

You and I can also change the world

Over the Christmas period, I had the time to read several books. One was about the world's leading investor, Warren Buffett, who is now 85 years old, while another was about the famous theoretical physicist Albert Einstein, who was the originator of the theory of relativity. Another was about Elron Musk, the founder of 'Space X' and 'Tesla Motors'.

I like reading about people who have made a difference in their field because knowing their stories is inspiring. The three people I read about are entirely different: Albert Einstein was a scientific genius, who died in 1955 at the age of 76, having revolutionised our understanding of the laws of physics. Warren Buffett is now 86, and lives in Omaha in the US. He started with a few hundred dollars he saved from his paper round and has built up a company, (which is now the 5th most valuable

company in the world), through patiently investing and building up businesses. Elron Musk is 44, he was born in South Africa, emigrated to the US, started a company, which today is known as Paypal, sold it, and started three other companies, one making spaceships, another making electric cars and the third making solar panels.

Throughout his life Albert Einstein strove to achieve a unifying theory, which could explain all the laws that govern the universe, from the smallest atomic particle, to the movement of the planets. He had a deep reverence for the order of creation and was driven to understand the principles behind it. He lived a very modest lifestyle, but was passionate about freedom of expression for the individual, and against totalitarianism in any form. He was a German Jew who narrowly escaped the Nazis, and near the end of his life was asked to be the President of the State of Israel (which he turned down).



Dr Ian Clarke

Warren Buffett has run a company called Berkshire Hathaway for the past 50 years. He bought it as a failing textile company and used it as a vehicle to build a conglomerate of companies with interests in many sectors,

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particularly insurance. Several years ago he announced that he would give away 99% of his wealth to philanthropic causes. He said he had benefited from the ‘embryo lottery’ by being born into the US, which rewarded him generously because he has a special talent in the securities market. He said he could have been born into another society, which would not have provided such opportunities and if he had chosen to be a teacher, he would have earned only a modest living, so he believes that society has been good to him and he owes something

back to society. This is why he is giving back all his personal wealth for the benefit of mankind.

Elron Musk has always been concerned about global warming and the destruction of the planet, he holds the ‘crazy’ belief that mankind may wipe itself out, so there should be a back-up plan for saving humanity, such as setting up a colony on Mars. Global warming is mainly due to the use of fossil fuels, so when he made over one hundred million dollars from the sale of Paypal, he invested in a start-up company making

electric cars and also backed his cousin to start a company making solar panels. However, his main investment went into starting a company known as ‘Space X’ making rockets.

Last week ‘Space X’ launched a rocket, which landed back on earth, the first step in taking a manned mission to Mars. Meanwhile, his Tesla car battery packs can be charged free, through stations using solar power, so they use no fossil fuel and run from the sun!

We were all taught in school about legendary figures, such as Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein who formulated the laws of physics and changed the world, but today we also have many living legends such as Elron Musk and Warren Buffett who are changing the world. You and me are ordinary mortals, but there is still something within us, which wants to make the world a better place. We should never suppress this voice. You never know what you might accomplish.