# Psychobiography-Princess Diana

## **Introduction**

Princess Diana Spencer, a member of the British royal family, drew worldwide admiration due to her touch with commoners despite her royal status. She was born on 1st July 1961, in Sandringham, England, to Edward John Spencer, Viscount Althorpe, later Earl Spencer and Hon. Frances Shand-Kydd, who was previously called Frances Ruth Burke Roche, Viscountess Althorp. While still very young her parents had a bitter divorce in which her father won custody of the children. He later remarried another woman, Raine Legge. Princess Diana was the third born in the family of four (The Biography.com website, 2017).

Her father was accorded the title Earl Spencer in 1975 making Diana assume the title Lady Diana Spencer. While growing up, Diana developed an interest in music and dancing despite her shy nature; she also had a special liking for children. After her early education at home, she joined Riddlesworth Hall School and proceeded to West Heath School. She further attended Institute Alpin Videmanette in Switzerland to cap her studies. She then moved to London where she worked in early childhood development rising to the position of an assistant at Young England Kindergarten.

In 1977 Diana met the royal brothers (Prince Andrew, Prince Edward and Prince Charles) again after having earlier played with them in her childhood when Diana’s family had rented the Park House, an establishment belonging to Queen Elizabeth II. It is only that, this time a romantic relationship developed between Princess Diana and Prince Charles, who was the older brother of the other two. Prince Charles was 13 years older than Princess Diana. Prince Charles is an heir to the British throne, and Princess Diana's love for fashion and popular culture made their relationship suffer much of the public scrutiny. However, in 1981 the couple tied the knot in what most people described as the wedding of the century. The ceremony was televised all over the world attracting millions of viewers.

The couple got their first child Prince William Arthur Philip Louis on the 21st June 1982. Over two years later they welcomed another boy, Prince Henry Charles Albert David; commonly known as Prince Harry. Princess Diana took time to acclimatize to her royal responsibilities and scrutiny, however, after she got over these she decided to pursue her life interests. She supported many charities and strived to assist the needy, specifically, poor children, homeless people, and people living with HIV and AIDS.

Despite their historic union, the couple had a turbulent relationship with claims of infidelity from both parties. As a consequent Diana even suffered serious depression and bulimia. The couple was officially separated in 1992, an announcement that was made by the then Prime Minister John Major. In 1996 they became officially divorced.

Diana continued on her path of charitable acts as much as she was still a dedicated mother to her sons. This earned her great admiration and scrutiny alike. In 1997 she began dating Dodi Fayed, an Egyptian producer and socialite, drawing a wild reaction from the people and media alike. On 31st August the same year, the couple got involved in an accident while on a trip in Paris. Fayed and the driver was pronounced dead at the scene, Diana was rush to a Paris hospital, however, she passed away owing to her multiple injuries. News of her death shocked the world with many leaders giving their condolences and tributes. On 6th September 1997, her funeral procession was held, her body was finally laid to rest in her family's Estate, Althorp.

## Section II

Sigmund Freud described human personality as a complicated structure being controlled by multiple forces. In his widely known psychoanalytic theory of personality, a person personality is disjointed into three elements: the id, the ego and the superego. These elements work in unison to develop complex traits and behaviour exhibited by people (Schultz & Schultz, 2016).

Id – this is the element of personality that seeks immediate gratification. Everyone possesses this at birth, it is unconscious and comprises both the primitive and instinctive behaviours. Freud argued that the id is the source of psychic energy thus becoming the basic component of personality (Cherry & Gans, 2017). The id runs on pleasure principle which drives or pushes for instant gratification of needs, wants, and longings. Failure to gratify these leads to the development of a state of anxiety and tension. As a person grows, one learns to control id more specifically due to the development of the ego and the superego which introduces the aspect of reality to the id’s primary instincts’ acts.

Ego – this component plays a mediatory or reconciliatory means to the extreme ends; the id and the superego. The ego evolves from the id to institute a level of reality to the id; therefore impulses of id are controlled and presented in a way that is acceptable to reality (in the real world). The principle of reality drives the ego. This allows for id’s needs gratification in a realistic and morally acceptable manner. The principle of reality moderates on the consequences or outcomes from such need gratification before delivering on an appropriate action set. In most cases, the ego deliberates that id's impulses become gratified later at an appropriate time and place in a process commonly referred to as delayed gratification.

Superego – this is the component of personality which houses all acquired ideas and moral standards from parents and the society. It develops at around the ages of five. They define ones internalized logic of right and wrong, a key element of passing judgment on societal happenings. The superego is divided into two (Cherry & Gans, 2017):

1. Ego ideal – this consists set guidelines for good behaviour. These commonly do comprise of behaviour which is acceptable to parents and those wielding power or persons with authority. Alignment to these guidelines causes emotional gratification with a consequential feeling of pride and value.
2. Conscience – this comprises all those that are considered bad an unacceptable by parental figures and the society. All of these (acts or behaviours) are prohibited, and indulgence in any is punishable with dire consequences. Also participating in such predisposes one to a feeling of guilt and remorse.

All these components are what interact to bring out a personality and behaviour in an individual. When a suitable balance is achieved, a healthy personality is acquired, on the contrary, when an imbalance among these components results, then a maladaptive personality is expressed.

## Key Milestones in Princess Diana’s Life

### Birth

Diana was born in 1961; she had a normal life just like most babies with both parents. At this stage most of her personality component was id

### Parent’s divorce

In in 1967 when Diana was just about six years old her parents got separated and divorced. They got entangled in a court battle over the children custody which her father eventually won. At this stage according to Freud, Diana had started developing her ego component of personality. This experience, therefore, must have provided her with the notion of a real world where it is acceptable to get a divorce. Both her parents eventually moved on from the divorce as they married again. This is the second taste of reality she was getting from her parents; that there is always love even after a broken marriage.

### School Life and Early Work Experience

Diana experienced most of her early childhood education at the hands of private tutors at her home. Seemingly this was one experienced she did enjoy as she would later develop an interest in children and eventually becoming a kindergarten teacher herself. After her early education, she got enrolled at Riddlesworth Hall, Norfolk and later went to West Girls Heath School; at both institutions Diana did not do well academically (Lewis J. J., 2017); however, she grew liking towards Music and Dancing, all who are dominantly expressed and experienced in early childhood education. This reaffirms the impact that stage of life had on her life.

Diana later proceeded to a finishing school in Switzerland, Institut Alpin Videmanette. She only stayed at the institution for a term before quitting. She then moved to London, where she lived with other three girls in a 3-bedroom flat owned by her father. During this time, she worked as a nanny, housekeeper and an assistant to a kindergarten teacher (Lewis J. J., 2017). All these experiences were not ordinary for someone whose father had tried to give her all he could. For instance, most of the jobs Diana did were associated to commoners and less fortunate in the society. The superego did take root in her, as she would later develop empathy for the less fortunate in the society. This was evidenced by her championing for various charity courses for less fortunate.

### Courtship and Marriage

Diana initially met her future husband Prince Charles while he was dating her older sister Sarah. A few years later, after Prince Charles and Sarah broke up, Lady Diana and Prince Charles met again, however this time a romantic relationship developed between them. To some people it may be morally unacceptable to indulge in a relationship with a sibling’s former partner; however, Diana's parent's turbulent relationship might have led her to perceive such as morally acceptable, since after the parents’ divorce they moved on a remarried again. During her marriage, she suffered bulimia and depression to a point where she tried committing suicide (Lewis J. J., 2017). After her first baby, Princess Diana lost weight and started struggling with bulimia as tried to cope with her new found self of being a fashion idol.

### Divorce

The marriage of Prince Charles and Princess Diana had its unique shares of troubles. The accusation of infidelity from both parties, Diana struggles with bulimia and depression, made the marriage to eventually give in. The parties finally parted way in separation, and later the divorce was finalized. Similar to what her parents had in her early life many would view this as the culmination of such early events. It can be inferred that divorce become one of her ego ideals.

## Section III

One concept that progressively developed throughout Princess Diana's life is that of coping. At an early age Diana's parents divorced, and according to Diana's nanny at that time her parents' failed union had a resounding impact on her (Keck, 2007). During those early times in Britain divorce were not common something that made Diana feel little different from other kids. However, she was able to cope with this experience and assume a healthy/normal playful life as a child.

In school Diana didn't quite score well academically, it is even on record that she failed her O levels twice before calling it quits. Nevertheless, Diana found something she was passionate about in music and dancing. These would be viewed as means of coping with her poor performance in academics. She also later developed a big heart for children owing to her struggles in her childhood.

After marriage Princess Diana was overwhelmed with her royal roles and increased media scrutiny, however, she eventually managed to shake of these barriers to pursue her interest. This not only is an indicator of coping but also great resilience on her part. During her marriage she had serious troubles with bulimia and depression; two conditions that most people do suffer in silence. She was able to cope with these and came out to encourage other people who might not have thought that even people of the royal status could suffer from such conditions.

Finally, divorce isn't a pleasant experience for anyone to go through especially after being a bride in a wedding ceremony that people described as the ‘wedding of the century'. Diana, despite what many people would have thought or felt, called out Prince Charles infidelity creating the blueprints for their divorce. She was able to cope with the divorce and even moved on from their fairy tale marriage.

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