

The Proust Questionnaire has its origins in a parlor game popularized by Marcel Proust, the French essayist and novelist, who believed that, in answering these questions, an individual reveals his or her true nature.

Proust questionnaire: Peter Allen, MD



What profession might you have pursued, if not for medicine?

Geologist and mining engineer.

Which talent would you most like to have?

To be able to influence people in a positive way.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

The initiation of open heart surgery in British Columbia on 29 October 1957 at Vancouver General Hospital.

Who are your heroes?

Sir Winston Churchill, Dr Frederick Banting, and Dr Rocke Robertson.

Dr Allen worked as a cardiac surgeon at Vancouver General Hospital and retired as emeritus clinical professor of surgery at the UBC School of Medicine. He now lives in Oakville, Ontario.

What is your idea of perfect happiness?

A summer evening, sitting by the water with good friends and family with a glass of wine in hand.

What is your greatest fear?

Departing this world before I have achieved all my plans, simple as they are, to make a better world.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

Impatience—a trait I find difficult to control.

What is your most marked characteristic?

Enthusiasm and eternal optimism.

What characteristic do your favorite patients share?

The ability to take part in their own health care.

Which words or phrases do you most overuse?

“Do I make myself clear?” and “On what do you base that statement?”

What medical advance do you most anticipate?

The increasing ability to prevent or further retard arterial occlusive disease.

On what occasion do you lie?

When necessary in conversation to increase the self-confidence of others. Also when caught out in failing to do a household duty.

What do you most value in your colleagues?

Reliability and ability to face reality.

What is your greatest regret?

Not having spent more time with my family during the early days of practice.

What is your motto?

Each day appreciate who you are and what you have.

How would you like to die?

In my sleep and thus avoid my family's exhaustion from a prolonged illness.

Tell us a bit about yourself. Please complete and submit a Proust Questionnaire—your colleagues will appreciate it.



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