's not like their choice. It's our choice together and then I met, first one I met is her and then after I met three, four more girls.

So then all night I had to, thinking about two girls, differentiated and what attracted me. She was very clear and very artistic and creative. For me, education and the business is different but I need somebody in the family who must be more creative and so that's why I thought this is, so I decided and then within two weeks we got married and that's that. Then I came back. When I came back at the work, they won't believe me that, I showed the pictures still they won't believe me I got married.

Then I showed the newspaper clip then they believed then they said no, he can't get away with that. The American tradition, they had to have a bachelor's party so they gave me a bachelor's party after I got married.

Steve Velasquez: So how did you first come to the United States? Were you the first in your family or had others come here?

Raj: Yeah, I have a brother, older brother. He came first. He came almost eight years before I came so he came also like a student, studied and then go – and now he lives in Washington DC.

Steve Velasquez: Where did you first settle when you came here?

Raj: At Detroit downtown, Wayne State campus.

Steve Velasquez: Okay, so you came here for education.

Raj: Education, yeah.

Steve Velasquez: Okay, and did you stay in one place? Did you move around at all?

Raj: Yeah, within the campus, I moved around two, three different apartments and finally settled down in one apartment.

Padma: You know as our lived evolved, better things were affordable so we did move from apartment to a condo to another condo and built a home and then built another home. As our needs changed then things changed so this is the home we built 11 years ago. We've been in it for 11 years.

Steve Velasquez: How did you come to live here? How did you decide this is where you wanted to make your home?

Raj: Mainly I applied to several universities in the US but Wayne State and Oregon State had full scholarship and so I [inaudible][00:09:20] Detroit is a big town. My brother was also here at that time and so that made me come to Detroit but I never imagined the campus at that time before I came. It's a very beautiful campus when I stayed there, my engineering studies in India.

Steve Velasquez: At that time, did you think that you would become citizens of the United States or –

Raj: Not necessarily but not sure, I'm really thinking that maybe an entrepreneur, I wanted to start something in business by learning here and so it was not really thought about being citizen until I started the business.

Padma: America gave us such opportunity. We had to think like Americans and become an American. It took a longer time for me to come to terms with it because I always carried India in my heart at that time until I walked to this point. Anytime I thought of home, I would always say I would like to go home, that meant India and now when I'm visiting India and I say I'm missing home, it is America now. As our lives evolved, our thought process changed drastically because of the opportunities America provided us, allowed us to do things that we would have been otherwise perhaps not been able to do it in India.

Steve Velasquez: Can you talk about the journey here? Is there anything from the actual journey that you remember?

Raj: The time went so fast. You have no idea it's been 40 years that you've been here. The journey has been really beautiful in terms of, even though a lot of challenges some that crossed away but always had a great, I mean in terms of the opportunities which was given us to really mitigate all these challenges and eventually the company grew from five employees to 20 employees to 100 to eventually close to 10,000 employees. All the way it has been, it's really the opportunity which the US has provided in all aspects and really, you know, put everything else behind and most important is the great employees, too, and how they all came together and really built an organization to help many, many of our customers and in terms of the very troubled technology projects we took over and helped them.

Given a lot of confidence that we have the real strength in the organization skills and so professional skills which really helped, which really very much all learned in US those skills then the, what really helped India was the talent and the ability and the aptitude to learn how to apply themselves with a little training and the culture of US, the ability to execute projects 10,000 miles from here which was never heard of before so that has given us a lot of confidence and that differentiated us in the market and helped us to grow.

Steve Velasquez: What about the actual journey when you left India to come here? How did you get here? Did you fly? Did you fly directly to the US?

Raj: Yes.

Padma: Yes.

Steve Velasquez: And what did you bring with you? What did you have?

Padma: When I left India, one suitcase is all I brought because there were weight restrictions and 20 kilos is all you could bring then but I paid extra money because he wanted me to bring my musical instrument. I was learning sitar in India so he wanted to, that was a lot of money to pay for sitar to be brought back but I did bring it back and of course as the suitcase has 20 kilos restriction. There were a lot of things that families didn't know because we were one of the earlier ones, what was available here or not here so they wanted to stuff things from groceries thinking that we might be starving here or whatever and pressure cooker because they use there and they did not know.

So they put all of this in the hand luggage for me and it was so heavy. Hand luggage have to restriction. If you could carry, you could bring it. So all the weighty items were put in the hand and when I left India, I came here with such apprehension not knowing what my life would be like, it's an entirely different culture, no friends, no relatives and the near proximity and Raj did have a brother but I did not know them very well. They turned out to be really lovely people and took care of me and guided me how to go about.

I had friends who came and we were buying winter coats and one of the friends said oh, the large one and the small one are the same price. Let's take the large, you know you get more for the money sort of a thing. I mean we went through all of this and we laugh about it now and once I came here, made friends and the reason that we have not moved from Detroit in all these many years is all of the people who made the fabric of our lives are here and we are so closely entwined in each of those lives. That's a huge, huge support system for both of us and when we think of family, even though we are close to our families in India, they're so far away. It's our friends here who we immediately think of them as family.

So that's one of the reasons I think we remained in this Metro Detroit area.

Steve Velasquez: So let's go back to that pressure cooker for a minute. Did you actually use it?

Padma: A few times. You know, then I found a better pressure cooker here because Indian pressure cookers, if the pressure built up, there was no way it could be controlled. There was no gauge for low pressure or high pressure which the pressure cookers here had it and then the pressure cooker would burst. They also gave me the pots that would you know, the valve would burst so they sent me with two extra valves and gaskets to go around, over the use that they become kind of loose and the pressure escapes from that so I had all of that. I did use for a little bit but I still kept it now since I carried it. It was painful carrying it so I kept that.

Raj: When I came, first the university, they arranged their host family for me to so they're a very nice family from a suburb here in Birmingham and so they really took care of me until they, you know, the school started and so I

stayed with them and then they took me to the church. It so happened those days, you could only come with \$20.00 in cash, the government won't give you more than \$20.00 so when I came, \$20.00, I was looking for an apartment in the campus. Somebody ran into me and picked my pocket so I lost the \$20.00, too.

So yeah, I went to foreign [inaudible][00:17:42] because my paycheck had not come yet so it was too, so I went there and then the, so I briefly told my host family that weekend what happened so they must have told everybody in the church. So everybody coming to me, very sorry and they start giving me the money. So it was really an experience, and that they were a very nice family and I really learned a lot during that time what the American culture is about.

Padma: You know, so many people, some we keep in touch, some we've lost touched are influencing factors in our lives as to where we have reached now. God bless them all.

Steve Velasquez: So I know you have some other heirlooms that you've brought from India that were parts of your family. Can you talk a little bit about those and how were they handed down and are there particular memories associated with them?

Padma: You know, all of these heirlooms didn't come when we came because it's over the years that, as India was becoming modern, nobody wanted older pieces of furniture and they were in our family home in Madras and his family home in Nepali so when I asked them can I take this, they would say just you can have them and that's how it came about when we moved into a bigger home and there was space to use them and display them. That's how they came about. I picked and chose some of the heirlooms because the ones that were not broken and the ones that can be used here but I don't have a total attachment to any one of them, only summer holidays we saw.

As children these things didn't mean anything until you came to a certain age into your 30's then your roots become so important to you, you know, that all that many years you really don't care about heritage and all that stuff. Suddenly you in your heart, you become so Indian and you want to be surrounded with all the things that are in your memory, you know. So that's how some of the pieces came about, the riches from my paternal grandmother and the riches from Raj's maternal great grandmother I think, chairs and some furniture like that which I treasure now. I really treasure them now.

Steve Velasquez: What were the homes like that you grew up in India?

Padma: We belong to a middle, upper middle class family. It was quite contemporary. Nothing much has changed in the years that I grew up and now except in the drapes and some of the furniture and stuff like that. A lot

of the old furniture was reconverted into modern furniture and it's the same home that we moved in mid '60s that we still live in, in my mother's house and they modernized, they got rid of all the older pieces and modernized now but it was a fun thing that everything was not available to us, everything we wanted but it was a comfortable life.

We had a refrigerator. We had electricity and a TV that came in when I was in high school which used to be black and white and only have government programs about agriculture or something new and it hasn't worked to, a totally different world now, whatever we have it in the west, we have it in India.

Raj: So I think family background was important for us. We really enjoyed in all aspects but they gave us a great education so we came here, we didn't want to take any help or support, want to be completely on our own and that determination helped to really not only get a scholarship here but also making sure working hard and then trying to become an entrepreneur and the work ethics of American worker, professionalism in America has really taught a lot to go to the next step.

Steve Velasquez: What have been some of your family's major struggles as well as successes?

Padma: I will tell that. When I came here in 1970, October, Raj handed me the checkbook. I had never dealt with money issues in India. Whatever we wanted as far as parents could afford was made available to us. So I did not know what but the thing was, I did not know what, how to write a check. I never had a bank account or a credit card on my name. So Raj taught me this is how you write a check. This is how when the electric bills come and telephone bills come and when I came, I was so lonely because Raj went away to work. It was almost winter. We had only one car. I did not know how to drive. So I was homebound for most part.

So I used to call, I had a friend in New Jersey and I had a friend in California and those days, they have restriction, daytime calls were really expensive. Only after 8:00p.m. or so they had like 60 or 70 percent off and Sundays. Not knowing that I made calls and the first bill that came was \$700.00. It was two times our mortgage for a condo, almost and I did not know how to even tell Raj that so I hid the bill and I asked him casually how much is your phone bill normally phone bill in average so he said \$25.00, \$30.00 you know and I did not know how to break that I had a \$700.00 thing so I quietly told him I said I made a mistake and I have a \$700.00.

As generous as he is now, he was, he had this generous heart. All he said was okay, next time, be more careful, okay? That's all he could say and it never ever happened ever again until I knew and also I started working. I went to Wayne State and then I started working as a metabolic nutritionist in one of the hospitals here and there was a time that you know, some family members that was wedding, for someone that worked for Raj's father. Raj's

father was a dentist and we sent some money and then there was a new roof needed to be put so all of our savings went into all of these things.

I so vividly remember there was one week left in the month to get before we got our next paycheck and there was \$7.50 in that card, that's it, to make do for the whole week and we made it. We made it and that's the beauty of it, you know, to remember from where we have come to where in life and really thanks to America, you know. It's a beautiful journey even though we struggled a little bit, it was, we only remember the best.

Raj: I think it's determination and most important is in the business career, really learn how to blend both the cultures. The American culture brings professionalism, opportunities and the Indian culture is to be determination, patient, give or take approach and those are the kind of balance a lot of our customers always like compared to dealing with the big companies. They dealt with us because we're always flexible give and take approach is what really helped us to forge a relationship with the customers.

Padma: I think because of the struggles that we went through, the challenges we went through, I think we better understand other people in the community, what the needs are, wanting to help.

Raj: The two things that really helped me is Dale Carnegie, when I was in school, I read his book, How to Win People, How to Influence People. He always said you put yourself in the other person's shoe. Think like them, everything will come to you. I apply that always in myself personally. Even today, I tell all my employees you know, put yourself in the customer, think what they want, what they need, what their challenges are. We can really do that.

Second one is Robert Kennedy. I'm sorry, John Kennedy always said preparation, preparation, details, details. That really also helped. That really, it's really most influential quotes from both of them all the time really helped.

Steve Velasquez: Can you talk a little bit about your family and you know why did some of you decide to immigrate and why did some stay in India and what does it mean now to be in this sort of transnational world where earlier if you were an immigrant, you often left your country behind but now it's easy to fly back to India or to you know, pick up the phone and call and remain in touch. One specific question, do you remember, did you ever fly on a 747 aircraft to come here?

Raj: No, that was the first time, 747, yeah. The smaller planes flew, you know, other than that, no.

Steve Velasquez: Okay.

Padma: Coming to America was my first international. I've never seen snow so I have such excitement when I looked out. He said oh, it's snowing, it's snowing, you know. I didn't understand what fall was because there were not many movies being shown in that season or whatever or we never looked at as children, too, in the background. So when he told me, I did not believe him. I came after, right after the fall. He says the trees turn all kinds of colors. I said no, you're lying, how can the trees turn all kinds of but the following year, I did witness it and witnessed all the snow, it was such excitement, such joy in little things that others might not feel the same way.

I come from a family, very highly educated family. My mother had a master's and she went to law school after four of us were born. We were four siblings. The other three siblings are all doctors and I was the only radical in my family who didn't want to be a doctor against my mother's wishes. My mother has been the mother and the father for us. She's the anchor and crest of who I am now and why I chose, one of my brothers is here in Tennessee, second brother and my sister chose to stay back in India even though she had an opportunity to come to here to be closer to my mother.

My older brother did go to Africa and worked for several years and went back to India to start his own hospital there and that's why the other siblings are not here, we are here. Why I chose to marry Raj and to come here is opportunities, couldn't let go of the opportunities that also.

Raj: My family, my dad was a dentist. He was one of the three dentists in the entire area. Now there are close to 150 to 200 dentists in the same area because the population has grown. So we always believed in education so making sure we all have, well-educated and reason for me to really come as, always I've liked the US in terms of the education, higher education and especially in the computers area, I really wanted to get into and we didn't have as much in India at that time like we have much older computers so I really wanted to do computer science.

Right from the, before two years graduating from my engineering, always went to American consulate, read a lot of books and also applying to several universities, looking at which universities are the best and everything and saw that inspiration and then making sure we would make it here right after the college there and that's why I came here.

Steve Velasquez: Okay. What are some of the ways that you say in touch with your family in India? You visit several times a year.

Raj: Yeah, visit and also as you said, you know, phones, emails, phones, text message.

Padma: It has evolved. When I came to this –

Raj: We don't write anymore really. Initially when I came, I used to write letters but now you know, after four or five years, I stopped writing letters.

Padma: Phone calls were so expensive then. I used to have a continuous letter that I would date it and then every 10 days I would mail it, several pages of it. Even to make a call, it was so difficult because you needed to speak to a certain person so you had to make person to person call and the operator when she connected there then they would call us back sometimes half hour, sometimes couple hours. The world has changed. It's become so small and how you can communicate, travel, all of that.

Steve Velasquez: What do you miss the most?

Raj: Really right now, don't miss anything except when we were growing up, a lot more harmony in India especially in rural area but now the population has grown so much and so much this thing and there's so many issues confronting the people and so that is something which when I was growing up as kids, we had such a great time, really enjoy simple life so I miss that.

Padma: Everything is available that's available in India, in US now so and then you can practically get anything DHL or FedEx, you know, two days it takes. Some of the brooms I used here, in India, I'd gotten so used to it, I had Raj's sisters send them to me and she sent them from a small village on a Monday and I had it Wednesday morning here with me. It's become that simple, you know?

Steve Velasquez: Can you talk a little bit about when you feel Indian, when you feel American and when you see this sort of blending of cultural traditions?

Raj: I think as far as the personal life concern, in terms of giving to the community, I think like American very much more than India. When it comes to the values and the balancing the life, I think more Indian. When it comes to professional life, when being very professional, high integrity and honesty, a lot comes from the American aspect of life and when it comes to really day to day giving and taking, a lot of the Indian life, so kind of balancing at each contest level, it's more again comes out of the heart than anything else. I mean I guess it really doesn't matter with American or Indian but how you apply yourself in the usual case, the spiritual life helps a lot, you know sometimes.

Just sitting, I get so many ideas just thinking, sitting down and thinking about spiritually and things like that so, it's really it's a blended aspect of it and I'm sure many people have the same way and even the Americans, I know a lot of my friends, they have changed quite a bit through traveling the world, seeing the people and also now really, quite a bit the give and take approach. But generally for giving back to the people, I really learned here in how to, most important how to make sure that it's effective.

Padma: You know the demarcation line, when I came, we grew up in the areas where rice was grown so we ate rice twice a day and sometimes three times a day in a different farm. We had an American friend and he would ask what did you have for dinner and I would say rice was such an exotic item. That is six years ago when I came here. It was not like an everyday use and the kind of food we ate and how we felt it as – I felt more Indian then and then as it evolved and as it, we became liberal and accepting of other cultures and all that, now the line of demarcation is erased really. It is not Indian, American.

We have friends Indian, American, and other international, very diverse group of friends so we cease to even think is it Indian. Like we talk, the Indian-ness is in terms of talking like oh, I'm serving Indian food or some Indian singers are coming like that but really doesn't matter if you're Indian or not. In my heart when I think of home now, it is America. Wherever I go and I want to get home and then I was thinking what is home for me? It's my home in America is how I think.

So it ceased at some point and I don't know when it was that we became so comfortable with who we are and what we are and accepting the other purpose, the other side of the fence so the fence ceased since then.

Steve Velasquez: How about your children? How did they see their, this intersection of their rich cultural heritage with being American?

Padma: You know, I talk to children who, my son is 30. He'll be 30 soon. Kids who are 10, 12 years older, they struggled a lot because at home, parents expected them to be very Indian, ate Indian food, speak the language, wear Indian clothes and some of the religious things to perform. When they went to school, they had to be totally American, speak English and they didn't want to deal with Indian food because they did not, the group was smaller, population was smaller then and they didn't want to be associated.

When I talk with these kids, they tell me. Our children when they were in school, 30 percent of their school was Indians or Chinese, you know, 30, 40 percent so they were very much at home. We celebrated international day there, Indian holidays. We as parents would go, participate, talk to them and explain to them and take –

Raj: Also a lot of Jewish holidays, yeah.

Padma: So, our children were very comfortable. We Indians especially from South India, we eat our meals with hand, never with the fork or only when we went out in public, other people but at home, you know, traditional meal was served on a banana leaf and we ate it with hands and I wouldn't do that. Now I would. I'm comfortable with who I am. I don't need to be pretending. I don't need to belong to a certain group but as time was

passing, I came to this stage but before, I would eat even Indian food with a spoon and a fork in groups of people but our children became so comfortable.

One day my daughter's friend was there and my daughter was eating with her hand, I said you know, what is, mom, this is our culture, it's okay. They will learn. They'll learn to accept. She loves me. This won't matter to her is what our daughter told me. So they're very comfortable. Their friends have traveled with us in India so we serve Indian food. Actually my son's friends when I'm going to New York, they ask me for specific foods to bring back. What are you bringing? Can you bring green beans that you make or other Indian food?

So I think as the world is getting a smaller place, all eating sushi and all kinds of other international food, it's become easy and people enjoying it.

Raj: This, one of my son's friends when they were young and so we took him to Chicago.

Padma: For our son's 10th birthday.

Raj: So we, so at the restaurant, we took him to Indian restaurant so when the waiter comes and he says what would you like to have? I want my best friend what he eats, curry and rice, I wanna eat with hand.

Padma: Our son's comfort food was yoghurt and rice so this child all wanted to have yoghurt and rice, you know. Yoghurt and rice is a comfort food like you eat mashed potatoes or something like that. So our children never ever felt alienated. There were some things that they would tell me ahead of time like for holidays I would take sweet meat, Indian, and it's called burfee and then you know, from previous years, the teachers would say don't call it, just so I would say they're almost squares because burfee is like children would make like oh, that's a barf, you know, things like that.

So it was overall, I think taking from both cultures the best of the both cultures, they both are comfortable with –

Raj: And our daughter, you know, we didn't force her anything. On her own, she really liked the Indian classical dances and took upon herself and put all effort and the teachers come from India and all the qualified, she finished her degree and then did the what we call –

Padma: It's called [speaking in Indian] first entrance on the stage and she performed for two and a half hours.

Raj: Two and a half hours, by herself so that's kind of on their own, we never forced anything to them and but always they enjoyed it like that, what are we, both the cultures are –

Steve Velasquez: And you, are there any particular holidays either Indian or American traditional holidays that you, that are special and you celebrate?

Padma: You know, just because of the convenience of the vacation dates, Thanksgiving always is a favorite holiday for the children and for us and they don't want to come to Miami's, two three years they came in a row to Miami. Last year they said we're going to Michigan to celebrate. Mom and dad, if you wish to join us, please come to Michigan, you know.

Raj: And I feel Madras is [inaudible][00:43:48].

Padma: You know the fall colors, all the whole cooler weather they associated with Thanksgiving.

Raj: Then just we have another Indian festival called festival of life.

Padma: Diwali.

Raj: They really enjoy that also, festivals.

Padma: They come if they can. I don't force it upon them to come but we get together. They come often enough. They tell me that they come more frequently than any of the other friends go to their homes so and then our house is open house so I always have bunch of friends of the kids. Even if our children, they have their friends come and stay with us.

Raj: The only, really the thing I followed, American tradition, whenever her friends from school come, if they were boys, I used to carry the baseball bat around.

Padma: He's kidding. He would just threaten them I have a baseball bat you know, for homecoming for home or something because this culture of dating, I was not exposed to. I've never ever even gone out on a date with a boy and they were a lot of – this culture doesn't understand what arranged marriage is. They think it's forced marriage. It is not. I have turned down two or three other boys that were introduced to me and so if both of us, either one of us said no, the marriage would have never happened.

Unknown Speaker: I was gonna say we have about five minutes and then we ask a couple more questions.

Steve Velasquez: Just one, you have a special area in your home that relates to religion. Can you talk about that?

Padma: Yeah. We used, in most of the Indian homes and in our previous home, we had a room, a small room because they don't want everyone to step in with shoes and all that stuff. We have liberalized. We just have an open altar in

our home where all kinds of gods, goddesses, statues, pictures are there, whoever when we go to India gives me something for good luck, I bring in, I put it there. So we have and the altar is actually a fireplace around that was made in South India for British in 1800 something and that came into an auction in America and I bought it and use it as an altar space.

Most Indians always will have a Hindus will always have an altar space with a photograph or a statue or whatever it is and we are not ritualistic every day. We do our meditation but holiday, special holidays we do celebrate with some ritual.

Steve Velasquez: Raj, can you talk a little bit about your career?

Raj: Always wanted to, as I said be an entrepreneur when at the same time, I want to learn the working aspects of America in the six years working in the automotive company, I learned a lot you know, what the business is about, what it takes to organize everything and so the, so when I started because the technology I started is a great opportunity for, thought it will take off but never thought it will take off this level and so that's the reason I wanted to change the old, our professional world, how to do the projects and technology area and that's what I was really focused on and then that five six years that focus, helped us to really grow even if we start with nothing then that make it a really, a standard now in the world and so for how to do the technology, leveraging the global workforce, doing it in much more different way, much better way and how to build a talent across because as the technology grew, this talent was very important.

Even today there's so much shortage in talent, good technology talent in US and so Silicon Valley has leveraged that in a bigger way and then that's when really things grew and it's given a lot of, thinking of opportunities, even today, after this big company is so quite involved with that, it's now going to the next stage of the, how do we change the technology even better and that's why I started a new company now and that's growing also way past and so I feel similarly in the technology, medical technology, when we've given this money for the philanthropy point of view for the cancer research, we wanted to leverage the technology.

We're the first one to do robotics surgery in prostate cancer and making the world standard. Now it's across the world so we're opening a lot of this robotic centers in India, Europe and UK, and US and again, it's been always that opportunity to look at how to do the philanthropy, at the same time, how you make to scale. Now we're doing it in India using the mobile technology for poor people to do banking and getting their low interest rate credits and, so these are all now trying to do both business perspective as well as a philanthropy perspective to scale and grow and that has been a really, really rewarding career for me personally and also the support from Padma all these years and the things really taking care of the children, taking care of the family and the home, everything.

So it's really again, a lot of support and encouragement and most important is a lot of confidence.

Steve Velasquez: Okay. You've had a wonderful career. You have a wonderful family. What are you most proud of, both of you?

Raj: I was gonna say my daughter's wedding. The most important is life is beautiful. There are so many things happen in your life every day, every day's great but there's something very important moments in life and you have, coming to this country and then seeing things and then getting married and you know, this whole, more than beautiful day then coming and then having children you know, that's probably another real beautiful day and now the children grown and then they turned into great children and that's a very rewarding moment.

The personal career point of view and what we accomplished which is good but the most important is the children and the family really makes a lot of difference.

Padma: Yeah, for me family, children of course, the relationships I've had with friends here and the opportunity to serve whether it's friends the community. I find it it's a great strength in giving back to the community. The highs you get from doing so is you can't equal at anything else. Thank god for the children and Raj and health and all other things that we have but I think helping people in need, made friends, whoever it is, I'm always available and that gives me great joy.

Steve Velasquez: What are your dreams for the future?

Raj: I think remember one is helping our children of course. They're also in the same page in giving back to the community and everything. I hope they can carry the same thing and maybe at a much bigger scale and really make the difference in the world in more things we do and get to make the much scalable results and like we have the biggest, or how do we bring people out of poverty around the world and so wanted that to do to millions of millions of people hopefully with [inaudible][00:52:51] our children we can make that happen.

Padma: To have a positive impact really and scaling up what we believe in and what we're doing and education I think is the answer to poverty and hopefully someday.

Raj: One thing learned in the giving, it's not just giving the money. It's giving your time and your, your ideas and thought process and making an impact. I think that's really very important. I think more and more younger children, they can give their time and effort and then there's enough in the world

people give but effectively utilizing that is very little and that's what we need, that's why we hope our children will spend more time doing that.

Padma: To give effectively and to scale up and to have an impact on what we believe in.

Steve Velasquez: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Raj: No. Thank you. This is I think basically two things which this country really helped us is to not only create a professional life, business life and made a difference in our industry and similarly in the philanthropy giving to really help us to thank god we have the right time, right opportunity what we did in the prostate cancer has really created a difference in the world. We hope to do similarly in India with the poverty and so like that, any programs we can think of where we can really make a difference. Thank you.

Padma: Thank you. This has been wonderful.

Steve Velasquez: Yes, thank you.

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