



From top: Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, a Thai retreat, José Mourinho, Jude the Obscure, the Houses of Parliament, Starbucks coffee and Louis Armstrong

The prized possession you value above all others... A first edition of Thomas Hardy's novel *Jude the Obscure* from 1895. I bought it at Sotheby's for £15,000 in 2002. I was heavily pregnant and hormonal, so I kept bidding.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... I wish I had listened more carefully to my parents' stories. My mum, Amy, died from Alzheimer's in 2006 and my dad, Phil, is 76 and currently suffering from it, too. All their memories are lost forever.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...

My life is so wrapped up in work and other people that it would be bliss to have 24 hours alone being pampered at a spa in Thailand. I'd also like to visit Spain to chat to José Mourinho. I'm a big Chelsea fan and I thought he was so sexy and stylish. I miss him.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Starbucks coffee. I can't go a day without an extra-hot skinny latte.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... *Jude the Obscure*. I was 18 when I read it and I connected strongly with Sue Bridehead, Jude's lover. I was captivated because she was her own woman.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I'd watch my 12-year-old son at school to find out what he does all day, as he doesn't seem to learn much. He's more interested in entertaining the class.

The way fame and fortune has changed you, for better and worse... Being well-known has not essentially changed me, but working on GMTV affected my life dramatically. Everything was geared towards getting up early, so I lost contact with friends and spent the entire time tired. I'm much happier now.

The film you can watch time and time again... *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. It reminds me of fun times as a child and of my two sons growing up.

The person who has influenced you most... My mum. She was such a warm, open person. Watching her taught me how to communicate, which has always been at the heart of my life.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Emmeline Pankhurst. I am in awe of what the suffragettes did.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Barack Obama's mother said this to him and my mum said it to



If I knew I'd get away with it, I'd be a Peeping Tom in Chelsea's dressing room at Stamford Bridge

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... I was always irritated that everything written about me included the word 'bubbly'. It has connotations of being vacuous and shallow. Urgh! I like drinking bubbly, but not being perceived as it.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... When my mum was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 1999. It was the beginning of an immense grieving process.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd be a Peeping Tom in Chelsea's dressing room at Stamford Bridge.

The song that means most to you... Louis Armstrong's *What A Wonderful World*. It reminds me of my happy childhood and always moves me.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... When I was pregnant with my first son [her second son is eight], I feared I wouldn't bond with my baby. That first night in hospital, I fell in love. I was so happy – and relieved.

The saddest time that shook your world... When my dad attacked my mum because he couldn't cope with her Alzheimer's. In that moment, my childhood dissolved and I became the parent. It was totally out of character for Dad and we found out subsequently that he was also suffering the early stages of Alzheimer's.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To do everything I can to make my children happy.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

The order of service at your funeral... I don't have an ego that requires a big send-off. For all I care, my family can put me in a cardboard box and bury me in the garden!

The way you want to be remembered... I simply would like my values to live on in my children.

The Plug... Fiona's memoir, *Before I Forget*, is published by Arrow, priced £7.99. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's TV presenter Fiona Phillips

me: 'Put yourself in the other person's shoes before you do anything.'

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Politics. I read political memoirs and follow the machinations of Westminster like a junkie.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... A thief stole my grandmother's engagement ring, which she left me when she died, and a watch my parents gave me for my 21st birthday, from my dressing room in 1988

when I was doing my first TV show for BBC Norwich. I was so upset.

The unending quest that drives you on... To keep working hard. My parents instilled a strong work ethic in me and thank God they did because I've got a huge mortgage to pay off!

The poem that touches your soul... *He Wishes For The Cloths Of Heaven* by W.B. Yeats. The last line gets me with its vulnerability: 'Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.'

PS...

Cinema's superhero summer continues with *Captain America*, starring Chris Evans, out now. Blondie play family festival *Camp Bestival* in Dorset this weekend. And *A Midsummer Night's Dream* opens Stratford's revamped Royal Shakespeare Theatre

NEXT WEEK

● The brutal story of the Borgias, history's most notorious dynasty, comes to TV ● Michelin-starred chef Angela Hartnett cooks simple family meals ● Meet the first two finalists in our National Garden Competition ● PLUS Britain's most detailed TV listings guide