The prized possession you value above all others... My life! I nearly lost it twice... Feelin,
Rudyard Kipling, Fred Astaire and the King's Head in Santa Monica

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's TV producer Nigel Lythgoe's turn

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Keep your common sense. All too often people panic under pressure. Just stop, stay calm and think. The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I'm absorbed with education, particularly in America. The arts are being cut out of teaching yet it's proven that children learn better when you involve passion and emotion. I've spoken to Congress about this.

The treasure item you lost and wish you could have again... My youth!

The poem that touches your soul... Rudyard Kipling's If. As far as I'm concerned, it's about common sense. The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm nasty! That persona came out of Pop stars and has stuck in the UK, although no one thinks of me like that in America. Here, I'm Nurturing Nigel.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... The success of American Idol. It took me to America in 2002 and made me wealthy. The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd be an expert computer hacker and break into FBI files to find out who killed JFK. The song that means most to you... You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin by The Righteous Brothers. When I was 15 in Liverpool I'd sit in a café with my mates playing it on the jukebox and we'd all try to hit that low note. Great times. The happiest moment you will cherish forever... The birth of my son, Simon. He was yellow with a pointy head and the nurse said, 'He looks like his dad!' The saddest time that shook your world... Receiving divorce papers in 2005 broke my heart. They arrived just before Christmas and I was distraught. The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... I'm really not nasty! The Nasty Nigel persona stuck in the 'I'm really not nasty!' The Nasty Nigel persona stuck in the US. So I'd get a yacht with my ex-wife Bonnie, and mate John and sail around the Florida coast playing the best courses. I'm a huge sense of sadness about it ending.

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As told to Rob McGibbon

PS... Relive the magic of James Cameron’s Titanic with Kate Winslet and Leo DiCaprio in 3D. It’s in cinemas now. Penelope Keith stars in The Way Of The World at Chichester Festival Theatre. Or catch BGT 2009 winners Diversity, on tour until Wednesday.