

Summer of Peace™ 2013

Compassion in Action: Building a Global Compassion Movement (July 16)

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Jon: Welcome to the Summer of Peace summit, a production of The Shift Network. I'm Jon Ramer and we're delighted that you're joining us. I'm really excited and humbled to introduce our special guests today. We have a topic on the global compassion movement and we have three remarkable people with us.

Andrew Himes is the executive director of the Charter for Compassion and he's got a remarkable career and history as an author and a technologist and a philanthropist, an innovator.

We have Marilyn Turkovich, the educator and wise teacher who is developing a curriculum and has been involved with building movements for a number of years.

Joining us from New Delhi, India is Anil Sachdev, the founder of the School of Inspired Leadership. They are doing amazing work with educating the next generation of leaders that are working not only in business but as the whole part of this global compassion movement.

What we're going to do is hear from each of our speakers. I'm curious to first hear from each of you, from your own perspective, what drove you and inspired you to do this work? I'm curious, how do you define the work as you see it and what were the challenges and the choices you made that led to getting involved in doing the work that you're doing? Maybe, Anil, we could start with you from New Delhi.

Anil: Thank you. In India, we have this tremendous disparity between the rich and the poor. We have 1.2 billion people and we have the poorest of the poor and the richest of the rich. At one time, India was leading itself more consciously but that was **[0:02:00] [Indiscernible]** back. I think in the more recent past centuries of British rule and the Mughal rule, India forgot its own heritage and started blindly keeping a model of development which was not very conscious and so we have this extreme poverty all around us.

We are a very young nation in terms of our freedom, just over 60 years old. I know for politics that we have in India with multiple parties and political leaders and so on. Now, we've got democracy but we have a large amount of illiterate

citizens who soon became open to being influenced by all selfish politicians and we were electing them. India is at the crossroads where we have extreme form of corruption, we have self-centeredness and so on and our old democratic model has been failing us.

The world of business, I'm not sure how it is in the west but I think the business leaders are not trusted at all in this country, just like politicians are not. Instead of cursing our government and politics and business, some of us thought that one good way is to join politics and be a part of the change but the other is next best to politics is to be a part of education. So we have really got together and created a network of the good which is a consortium of conscious businesses, a consortium of conscious not-for-profit organizations, and a network of leaders who truly cared and who wished to take responsibility for the way we live now.

So we thought instead of cursing this absence of good leadership, why don't we create a network of the good and begin to take responsibility and so that's how we got into this work of inspired leadership and taking responsibility for the way we live now. That's really the context for our birthing.

Jon: Right. No, it is so innovative, the idea of linking together. I know you have the social innovation program as part of -- this is an educational school teaching -- it's a business school, right? But everyone there --

Anil: Yes.

Jon: -- is working with non-profits in partnership. But, Anil, I'm curious for you personally though. What was it that got you, I mean, you're very successful in your life and had done so many remarkable things, why did you make this choice to bring your time and passion and energy to create such a school?

Anil: The first part of my life was spent in industry, in operations in the automobile industry. I was a part of Tata and then a company called Eicher that I worked from the **[0:04:52] [Indiscernible]**. The first part of my life was dedicated to creating an organization that lived this whole principle of sustainable living, a responsible business, and giving back to society. In these companies, we observed the highest form of proper governance, a tremendous amount of investment in our people, creating an environment of trust, and working with the local communities.

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I had to get that exposure first to say it's possible in India. Our time is to create models which will defy the majority of people who are not working and living in

this place. I was fortunate to work in a company and to be a part of a team that created that. And then it was my dream that I would create a consulting organization that would help others to do that so we created a company called Eicher Consulting which had an unusual mission statement which will inure economic development without the spiritual impoverishment.

To us, spiritual impoverishment was all about losing a sense of community, not following the right means to make money, and consuming more than what we produced. So with these three principles, we cleared a consulting company that then helped others to follow this model of a more balanced living and a balanced business.

After ten years of running that consulting company, we decided to enter into this whole area of education and growing talent. So we created first the mother company called Grow Talent. We began to invest in leadership development of this inspired living and saying we've consulted, we've done it ourselves, and now let's start developing this into our model of inspired leadership which we did, and finally we created the capital that we needed to create a whole higher education institute which is what School of Inspired Leadership is where we were able to generate the capital ourselves to invest in creating an institution of this kind.

That's how it's been a lifelong journey but I dreamt about it even when I was in my 20s doing my business school education and really speaking the **[0:07:07]** **[Indiscernible]** but I was just paying attention to the calling and fight to say, "You know what? You have this dream about making your country live like this but first you do it inside the campaign then you help others to do it," and finally we went to the field of education. So that's how it's been a lifelong journey of really being inspired by this call.

Jon: Fabulous, Anil. Wow. Amazing how that past with human development and your work there leading to leadership development and being not only doing it in business and then consulting other businesses and now building a school to do that. That is really inspiring. Fabulous.

Anil: Thank you.

Jon: Let's move to Marilyn. I want to hear similar from you, Marilyn, because education is a nice bridge there because that's been so much a part of your work. But also I know you've been working for movement building for a number of years. Tell us a little bit about what motivated you, Marilyn, to get involved in this work and what were the challenges that you saw and the choices you made

to be able to be the educator you are and to be a part of building a number of really amazing movements.

Marilyn: Well, I was really excited to hear Anil because I always think about India as being my second home and I've learned so much about movement building from India with different organizations that I've been exposed to. But when I think about my life, and I've been doing that a lot just because of working with the charter, each day I communicate with people from all over the world. I think about my life as being, in the beginning, somewhat insular.

I lived in, I guess you would call it a ghetto of immigrants on south of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania so that people around me spoke every language that I am very fond of from Greek to Russian, there were Arabic Lebanese people, there were African Americans and of course my own roots are Croatian. I was really used to this really cacophony of sound, of language and it was very, very important to me.

And then I went off to college. I made the decision myself and it was what one might say "providential." I wound up, out of all places, in Louisville, Kentucky and all of a sudden I was in a brand new world. It was a different world, not only of sound and people but it woke me up politically. It was the '60s and there was the beginning of a brand new movement – civil rights – and it just seemed that I needed to be involved in that because I was really taking a position that came from what I felt was my roots back in Pennsylvania.

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So that was my first exposure of being a college student, getting out there, and participating in local marches and a very big march with Martin Luther King in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Right after graduation, I decided that it was going to be either my going to the Peace Corps or it was going to be going to Chicago. It was a very crazy thing that drew me to Chicago because of the fact that it stemmed from reading an article in the paper about a priest who was working on the west side of Chicago. He was pretty much an activist. I went up there just to see, is this something that I could be working and doing?

When I got there, he was gone. He was sent away by the cardinal because he was being such a good activist. But I stayed in Chicago and then I did get involved in what was happening. By that time, Martin Luther King had moved temporarily to Chicago and so I became a part of that whole movement within the city and

just seeing about, all of a sudden, here was segregation in a whole different way than I had ever seen it.

Chicago is just neatly, or was at that time, divided. I mean, you would go under a viaduct and all of a sudden you would be in a totally different economic community or more likely it would be a division of African Americans. At that time, not so many Mexican Americans as it is now. So that was part of my involvement.

I then decided that I needed to get into education and I did. I started out teaching in fourth grade and just going to graduate school. It just seemed that desegregation of housing, redlining of houses, all of these things kept smacking me in the face. I was in an ideal place in Chicago and so I stayed there for many, many years and was involved all of that time in education, but at the same time really trying to make education meaningful working with I think wonderful people and incredible theories where people –

I even had the opportunity with working with the Alternative Schools Network which I was very closely aligned with, of bringing **[0:13:11] [Indiscernible]** to Chicago. He came at a time where it just so happened there were incredible riots happening. We spent four days with him and the first day was practically in silence because he was committed to the fact that it was the people themselves who needed to come forth and talk, dialogue and decide what is it that they needed to do, that it was their responsibility and they needed the space to come to a sense of consciousness. That was an incredible turning point for me.

Somehow, as I continued to work in Chicago, at the same time looking at again this incredible group of diversity in front of me in the city, going into schools -- Senn High School at that time I think had students representing 176 different languages. Once you think about that, that's pretty mind-blowing. It just naturally led me into getting involved with a brand new educational movement which was global education. I was again very, very lucky to be right there at a time where lots of people were talking about this global movement.

I continued to do lots of things. One was to spend a lot of time in India. Again, just because of the organizations that I worked with and the fact that there was, for American students, very little curriculum about South Asia and so that was my beginning of going to India on a Fulbright and being able to come back and spend some time with colleagues and writing about India and creating curriculum around that.

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A lot of my students always used to say that there are athletes who have tennis elbow but I used to have curriculum elbow because I always was lugging books around trying to find the easy way for people to begin to appreciate the uniqueness of the other. And so here I am and there's lots of different episodes here but working today with the Charter for Compassion.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. Fascinating, Marilyn. Well, I'm very interested in exploring further in this call with you what similarities you see and differences you see in building a compassion movement now as opposed to the work you did with civil rights and now the innovations you've done with education and bringing education to a global scale.

Let's hear from Andrew Himes. I want to also hear from you, Andrew, a similar way about your own journey and what brought you to this work and the challenges and choices you made to now be the executive director of the Charter for Compassion International.

Andrew: Yeah. Well, I suppose my personal journey, for me, I think begins probably when I was just a young person. A child. In my early teen years, I was living – my family was a very prominent southern fundamentalist Christian family. My granddad was a man named John R. Rice who founded the newspaper called The Sword of the Lord back in Texas in 1935. He was the mentor to many younger fundamentalist preachers including Billy Graham and Jerry Falwell and Bob Jones Jr. and a thousand others.

I grew up in a family in which every single male relative I have is a Baptist preacher from the South -- uncles and my granddad, my great grandfather. My brother is a missionary to Japan. My dad was a Baptist preacher for 50 years. So the family that I grew up in in 1963 in Shelby County, Tennessee, from my perspective, I grew up in an entirely homogenous community. Utterly unlike the community that Marilyn grew up in. I only knew about white people and my white family, my white school, my white church.

And then on Monday morning in 1963, two black children came to my school and were met with a howling mob of my classmates and I was shocked. I was completely stunned by this expression of rage and hatred from people whom I had grown up with and had never really had engaged with the diversity of my community or understood that it was a more complicated world than I knew about. It was interesting that growing up in an all-white community, nonetheless, I was living in Shelby County which was a majority black county and in 1963, it was a time when all of the internal contradictions of the world that I was living in were just about to explode.

So during the 1960s then, I was first attracted by and then deeply involved in the civil rights movement. I was attending civil rights demonstrations even when I was in high school and then part of the anti-war movement. I became aware that I was part of a global movement for change, a global movement for liberation. It was reflected in countries around the world. There were national liberation struggles. There was the emergence of liberation theology in the Catholic church. There were movements in congregations and in businesses, in social organization and in schools and thousands of colleges and universities around the world. And I was part of that.

Shifting forward a lot of years then, five years ago, two important -- really extremely important -- events in my life that were catalytic for me. One was the Seeds of Compassion event here in Seattle, Washington, a massive event headlined by the Dalai Lama and by Archbishop Desmond Tutu from South Africa and by many, many other global leaders in spiritual and religious communities as well as in understanding the scientific basis and social impact of compassion.

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That event brought together over a 160,000 people in multiple events -- there were four days -- and had a profound impact on my world and the beginning of a real understanding that there was something that could be learned from and developed called the "global compassion movement" or that I'm calling the "world for global compassion movement" today.

Another thing that happened five years ago was that ted.com awarded its TED prize to Karen Armstrong, a prominent and wonderful writer on topics of religion and the history of religion and spirituality. The question for Karen was what's the dream that you have or the idea that you have that could help to transform the world? Karen's expression of her dream was the Charter for Compassion, a document that was crowd-sourced by 60,000 people on ted.com, the language of which was finalized by a group of 20 elders on the Council of Conscience from many, many different religious and spiritual traditions and then given as a gift to the world.

The Charter for Compassion was an absolutely kind of a concretizing or a catalyzing moment. Its introduction in 2009 and then the celebration a year later at the United Nations was a moment that crystallized all of the social change, all of the acts of the imagination, and the expressions of creative innovation that have helped to transform our understanding of what's possible in the world over the last 50 years since I was a 13-year-old in Millington, Tennessee and got my first glimpse of what the change that needed to happen was all about.

So the moment today that I think that we're in is a moment of time in which all of that history, all of that complexity, all of that sense of potential around the world for how people can take control of human history again and act consciously to transform our relationship with the world that we live in and our capacity to build a sustainable, thriving global community is on the map now. It's on the agenda.

Jon: Yup, yup, yup, yup. Yeah, that's beautiful to hear, Andrew, and that's the reason why this call is so relevant, to me as well, because we seem to be at this moment. I do want to hear from each of you about that because Karen's wish to implement globally the Golden Rule reflected in the Charter for Compassion. I'm curious. I mean, here we are. The technology is such a difference from what we've ever seen before. We are so connected, right? And now, just this call demonstrates the ability to -- at different time zones now, time and distance seems to disappear. We can come together and have a conversation about compassion and the movement for compassion.

I want to hear again from each of you about what you see compassion meaning in the world today and why we need compassion now. Anil, I'm curious if we could start with you again? If you hear this phrase "global compassion movement," what is compassion for you and how does it relate to movement building at this moment in time?

Anil: I think we are all witnessing the grave crisis that we have caused the Mother Earth to endure right now. You know, the way we are consuming its resources, the way we are living our lives today, we are not paying any attention to a lot. In fact, we are having our ways of doing and being on Mother Earth.

If you look at it on one hand, there is a huge amount of poverty and the population increasing a lot in countries which are more poor and if you look at the way we are utilizing resources of the Earth and the way we are wasting resources and the way we are losing a connection, so what's going on is, on one hand, the way we are damaging the environment. On the other hand, even though we are connected through technology, we don't really have that sense of human touch to say what's happening to our brothers and sisters in different parts of the world who are suffering?

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So instead of trying to find common ground by working together to save, how do we take on the challenges that we are here experiencing in the world that, on one hand, there is restive youth. In India for instance, it's the youngest nation in the world in terms of population and yet we are not able to provide education

and skills to all these youthful people who are seeing these images on the internet about a better life but their aspirations are not met with enough investment that they can get.

Instead of focusing on giving our people the best education and capacity so that they can find the life – a way of living, we are making the mistake of actually spending more and more money on defense and having strategic dialogue about weapons. So all this kind of thing which has really messed the way of living.

This sense of not being connected for the larger issues of the Mother Earth where we say we are collectively responsible, we have to urgently address the issues. We really have to begin like one family. We cannot pretend to have national borders which in many cases are development we call a technology. But if we don't experience the pain of each of us, the collective wish or the aspirations of our collective people in the planet and all the living beings and the species of the planet, then I think we are going to really – the time is just running out for the planet. And so a sense of compassion is very badly needed in terms of what we can do in terms of living more consciously. So that's how I see that.

Jon: Yeah, yeah, I know. The urgency is so great, Anil. The hope I see is that humanity is growing up and this global brain is awakening and recognizes the interconnectedness of all of us. Compassion then becomes such a powerful approach to how to think about these issues. The boundaries are artificial. They are dissolving. We are one. And it's so fabulous to have a chance to hear from you and to see the interconnectedness in the moment in time.

Marilyn, how do you treat compassion and its role in this movement, in this global compassion movement at this time and why is compassion such a compelling idea?

Marilyn: Well, I think that there are a number of things, a number of facts. One, I think that younger people have a sense of compassion whereas at a much younger age than, for example, I think maybe I did or the people of my generation. But I'm so reminded of a chance at seeing Margaret Mead at Beloit College probably very shortly before she died, and she was asked to speak about anthropology and the career for young people in anthropology. She basically said that for undergraduates there was not too much opportunity for them but they would find their way.

She wanted to talk about something that was very important to her. And that was, she wanted to work to bring seniors together with younger people. She felt that it was the creativity and compassion and empathy that young people felt for each other and for the globe and that it was their grandparents and their elders

who had the patience and they've gone through the journey to help these young people begin the process of changing the world.

I'm always struck by that. I see that with the Seeds of Compassion that happened here in Seattle, the youth ambassadors that were a part of that and what they are capable of doing and are doing today in schools. It's almost like a time of rightness. We've gone through the women's movement, the anti-war movement, we've protested, we've done all sorts of things, but the only thing that we haven't done is come together.

I think that Anil was basically talking about that. What is it right now that is driving us to be this family that he spoke of? I think that that's what the compassion movement is all about so that if I respond to a woman, Magdalena in Botswana yesterday. She wrote this most incredible plan about compassion and how she saw it in schools but most importantly in healthcare because of the HIV problem in Botswana.

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By looking at that, the possibilities that we have of my knowing that we have partners now as part of the movement that are at Harvard and are in New Zealand, and sharing her plan with those people, within 12 hours, there were hands reaching out to her. That's something that we haven't had before. We haven't had that kind of ability. Or us just having this conversation or planning sessions which I think probably each of us do each day on Skype or through other platforms that allow us to not only share ideas and have this wonderful dialogue but to act, to build partnerships, to build collaborations. I think we are so absolutely right for this. I see people of all ages right now reaching out.

I remember – you're going to have to excuse me because I keep thinking about all of these wonderful people that I've had in my life but there was a psychologist and his name was Carlson. It was so amazing because he always used to say, "You have to work with the health when you're in a school." I remember how teachers used to just rebel and he would say, "No, we have to work with the healthy people, the healthy minds because they are the ones who will take responsibility for bringing along others."

I think that's what we're looking at right now. We're working with people who have this idea that, "Hey, I'm going to go to the president of Burundi. I don't care what it takes. I'm going to get there." We need to support people at all levels of society and I think that the compassion movement is working with people who have that dream, that vision and to a certain extent, that health to help others who are not as fortunate.

Jon: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, I know. Anyone listening I hope will get the enormous opportunity that's emerging here and what we actually see happening because we've seen, at this time of profound change, to be both pushed by necessity as well as pulled by opportunity. In other words, the growing institutional collapse, systems that are in crisis, the climate disruption, the resource depletion, all of these issues are pushing us. At the same time, we are seeing enormous signs of really coming together in progress and example and with compassion being such a unifying theme and expression of what we're capable of.

I want to shift to you, Andrew, and get your take on this global compassion movement and why compassion and what you see happening now and why that's such a relevant way for us to unite as a human family.

Andrew: I think it's helpful to break down that phrase a little bit. The global compassion movement, what do we mean by that? I think first, taking the word "global," it's important to note that this needs to be a truly global movement. It needs to be geographically diverse, culturally diverse, diverse in terms of the sectors that people come from or the interests that they have. It needs to be a movement that engages people from education, from business, from congregations and spiritual communities.

It needs to involve people from government, from cities and from national governments as well. It needs to be a holistic expression of all of the diversity of the human community on the face of the Earth. It cannot just be a movement of the South or the North or the East or the West or of a particular kind of country or the expression of the imperialist face of politics and much of the 20th century that divided countries into countries with power and hegemony and other countries that were struggling, marginalized, oppressed and exploited. It has to be a global movement that engages the 100%. The 100%, not the 99%. But it needs to be a movement that encompasses, helps all of humanity to move forward.

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Secondly, the word "compassion" is extremely important. I spent a lot of years in the peace movement and one thing that was remarkable about the peace movement was how full of oppositional sentiment it was. As a member of the peace movement, I identified a set of enemies that I had to fight against. People whom I thought were responsible for war, responsible for violent conflict, either specifically or generally, in the world. In some ways, for me personally, the peace movement was an opportunity to wage war on people whom I thought of as the warmongers.

The compassion movement is really different. It's a statement that at the very heart of every single thriving human relationship, institution and society in the world and in its history, at the very heart is this core capacity that human beings have to be compassionate. Compassion is not just kind of a touchy feely, vague, abstract, nice emotion. Compassion is literally about action. The roots of the word "compassion" come to us from Latin. It meant "to suffer together with another human being."

Literally, you understand that if you are truly taking the point of view, entering into the world view and understanding the world from someone else's point of view, it's impossible for you to act in a way that's hateful, destructive or exploitative toward that person. It's impossible for you to truly be an oppressor rather than a partner if you understand the world deeply from somebody else's perspective. So compassion is about suffering with and struggling with and working together with other human beings in order to create a successful, thriving community at any level -- at a local level, at an interpersonal relationship level and also at a global level.

The word "compassion" is a transformative word. It's at the core of everything that makes us human.

The last thing that I just want to say about compassion is that one of the most eloquent and powerful descriptions of what a "compassionate city" is for example, came to me from Karen Armstrong who was the person who inspired the Charter for Compassion. Karen, when asked what is a compassionate city said a compassionate city is a deeply uncomfortable city. A compassionate city is one in which people are deeply, powerfully uncomfortable if there is any human being who goes to bed hungry at night. A compassionate city is one that is deeply uncomfortable if any child is denied the right to a deep, rich, and excellent education.

A compassionate city is one that is deeply uncomfortable if there is anyone who doesn't have a home to go to at night and who has to sleep on the streets. A compassionate city is deeply uncomfortable if there is any group of people anywhere in the world who are marginalized, subjugated, oppressed or exploited in ways that don't welcome them fully into the human community.

What we're doing is building a movement that is both deeply practical and has to express itself in measurable material ways in improving the conditions of life and the capacity for thriving of any human being on the planet. Also, a deeply resonant emotional motivation as well that, if I truly understand the point of view and the suffering of another human being, I am compelled to act on their

behalf because I understand that my own welfare is dependent, my own happiness, my own peace is dependent on the peace and the welfare and happiness of anybody else in the world.

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Jon: Yes. Yes. Beautifully said, Andrew. That interconnectedness seems to be one of the themes that so many people are waking up to. I mean, here we are. More than half the planet is under 25 years of age. So we know that this movement is inter-generational as well as cross-cultural and also this moment of time with enormous ascent of women in the role of leadership on the planet. That's why I'm curious to hear from each of you again, what role do you see for women and youth at this time and how this movement will happen? What do you think are the challenges and obstacles that we face to really allow for this next expression?

It seems like a new story is being written here that we realize that we've kind of reached the end of one story, that no longer can we continue. There's a Chinese proverb that says if we don't change our direction, we're likely to wind up where we're headed. So there seems to be a growing awareness that not only do we have all this youth and we have the power of women being recognized and the need to make this change, but what are these challenges and obstacles and what are the opportunities in youth and women leadership do you see from each of your perspective?

Anil, I'm curious to hear from you. Start there again.

Anil: Yes. You know, women have an extraordinarily powerful role to play because we have research to back this understanding that in India, when we educate women, the multiplying impact is huge so the focus on the girl child amongst the poorest of the poor. We have been involved with a large experiment in the Himalayas supporting for the last 20 years the work of the Chinmaya Organisation of Rural Development in the district of Angara and we have seen some huge transformation by focusing on the girl child. It's not just providing them good education but education, not just how to read and write but how to be. So it's a whole aspect of not just the soft skills but conscious living which has been part of education.

And so these sessions in which there are self-help groups for the women who – and we are also using microfinance. They are emphasizing a lot on education of the girl child. And then these young women grow up to be more socially responsible as groomed by self-help groups using microfinance. The multiplier impact on the community is huge and when they truly understand compassion,

and you know there is a lot of youth who are restive and restless, who have a lot of energy to do more. My spiritual teacher always used to tell us, he said the youth of this planet are not useless. They are used less. So it's a question of our engaging with their energy, mentoring them.

I notice that the young people today are far more ethical, far more compassionate and they really want to make a difference. So if we stop using the language of hopelessness, start treating them in ways which are too paternalistic and trying to tell them how to look after their lives but really create the energy and the enthusiasm and the mentoring support for them and the wisdom that we have to actually help them to use their own gallant youth, their own idealism.

So this combination of educating women in the right way, getting the youth to work, like in the School of Inspired Leadership, the average age of our students is 25 and these people come and spend a year with us. One day in a week they work with a call of their choice, and the kind of callers they are working for, whether it is the villages which are just 30 minutes away from Delhi where people are living in a miserable condition, and how our students are creating educational initiatives of them, especially with focus on the girl child. So these young people today, they have a huge amount of creativity, they have idealism, and what we need to do is really partner in a way the use of wisdom with their creativity and their idealism in making the difference.

I think investment on women and making sure that the women really take leadership and provide this kind of a bridge because you know they help us not just to step into the shoes of those who are unfortunate, but women help us and remind us by knowing that first we need to get out of our own shoes before we step into somebody else's shoes. So they are able to confront us with their own freedom and for us to live with the consequence of our action. I think the combination of women and youth, with the right kind of values, is really what I think is the power behind this large movements that we are witnessing in different parts of the world.

Jon: Yeah. Beautifully said, Anil. Beautifully said. Amazing. Marilyn, how does it look from your perspective, being a woman who's seen such tremendous changes in power sharing and the role of women in society and now this inter-generational dynamic happening?

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Marilyn: I think I'm coming at this with some mixed feelings. I mean, the reality is that women do hold our part of the sky and I think women have made tremendous strides. At the same time, we see that we have a great deal of sexism that exists

in the world. I was just listening to the BBC report on the ouster of the Australian prime minister and it has nothing to do in this case of my feelings about her politics but the horrible means that she was called and the kinds of accusations that went against her because she was a woman. So we still see that throughout the world.

I feel that as we look at this idea of compassion that it is a skill. Women I think understand compassion just because of who they are in terms of nurturing young people. I know that there are sayings that say you educate a woman and you educate an entire family. I know that that is absolutely true.

I think that as we look at the education of women and the education of children, what we're looking at are the skills that are part of compassion so that we are looking to help people understand how to be empathetic, to be kind, to be generous, to extend themselves not only to others but to have self-compassion as well so that these kinds of things that we are talking about at least in schools and in development today, I think are really at the forefront of bringing a whole other kind of maybe silent revolution to education because of the fact that so much of this needs to be modeled.

I think that teachers are beginning to understand that and there are actually organizations in business, in healthcare, and in education that really are paying attention to the fact that we really need to have service, volunteering so that the service hours that people are giving, give them outside of their own skin, their own perspective, and begin to look at alternative perspectives. That is I think one of the big things that is happening right.

I think service learning, it's been around for a while in our country and in other countries of the world but I think right now it's spiraling. I think that's what we are about. I think the compassionate movement is bringing us to this spiral that's moving us from the alpha to the omega. In the spiral, we tend to go backwards sometimes but we're really going ahead. I think that's the excitement that is really at the forefront.

I keep saying that it's going to be the younger generation who is going to help get us there and it's going to be the Anils and the Jon Ramers of the world who are going to do the mentoring so that these younger people understand the journey and that they get a lot of encouragement in that journey.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. Thank you, Marilyn. Well said. Yeah, you know a theory of change that I have often reflected on is this notion that awareness plus commitment equals change and the importance of education, the importance of making us more aware of each other and aware of the situations and aware of also the

opportunities there are. It's incredibly inspiring just last night being with generation waking up and recognizing the enormous inspiration and creativity. It's the solutions culture that exists and now us giving the resources back to this next generation to enable them.

Andrew, what's your take on the inter-generational, the power of women at this moment and the challenges and obstacles to making this movement happen at the next level? What's your read?

[0:50:04]

Andrew: Well, first I'd like to talk about the power of the feminine or what I think of as kind of a core feminine understanding when it is added as an overall perspective to the work that we're doing. In my life, much of my life and much of what I've done in my life, I've tended to think about projects that I need to do. Very specific things that I wanted to accomplish that had goals and objectives attached to them and required resources and required focused attention. I think that that's partly a characteristic of guys.

I've always thought I want to make things happen. I want to create results. I want to change the world in some specific way and I want to work hard to make that happen. In some ways, when you hear the phrase "making things happen," it's really kind of a metaphor to the factory floor that there's a specific product that comes out at the other end of the process or at the other end of manufacturing. It's specific and it's measurable, it's grounded in the way that business tends to think about the world.

I have a career in business and been working for a technology company for years and what I've come to understand more recently I think within the last several years is much more of a feminine understanding of how change happens and a much more organic and holistic understanding of how social change happens.

It's the metaphor of the garden rather than the metaphor of the factory. The metaphor of the garden is it assumes that everything that we have to change the world, everything that we have to save humanity, everything that we have to knit the fabric of sustainability and thriving for human communities, we already have. We have everything that we need and what we need to do is understand how to help the positive ways that human beings naturally interact with the world around us, how to give space to things that want to grow.

So the metaphor of the garden is that we've got the sunshine and we've got the fresh air and we've got the water and we've got the nutrients and the soil and our job is to help the natural processes that are already at work come to life. I

identify that as a feminine insight because I think it's about generativity rather than about working with material forces to create a measurable impact. It's about how do we understand that the world works naturally according to the inspiration of compassion.

Our job is simply not to create a movement for compassion but instead to ask a question. And the question that we ask is what is compassion asking of us? It's this notion that we're responding to the way that the world wants to behave and wants to work rather than trying to create something artificially.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. You could sense we are on the cusp of some new level of human maturity and partnership and freedom. There's such access to such wisdom and understanding. I love the shift that's happened from the survival of the fittest to the survival of the kindest and the growing awareness that we do have what we need. It's now a question of how do we share power with each other and how do we fill the relationships with each other that turn what we have into what we need to allow for this garden to really bloom.

I want to move to more of an action focus with us. Each of you are involved in remarkable projects. They're very practical. I just want to speak to the listener here who may be listening in on this conversation say, "Okay, now how do I find out more about each of the work that you're doing?" with the hope that this call will inspire and lead to more connections and more actions on the part of the people who had a chance to hear your voices.

[0:55:21]

So, Anil, tell us more about the School of Inspired Leadership and how people can find out more and get involved. What do you see is the opportunity for them? This is a chance to please shamelessly promote the work you're doing because it's remarkable. I want people to know about it.

Anil: The School of Inspired Leadership did an experiment in higher education where we have created over the last five years an equal system of conscious businesses so that our 50 corporations which are enrolled with us in one way or the other into a consortium. We have three vehicles for this partnership with corporations. One is our full-time one-year graduate program in inspired leadership in which they help us to design curriculum, they give us opportunities to our students to intern with them, they come and teach kids studies, and they also hire out of our school. So that's one sort of format for the full-time one-year program.

For emerging leaders of these companies, there is a program that we bring them together once in a quarter for a week in a residential format in which again, the whole curriculum is jointly designed. We do that.

We run a global leadership program in three continents, in North America, in Europe and emerging markets in which people spend -- People at the senior-most level who are in the C suite, they come together for three weeks over nine months.

In all these three formats, there is a common approach on a framework of inspired leadership which is around five pillars. The foundation for that is mindfulness and to say first is you have to become deeply self-aware, you have to be fully present, you have to really understand the essence of who you are and just be. So that's the foundation and we teach that through a combination of meditation and yoga and breathing practices to make people develop that essence of mindfulness to get them in touch with their own inner being.

And then there is the practice of compassion in which, in all our programs, there is a social innovation project that leaders engage with. In that, especially in the full-time program, once a week for a full day, they work on a cause for the not-for-profit organization and it's a virtuous partnership where the business leader is a mentor to this team, that the students work with the civic society and sometimes the local government also gets involved. This happens right through the one year so people can make a difference. Many of our alumni are still engaged with these causes long after they have graduated from our school.

Then there is the practice of ethics in which we simulate learning through theater. So we use theater a lot to help people to simulate different conditions and look at different scenarios to understand how the world would be different.

And then there is the practice of diversity in which we make people learn from one another, use the power of multiple intelligences, understand how to get the best out of each of us.

Finally, the whole thing in action terms, the practical sustainability where they really have a way of measuring about the way they are living their own lives and their businesses to contribute to a more sustainable world.

So we have a very practical framework which is converting into curriculum, the young people in their 20s to the high potential people in their 30s and then to the global leaders in their late 40s or early 50s.

Besides this, we also do and we have a common framework across all formats which is coaching one-on-one with each of the leaders. So people are coaching through both life planning and looking at a lot of our work around self-leadership to say truly pay attention to who you are, understand that you have come to this planet for a purpose, know that you have been given gifts in line with your purpose, and learn to leverage your gifts towards your purpose. The higher the purpose, the more the journey towards inner peace and happiness.

[1:00:01]

So we have this whole way of being and so we say all forms of education in the School of Inspired Leadership are a good combination of a knowing, a doing, and being. And that's how we connect all this.

Jon: Ah. Beautiful, beautiful. The web address is soilindia.net is where our listeners can go to find out more. It sounds like no matter where you are, you can participate with SOIL India and you have programs that are global. This is a global expression of education as I understand.

Anil: Yes. Every **[1:00:39] [Indiscernible]** are in California for instance. So yes, we are in three continents so our programs carry us to three continents. That's right.

Jon: Okay. Yeah, yeah. Very good. Very good. When I hear about those five pillars, it reminds me the good fortune I had to meet Chief Phil Lane Jr. Hereditary chief. There are 16 guiding principles, 40 years of consultation by indigenous leaders and very similar and again, this kind of seems to be a wisdom that we all share though we may say it different ways.

The summary statement of that starting from within, working in a circle in a sacred manner, we heal and develop ourselves, our relationships in the world. That came to mind as I listened to the five pillars there. There seems to be again this growing recognition of this timeless wisdom that so many different cultures and traditions can teach us. It's really a privilege and honor to hear from the work you're doing and it's so good to see us connected like this.

Marilyn, I want to hear more about the charter and the work that you're doing with the charter and how people that are listening could engage with us and be a part of this movement. They already obviously are a part of it but how they could take another step down the path and get more involved.

Marilyn: Well, I think that one of the ways that we talk about the work of the charter is that we are about movement building and it happens that it is international movement building. We look at our role of merely helping people to move

forward in their own local organizing and that's at various different levels so that we reach out to cities. I believe that Andrew will talk about cities.

We do the same with businesses so we need to make certain that an organization like SOIL becomes a partner because as people contact us in various places in the world where they might not have an opportunity to what is happening with a partner like SOIL, then we can put them in touch with them. We offer that kind of collaboration and that type of partnership building and we do it in a number of different ways so that schools become partners as well as businesses, healthcare organizations, safe space groups.

They come and through the partnership, they let us know who they are and what they're about and then they each get a page on our website and they're linked directly back to their websites. At the same time, as new partners come together, we have partner calls, we have opportunities on Facebook with a page for partners so that there can be an ongoing dialogue.

A partner might say, "This is a new idea that I have. I want to share it." Or another partner might come along, for example a media center group of young people in Belgrade right now who are partners who are saying, "Here's our next steps. What do you think? Do you want to be involved in the projects that we're doing?" Another partner, Sleep Tight Kids, going out there and making certain that homeless children and children who just don't have clothing and an opportunity to have the comforts of being cared for are sharing their ideas so that other partners get involved across the line.

It's almost like a little bit like saying, "Geez, here is —" Jon, I'm going to lean on you. "Here's the compassion game," and the compassion game is to find and say that across all of our partner lines, we are going to commit to making certain that we're going to make the lives of homeless people in our community a little bit better. We are here to help people in their own particular organizing, creating their own goals, their own action plans and we're there to support. We're there to offer tools along the journey that people might need.

[1:05:25]

We're constantly evolving and as we talked earlier, we rely very heavily on the internet and on these kinds of communications and conference calls, the Skype opportunities. Our goal is to bring people together to help one another.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. Fabulous, Marilyn. Thank you for the good work you're doing. Yes, Andrew, please elaborate more on the role that you see the charter playing and the opportunities that our listeners can seize, engage with the charter.

Andrew: Let me give you a little, tiny bit more background on the charter and then what's happening today. The charter, I want to just reiterate, it's a document that transcends religious and ideological and national differences. I'd actually like to read two short paragraphs. The first and the last paragraphs from the Charter for Compassion. They give you a really strong sense of what this is all about and how this is such an important framing or founding document for the global movement for compassion.

The Charter for Compassion, it says: "The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the center of our world and put another there, and to honor the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody without exception with absolute justice, equity and respect."

The final paragraph: "We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in the principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological, and religious boundaries. Borne of our deep interconnectedness, our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It's the path to enlightenment. It's indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community."

So that's a transformational document. It changes the nature of any conversation about who we are as human beings and what we need to do in order to live successfully on this planet. I want to point out or report that just a couple of days ago, an amazing event took place at the United States Conference of Mayors' meeting in Las Vegas, Nevada. There were over 1,300 mayors from every major city in the country. Every city in the United States with over 30,000 population were represented there. The mayor of Louisville, Kentucky presented a resolution to have the United States Conference of Mayors endorse the international compassionate cities campaign. I'd like to read just a couple of sentences from the words of the resolution.

"The United States Conference of Mayors applaud the cities who adopted compassion as a key policy for their communities, recommend that other cities explore the use of compassion as a key component to achieve core objectives in their communities. The U.S. Conference will provide future opportunities for exploration and discussion among mayors on the role of compassion as an effective policy for their communities and will result in the development of

policies, procedures, tactics, and practical guidance on the integration of compassion and programs to address the holistic wellness of communities especially as it relates to those most at risk."

I think what we're seeing is the eruption, the flourishing of an extraordinary movement taking place in hundreds of cities around the world, in the lives of millions of people around the world who are waking up to what compassion will enable us to do if we really understand and carefully listen to what compassion is asking of us.

[1:10:19]

The opportunity for everybody on this call and around the world is join the movement, be part of this self-conscious, intentional movement to bring compassion into all of our lives and to enable all of us to connect with each other consciously and intentionally in the way that we already are without even understanding it. So go to the Charter for Compassion website. It's charterforcompression.org.

I'd like to ask you to do two things. One is there's a little button on the front page of the website that says "Sign the Charter" so please sign the Charter for Compassion on the website. Secondly, on the front page of the website, there's a little box that says "Take Action" and there's a big green button that says "Compassionate Action." Click on that button. Come to the Compassionate Action website and explore how you can get involved as someone who's organizing a campaign in a city or someone who's part of a church or a school or a mosque, a synagogue, a temple, someone who's part of a business who wants to explore what compassion means in your business or in your social service agency or other organization. Be part of the movement. Step forward to join with millions of others around the world who are doing this.

Jon: Yeah, yeah. There's no doubt that this is happening. There is an awakening. We're remembering an awakening and compassion as an inspiration for all of us. The compassionate cities movement is a beautiful example of that. Seattle was the first to affirm the charter. There's now many, many cities that's following. We actually will have the honorable mayor of Louisville, Greg Fischer, on the next panel that's going to be happening here on the Summer of Peace.

In addition, it was the mayor of Louisville who challenged us here in Seattle and that led to the birth of the compassion games, the survival of the kindest. In answer to the question, people say, "Okay, that's a nice thing, to be a city of compassion. How do you really measure that? How do you really turn that into action on the ground?" The games, which happen from September 11 to

September to 21 are we've called a "coopetition." We're striving together. We're not competing against, we're competing with and we're measuring the number of volunteers, the hours of community service, the dollars raised from non-profits, the number of people served.

I encourage anyone who's listening who's interested to get involved. You can work to make your community a compassionate community. You can participate in the games. You can get the kind of education that we're talking about at the School of Inspired Leadership. This is happening. There's no doubt. It's a privilege to be a part of this conversation and to make it known.

The last topic, and then we're going to close on this, I want to give each of you just a chance to speak to this urgent challenge. It's clear that we all see we're called and we need to face the challenge of our time – the climate change, the institutional failures, all of that. But there's also the hope that we can face and the choices that we must make at this time in order to act.

I want to give each of you a chance to share some closing thoughts on what our listeners can and should do from your perspective and how they can be a part of helping to grow this movement. I'm starting with you, Anil.

Anil: Compassion, when it arises in our hearts, it's like a daily practice so when I get up in the morning and I say, "Thank you. I have another day of life within me," how can I honor that by making a difference throughout the day in a conscious way in my very being so right from the way I speak to others to the opportunities I have to take responsibility, to doing that and throughout the day being conscious of that.

When I go to bed in the night to say, "What do I have a sense of gratitude for and what did I do today to rise in my own eyes?" You know, my teacher would say, "Rise in love and you will discover extraordinary talent and you are very inspired by a higher purpose. You will get the joy of living that way."

I think it begins with a personal practice. It begins in meditation of looking at and being the observer of your own life and getting your inner witness to see your own self through a personal practice. And then creating a network of the good. So whatever work we are doing, whether it's in business, it's not for profit, in government, in our community, creating a virtual and virtuous network and also a real network of people -- There are so many people wanting to have this kind of conversation because it helps you to connect in very special ways.

[1:15:21]

Finally, always picking up one specific cause that you and your family and your community and your organization as what's uppermost in mind which speaks to this feeling of compassion because it's so much needed. So I will say right from a personal reflection every day and a personal habit to picking up one cause that fully matters to you to make the world a little bit better than what you found it.

And then we are creating a virtuous network and partnership and alliances around that, providing the way to go because the moment we say we are in partnership with all kinds of wonderful people like all of you have shown up in my life, you know, thanks, Jon, and thanks to all other friends. So I think the moment we get connected like that, wonderful gifts will arrive in our lives and I think we would then be able to feel that we do have the opportunity of coming together and taking responsibility and talking about this.

Jon: Yeah. Very beautiful. Very wise. Thanks, Anil. It's so good. Remember, everyone, it's soilindia.net to find out more about the School of Inspired Leadership and the work that Anil Sachdev has been doing in India and around the world.

Marilyn, how about some closing words from you?

Marilyn: I think I'm going to center on education. Right now, we have about 72 partners in the charter with educational interests. I think that the important thing is just that for schools to consider what does it mean to be compassionate. It doesn't mean that they're going to add some new subjects although that might be nice, but the idea about compassion is to begin to model it through the administrators, through teachers to help parents understand what it is to raise a compassionate child, to have children themselves and youth at all ages to begin to honor cooperation in a classroom.

There's a wonderful program in Canada called Roots of Empathy where parents, usually mothers, bring very young babies into a classroom and young children in first grade, second, third grade get an opportunity to observe and interact with these young children. It's been proven that just that association, I mean, such a small amount of difference in age, someone who might be six months versus somebody who might be five or six years old, but that opportunity to look and interact and to a certain extent begin to understand what it means to take care of another is so important.

I think that for people who are in education out there, we have wonderful schools at the elementary level, middle school and we have compassionate colleges and universities. We work with them to create action plans that will move them in new directions. I think that's what I want to speak to. We have those same kinds of programs in our other sectors of business and healthcare

and certainly in safe space organizations, churches, synagogues and mosques, and certainly again in cities. But I think for now, with my interest, it's grounded very solidly in education.

Jon: Very good. Thank you, Marilyn. That's the charterforcompassion.org. And now let's hear the closing words from its executive director Andrew Himes.

Andrew: I just have a few words and they're not my words. I want to borrow some words from somebody else.

The Dalai Lama years ago was asked, how can somebody be happy? What's the recipe for happiness? And the Dalai Lama said, "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion." Thanks for listing us, Jon.

Jon: Oh, for sure. No, thank you, Andrew. That's Andrew Himes, Marilyn Turkovich, and Anil Sachdev. We've been on this conversation about the global compassion movement on the Summer of Peace on The Shift Network. I'm grateful to everybody who's been on this call with us and those of you who spoke and those of you who listened.

Those of you who listened, don't stay silent. We want to hear from you. There's so many opportunities to get involved. Let us all come together to grow this global compassion movement. This is Jon Ramer for The Shift Network saying bye for now.

[1:20:32] End of Audio

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