

*“Carry out a random act of kindness with no expectation of reward, safe in the knowledge that one day someone might do the same for you.”* Princess Diana.

The much loved, Princess Diana, who is dubbed “The People’s Princess,” was met with great disappointment upon her birth. Born into one of the United Kingdom’s noble families with a long line of royal ancestry, she was not the desperately desired son who would be able to carry on the family lineage. In fact, the sole purpose of her mother’s fourth pregnancy was to replace the baby boy who had not survived.

When Diana was born, there were already two girls in the family; Sarah and Jane. A son, John, named after his father, had been born after them, one year before Diana’s birth. However, the son was born with a lung disease and died 10 hours after he was born.

A third daughter was not what was wanted or expected. The family was so unprepared for the birth of another daughter, that they in fact did not have a name for her. Diana was finally named a week after her birth. She was given the name, Diana Francis, which was a combination of her mother’s name and the name of a distant relative. Diana Francis Spencer became known as Lady Diana after her father inherited the title of Earl Spencer in 1975.

After Diana’s birth, her mother, Lady Apthorp, was sent to clinics in London to see what the *problem* was; why was she incapable of producing a healthy son? The pressure for an heir added more strain to the couples’ already difficult relationship. Three years after Diana’s birth, Charles Edward Maurice Spencer was born, and her parents finally got their fervent wish for a son. It has been said that Diana and her younger brother Charles, would often visit the grave of their older deceased brother, and wondered if either of their births would have occurred if their brother John had lived.

When Diana was seven years old, her parents’ troubled marriage fell apart, and after a bitter divorce and child custody battle, both remarried. Their father was awarded custody of the four children. Diana said that the sound of the gravel under her mother’s shoes as she walked away from the marriage and her children would always haunt her. She described her childhood as unhappy and unstable, and referred to her stepmother as a bully.

When barely 20 years old, Lady Diana married Prince Charles. Unbeknownst to her at the time, this marriage would result in yet another rejection. Once again, the pattern of being the “wrong person” would be repeated in her life. Diana would function as a “stand in” until her husband could marry his longtime girlfriend, Camilla Parker Bowles.

In spite of her many long term personal struggles, and very possibly because of them, Diana found her voice. She changed lives by discussing her mental illness; her struggles with bulimia, self harm, poor self image, anxiety, and postpartum depression. Many people sought help with their own lives because Diana spoke in depth about hers.

Demonstrating great bravery, she spoke out against what she felt was wrong. Her own experiences fuelled her empathy. She touched many people with her honest compassion and used her celebrity status to champion numerous charitable causes.

Diana's two sons have been publicly honest about their own struggles in coming to terms with their grief regarding her death. Like their mother, their candid self disclosure has given awareness and courage to others to seek help for themselves.

*Information sourced from Wikipedia*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,\\_Princess\\_of\\_Wales](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales)