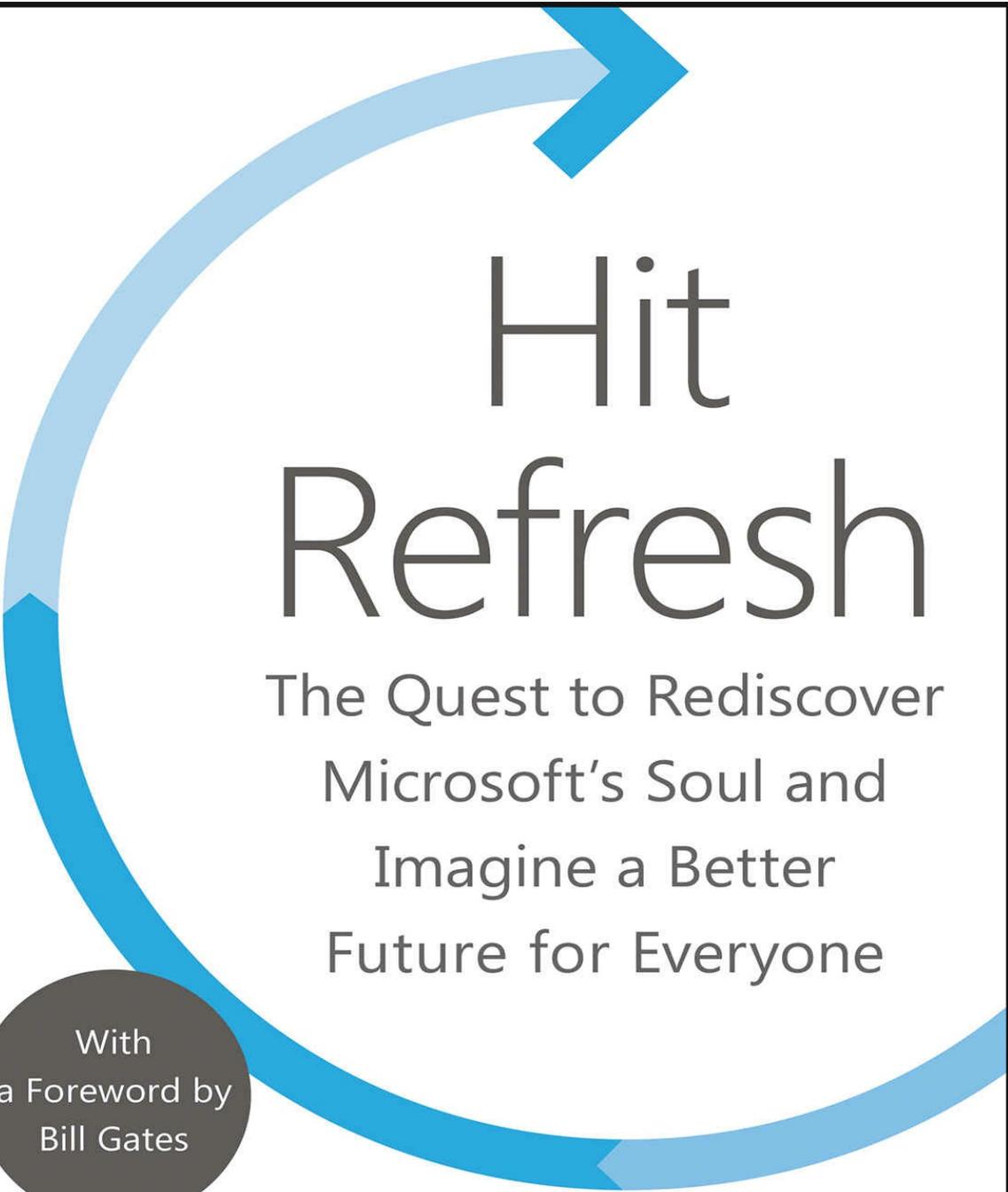# Hit Refresh

The Quest to Rediscover
Microsoft's Soul and
Imagine a Better
Future for Everyone

With
a Foreword by
Bill Gates

Satya Nadella

Microsoft's CEO, with Greg Shaw and Jill Tracie Nichols

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Photo

On the morning of February 4, 2014, I was introduced to employees as Microsoft's third CEO alongside Bill Gates and Steve Ballmer, the only CEOs in Microsoft's forty-year history.

Dedication

To the two families that have shaped my life: Anu, our parents and our children; and my Microsoft family

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Foreword

By Bill Gates

I've known Satya Nadella for more than twenty years. I got to know him in the mid-nineties, when I was CEO of Microsoft and he was working on our server software, which was just taking off at the time. We took a long-term approach to building the business, which had two benefits: It gave the company another growth engine, and it fostered many of the new leaders who run Microsoft today, including Satya.

Later I worked really intensely with him when he moved over to run our efforts to build a world-class search engine. We had fallen behind Google, and our original search team had moved on. Satya was part of the group that came in to turn things around. He was humble, forward-looking, and pragmatic. He raised smart questions about our strategy. And he worked well with the hard-core engineers.

So it was no surprise to me that once Satya became Microsoft's CEO, he immediately put his mark on the company. As the title of this book implies, he didn't completely break with the past—when you hit refresh on your browser, some of what's on the page stays the same. But under Satya's leadership, Microsoft has been able to transition away from a purely Windows-centric approach. He led the adoption of a bold new mission for the company. He is part of a constant conversation, reaching out to customers, top researchers, and executives. And, most crucially, he is making big bets on a few key technologies, like artificial intelligence and cloud computing, where Microsoft will differentiate itself.

It is a smart approach not just for Microsoft, but for any company that wants to succeed in the digital age. The computing industry has never been more complex. Today lots of big companies besides Microsoft are doing innovative work—Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, and others. There are cutting-edge

users all around the world, not just in the United States. The PC is no longer the only computing device, or even the main one, that most users interact with.

Despite all this rapid change in the computing industry, we are still at the beginning of the digital revolution. Take artificial intelligence (AI) as an example. Think of all the time we spend manually organizing and performing mundane activities, from scheduling meetings to paying the bills. In the future, an AI agent will know that you are at work and have ten minutes free, and then help you accomplish something that is high on your to-do list. AI is on the verge of making our lives more productive and creative.

Innovation will improve many other areas of life too. It's the biggest piece of my work with the Gates Foundation, which is focused on reducing the world's worst inequities. Digital tracking tools and genetic sequencing are helping us get achingly close to eradicating polio, which would be just the second human disease ever wiped out. In Kenya, Tanzania, and other countries, digital money is letting low-income users save, borrow, and transfer funds like never before. In classrooms across the United States, personalized-learning software allows students to move at their own pace and zero in on the skills they most need to improve.

Of course, with every new technology, there are challenges. How do we help people whose jobs are replaced by AI agents and robots? Will users trust their AI agent with all their information? If an agent could advise you on your work style, would you want it to?

That is what makes books like *Hit Refresh* so valuable. Satya has charted a course for making the most of the opportunities created by technology while also facing up to the hard questions. And he offers his own fascinating personal story, more literary quotations than you might expect, and even a few lessons from his beloved game of cricket.

We should all be optimistic about what's to come. The world is getting better, and progress is coming faster than ever. This book is a thoughtful guide to an exciting, challenging future.

Chapter 1
From Hyderabad to Redmond
How Karl Marx, a Sanskrit Scholar, and a Cricket Hero Shaped My Boyhood

I joined Microsoft in 1992 because I wanted to work for a company filled with people who believed they were on a mission to change the world. That was twenty-five years ago, and I've never regretted it. Microsoft authored the PC Revolution, and our success—rivaled perhaps only by IBM in a previous generation—is legendary. But after years of outdistancing all of our competitors, something was changing—and not for the better. Innovation was being replaced by bureaucracy. Teamwork was being replaced by internal politics. We were falling behind.

In the midst of these troubled times, a cartoonist drew the Microsoft organization chart as warring gangs, each pointing a gun at another. The humorist's message was impossible to ignore. As a twenty-four-year veteran of Microsoft, a consummate insider, the caricature really bothered me. But what upset me more was that our own people just accepted it. Sure, I had experienced some of that disharmony in my various roles. But I never saw it as insolvable. So when I was named Microsoft's third CEO in February 2014, I told employees that renewing our company's culture would be my highest priority. I told them I was committed to ruthlessly removing barriers to innovation so we could get back to what we all joined the company to do—to make a difference in the world. Microsoft has always been at its best when it connects personal passion to a broader purpose: Windows, Office, Xbox, Surface, our servers, and the Microsoft Cloud—all of these products have become digital platforms upon which individuals and organizations can build their own dreams. These were lofty achievements, and I knew that we were

capable of still more, and that employees were hungry to do more. Those were the instincts and the values I wanted Microsoft's culture to embrace.

Not long into my tenure as CEO, I decided to experiment with one of the most important meetings I lead. Each week my senior leadership team (SLT) meets to review, brainstorm, and wrestle with big opportunities and difficult decisions. The SLT is made up of some very talented people—engineers, researchers, managers, and marketers. It's a diverse group of men and women from a variety of backgrounds who have come to Microsoft because they love technology and they believe their work can make a difference.

At the time, it included people like Peggy Johnson, a former engineer in GE's military electronics division and Qualcomm executive, who now heads business development. Kathleen Hogan, a former Oracle applications developer who now leads human resources and is my partner in transforming our culture. Kurt Delbene, a veteran Microsoft leader who left the company to help fix Healthcare.gov during the Obama administration and returned to lead strategy. Qi Lu, who spent ten years at Yahoo and ran our applications and services business—he held twenty U.S. patents. Our CFO, Amy Hood, was an investment banker at Goldman Sachs. Brad Smith, president of the company and chief legal officer, was a partner at Covington and Burling—remembered to this day as the *first* attorney in the nearly century-old firm to insist as a condition of his employment in 1986 that he have a PC on his desk. Scott Guthrie, who took over from me as leader of our cloud and enterprise business, joined Microsoft right out of Duke University. Coincidentally, Terry Myerson, our Windows and Devices chief, also graduated from Duke before he founded Intersé—one of the first Web software companies. Chris Capossela, our chief marketing officer, who grew up in a family-run Italian restaurant in the North End of Boston, and joined Microsoft right out of Harvard College the year before I joined. Kevin Turner, a former Wal-Mart executive, who was chief operating officer and led worldwide sales. Harry Shum, who leads Microsoft's celebrated Artificial Intelligence and Research Group operation, received his PhD in robotics from Carnegie Mellon and is one of the world's authorities on computer vision and graphics.

I had been a member of the SLT myself when Steve Ballmer was CEO, and, while I admired every member of our team, I felt that we needed to deepen our understanding of one another—to delve into what really makes each of us tick —and to connect our personal philosophies to our jobs as leaders of the company. I knew that if we dropped those proverbial guns and channeled that

collective IQ and energy into a refreshed mission, we could get back to the dream that first inspired Bill and Paul—democratizing leading-edge computer technology.

Just before I was named CEO, our home football team—the Seattle Seahawks—had just won the Super Bowl, and many of us found inspiration in their story. The Seahawks coach, Pete Carroll, had caught my attention with the hiring of psychologist Michael Gervais, who specializes in mindfulness training to achieve high-level performance. It may sound like Kumbaya, but it's far from it. Dr. Gervais worked with the Seahawks to fully engage the minds of players and coaches to achieve excellence on the field and off. Like athletes, we all navigate our own high-stakes environments, and I thought our team could learn something from Dr. Gervais's approach.

Early one Friday morning the SLT assembled. Only this time it was not in our staid, executive boardroom. Instead we gathered in a more relaxed space on the far-side of campus, one frequented by software and game developers. It was open, airy, and unpretentious. Gone were the usual tables and chairs. There was no space to set up computers to monitor never-ending emails and newsfeeds. Our phones were put away—jammed into pants pockets, bags, and backpacks. Instead we sat on comfortable couches in a large circle. There was no place to hide. I opened the meeting by asking everyone to suspend judgment and try to stay in the moment. I was hopeful, but I was also somewhat anxious.

For the first exercise Dr. Gervais asked us if we were interested in having an extraordinary individual experience. We all nodded yes. Then he moved on and asked for a volunteer to stand up. Only no one did, and it was very quiet and very awkward for a moment. Then our CFO, Amy Hood, jumped up to volunteer and was subsequently challenged to recite the alphabet, interspersing every letter with a number—A1B2C3 and so forth. But Dr. Gervais was curious: Why wouldn't everyone jump up? Wasn't this a high-performing group? Didn't everyone just say they wanted to do something extraordinary? With no phones or PCs to look at, we looked down at our shoes or shot a nervous smile to colleagues. The answers were hard to pull out, even though they were just beneath the surface. Fear: of being ridiculed; of failing; of not looking like the smartest person in the room. And arrogance: I am too important for these games. "What a stupid question," we had grown used to hearing.

But Dr. Gervais was encouraging. People began to breathe more easily and to laugh a little. Outside, the grayness of the morning brightened beneath the

summer sun and one by one we all spoke.

We shared our personal passions and philosophies. We were asked to reflect on who we are, both in our home lives and at work. How do we connect our work persona with our life persona? People talked about spirituality, their Catholic roots, their study of Confucian teachings, they shared their struggles as parents and their unending dedication to making products that people love to use for work and entertainment. As I listened, I realized that in all of my years at Microsoft this was the first time I'd heard my colleagues talk about themselves, not exclusively about business matters. Looking around the room, I even saw a few teary eyes.

When it came my turn, I drew on a deep well of emotion and began to speak. I had been thinking about my life—my parents, my wife and children, my work. It had been a long journey to this point. My mind went back to earlier days: as a child in India, as a young man immigrating to this country, as a husband and the father of a child with special needs, as an engineer designing technologies that reach billions of people worldwide, and, yes, even as an obsessed cricket fan who long ago dreamed of being a professional player. All these parts of me came together in this new role, a role that would call upon all of my passions, skills, and values—just as our challenges would call upon everyone else in the room that day and everyone else who worked at Microsoft.

I told them that we spend far too much time at work for it not to have deep meaning. If we can connect what we stand for as individuals with what this company is capable of, there is very little we can't accomplish. For as long as I can remember, I've always had a hunger to learn—whether it be from a line of poetry, from a conversation with a friend, or from a lesson with a teacher. My personal philosophy and my passion, developed over time and through exposure to many different experiences, is to connect new ideas with a growing sense of empathy for other people. Ideas excite me. Empathy grounds and centers me.

Ironically, it was a lack of empathy that nearly cost me the chance to join Microsoft as a young man some twenty years before. Looking back to my own interview process decades ago, I remember that after a full day of interviews with various engineering leaders who tested my fortitude and my intellectual chops, I met Richard Tait—an up-and-coming manager who went on to found Cranium games. Richard didn't give me an engineering problem to solve on the whiteboard or a complex coding scenario to talk through. He didn't grill me on my prior experiences or educational pedigree. He had one simple question.

"Imagine you see a baby laying in the street, and the baby is crying. What do you do?" he asked.

"You call 911," I replied without much forethought.

Richard walked me out of his office, put his arm around me, and said, "You need some empathy, man. If a baby is laying on a street crying, pick up the baby."

Somehow, I got the job anyway, but Richard's words have remained with me to this day. Little did I know then that I would soon learn empathy in a deeply personal way.

It was just a few short years later that our first child, Zain, was born. My wife, Anu, and I are our parents' only children, and so you can imagine there had been much anticipation of Zain's birth. With help from her mom, Anu had been busily equipping the house for a new happy and healthy baby. Our preoccupations were more centered around how quickly Anu might return to her burgeoning career as an architect from maternity leave. Like any parent, we thought about how our weekends and vacations would change when we turned parents.

One night, during the thirty-sixth week of her pregnancy, Anu noticed that the baby was not moving as much as she was accustomed to. So we went to the emergency room of a local hospital in Bellevue. We thought it would be just a routine checkup, little more than new parent anxiety. In fact, I distinctly remember feeling annoyed by the wait times we experienced in the emergency room. But upon examination, the doctors were alarmed enough to order an emergency cesarean section. Zain was born at 11:29 p.m. on August 13, 1996, all of three pounds. He did not cry.

Zain was transported from the hospital in Bellevue across Lake Washington to Seattle Children's Hospital with its state-of-the-art Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Anu began her recovery from the difficult birth. I spent the night with her in the hospital and immediately went to see Zain the next morning. Little did I know then how profoundly our lives would change. Over the course of the next couple of years we learned more about the damage caused by asphyxia *in utero*, and how Zain would require a wheelchair and be reliant on us because of severe cerebral palsy. I was devastated. But mostly I was sad for how things turned out for me and Anu. Thankfully, Anu helped me to understand that it was not about what happened to me. It was about deeply understanding what had happened to Zain, and developing empathy for his pain and his circumstances while accepting our responsibility as his parents.

Being a husband and a father has taken me on an emotional journey. It has helped me develop a deeper understanding of people of all abilities and of what love and human ingenuity can accomplish. As part of this journey I also discovered the teachings of India's most famous son—Gautama Buddha. I am not particularly religious, but I was searching and I was curious why so few people in India have been followers of Buddha despite his origins. I discovered Buddha did not set out to found a world religion. He set out to understand why one suffers. I learned that only through living life's ups and downs can you develop empathy; that in order not to suffer, or at least not to suffer so much, one must become comfortable with impermanence. I distinctly remember how much the "permanence" of Zain's condition bothered me in the early years of his life. However, things are always changing. If you could understand impermanence deeply, you would develop more equanimity. You would not get too excited about either the ups or downs of life. And only then would you be ready to develop that deeper sense of empathy and compassion for everything around you. The computer scientist in me loved this compact instruction set for life.

Don't get me wrong. I am anything but perfect and for sure not on the verge of achieving enlightenment or nirvana. It's just that life's experience has helped me build a growing sense of empathy for an ever-widening circle of people. I have empathy for people with disabilities. I have empathy for people trying to make a living from the inner cities and the Rust Belt to the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. I have empathy for small business owners working to succeed. I have empathy for any person targeted with violence and hate because of the color of his or her skin, what they believe, or who they love. My passion is to put empathy at the center of everything I pursue—from the products we launch, to the new markets we enter, to the employees, customers, and partners we work with.

Of course, as a technologist, I have seen how computing can play a crucial role in improving lives. At home, Zain's speech therapist worked with three high school students to build a Windows app for Zain to control his own music. Zain loves music and has wide-ranging tastes spanning eras, genres, and artists. He likes everything from Leonard Cohen to Abba to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and wanted to be able to flip through these artists, filling his room with whatever music suited him at any given moment. The problem was he couldn't control the music on his own—he always had to wait for help, which can be frustrating for him and us. Three high school students studying computer

science heard of this problem and wanted to help. Now Zain has a sensor on the side of his wheelchair that he can easily tap his head against to flip through his music collection. What freedom and happiness the empathy of three teenagers has brought to my son.

That same empathy has inspired me at work. Back in our leadership team meeting, to wrap up my discussion, I shared the story of a project we had just completed at Microsoft. Empathy, coupled with new ideas, had helped to create eye-gaze tracking technology, a breakthrough natural user interface that assists people with ALS (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease) and cerebral palsy to have more independence. The idea emerged from the company's first-ever employee hackathon, a hotbed of creativity and dreams. One of the hackathon teams had developed empathy by spending time with Steve Gleason, a former NFL player whose ALS confines him to a wheelchair. Like my son, Steve now uses personal computing technology to improve his daily life. Believe me, I know what this technology will mean for Steve, for millions around the world, and for my son at home.

Our roles on the SLT started to change that day. Each leader was no longer solely employed by Microsoft, they had tapped into a higher calling—to employ Microsoft in pursuit of their personal passions to empower others. It was an emotional and exhausting day, but it set a new tone and put in motion a more unified leadership team. At the end of the day, we all came to the same stark realization: No one leader, no one group, and no one CEO would be the hero of Microsoft's renewal. If there was to be a renewal, it would take all of us and all parts of each of us. Cultural transformation would be slow and trying before it would be rewarding.

* * *

This is a book about transformation—one that is taking place today inside me and inside of our company, driven by a sense of empathy and a desire to empower others. But most important, it's about the change coming in every life as we witness the most transformative wave of technology yet—one that will include artificial intelligence, mixed reality, and quantum computing. It's about how people, organizations, and societies can and must transform—*hit refresh*—in their persistent quest for new energy, new ideas, relevance, and renewal. At the core, it's about us humans and the unique quality we call empathy, which will become ever more valuable in a world where the torrent of technology will disrupt the status quo like never before. The mystical Austrian poet Rainer

Maria Rilke once wrote that "the future enters into us, in order to transform itself in us, long before it happens." As much as elegant computer code for machines, existential poetry can illuminate and instruct us. Speaking to us from another century, Rilke is saying that what lies ahead is very much within us, determined by the course each of us takes today. That course, those decisions, is what I've set out to describe.

In these pages, you will follow three distinct storylines. First, as prologue, I'll share my own transformation moving from India to my new home in America with stops in the heartland, in Silicon Valley, and at a Microsoft then in its ascendancy. Part two focuses on hitting refresh at Microsoft as the unlikely CEO who succeeded Bill Gates and Steve Ballmer. Microsoft's transformation under my leadership is not complete, but I am proud of our progress. In the third and final act, I'll take up the argument that a Fourth Industrial Revolution lies ahead, one in which machine intelligence will rival that of humans. We'll explore some heady questions. What will the role of humans become? Will inequality resolve or worsen? How can governments help? What is the role of multinational corporations and their leaders? How will we hit refresh as a society?

I was excited to write this book, but also a little reluctant. Who really cares about my journey? With only a few years under my belt as Microsoft's CEO, it felt premature to write about how we've succeeded or failed on my watch. We've made a lot of progress since that SLT meeting, but we still have a long way to go. That's also why I'm not interested in writing a memoir. I'll save that for my dotage. But several arguments convinced me to carve out a little time at this stage of my life to write. I felt the tug of responsibility to tell our story from my perspective. It's also a time of enormous social and economic disruption accelerated by technological breakthroughs. The combination of cloud computing, sensors, Big Data, machine learning, and Artificial Intelligence (AI), mixed reality, and robotics foreshadows socioeconomic change ripped from the pages of science fiction. There is a wide and growing spectrum of debate about the implications of this coming wave of intelligent technologies. On the one hand, Pixar's film *WALL-E* paints a portrait of eternal relaxation for humans who rely on robots for the hard work. But on the other, scientists like Stephen Hawking warn of doom.

The most compelling argument was to write for my colleagues—Microsoft's employees—and for our millions of customers and partners. After all, on that cold February day in 2014 when Microsoft's board of directors announced that

I would become CEO, I put the company's culture at the top of our agenda. I said that we needed to rediscover the soul of Microsoft, our reason for being. I have come to understand that my primary job is to curate our culture so that one hundred thousand inspired minds—Microsoft's employees—can better shape our future. Books are so often written by leaders looking back on their tenures, not while they're in the fog of war. What if we could share the journey together, the meditations of a sitting CEO in the midst of a massive transformation? Microsoft's roots, its original raison d'être, was to democratize computing, to make it accessible to everyone. "A computer on every desk and in every home" was our original mission. It defined our culture. But much has changed. Most every desk and home now have a computer, and most people have a smartphone. We had succeeded in many ways, but we also were lagging in too many other ways. PC sales had slowed and we were significantly behind in mobile. We were behind in search and we needed to grow again in gaming. We needed to build deeper empathy for our customers and their unarticulated and unmet needs. It was time to hit refresh.

After twenty-two years as an engineer and a leader at Microsoft, I had been more philosophical than anxious about the search process for a new CEO. Even with speculation swirling about who would succeed Steve, quite frankly, my wife, Anu, and I largely ignored the rumors. At home, we were just too busy with taking care of Zain and our two daughters. At work I was very focused on continuing to grow a highly competitive business, the Microsoft Cloud. My attitude was that the board would select the best person. It would be great if it were me. But I would also be equally happy working for someone the board had confidence in. In fact, as part of the interview process one of the board members suggested that if I wanted to be CEO, I needed to be clear that I was hungry for the job. I thought about this and even talked to Steve. He laughed and simply said, "It's too late to be different." It just wouldn't be me to display that kind of personal ambition.

When John Thompson, who at that time was the lead independent director and headed the CEO search, sent me an email on January 24, 2014, asking for time to chat, I was not sure what to make of it. I thought he probably was going to give me an update on where the board was in its decision process. And so, when John called that evening, he first asked me if I was sitting down. I was not. In fact, I was calmly playing with a Kookaburra cricket ball as I usually do when talking on the speakerphone at work. He went on to deliver the news that I was to become the new CEO of Microsoft. It took a couple of minutes to

digest his message. I said that I was honored, humbled, and excited. They were unplanned words, but they perfectly captured how I felt. Weeks later, I told media outlets that we needed to focus more clearly, move faster, and continue to transform our culture and business. But behind the scenes, I knew that to lead effectively I needed to get some things square in my own mind—and, ultimately, in the minds of everyone who works at Microsoft. Why does Microsoft exist? And why do I exist in this new role? These are questions everyone in every organization should ask themselves. I worried that failing to ask these questions, and truly answer them, risked perpetuating earlier mistakes and, worse, not being honest. Every person, organization, and even society reaches a point at which they owe it to themselves to hit refresh—to reenergize, renew, reframe, and rethink their purpose. If only it were as easy as punching that little refresh button on your browser. Sure, in this age of continuous updates and always-on technologies, hitting refresh may sound quaint, but still when it's done right, when people and cultures re-create and refresh, a renaissance can be the result. Sports franchises do it. Apple did it. Detroit is doing it. One day ascending companies like Facebook will stop growing, and they will have to do it too.

And so let me start at the beginning—my own story. I mean, what kind of CEO asks such existential questions as why do we exist in the first place? Why are concepts like culture, ideas, and empathy so important to me? Well, my father was a civil servant with Marxist leanings and my mother was a Sanskrit scholar. While there is much I learned from my father, including intellectual curiosity and a love of history, I was always my mother's son. She cared deeply about my being happy, confident, and living in the moment without regrets. She worked hard both at home and in the college classroom where she taught the ancient language, literature, and philosophy of India. And she created a home full of joy.

Even so, my earliest memories are of my mom struggling to continue her profession and to make the marriage work. She was the constant, steadying force in my life, and my father was larger than life. He nearly immigrated to the United States, a faraway place that represented opportunity, on a Fulbright fellowship to pursue a PhD in economics. But those plans were suddenly and understandably shelved when he was selected to join the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). It was early 1960s, and Jawaharlal Nehru was India's first prime minister following Gandhi's historic movement, which had achieved independence from Great Britain. For that generation entering the civil service

and being part of the birth of a new nation was a true dream come true. The IAS was essentially a remnant of the old Raj system left by the British to govern after the UK turned over control of the country in 1947. Only about a hundred young professionals per year were selected for the IAS, and so at a very young age my father was administering a district with millions of people. Throughout my childhood, he was posted in many districts across the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. I remember moving from place to place, growing up in the sixties and early seventies in old colonial buildings in the middle of nowhere with lots of time and space, and in a country being transformed.

My mom did her level best during all these disruptions to maintain her teaching career, raise me, and be a loving wife. When I was about six, my five-month-old sister died. It had a huge impact on me and our family. Mom had to give up working after that. I think my sister's death was the last straw. Losing her, combined with raising me and working to maintain a career while my father was working in faraway places was just too much. She never complained to me at all about it, but I reflect on her story quite a bit, especially in the context of today's diversity conversations across the technology industry. Like anyone, she wanted to, and deserved to, have it all. But the culture of her workplace, coupled with the social norms of Indian society at the time, didn't make it possible for her to balance family life with her professional passions.

Among the children of IAS fathers, it was a rat race. For some of the IAS dads, simply passing the grueling entrance test meant they were set for life. It was the last test they would ever have to take. But my father believed passing the IAS exam was merely the entry point to being able to take even more important exams. He was a quintessential lifelong learner. But unlike most of my peers at that time, whose high-achieving parents applied tremendous pressure to achieve, I didn't face any of that. My mom was just the opposite of a tiger mom. She never pressured me to do anything other than just be happy.

That suited me just fine. As a kid, I couldn't have cared less about pretty much anything, except for the sport of cricket. One time, my father hung a poster of Karl Marx in my bedroom; in response, my mother hung one of Lakshmi, the Indian goddess of plentitude and contentment. Their contrasting messages were clear: My father wanted intellectual ambition for me, while my mother wanted me to be happy versus being captive to any dogma. My reaction? The only poster I really wanted was one of my cricketing hero, the Hyderabadi great, M. L. Jaisimha, famous for his boyish good looks and graceful style, on and off the field.

Looking back, I have been influenced by both my father's enthusiasm for intellectual engagement and my mother's dream of a balanced life for me. And even today, cricket remains my passion. Nowhere is the intensity for cricket greater than in India, even if the game was invented in England. I was good enough to play for my school in Hyderabad, a place that had a lot of cricket tradition and zeal. I was an off-spin bowler, which in baseball would be the equivalent to a pitcher with a sharp breaking curveball. Cricket attracts an estimated 2.5 billion fans globally, compared with just half a billion baseball fans. Both are beautiful sports with passionate fans and a body of literature brimming with the grace, excitement, and complexities of competition. In his novel, *Netherland*, Joseph O'Neill describes the beauty of the game, its eleven players converging in unison toward the batsman and then returning again and again to their starting point, "a repetition or pulmonary rhythm, as if the field breathed through its luminous visitors." I think of that metaphor of the cricket team now as a CEO when reflecting on the culture we need in order to be successful.

I had attended schools in many parts of India—Srikakulam, Tirupati, Mussoorie, Delhi, and Hyderabad. Each left its mark and has remained with me. Mussoorie, for example, is a northern Indian city tucked into the foothills of the Himalayas, around six thousand feet of elevation. Every time I see Mount Rainier from my home in Bellevue, I am always reminded of the mountains of childhood—Nanda Devi and Bandarpunch. I attended kindergarten at the Convent of Jesus and Mary. It is the oldest school for girls in India but they let boys attend kindergarten. By age fifteen, we had stopped moving and I entered Hyderabad Public School, which boarded students from all over India. I'm thankful for all the moves—they helped me adjust quickly to new situations—but going to Hyderabad was truly formative. In the 1970s, Hyderabad was out of the way, not at all the metropolis of 6.8 million people it is today. I really didn't know or care about the world west of Bombay on the Arabian Sea, but attending boarding school at HPS was the best break I had in my life.

At HPS I belonged to the Nalanda, or blues house, which was named for an ancient Buddhist university. The whole school was multicultural: Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Sikhs all living and studying together. The school was attended by members of the elite as well as by tribal kids who had come from the interior districts on scholarships. The chief minister's son attended HPS alongside the children of Bollywood actors. In my dorm there were kids from