

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's presenter Chris Tarrant's turn



The prized possession you value above all others... My lucky 1949 George VI sixpence. It was handed to me in 1984 by a stranger who said, 'Be lucky.' My first marriage had collapsed and my career was in bad shape. Then I got a job presenting on Capital Radio.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Pork pies. They have no nutritional value but they're so tasty.

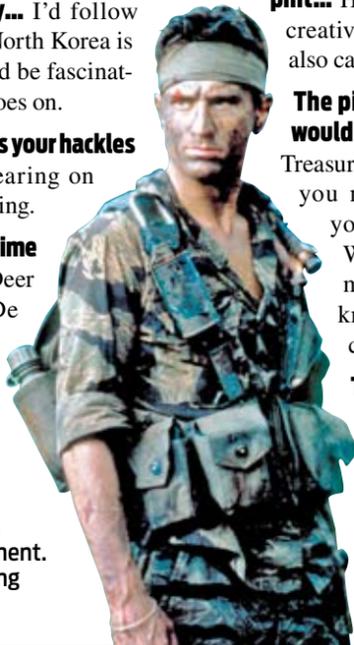
The book that holds an everlasting resonance... David Niven's memoir, *The Moon's A Balloon*. It made me laugh and inspired me to write about my own life.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd follow Kim Jong-un around. North Korea is such a mystery, it would be fascinating to see what really goes on.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Footballers swearing on TV. Children are watching.

The film you can watch time and time again... *The Deer Hunter* with Robert De Niro and Christopher Walken. It's riveting, especially the Russian roulette scene.

Right: Robert De Niro in *The Deer Hunter*. Above right: A flower arrangement. Far right: Chris presenting Tiswas in 1975



The biggest regret you wish you could amend... That I never learnt to play the violin. I had lessons when I was ten but I packed it in.

The person who has influenced you most... My dad Basil. He was such a kind and honourable man. Dad died from heart failure in 2005 when he was 85.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Henry VIII. He was creative and sensitive, but also capable of brutal acts.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Treasure every day because you never know when your number is up. When I was 11 one of my best friends was knocked off his bicycle and killed.

The song that means most to you... *A Day In The Life* by The Beatles. As a DJ, it was the only song I could play and always enjoy.



Jane has a good old laugh about it.

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... The ability to bowl fast. I was a decent fast bowler, but now I'm 68 I've lost my speed. It's nothing to do with the stroke I had last year – I've recovered. I've become a wily spin bowler now.

The unending quest that drives you on... To catch a 100lb carp.

The poem that touches your soul... *For The Fallen* by Laurence Binyon. I think it's the best war poem.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm a motormouth who talks all the time. I can be larger than life when I'm working, but I'm a quiet, sensitive person.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Presenting Tiswas, which started in 1974. Everything in my career has come from that.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Flower arranging.

Seriously! I like walking in the country, picking wild flowers and putting them in vases. My wife

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I would murder Aleksandr the Meerkat from those TV ads. I have to turn the telly over when he comes on.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd begin fishing for salmon at the River Gaula in Norway. I'd be with my mate Sean who loves fishing, but isn't very good, which makes me look better. We always put the fish back, but after that I'd have smoked salmon and scrambled eggs for breakfast with coffee at a cafe by the river. Then I'd watch a Test match between England and India in Calcutta where Alastair Cook would score a fast century. Lunch would be in Cambodia with Jane. They make the best curries in the world. I'd have a few local beers, then visit some ancient temples. Then go to the Maldives with Jane and my kids [he has six, aged 22-38, from two previous marriages]. We'd snorkel alongside the great manta rays, then hang out on the beach. I'd watch the sunset in Yukon, Canada, and have a huge steak for dinner. I'd

end the day at home in Berkshire. I'd pour myself a glass of red wine and watch an episode of *The Sopranos*.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Getting the Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Television Awards at the Royal Albert Hall in 2000. Dad came on stage to give it to me disguised as the Phantom Flan Flinger from Tiswas.

The saddest time that shook your world... My mum Joan dying in 2012. She was 92. It was made worse when her house was burgled three days later.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To sleep with Tina Turner! That smile, those legs...

The philosophy that underpins your life... Never lose sight of the things that really matter. Even when I was working all hours on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, I'd go to a river at midnight to do a bit of fishing.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd want a very positive and uplifting service at a local church with Bobby McFerrin's *Don't Worry Be Happy*. I want my ashes scattered on the River Kennet in Berkshire and later all my family and mates can have a big cricket match in my memory at Lord's.

The way you want to be remembered... As someone who made people smile.

The Plug... *Dad's War* – Chris's tribute to his war hero father – is published in paperback by Virgin priced £7.99. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PS...

*Al Pacino plays an ageing rock star in *Danny Collins*, in cinemas from Friday. Just Jim Dale, the *Carry On* star's one-man show, is at the Vaudeville Theatre from Tuesday. And Paul McCartney starts a short UK tour at London's O2 Arena next Saturday*



NEXT WEEK

- Tim McInerney takes us behind the scenes on the last ever series of *Strike Back*
- Simple and delicious Chinese food from the *Dumpling Sisters*
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings