

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/recognizing-opportunity>

Lightspeed Venture Partners founding partner Ravi Mhatre explains how his parents' immigrant background impacted his own trajectory. A mindset that embraced and appreciated opportunities, even amid imperfect situations, allowed them to succeed in the United States, and imprinted on him as well.



Transcript

- You look at my family background, on my mother's side 00:00:08,640 I have a grandmother who was an immigrant from Eastern Europe.. My mother grew up in a single parent household.. Was raised by my grandmother who worked in a factory her entire life to really make ends meet.. And my mother had to find a way.. She put herself through school.. They really cared about education.. She ultimately got a PhD in Clinical Psychology.. On my father's side, my father is originally from India.. He came to the US in the 1950s.. He took a boat here and it's a more common sort of narrative I think for non-resident Indians today..

But he was in an early cohort of people who came to this country to get an education and really with the expectation that he could have a better life here, but without really knowing what to expect or what that would mean.. And I think my parents were really unusual in some respects and Eastern European first-generation Jewish American woman and an immigrant Indian father, they were in some ways very ahead of their time I think, and my father, he kind of ended up first getting a PhD in Biochemistry and then ultimately became a business person in the biotech industry.. And I've watched them growing up and I didn't really understand at the time.. I think there were many ways in which the US probably wasn't the perfect idealized place where everything just went well and everything was easy.. On the other hand, I saw them really have both of them a mindset which is not taking things for granted, embracing at some level that they were different, but that they felt strongly about wanting to connect with the who and what they were and feeling that this country was somehow, it's definitely not perfect.. But I think for both of them in their own ways if you really understood their backgrounds and where they came from, having a deep appreciation for the opportunities that did exist in this country, not withstanding its imperfections.. And I think that's something as I've gotten older, I've realize imprinted on me quite deeply...