

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

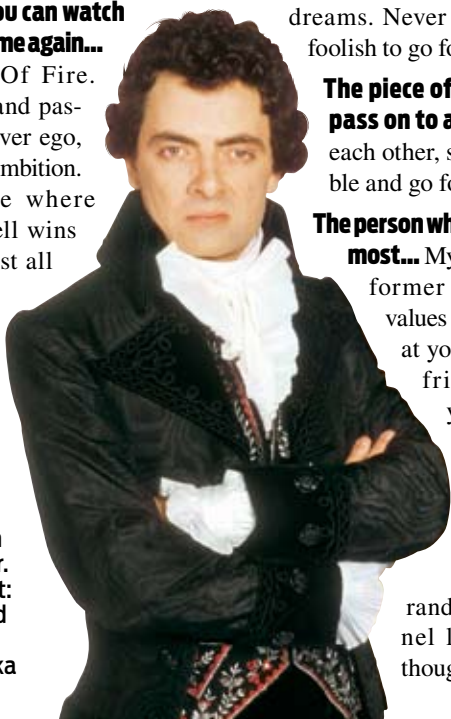
We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week it's the turn of TV survivalist Bear Grylls

**The prized possession you value above all others...** An oil painting of a father holding his son by my best friend, artist Charlie Mackesy. It has the words in gold across it, 'Christ within me, Christ beside me, Christ to hold me, Christ to win me'. It's in our hall and speaks to me whenever I race past it.

**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...** That my wife Shara's father Brian and mine, Michael, didn't live to see our three boys – Jesse, 14, Marmaduke, 11, and Huckleberry, eight. They both died in 2001, my father of heart disease and Brian of multiple sclerosis – the cruellest.

**The film you can watch time and time again...** Chariots Of Fire. Humility and passion win over ego, pride and ambition. The scene where Eric Liddell wins gold against all the odds in the 400m never fails to move me.

Right: Rowan Atkinson in Blackadder. Above right: bar-headed geese. Far right: Alaska



**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** Rhinoceros Success by Scott Alexander, about how to get ahead in life. I read it when I was 13 and it rewired my aspirations. My children have all read it and loved it too.

**The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day...** I would soar over Everest with bar-headed geese.

**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...** People who belittle others' dreams. Never tell anyone they're foolish to go for something crazy.

**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** Look after each other, stay gentle and humble and go for things.

**The person who has influenced you most...** My late father. He was a former commando whose values of being able to laugh at yourself, being a good friend and going for your dreams will stay with me always.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** Watching Blackadder on some random cable TV channel late at night, even though I know every line.

**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...**

SAS founder David Stirling. To hear his stories would be amazing.

**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...** I'm obsessed with rigid inflatable boats (RIBs), from spending part of the year living on a remote Welsh island.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** A lovely old cloth hat that I'd taken on so many expeditions since Everest in 1998. I lost it a few years ago while bombing down the Thames in our RIB.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** As Chief Scout, my goal is to bring adventure to youngsters who might otherwise not get to experience the wild.

**The poem that touches your soul...** Amazing Grace, written by John Newton, a slave trader who saw the light.

**The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...** I'd take offensive action against poachers to protect the dwindling rhinos.



'It's not true that I never get scared – parachuting makes me physically shake and I get anxious at social gatherings'

Verbier, before heading to Japan. Then we'd paraglide to the South Island of New Zealand and ride a beautiful river on jet-powered surfboards. We'd end hand-in-hand with Shara watching the sunset on a small boat in the Bahamas. We'd eat fish we'd speared, then give our boys their favourite chocolate digestive cake.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** Seeing dawn on the summit of Everest and collapsing to my knees after three long months attempting the climb.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** The grief on Shara's face when her father died aged just 57.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** To build the perfect yacht to survive an apocalypse! I love planning the escape for my family.

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** Never give up.

**The order of service at your funeral...** I want the hymn Be Thou My Vision, O Lord Of My Heart, and St Paul's final words: 'The time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.'

**The way you want to be remembered...** Kind, courageous, and I always had your back.

**The Plug...** How To Stay Alive by Bear Grylls is out now (Bantam Press, £20). Visit [beargrylls.com](http://beargrylls.com).

As told to Rob McGibbon



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