

SPOTLIGHT

The U.S. India SME Council Present Incredible Inc 50 Business Leaders' Series
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'Great Truth' is my story: an interview of Mr. Andy Swarna by Shivani Sawant

In this interview, I sit down with Mr. Andy Swarna, the founder of the Great Truth nonprofit organization. Mr. Swarna speaks on Great Truth, the central message that his organization is trying to spread, as well as Religious Freedom Forever, the book he published, and how he set on this path.

Shivani: You founded Great Truth—what exactly is 'Great Truth', and what made you decide to start it?

Andy Swarna: Truth is now, Great Truth. What I mean by that is, humanity that reaches beyond all borders, irrespective of race, religion, caste, gender, ethnicity, and language and so forth. This humanity that cannot address the conflict between faith and politics. It does reach beyond borders, by preaching kindness, encouraging compassion, but it cannot address the conflict between faith and politics. But with the Great Truth, humanity is now a universal humanity. What I mean by that is, there is now conflict resolution between faith and politics, and religious freedom. And that's what makes humanity into a universal humanity. In other words, a human is nothing but identity, belief, and behavior. We have many stories for identities, we have many stories for belief. Whereas with Great Truth, there is one story for identity, and just one story for belief. And it answers: you are one of us, with this universal identity and universal belief.

Shivani: What exactly do you set out to do, and when did you decide to start Great Truth?

Mr. Swarna: I started Great Truth, the non-profit, to share the conclusion of who we are as humans of faith and humans of politics. The progress we are trying to achieve is control. When we know how to define it, how to control it, we call it progress. This freedom and control would mean a new awareness. To live, to share, to celebrate, to express. That makes us

complete and universal to human solutions to human problems. So I do a project called, "Can you speak for three minutes on how a human is the solution to human problems?" So that is the objective, and providing the necessary answers, that conversation will affect the person's personal life and how they live.

Shivani: With this project, are you recording the people's answers and compiling their truths?

Mr. Swarna: Well, the idea is that this is a new awareness. So let's take religious freedom—what my book is about. We are limited in many ways. The key point is that every nation spends a significant portion of the budget on security. Because, we humans don't recognize the solution to our own problems. So, how should we address this? It cannot just be addressed by principle—we have all the principles. But we don't have the self-worth, as in, our own self qualifications. Because there is something that is not addressed yet, as in how I should live for this problem. We live by freedom, we understand that we need to respect each other, there are so many principles, so many stories, so much inspiration and all that. But when it comes to conflict, it remains as a conflict, and always individuals are kept in some box. You have to choose some box, otherwise you don't exist, you don't have a self-image. So in our daily life, I can look at someone else, and there are so many ways I can look at them. But with the Great Truth consciousness, I can start looking at them differently and start addressing issues differently. How I grow up myself, how I think,



how I go from problem to solution. I put myself in a different foundation.

Every child in this world is living with conflict in mind. Conflict about how their life is almost always disagreeable to someone else—in some idea, in some thought, we are all different. So how can we bring together "us and them" in a universal non-conflict. They live as a conflict, and that means there is a disagreement. A non-conflict would give them a harmony, a way to persist in their own life and find meaning, so that others are on their side. The first thing is evaluating that conflict, and this has to come from living, sharing, and experiencing. Addressing the issues. So that is the difference between individual truths and what Great Truth is—an individual becomes a person, a person of many things, and this person of many things is a natural person who removes chaos

from human life.

Shivani: You mentioned that Great Truth is your "story"; how did you start out, and what made you decide to do this?

Mr. Swarna: I came to the US in 1999, as a software professional. So, in 2002 and 2003, I was working at a lobby firm in DC. I was working there in the computer department, as an IT professional. They liked my idea of religious freedom and separation of powers—separating politics from religion. It's not that I went to a supervisor and directly suggested it, I was actually having an informal conversation with one of my colleagues, and we just happened to touch on religion and politics. I expressed my view, and my way of thinking, and the idea spread. And they implemented it, they found that it was very harmonious and did the necessary political and

legal networking to remove a Ten Commandment tablet from an Alabama courthouse. But this did not end harmoniously. All of the politics came into my life. And it revealed the purpose of my life, which in the grand scheme of things, is the service of humankind. So this realization helped me continue on to start Great Truth and write Religious Freedom Forever.

Shivani: This idea that you shared with your colleague—where did you get the idea for it? Were there any personal experiences you had growing up that influenced you?

Mr. Swarna: Well, like anyone else, I read and respond to issues. Where we are, and where we can be, is something in your mind. If I am being a politician, I might be used to convincing people to vote for me. If I am a Church Father or

Pastor, I might feel really enlightened and free. But I was not part of any sort of group. I observed, I learned, and so I had some thoughts in my mind. But there were never any plans in my mind, to do what I am now doing. This all happened, generally speaking, because the right moment happened at the right time. And what I paid attention to—what I learned, what I saw, how it is, what it can be and what it should be—all shaped how I looked at life, and I know I have a message to people for the better. At this point I think I am living freely, maybe more so than others, because I can feel comfort, I can feel harmony, I can feel peace whenever a problem occurs, and where others might push back against themselves, I can move forward and engage.

Shivani: This conflict resolution and peace that you're describing, is that what Great Truth aims to achieve?

Mr. Swarna: "You are one of us." Let's say that is the objective. You are one of us: by identity, and by belief. It's as simple as that, and it cannot be divided by any other iteration. It doesn't matter who comes with whatever idea. This "one of us" cannot be divided by anything.

See, our own existence, by our own origins, is underdeveloped—all of the texts, all of the inspirational learnings and religious texts—have failed to address conflict resolution in faith and politics. So, that is the foundation of what I call "the most useful problem to solve," which is your

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own existence and your own origins.

Shivani: *Let's move to your book, Religious Freedom Forever. What is your book about, and how does it relate to your nonprofit?*

Mr. Swarna: There are two philosophies in America. One idea is that we should always try to inject religion into politics, thereby into the Government. Another idea is based on religious freedom. Religious freedom is the separation of powers, meaning, the government is a political and legal organization that includes all its institutions. But the issue, the underdevelopment is, who is the universal individual to God. Are they individual to God by faith? By interfaith? By intra-faith, multifaith? Or God and Nation? And

this informational gap is a source of conflict in minds. And this problem is also the source for the lack of psychological clarity in people's minds. So, as humans of internal beliefs and experiences, dealing with external influences, we have been searching for answers for a long time. The Great Truth distinguishes what humans can define and what they cannot define. All that we can define is a social identity of understanding each other from intuition to passion. And that which "cannot be defined" is a spiritual identity to the clarity of image of an individual subjected to reason and circumstance.

Shivani: *Looking online, you also seem to have written the book American Value Forever. Can you speak a little about this book and what it's about?*

Mr. Swarna: Well, actually it is the same book, with a

different title. The reason I also published it under the name American Value Forever is that religious freedom is considered as a sacred American gift to the world. And the people who work in this area feel motivated by this thought, that they're doing something precious. This is a key area to find common ground. That's why I used two titles for one book.

Shivani: *Finally, I wanted to ask a little about your personal life—do you have any hobbies or outlets that you turn to when you're not working?*

Mr. Swarna: Oh, of course, I do walking, I play tennis, I play chess, I go to the gym, I do volunteer work. I have a wife and a son, and we've lived in the Silver Spring area for a while now.

Shivani: *Do you have anything else to add, either about your life or the Great Truth nonprofit, before we*

wrap things up?

Mr. Swarna: I have some more definitions on Great Truth. Great Truth is one idea that converses with many truths relating to why anything happens, in all similarities and dissimilarities, resulting in one universal truth for the highest benefit of being a human. Great Truth is a solution and resolution to the disharmony in identity, belief, and behavior. Great Truth is a relationship of creational thought, that all existing truths are different from the truth that God exists and one's relationship with him. And Great Truth is the consciousness that when you and the person next to you understand each other, you can have a conversation: not just do we believe in God, but how can our belief in God be a solution and not a problem. Great Truth is a forever relationship of truth and reality. Simply, Great Truth is my story.