

Kiran Khalap: Navigating Business, Creativity and Spirituality by Awakin Talks Editors

Where do business and spirituality meet? How does one use creativity to unite? How might we walk our unique path in solving problems outside and dissolving the ego inside?

A weekday brand-consultant, a weekend rock-climber, author during nights and a lifetime seeker of Truth -- Kiran Khalap's journey is a striking example of a life of emergence which defies linear planning.

At the early age of 17, when most are concerned about grades and friends, Kiran's strongest yearning was "to know the Truth". He read most contemporary philosophers and ancient scriptures, but finally it was J Krishnamurti's words which changed his life. In the attempts of paying forward his gratitude and carry forward JK's vision, Kiran after finishing graduation joined Rajghat Besant School, in Varanasi, as a teacher. In those 4 years, he taught who he was, with no sense of hierarchy and found himself learning and evolving in the process.

Parents' illness brought him back to Mumbai, and with his natural creative gifts in writing and storytelling, he joined the advertising industry. A few years later, he co-founded and continues to lead a brand consulting firm "chlorophyll" which has worked with hundreds of brands, including the world's largest biometric identity brand Aadhar. chlorophyll (in lowercase), a well respected agency, is a home to questioning, ideation and creative tinkering. In an industry marked by hypercompetition and excesses, one of its unique, very counterintuitive principles is to "not draw attention towards itself". Yet paradoxically, it has emerged as one of most revered organizations in the Industry delivering professional excellence along with deep integrity. From 10-min meditation sits in weekly meetings, to letting go top clients for employees' wellness - metrics of responsibility and compassion take precedence over net profits.

A disciplined practitioner of yoga and Vipassana since decades, Kiran believes that society changes only when individuals change. "And the person who I have the best shot at changing is myself" he says. Having spent more than 3 decades in a creative profession, Kiran has come to believe that anything which unites us is creativity and anything which divides is destruction - "To create is to unite," is his favourite catch-phrase which he strives to live by at all levels of mind, body and spirit.

True to his message, Kiran is always on lookout for opportunities to contribute, to pay-forward and to unite, whatever the context may be. He and his friends were instrumental in hosting Rock Climbing (Bouldering) World Cup in India in 2016 and 2017 with little government or corporate funding or support. Both years, India got voted as the best venue globally. His wife Rajashree is a profound animal lover. Her field work couple with Kiran's tech innovations led a wildlife researcher, Javed to discover many new

species of spiders. Little did they know, that moved by gratitude Javed would name two species after them- *Thelcticopis kirankhalapi* and *paraplectana rajashree*. :) He also serves on the advisory board of Arpan, an NGO working towards freedom from child sexual abuse and Protsahan, an NGO that deploys creativity as a tool for healing for abused adolescent girls.

Upon his return from Varanasi, seeing absence of Krishnaji's book in college libraries, he initiated a program to buy the books and gifted it to many college libraries. Upon hearing of any difficulty or hardship faced by any employee, he is the first one to extend a helping hand and a caring shoulder. Perhaps chlorophyll is one of the rare organizations which lists all its past employees on the website, undoubtedly a teal organization. His books are his excuse to share his life learnings with the community and despite handling 4 jobs, he does his best to make himself available as a friend and a mentor to young minds.

For more inspiration, join this weekend's Awakin Talk with Kiran. More details and RSVP info [here](#).

Kiran will be in conversation with Rohit Rajgarhia. Rohit is an alumnus of IIM Bangalore, and has worked deeply in the India's internet economy as an investment banker before he stepped out of corporate career to explore a life of simplicity and volunteerism.