

# Appreciating Ralph

Andrew Beath

Andrew Beath, M.A., is the founder and president of Social & Environmental Entrepreneurs(SEE), founder and current Executive Director of EarthWays, founder of the Foundation for World Arts and a founding board member of Amazon Watch. Having earned a Master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton Business School, his publications include *Consciousness in Action*.

What do I appreciate most about Ralph? His unique character: a consciousness adventurer of the highest order, as well as an accomplished teacher, specializing in the meaning of existence; not just his existence, or my existence, but Existence itself. His lifelong work provided us guidance in our own exploration of life's unknowable, sacred mysteries.

He pursued enlightenment with a passion— not that he expected to achieve it, for he was a humble seeker. As much as anyone I have known during my 25 years of pursuing sacred meaning, Ralph played within the realms of the mysteries, exploring intimacy with all things, while mentoring us in how to connect to the infinite—guiding our way. He immersed himself in this guidance, thereby allowing us to access a more profound reality than we had previously known. No books can achieve expanded awareness as surely as the varied and variegated experiences that Ralph made available to us.

Yes, Ralph was unique in myriad ways. He walked his own path while inviting us to walk alongside, to sing along, to study, to experience, and to connect to the Divine. He taught us that the earth is sacred and our life—all life—is a gift of Mother Earth. Heaven is here on earth, if only we can expand our awareness, open to the connection with all living things, and appreciate Divinity in the gift of life. Planet Earth has brought us to life, suckled us, and has grown us into the

magnificence of self-reflective thought; She has also provided us with the skills to tackle the many challenges we face, the looming apocalypse we have created.

Ralph enabled us to explore the infinite. We intellectually learned about the plant medicines, the molecules, and plant's ability to teach us; however, Ralph knew that intellectual knowledge was not enough. So he led us to the precipice—an invitation to jump. That leap off the cliff remained our responsibility, while Ralph had our backs, holding the space for us.

How many individuals were given Ralph's guidance into the unknown—the connection to Sacred Earth? How many of those folks are creating the changing conditions we see today: an impetus toward a new world view, one that prioritizes a healthy society and a healthy planet? How important was Ralph's role in today's ongoing evolution of human consciousness? We will probably never know; however, I have been involved in this “movement” for 25 years and can personally attest to that in my experience Ralph has had as much or more impact as anyone. In both intellectual and experiential ways he has moved human consciousness forward on its path toward toward a wider perspective.

*Ecology of Consciousness* and many other of Ralph's writings demonstrate how subjective and objective reality inter-twine to create the world we see, and our worldview. Like Van Gogh, Ralph “saw” energy fields shining forth from within matter: energy as matter, matter as energy, thus realizing interrelationship among all things.

Ralph was a shaman, a wise elder, and lifelong consciousness explorer, generously sharing his soul to benefit us all. His writings and experiential guidance are as profound as they are comprehensive, providing insight to life's grand creative mysteries. He will be missed by many; I expect him to be discovered by many more.

I'm writing outside, next to the docks of a small fishing village. It's nighttime. The Moon is full. From what I know of Ralph, he would have been tickled that moonlight is inspiring this appreciation.