



Perhaps Alfred E. Mann's story is the best one to read in today's very difficult economic times. When many doubt whether brighter days are ahead, with problems that seem insurmountable, perhaps more empowering than slogans such as "Yes, we can" would be "Wow,

look at what he did." From helping send men to the moon to creating pacemakers, from giving the blind sight and the deaf a chance to hear, Alfred E. Mann, the self-made billionaire, is living proof that nothing is insurmountable if we work toward success. Not one to lean on quick fixes and false promises on how to make it, it's no wonder he would title his biography *How to Succeed in Business by Really Trying*—surely a jarring phenomenon for a generation addicted to immediate gratification.

Having interviewed quite a few billionaires, it's safe to say that if this 83-year-old Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of MannKind Corporation were single, one wouldn't just admire him for his money. His affable personality, sense of humor, brilliant mind, passion, respect for all people--regardless of where they fall on the food chain--are heart-warming, charming and add much to his \$1.8

ALFRED E. MANN

'A Mann of His Word'

By Aliza Davidovit

billion. But, ladies calm your hearts, Mann is not single and is happily married to his fourth wife, Claude, who is quite a voluptuous dynamo herself and with a sexy French accent to boot.

Since Alfred E. Mann was a young boy, there were clear signs that he was really a “Mann” in the making. He was born in 1925, in Portland, Oregon, in a modest income home. Like many kids of the time, he sold magazines and lemonade to make a few extra dollars. He clearly remembers the hardships of the Great Depression and how his parents struggled to make a living in the small grocery they ran, much smaller he says than the Waldorf suite in which our interview takes place. As a self-described scrawny young child, Mann says that even as a kid he was focused much more on books and much less on ballgames. Graduating from Lincoln High School at age 15, his academic route was somewhat influenced by his strong aversion to having to dissect a frog if he pursued biology. Therefore, he took chemistry and math instead--which he loved. “That experience transformed me,” Mann reflects. As a result, he majored in science and studied physics at Reed College and Oregon State College before serving as a B-29 navigator in WWII. He continued at UCLA after the war, eventually working on his Ph.D. research project before accepting a job and leaving with a Master’s degree.

But before leaving high school, at the age of 14, Mann wrote a poem which not only earned him an “A” in class but also showed a prescience beyond his young years. It is titled “Advice to a Young Man.” He recited the poem to this Lifestyles journalist, albeit with his wife in the next room, 69 years after it was written. He acknowledges that it seems to reflect how he managed his life:

Young man I beg of you awake

And hear the error I did make.

I too did waste away my time

And did not wait ‘til in my prime

To realize that change was late,

So I must suffer now my fate.

Throughout my life the road’s been steep,

The fruits have been so few to reap.

If only I had listened then
When I was young to older men
The happiness I sought to earn
Might not have been so hard to learn.

It's far too late to make amend
For life for me is soon to end.

And so my son don't waste away
Those precious hours of every day.
Whate'er you can store up within
For life repays what you put in.



Photographed by Gary Choppil of Creative Image Photography. Special Thanks to Ron Clark.

Indeed, his life is a reflection of what he put into that poem; even now he works 80 to 100 hours a week. With so much energy he says that he must be dyslexic and is really 38, not 83. But it was actually at age 30 that Mann's career took its episodic turn. It was in 1956, while working in electro-optical physics for Technicolor--then the major color movie processing company--when he was approached by the United States Army. Mann heard them out as they cited their problems with their anti-tank missiles and then offered them some advice. They took his suggestions to their vendor that was supplying them at the time who, unable to cater to their needs, caused them to once again come knocking on Mann's door.

“Basically they came to me and said we need such and such and if you don't do this our army won't have any anti-tank missiles and thousands of people will be put out of work,” he recounts. And though Mann had it in mind to return to school to finish his Ph.D. at that time, with a wife and child he chose the more responsible route and took the government contract. But lacking the savvy business skill he has since acquired Mann didn't even know how much to charge the army or how to draft a proposal. The contract administrator advised him to basically add everything up and then add 10 percent on top. Hence, in 1956, Mann, signed a contract for \$11,200 and founded Spectrolab, his aerospace and electro-optical systems company, and began working 20 hours a day to deliver per the contract in four months.

In later years, Mann was once again in touch with that same contracting officer who told him that in his pocket at the time was an authorization for a \$500,000 contract, with additional room for negotiation. Whereas most people would cringe,

Mann says, “For me then or now, it’s never really been just about money, it’s about making a difference. Money is a tool to use effectively to accomplish things and if you do well, the money comes in.”

And a difference he did make. “I solved lots of problems on the tank program and built a reputation for doing things quickly, efficiently, inexpensively,” he says.” And perhaps the biggest secret to my success is that I do what I say I’m gonna’ do. Credibility is the most important asset, and I’m a man of my word.”

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If self-praise is dubious, the fact they came back to Mann in 1958 is the definitive corroboration. Now the Government wanted Mann to help them fly a spacecraft and power it with solar cells. As a result, Mann eventually founded Heliotek, the world’s leading supplier of solar cells and other special semiconductor devices. Mann successfully powered this country’s very first spacecraft and worked on over 100 before he moved on, not just for the United States but for the entire free world.

He eventually sold both companies to Textron and today Spectrolab (the merged company) is a subsidiary of Boeing Satellite Systems.

Though he is quite the innovator and has a curious mind, Mann says he never had the desire, as some billionaires do, to travel to space. “I’m not a tourist,” he cracks.

But he is a visionary. “I think that what people say most about me is that I can see the end when I start,” he shares. Though he is cognizant of hurdles, he is never deterred by them or afraid of them. “Fear has never helped anyone do anything.”

It was with that mindset that Mann ventured toward his next challenge when a scientist from the Applied Physics Laboratory at Johns Hopkins approached him with a novel idea to power pacemakers with the same technology used to power a spacecraft. Early pacemakers were big, clumsy devices, Mann explains, only lasted 18-21 months and involved major surgery for replacement. Mann saw the potential and started a company called Pacesetter Systems. On February 10, 1973, the first rechargeable pacemaker was implanted and would keep on ticking for 25 years. And though Mann sold Pacesetter in 1985 and formally retired as its CEO in 1992, it was with that innovation that his foray into the medical field began. Pacesetter Systems, Inc. is now the major part of St. Jude Medical and develops, manufactures, and distributes cardiac pacemakers and implantable defibrillators worldwide.

Mann then established MiniMed, which developed insulin pumps and the world’s only system that integrates an insulin pump with REAL-Time continuous glucose monitoring. Taking diabetes management to a level not achievable with other insulin pumps, he sold MiniMed and its MRG affiliate to Medtronic for more than \$4 billion

in 2001. He also founded Advanced Bionics, which is the only American company that develops cochlear implant technology that basically restores hearing to the deaf. He is also founder and chairman of Second Sight, a bio-med company that is developing a retinal prosthesis to restore sight to the blind; Bioness, a company devoted to aiding neural defects such as paralysis; and Quallion, LLC, which produces high reliability batteries for medical products as well as for the military and aerospace industries. He is also chairman of Stellar Microelectronics, which manufactures electronic circuits for the above mentioned industries.



Photograph by Gary Choppet of Creative Image Photography. Special Thanks to Ron Clark.

This whirlwind of innovation can leave one wondering, “How in the heck does he do it?” To that he says: “The secret of my success is that most people look at technology and say lets go out and find a use for this technology. I typically do the reverse. I look for a poorly met or unmet need and then find the technology to make it work.” But he hardly takes the credit and says he is very proud of the team of people with whom he works.

But one person who never got to be proud of Mann’s accomplishments was his beloved father, who died at age 69. Having emigrated from England after WWI, Mann says his dad would have gotten a great kick out of his success, especially in light of their economic struggles when he was growing up. Nonetheless, it was a home filled with love and lots of music and produced two great musicians: Mann’s brother Robert was the founder and first violinist of the Juilliard String Quartet for over 50 years and is a famous conductor and composer. His sister, Rosalind Koff, is a concert pianist. Mann speaks of his siblings in glowing terms and with a slight self-deprecating tone. Though he has an IQ of 172 and holds honorary doctorates from the University of Southern California, Johns Hopkins University, Western University, and Israel’s Technion, he maintains that his siblings are the talented

ones in the family. And as for his parents, whom he regards as beacons of integrity and compassion, Mann says full-heartedly, “From all the research I’ve done in my career, the most successful research was when I selected my parents.”

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Nonetheless, there are many who are grateful for Mann’s research in all its depth and breadth. In fact, his biggest venture to date could improve the lives of millions of people when the government gives him the go ahead. Twelve years and \$1.3 billion from the start, Mann is now waiting for approval for his biopharmaceutical company, Mannkind Corporation, to market a revolutionary insulin delivery technology. Its insulin is inhaled from a tiny, convenient, and discrete device. The drug formulation quickly dissolves upon contact with the lung surface, releasing insulin that rapidly enters the bloodstream. It achieves peak insulin levels within 12-14 minutes of administration, whereas various injected insulins take one to two and a half hours. MannKind’s invention

more closely mimics the natural release of insulin in a healthy body than any other insulin preparation.

“Dealing with the development and regulatory process for a drug has proven more difficult than for devices,” Mann shares. “The enormous cost and time result from the zero tolerance for risk in our country,” he adds. There are about 23.6 million people in the U.S. who have diabetes and another 40 million or more who have the beginnings of the disease and could benefit from this product. And there are millions more worldwide who suffer from diabetes. Mann predicts the company’s stock, MNKD on NASDAQ, will eventually soar.

Mann, who is listed 262nd on the Forbes 400 Richest People in America, has given to “mankind” with both hands with his innovations and his philanthropy. In 1998 he donated \$162 million to the University of Southern California and in March 2007 gave Purdue \$100 million from the Mann Foundation for Biomedical Engineering. The endowment is the largest research gift ever at the university, and will create the Alfred Mann Institute at Purdue. He also gave the Technion \$109 million.



In addition, he is continually giving through his Mann Foundation, which he founded in 1985. The Foundation's scientists and engineers are seeking bionic solutions, bringing advanced medical technologies to the public to provide significant improvements to health, security, and quality of life for people suffering from debilitating medical conditions. He develops technologies through his foundation that help people but which the business world would not deem likely to be sufficiently profitable.

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Mann's wife, Claude, was born in a concentration camp to Catholic parents who were political prisoners of the Nazis. She is also involved in the Alfred Mann Foundation and has created the very successful and colorful yearly dinners that serve as fundraisers. “The Foundation does miraculous things,” Claude says. “It helps people with medical problems to lead meaningful and full lives.”

Having attended hundreds of dinners with her husband throughout the years, this bubbly woman says she has learned what NOT to do to make a gala dinner successful. The first thing she does is limit everyone's speeches to three minutes. “Long speeches are boring and I want everyone to have a great time,” she says. When her husband advised her in the first gala that his speech was four and a half minutes, she was resolute: “Cut it,” she said. This former successful restaurateur really knows how to please “the customers.” Her dinners are filled with entertainment and beautiful décor. This year's entertainment, for instance, included Placido Domingo. Her own ebullience is reflected in the success of the event.

Claude and Mann have been married for 15 years, yet their relationship is still filled with romance. The first time I met them at an event where the speeches were definitely too long, the couple was dancing in the hallway of the banquet room--and there was no music. They are often hugging and kissing, appearing like honeymooners. It's Claude's second marriage and Mann's fourth.

As the interview comes to a close, Claude buttons up her husband's coat before he sets out to face a freezing New York day. Even billionaires catch colds. And as this class-act heads for the door and goes out to face the world, who knows what will attract his attention, grab his intellect, and plant the seed that will grow into some other fruitful endeavor. God may have punished the first man for eating from the tree of knowledge, but this Mann has benefited the world from the bites he has taken.
