

'I love you – let's meet my psychic'

Visiting a psychic is becoming as normal as a trip to the doctors. As the Princess of Wales introduces her new love to her clairvoyant, CARMEN BRUEGMANN looks at why more and more people are turning to psychic help.



PETER THACKER

FOR Diana, it was the ultimate act of love. To show her commitment to Dodi Fayed, the Princess of Wales took him to meet a special person in her life – her clairvoyant.

It was a visit similar to a first meeting with potential in-laws. Dodi, 41, the son of Harrods' owner Mohammed Al Fayed, smiled affectionately but nervously at Diana, 36, as they walked from the helicopter and into Rita Rogers' semi-detached home. Only instead of receiving a few parental pointers, the high-profile pair spent nearly two hours listening to psychic advice. They then emerged from the house, beaming, and headed straight for a waiting Harrods helicopter.

It was the latest in a string of visits to Romany-born Rita's Derbyshire home. Diana has had previous sessions with the psychic after first going to her on the Duchess of York's recommendation. Her front room is adorned with birthday greetings and postcards from Diana, who is said to have phoned Rita from all over the world.

Controversial

The medium, who apparently talks to Diana's late father, is believed to have advised Diana to go ahead with the controversial *Panorama* television interview in November 1995. The Princess also keeps in touch with the mystic by telephone.

Rita, who refuses to discuss her famous clients, was one of four advisers used by the Duchess of York, whose favourite was Madame Vasso Kortesis, the so-called confidante whose story was blazoned across the tabloids.

It seems it becoming more openly acceptable to contact the spiritual world. For years, it was assumed that only the wacky and bizarre dabbled with the supernatural, now seemingly intelligent people consult the likes of mediums and clairvoyants. John Major, Richard Branson and Hilary Clifton are all reported to have received personal and business



advice from spiritual guides. But there is something touching on the point of vulnerability, even desperation, in Diana's impatience to whisk her new partner off for a glimpse into the future at such a fragile stage of a relationship.

Yorkshire medium/clairvoyant Julie Cryer agrees.

"I don't think it's wise to have had a visit so early on, she should have left it a little longer," says the Selby-based former civil servant.

"If someone came to me four weeks after meeting a new partner, I would say to them, get to know them better, give it maybe eight months or so and find out more about them yourself first. "In Diana's case, though, maybe they have some announcement to make or perhaps she's in a position to trust her

completely." Julie, who says she has had her 'gift' since she was a child, is regularly frequented by a diverse range of clients such as celebrities,

● **PSYCHIC START:** Jonathan Ross with his wife Jane Goldman, who sought Julie Cryer's advice before beginning the romance.

academics, housewives and members of the business sector.

"It's becoming a therapeutic area of life," she adds.

"It's no longer something that people are embarrassed about. I think it's because a lot of people are recognising that there's alternative help out there.

"And why shouldn't we be interested in the future? I think it's inspirational, particularly as we are living in a world full of stress, doubt and a cynical outlook.

"A good reading should make you feel positive, it should inspire you and reassure you and confirm things that you already feel."

Julie says the future appears to her like a video image. She also claims to talk to deceased relatives and close friends of clients. She recalls: "Larry Grayson came to me for a reading shortly before he died and I talked to Tony Hancock, Tommy Cooper and Eric Morecambe while he was here.

Performance

"I told him he would go back on TV within six weeks and he said there was no way he would. Shortly afterwards, he was asked to appear on the Royal Variety Performance, which was his last performance before he died."

They also discussed Michael Barrymore's sexuality 18 months before he had broken the news to the world.

She continues: "I told Tonicha Jeronimo from *Emmerdale* in the early days that she would be living with Stuart Wade and they would be very happy.

"They were just working together on *Emmerdale* at that time and I said their relationship was very special and they would come together, which they did."

During a visit to London several years ago, Julie bumped into 17-year-old Jane Goldman who was gearing up for her first date with Jonathan Ross.

"She just asked me if anything would come of it and I said to her, 'He's your Mr Right.' They later married and now have a handful of children."