

The prized possession you value above all others... An ancient Tibetan Thangka - an embroidered drape given to me by the Dalai Lama in 1990 before my ascent of Everest.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend... Not making a film about the heavyweight boxer Bruce Woodcock in 1966. He begged me not to do it because he didn't want to be famous again. So I pulled out.

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

I'd wake up on the Grand Savanna of Venezuela and meditate looking at Mount Roraima, then travel by boat to Angel Falls with my wife Hildegarde. We'd climb to the top and admire the view. We'd then meet our daughter Rosalind, 37, on the Greek island of Santorini for a fish lunch. I'd bid them farewell and board Dan Dare's spaceship Anastasia and zoom to Mars where I'd scale Olympus Mons, which is 24km high. After that, I'd explore the Cydonia region on Mars, before returning to earth to meditate at the foot of Mount Olympus in Greece. To end the day I'd have dinner with my loved ones at a taverna.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Planting red acer trees in my garden in Surrey. I have about 150.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... In Search Of The Miraculous by the Russian writer Peter Ouspensky is the most staggering lesson in spiritual exploration.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd go to the jungles of Brazil and let the blue morpho butterflies settle on my invisible body.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Cruelty to animals. For God's sake stop killing rhinos and elephants. The film you can watch time and time **again...** War And Peace by the Russian director Sergei Bondarchuk. Nothing in cinema compares to it. He used the entire Red Army for his battle scenes. The person who has influenced you

most... Harry Dobson, an amateur theatre director. He took me under his wing and got me a scholarship to drama school – unheard of for a miner's son.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Jesus Christ. I'd ask him what happened to him between the ages of 13, when he disappears from the Bible, and 31, when he reappears.



We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's the turn of actor Brian Blessed

The piece of wisdom you would pass The unending quest that drives you on to a child... Follow your dream. The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Sumo wrestling. It holds a great inner spirituality at its core. I've spent time in Japan doing the voiceover for a series about it.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... The only photo I possess of my mother, Hilda, when she was seven. It disappeared five years ago. Mother died 20 years ago, aged 87.

On... To go into space. I'm a fully trained cosmonaut and have completed 800 hours training, which has made me the No 1 civilian reserve ready to visit the International Space Station. I am determined to go up and I want to explore the Moon, Mars and beyond!

The poem that touches your soul... John Clare's I Am. It's about peace, tranquillity and being as one with the Creator, animals and yourself.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm some loud, rampant maniac. I'm actually very pensive and quiet.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Falling in love with Hildegarde while we were filming Boy Dominic for Yorkshire Television in 1974. She is like Mother Earth and has done my soul so much good.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd vaporise every nuclear weapon in the world. The song that means most to you... Trees by the 1930s American singer Paul Robeson. It reminds me how precious trees are to the world.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... The birth of my brother Alan when I was seven. We went everywhere together and I loved him, but he died of leukaemia when he was 52 in 1995.

The saddest time that shook your world... Seeing my father, William, after his hips were crushed in an accident down the pit when I was 14. He had been Superman in my eyes, so seeing him in hospital all broken up was devastating. He was never the same afterwards. He died in 2009 aged 99.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To reach the summit of Everest. I've tried three times, although I only attempted the summit twice. On the first occasion I had to turn back to rescue another climber. I was halfway up on the second attempt when word reached me that my mother and brother were dying, so I had to fly home.

The philosophy that underpins your **life...** Life is a re-discovery.

The order of service at your funeral... There will be no funeral! Before I get

too old and ill, I'll go to So uth America and live among the Pemon people and meditate. When the time is right they can throw my body into the volcano.

The way you want to be remembered... Not at all!

The Plug... Nestlé condensed milk! It kept me alive on Everest and turns me into a Titan. Everyone should try it! ■ As told to Rob McGibbon

Jodie Foster and Matt Damon star in sci-fi blockbuster Elysium – in cinemas from Wednesday – while low-budget Julianne Moore drama What Maisie Knew arrives here on Friday with rave reviews. And Where You Stand, the new album from Travis, is out Monday

NEXT WEEK

● As The X Factor – and Sharon Osbourne – return, all four judges reveal how they'll shake the show up ● Royal cake maker Fiona Cairns on her rise to the top – plus recipes from her new book

Britain's best TV listings

78 weekend

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