

## Can the Brits do Emotions? | The Labour Leader's Tear Jerker

by Melanie Sully



The British are known for the stiff upper lip. You just get on with it, make a cup of tea and carry on. The Queen is the epitome of dutiful aloofness which has won admiration because it suits the tasks she has carried out. Maybe it's not modern anymore and Prince Harry's regular appearances to discuss his own mental illness and neurosis as he sees it of his own family, draw record viewers. Some applaud his "coming out", identify with his years of despair whilst others deplore this emotional outpouring as a bit too much, especially from someone who seeks privacy.

But how about a politician. Do we really need to know all the ups and downs of their family history? Keir Starmer, Labour leader, fighting for his position after some lacklustre election results has done just this in an interview with Piers Morgan who aspires to be a mix of Oprah Winfrey and Sigmund Freud. Starmer dressed in black, not the usual boring suit, white shirt and red tie, told us how tragic his family history had been. Tears choked up as he told of his mother's death after a debilitating illness, how he was told by his father to tell the rest of the family, how he left the leadership campaign to be with his wife whose mother was on her death bed. Starmer is clearly fiercely loyal and not the sort personally to leave anyone in the lurch. This all contrasted with his rather stilted and forensic style in parliament when he can run rings around Boris Johnson. This has not really cut it with voters but will they be charmed by the real man, the real Keir or find it inappropriate. Parts of the interview were embarrassing to watch but also riveting. This strange fascination with the disasters of other's lives is compelling but would it influence where the cross is put on the ballot paper.

Theresa May was also criticised for her robotic, wooden, no emotion, just get on with the job approach. She tried dancing showing off her moves at a party conference. She and her husband also once did a short personal interview discussing how they divided up the household chores.

May confessed hubby did the boys jobs like putting out the rubbish bin. Hardly nail-biting stuff. Also, she admitted to once daringly running through a wheat field, fully dressed one should add. Gulp that really throws light on a personality. Starmer refused time and time again to say whether he had taken drugs. A simple question, indeed a yes/no question Sir Keir, but he dodged it.

Boris Johnson rarely talks about his personal life. He doesn't need to, others do it for him or they make it up. This does him little harm. The emotional outpourings of VIPs wanting to sound "normal" could succeed or they can fall flat. Judge for yourselves

Here a clip from the interview:

- <https://www.itv.com/news/2021-06-01/tearful-sir-keir-starmer-recalls-moment-he-was-told-his-mum-wasnt-going-to-make-it-during-piers-morgan-interview>

Let us have your views and comments!

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#### *About the author*



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