

# Raj Sisodia's journey to finding his purpose: healing businesses



**Raj Sisodia** picked up the telephone and dialed India. He'd done it before, but it was the first time in almost **50 years** he was going to say the words: *"Mom, everything I've done to make a **difference** in the world is because of what you've **taught** me."*

The co-founder of [Conscious Capitalism](#) had just noticed the **impact of his mother** on the movement he'd started years before, when he realized that **the normal way of doing business** was **causing him and thousands of people around the world to be unhappy**.

*"I'd spent **45 years** of my life trying to **impress my father**, caring about power, success, domination, and winning, but I was always more like my **mother**, who cared about **love, affection, and compassion**."*

*"I called her. I told her that I wanted to make a difference in the world because of what she'd taught me, and she started to cry. The **world** and **businesses** don't need masculine energy. They need a mother's energy and **compassion**,"* he says with a smile.

In an interview with [CONNECTA](#), Raj tells his story and the story of the business movement in which everyone matters, and everyone wins. He talks about the call with his mother and the journey from his native **India** to leading the [Conscious Enterprise Center](#) at [Tec de Monterrey](#).



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### **A mother's compassion, the seed of conscious capitalism**

Raj was born and raised in **India**. A descendant of generations who took part in wars to guard the border against foreign invasions, he was raised by a father who sought **success at all costs**, but also by a **loving mother**.

His mother's **virtues** of **affection** and **compassion** were more similar to his own. At the same time, these were seen as a weakness by his father, who even cut ties with him when he wanted to marry without his approval.

*"(My father) believed I was defective, that I had to be the opposite of what I really was. If I was idealistic, then I had to become cynical and fight over everything for no reason,"* recalls Raj.

Thinking like his father had led him to **obtaining a Ph.D. in marketing** and teaching it for 2 decades, talking about how business is to do with power, money, and success, with no regard for **people's wellbeing**.

It took 45 years for the feeling that was growing inside Raj to make him face his reflection in the mirror and **realize he wasn't happy**.

*"It was never inspiring for business to be all about the money. It was **dehumanizing**. Like in 'The Godfather' movie, when he had someone killed and then said: '**It's not personal, it's strictly business.**'"*

***"Business could be a source of joy and bring wellbeing to employees, their families, communities, and customers. It could lead to the healing of society, despite our***

**differences.”**

Raj remembers thinking there had to be a **better way of doing business** than just surviving to chase money, so he first researched what he believed was wrong with capitalism.

Days and nights of research led to him discovering there were **successful companies** that helped achieve wellbeing for employees, customers, and even communities, as well as even **more profits**.

*“**Business** could be a source of **joy** and bring wellbeing to employees, their families, communities, and customers. It could lead to the **healing of society**, despite our differences.”*

He had found the answer. **Capitalism could be different** if businesses were **people centered**. Raj didn't know it yet, but he'd taken the first step towards **conscious capitalism**.

*“That's my purpose: to bring **heart, healing, courage, and soul** to the world of **business**, as well as leadership to build a better world for everyone. **We need to bring true humanity to business,**”* he says.



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## **The Conscious Enterprise Center across the globe**

Words, paragraphs, chapters, and eleven books have been written based on Raj's experience of deciphering **Conscious Capitalism** and its application by thousands of organizations around the world.

One of these organizations is in the north of **Mexico**, specifically in the city of **Monterrey**, Nuevo León, bearing the name of **Tecnológico de Monterrey**.

This is where Raj was appointed as *Distinguished University Professor of Conscious Enterprise* and guide for the [Conscious Enterprise Center \(CEC\)](#) within the [EGADE Business School](#) and the Tec's **Business School**.

The center aims to develop a **new awareness** in leaders, companies, and organizations that contributes to **human flourishing** as part of the Tec's **vision for 2030** and its **2025 strategic plan**.

*"I was at **Babson College**, a great university, but they didn't have this vision of treating conscious capitalism as something central to their institution, so I decided to give **Mexico**, the **Tec**, and its people a chance. I think it'll be a great adventure,"* he says.



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In September 2021, the launch of the CEC was announced with Raj at the helm, like the spearhead with which his **ancestors** defended India.

But this time, the situation is different. It's not about going fully armed to war, but about a **new way of teaching business**.

Raj has become **the Tec's first Distinguished Professor**, as part of an initiative by the institution to attract **100 global leaders** in their fields of study in the years to come.

*"I decided to give Mexico, the Tec, and its people a chance. I think it'll be a great adventure."*

In **August 2022**, Raj will strive to speak to more than **1,200 students** to plant the seed of conscious capitalism, a new way of doing business.

*“It’s not just teaching the theory and concepts of **conscious capitalism**. Content is important, but I think the **personal journey of awakening and growing** as a human being, a teacher, a student, and an entrepreneur is more important.*

*“If you have that awareness, you’re going to **teach and learn differently**. I think that’s what I’m looking for, for them to understand each other, get to know each other, love each other, and to be themselves and express themselves to the world,” says Raj.*



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## **The day Raj awoke and found his purpose**

The moment Raj calls his “**awakening**” happened when he was writing a book in 2003.

Raj had gathered **inspiring stories** from conscious companies to be published in the book [\*\*Firms of Endearment\*\*](#).

*“I was on a retreat for that book and as I was writing about these stories, I realized I had **tears of joy** in my eyes. I’d discovered there was a better way of doing business.*

*“I wanted to learn about it, understand it, teach it, and take it to the world. I had **found my purpose at the age of 47. Better late than never**,” Raj says with a laugh.*



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Those qualities that he shared with his mother, such as **love**, **affection**, and **understanding**, which he even came to consider as a series of flaws, would become an essential part of his journey.

Raj then constructed the **4 key principles** of conscious capitalism: The Why, What, Who, and How of business.

The **Why** attempts to change the paradigm of business from just seeking money, to instead choosing a **higher purpose** and something that helps people to improve their lives and be happier.

The **What** is the generation of **value** for customers, workers, their families, the communities around them, and even their suppliers.

The **Who** recognizes leadership and its influence on creating a **vision** to improve people's lives; not concerning money, ego, or power, but **service**, **love**, and **purpose**.

The **How** addresses the feelings of the people who work in these organizations, creating a **culture of purpose**, value, trust, integrity, and affection for the people who collaborate or have a relationship with these companies.

*"It makes going to work no longer torture, it makes you no longer say, 'Thank God it's Friday', but rather, 'I'm **excited to go to work**, because I love what I do.'*

*"That's how we have to build this culture," says Sisodia.*



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### A phone call to his mom's house

Raj's personal coach made him realize that he was **honoring his mother** with **conscious capitalism** and his work around the world in more than a dozen countries.

*"She told me I had to call her, but I told her that I didn't talk to my family about those things, that we only talked about the weather and our state of health.*

*"I told her I was going to India in 3 weeks and that I would talk to her there,"* Raj recalls.

His **mother** was **80 years old** at the time and Raj's coach told him not to waste any time.

*"The **next morning**, I called her, and **she picked up**. I told her that **what she believed** and what she had **taught** her 3 children was what the **world needed**, that it had **blessed** us, and that now we could bring that to the world. Then she **started to cry**,"* Sisodia remembers.



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Raj leans forward in his chair as he tells the story. He brings his hand to his chin and touches his mouth with his index finger. It takes him a few seconds to answer a question about the **legacy** he **would like** to leave to the world. Then he speaks.

*"In 2019, my parents passed away. I had that conversation with my mother in which I told her how I felt, and I had a later **conversation** with my **father** towards the **end**. He had been tough on me, but his father had been even tougher on him. **We were both victims**."*

*"I understood that I had my mom's part, but I also needed my **dad's strength**, his **courage**, and his **focus**. It isn't enough to be loved, love without strength is ineffective and strength without love is tyranny."*

*"It's combining what **Martin Luther King** said: '**A tough mind and a tender heart**', so it's the journey to the whole that I think we all need. We need both," he says.*





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When the day came for his **father to pass**, Raj didn't cry. Only his mother did. None of his father's **3 children** shed a tear and Raj reflected on the reason: **rather than pain, most people** seemed to be **experiencing relief**.

**Months later**, his **mother would also die**. She, on the other hand, left behind the tears of both him and his siblings, as well as a **recording of that call** years before. The one Raj listens to from time to time to remember her voice.

***"What will happen when you die? Will the predominant feeling among those you leave behind be one of grief or relief? For me, that was a sign of what could happen if you live a certain way, so I hope that in the end, people can remember me for making an impact with a message of healing to the world.***

*"That they feel that I was a **healing presence** and not one of suffering. I hope that **people can cry when I'm no longer here**,"* are the last words to come out of his mouth before he smiles at the end of the interview.

***"I hope that in the end, people can remember me for making an impact on people with a message of healing to the world."***

Raj's memoir, titled "**Awaken: My Journey to Purpose, Wholeness and Healing**" will be published by John Wiley in late 2022.

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