**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 presenter Paul O’Grady

*Theprizedpossessionyouvalueabove all others...* My five dogs – Olga, Bullseye, Boycie, Conchita and Eddie (pictured, far right, with Olga and Paul). They’re rescue dogs, each with very different personalities. If there was a fire, they’d be the first things I’d save.

*Thebiggestregretyouwishyoucouldamend...* Messing around and not having a game plan when I was a teenager. I lost valuable years of education and had no real goal until I found a job I loved in social services aged 22.

*The temptation you wish you could resist...* Staying up too late. I’ll read a book or start writing, and suddenly it’s 4am. I feel like death the next day.

*The book that holds an everlasting resonance...* The Complete Essays Of Michel de Montaigne, the 16th-century French philosopher. It’s full of little nuggets of wisdom.

*The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day...* I’d go to friends’ houses and pretend to be a poltergeist.

*Thefigurefromhistoryforwhomyou’dmost liketobuyapieandapint...* Rosa Lewis, a famous chef in the 19th century. She owned the Cavendish Hotel in London so I’d go there to eat one of her feasts and talk about her life.

*The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...* Don’t worry, it will all turn out well in the end.

*Thepothate that makes yourhakkles rise...* First is animal cruelty, but I also hate ticket machines at railway stations. They give you 30 different options when all you want is a single or a return.

*Thefilmyoucanwatch timelandtimeagain...* Wild Strawberries from 1957, directed by Ingmar Bergman. An old man recalls his past as he makes his last journey. It’s beautifully shot, superbly acted and very moving.

*Thepersonwhohas influencedyoumost...* My whole family unit. They were great characters and all so funny.

*The figure from history for whom you’d most like to buy a pie and a pint...* Nigella Lawson, a chef in the 19th century. She owned the Cavendish Hotel in London so I’d go there to eat one of her feasts and talk about her life.

*The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...* My hair colour. It was originally reddish-brown, now it’s white as snow.

*The unending quest that drives you on...* Curiosity. I’m constantly wanting to learn about new things.

*The poem that touches your soul...* First Fig by Edna St Vincent Millay. It has only four lines, but it’s beautiful. ‘My candle burns at both ends/I will not last the night/But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends it gives a lovely light!’ I recited it in hospital 15 years ago after the first of my three heart attacks.

*The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...* That I’m fascinated by herbology. I’ve been making my own potions since my 30s. I can mix infusions that cure all kinds of ailments.

*The philosophy that underpins your life...* Get on with it is my mantra.

*The order of service at your funeral...* It’d be at a church on Romney Marsh, Kent, led by the Salvation Army band playing Nearer, My God, To Thee. Tom Jones will sing ‘Jackson’ gospel song. I’d be carried out to the way you want to be remembered... As someone who tried to help animals.

*The Plug...* Paul’s memoir Country Life is out now, Bantam Press, £20.

*As told to Rob McGibbon*

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**NEXT WEEK**

- Don’t miss your final chance to win £25,000 in our murder mystery game
- Monty Don on the prettiest plant in the winter garden
- PLUS Britain’s best TV guide

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**Jake Gyllenhaal plays a Boston Marathon bombing victim in Stronger – in cinemas from Friday. Liam Gallagher launches his UK tour in Leeds tomorrow. And James Norton previews in Belleville at London’s Donmar Warehouse from Thursday**