We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it’s comedian Julian Clary’s turn

The prized possession you value above all others... The ashes of Fanny the Ironing – I was a little box by her photo at my home in Kent. It’s like a little shrine – I touch the box for luck whenever I go out.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Calling Coleen Nolan ‘overweight’ on Celebrity Big Brother in 2012. We were asked to tell someone a home truth and I knew it upset her. I said it. She’s fine now and we’ve worked together since, but it was not nice. I’m sorry, Coleen.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Making a fuss of puppies.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Stop Thinking, Start Living by Rich Carlson. I first read it 15 years ago and it helped me snap out of a downward spiral by letting go of negative thoughts.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I’d go to Syria and stop those awful ISIS people murdering gay men by throwing them off buildings.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Groups of teenage girls on crowded buses. They’re always so out of control that there’s danger in the air.

The person who has influenced you most... My mum, Brenda. She taught me to be self-sufficient and always say yes to things so I’d have time again.

The film you can watch time and time again... Gone With The Wind for pure escapism. It makes me laugh and cry and I always lose myself in it.

The poem that touches your soul... Shakespeare’s Sonnet 94. I had to learn it at school when I was 12 and I can still recite it from memory. I have no idea what it’s about, but it’s my party piece.

The song that means most to you... Don’t Worry, Be Happy by Bobby McFerrin. I played it to graduating students when I was given an honorary doctorate by the University of East Anglia in 2014.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Stop thinking and start living.

The order of service at your funeral... I want a direct inurnment after death, like David Bowie.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I’d have croissants and tea for breakfast with Joan Collins at her house in St Tropez, then go snorkelling over the Great Barrier Reef. After that I’d relax on a beach somewhere, but I’d skip lunch and spend the afternoon walking round the rag market in Birmingham looking at fabrics. I’d spend the evening at home in Kent with my partner Ian. I’d have a gin and tonic on the lawn with our dogs Valerie and Albert and our three chickens, then we’d have sushi with red wine.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... My show at the London Palladium in 1993 was very special because it’s such an iconic venue. All my family and friends were there and I remember taking a moment to savour it.

The saddest time that shook your world... The deaths of my partner Christopher and my best friend Stephen, who both had AIDS, in the 1990s. It was very sad and dramatic and I didn’t deal with any of it for a long time.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To play Sir Andrew Aguecheek in Twelfth Night at the National Theatre. If there are any directors reading this...

Angelina Jolie is back to voice Tigress in Kung Fu Panda 3 – in cinemas from Friday. Motown The Musical opens at London’s Shaftesbury Theatre on Tuesday. And Ellie Goulding starts her UK tour on the same day at the Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff.

NEXT WEEK
- Racy Raj drama Indian Summers returns – and this time it’s even steamier
- Sweet or savoury – how to bake perfect pies
- Monty Don’s tips for a top crocus display
- PLUS Britain’s best TV listings

PS...

“People keep mistaking me for Boy George – taxi drivers often tell me they love Karma Chameleon!”