

# Stress buster

*Get out and about to reduce stress, anxiety*

**I**F YOU ARE a keen traveller, you are perhaps a step closer to reducing anxiety or stress and improving your social skills as well.

There are more benefits of packing your bag and travelling. Huffingtonpost.com lists some of them:

**Improves your social skills:**

Meeting new people is one of the great upsides of travelling. Whether it's chatting up your roommate, making small talk with your seat-mate on a train or having a lively discussion at a local restaurant, you will be forced to improve your social skills (especially if you're travelling solo).

**Reduces stress:** Taking time off is an obvious way to recharge and reduce stress levels.

But while staying home and resting is a worthy use of your time off, travelling removes you from your everyday life and lets you truly escape.

Travelling lets you put aside your daily responsibilities and focus on yourself for a moment. When you return home you'll feel refreshed and have the motivation you felt drained of before you left.

**Accomplishes goals:** Having a travel "to-do" list and crossing



Photos: Getty, AFP

things off that list keeps you motivated and positive.

That list can include things like visiting certain locations or accomplishing something such as climbing a mountain or achieving conversational proficiency in a new language. Achieving those goals also increases confidence and gives a sense of success.

**Makes you more flexible:** Sometimes things don't go ac-

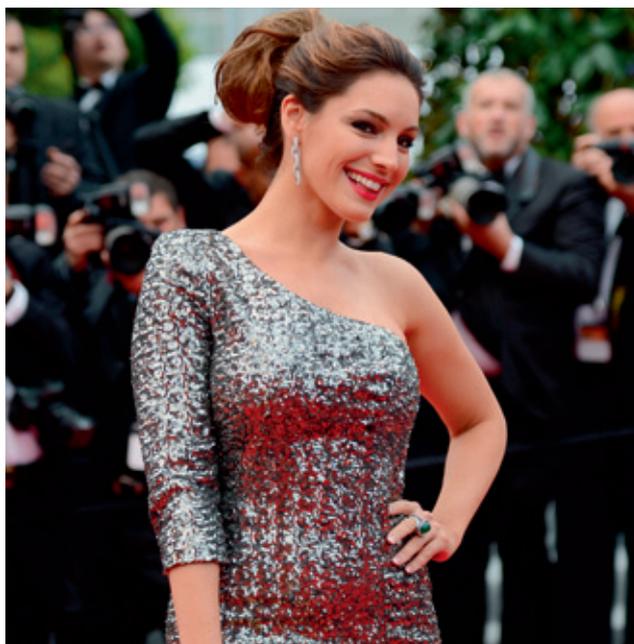
ording to plan while travelling.

Maybe your flight is cancelled or it rains the day you're scheduled to go on an epic outdoor adventure. It's okay - there are other flights to take (or trains, or buses) and maybe on that rainy day you'll discover a hidden bookstore to explore or an adorable cafe to experience. Travelling helps you to be more flexible and open minded, making you

more zen in your everyday life.

**Teaches patience:** Travel can involve a lot of waiting. You'll wait in lines, for flights or at restaurants.

Learning how to cope with those waits, how to make conversation with those you're waiting with and how to stay calm in frustratingly slow situations will teach you how to remain patient and calm in all situations. *IANS*



## Style icon

*Kelly Brook inspired by pop diva Madonna*

**KELLY BROOK** LOOKED up to superstar Madonna while growing up and often copied her famous hairstyles.

The 33-year-old says Madonna was her "idol growing up" and she always wanted to "dress like her" and she even "copied her iconic 1980s hairstyles".

"I would buy tonnes of hairspray. I had a bad perm and would scrunch my hair. I'd go through a can of hairspray a week," contactmusic.com quoted Brook as saying.

Brook also took beauty inspiration from her grandmother.

"My earliest beauty memory was at my grandmother's house. She was always into beauty products and I remember her teaching me how to cleanse my face using Anne French Cleansing Milk.

"Nowadays, my ethos is to take good care of my skin - but I also think that if you have a clear and happy mind, that shines through and makes you beautiful," she said. *IANS*

## ALIGN YOUR LIFE

### *The Dining Room*

**F**ood is associated with happy times and family gatherings. All festivities are planned around food. Every family has at least one special recipe that has been passed on to them by their mother or grandmother. All festivals around the world have one special dish associated with them and the food is very much part of one's culture and heritage.

In a home, it is the dining room where the full family comes together to enjoy meals and share their lives. The dining room is a central point in the house where people with different ideas merge to create a loving family. Feng Shui for the dining room should be an integral part of the house design and must be implemented to make the family meals an enjoyable experience.

Shapes and objects affect energy around us. Keeping that principle in mind, ideally oval or round shaped dining tables are ideal to help keep the energy flow smooth. Odd shaped dining tables and protruding sharp corners create harsh energy and lead to fights in the dining room. Avoid placing a large television in this area to reduce fire energy. One other added advantage of avoiding a television in the dining room is that people will be focused on food and conversation, rather than fixated on technology. Vibrant colours can be used to enhance family interaction. Certain colours help in boosting physical activity and will encourage healthy eating. Using yin or soothing colours in the dining room may lead to stagnant energy, which in turn would lead to overeating and lethargy.

If your dining room window overlooks a good view, place a mirror opposite the window to attract that good energy in your room. Placing green plants and displaying flowers will also enhance the energy flow and help maintain a harmonious environment. Vibrant paintings and family photographs can adorn the walls to help create a family atmosphere. Lighting in the dining room should be bright and energizing. In many modern homes there is an open kitchen leading to the dining room. This kind of design is not Feng Shui friendly, but can be rectified by creating a demarcation between kitchen and the dining room with the use of colours or partitions.

Keeping your dining room clutter free will enhance good family relationships and create a strong family.

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