

*My Dear Ralph,*

*Great Uncle Godfather Ant here.*

*I've written you a letter, which I hope will survive until you are old enough to make some sense of it.*

*You may already have worked out (despite the horror of our current existence & an uncertain future), that you are undoubtedly one of life's lucky ones. Putting aside the privileged white male stuff, more importantly, you have remarkable, deeply committed, greatly talented & loving parents, not to mention a wonderful, supportive family  
(& definitely not to mention, quite fabulous godparents).*

*Talking of which, as the old one of these, I thought I would write down some useful pointers for life. Not that you won't work it out for yourself, with the benefit of the greatest inheritance of all; the unconditional love of your parents.*

- *Do to start with, 2 things about LOVE: Firstly, ensure your love is always unconditional & boundless. We're not talking here of 'love of chocolate', for this is greed or 'making love', which is sex but true love. I think a Shakespeare quote here is appropriate: Juliet said: "My bounty is as boundless as the sea, My love as deep; the more I give to thee, The more I have, for both are infinite." So, love without reserve because it's a force of nature (or God) & not ours to withhold.*
- *Secondly about LOVE: 'falling in love' isn't love either, it's lust, which is quite different. So, don't get married for at least 18 months by which time the lust will probably have worn off & you will be able to work out if you have the basis of understanding for a lifelong commitment.*  
*Footnote: As a man, you might find it easier to comprehend that the re-emergence of lust - for someone else - need not shake that lifelong commitment but this has to be honestly negotiated. That's just healthy.*
- *RESPECT everyone without exception. Remember you're not necessarily endorsing their actions, which are not for us to judge but recognising their right to a*

*fulfilling life & besides, we are all in it together. It really is true, that what goes around, comes around (& you want it to come round & give you a kiss not bite you on the butt).*

- *Don't confuse the **MATERIAL** with the **IMMATERIAL**; the object with the subject. The immaterial is always what counts - maybe like software & hardware. There's plenty you can't see in this world but that doesn't mean it's not there, whether you're talking about love again or those we have loved & lost. Nothing is quite how it appears & making judgements on appearance can get you in trouble.*
- *Besides respect, work always for **DEMOCRACY** because the two are closely related. Don't believe people who say this is sorted because what we have is a fast-diminishing feeble version of the idea. Demo-cracy is rule by the people, yes all of us & irrespective of wealth or power. Believe it or not, in the perfect world we won't need leaders, who in time, only cause trouble. And real democracy will ensure our environment is preserved because the people know what's best for them & that's a clean, safe planet with which we're in harmony.*
- *Despite any good fortune & whatever you hear, **LIFE IS TOUGH** for everyone & appreciating this will make it easier. The more you strive the tougher it will seem but as they say, 'no pain no gain.' Don't confuse happiness with pleasure, as you can buy pleasure but happiness needs working on. Market forces have found the confusion helpful, to sell you stuff you don't need & may well do you harm. So, avoid the propaganda of advertising & trust your own judgement. First impressions have a knack of being right.*
- *Finally, work always towards restoring the **WHOLE**. We tend to see the world as separate bits, but this is an illusion. We are all actually part of the same great whole, unseparated even physically & understanding this will make you wise indeed. This is most easily done by setting time aside each day to meditate with careful breathing. Remember always that **YOU ARE JUST PERFECT** as you are!*

*Good luck & I'm hoping to be around still in case you've any questions.*

*Much love,*

