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Land Rover Adventure Ambassador **Ed Stafford** and his wife **Laura Bingham**

are arguably the most daring couple on Earth.

Recently joined by new-born son Ranulph, their circumstances have changed, but, as *Onelife* discovered, their attitude hasn't

WORDS NATHANIEL HANDY
PHOTOGRAPHY SAM BARKER

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ED STAFFORD
The ex-army captain, Land Rover Ambassador and star of Discovery Channel's *Marooned* and upcoming *Left For Dead* series is the first and only person to walk the entire length of the Amazon.



LAURA BINGHAM
The young adventurer has crossed the Atlantic by trimaran and cycled over 7,000km across South America without any money to raise awareness for the Operation South America charity in Paraguay.

“Let’s face it, dropping yourself on an uninhabited island with no clothes or food is artificial.” Ed Stafford – star of the Discovery Channel’s *Naked & Marooned* and upcoming *Left For Dead* series – should know. “But just because it’s a construct doesn’t make the experience unreal. It’s an artificial situation, but you’re tapping into very real instincts.” Ed is talking with his wife and fellow adventurer Laura Bingham about why – in a transparent world – they both still feel the need to go out and seek adventure.

“This isn’t planting flags,” says Ed. “It’s more about exploring the human mind in a way that makes you vulnerable. Everyone struggles a little, so if we put ourselves in situations where we really struggle, then people can engage with it.” Laura adds: “In our society, no one is pushed to survive. You’re never forced to run away from a predator or hunt for food. Doing so reminds me how much I want to survive. Just getting food and making yourself safe becomes an intense experience.”

It’s an experience Laura gained in an over 7,000km cross-continental cycling trip she completed in South America – with no money. It’s just another way in which paring back their survival kit to the minimum has helped both Laura and her husband Ed discover what they’re really made of.

What keeps most people on the sofa? Part of the answer is that we often aren’t sure what we want to achieve. Ed and Laura have found the most effective tools are often the simplest. “We have a ‘dream wall’ at home full of mind maps and ideas that are a visual statement: this is how we want our lives to be,” says Ed. Laura combines this with a written bucket list of things (currently 87) she wants to do. “It’s hard to ignore it,” she says, “and every time I show someone my list, they nearly always know someone who can help with achieving one of them. Just by having that list, it puts it out there.”

“Pick something and just say you’re doing it,” says Ed. “For me, the key thing is saying it. It’s not just wishful thinking. When you truly believe you’re going to do something, you can make it happen. It is where, not how, that is important.” Laura adds: “Achievement is about making it through lesson one. I learnt that doing bikram yoga. To begin with, I could barely stay in the room, but if you keep at it, persevere enough, stay in the race, you’ll become one of the best.”

At only 24 years old, Laura has already shown the determination to stay the course, whether cycling over the Andes, in a yacht crossing the Atlantic, or even this interview. While she talks to *Onelife*, Laura is having contractions as their first child is due.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DISCOVERY CHANNEL, BRANDON GIESBRECHT, XISCO FUSTER

“WHEN YOU TRULY BELIEVE YOU’RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING, YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN”

ED STAFFORD

“Nerves or fear shouldn’t stop you living your life,” she says. Indeed, those moments can be the ones that really matter. Ed recalls: “I’ve been held at arrowpoint by indigenous Indians, at gunpoint by drugs barons and watched a lightning bolt hit a lamp post beside me in the Amazon. At those moments, you have to trust your gut.”

Ed goes on to reveal: “As we become a family, our circumstances might have changed, but our attitude hasn’t.” Indeed, Ed and Laura’s first family adventure with their newborn son will be a road trip in their new Land Rover. “We’ll sleep in the back of the car,” says Ed. Given the family profession, the new Discovery will feel like a hotel. “We call it as we see it,” says a pragmatic Laura. “Try something, and if it doesn’t work, we’ll just try something else.” □

NEW ADVENTURES IN STORE

Rather appropriately, Ed Stafford took delivery of his new Discovery the same day he embarked on another adventure with the birth of his new baby son Ranulph.

The award winning Discovery’s unique blend of practicality, versatility, refinement and all-terrain credentials is perfect for this young family and their two large Newfoundland dogs. Available with a multitude of engines, it can be tailored to your requirements through a host of accessories and options.

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