

Only in
New Idea

THE VETERAN ACTOR REFLECTS ON LIFE IN THE SLOW LANE WITH HIS BELOVED FAMILY

PETER
MOCHRIE

'I've finally
found my
purpose'

Peter says he is
'blessed' to have Sally
and Cade (above)
in his life.

There's a sprinkle of silver in his hair and a few more lines around his eyes, but actor Peter Mochrie radiates health and energy. As a first-time father in his 50s, he has to be fit for anything. Playing football, building Lego towers, working six jobs at once – he's a willing slave to his lively six-year-old son Cade.

'He certainly keeps me busy,' the veteran screen star grins, snuggled up with wife Sally at home in Sydney. 'It's "Dad, Dad, Dad!" every waking second, but we're very blessed.

'Cade is a little Pisces – very intuitive, a really old spirit who's been here before. But when I'm 71 he will only be 20, so I've got to make sure I stick around!'

Now a youthful 57, it's hard to believe Peter first shot to fame back in 1978, as Ric Moran in *The Restless Years*. Since then, he's played lead roles in every

More recently, Peter
appeared with
Maria Dusseldorp
in *Janet King*.

ENSEMBLE

ENSEMBLE THEATRE

Some of the stage and
screen star's roles
include *Jack Of Hearts*
with Brooke Satchwell
(left) and a stint on NZ's
Shortland Street (above).

major TV series going, from *Water Rats* to *Murder Call*, plus a six-year stint in New Zealand's favourite soapie, *Shortland Street*.

'I went for a year originally, but along the way I found what I was looking for. I found a purpose. People ask what's the meaning of life and I think to be useful and happy is the answer. I was a bit of a tearaway in my youth and I became quite arrogant,' confesses Peter, a firm believer in Buddhism, kindness, karma and reincarnation, who meditates for 20 minutes a day.

'But eventually I started to wonder: "What's this all about? I can't walk this red carpet forever, I can't stand around in nightclubs anymore. There's got to be more to it than this." And then I met Sally and never looked back.'

To be accurate, they locked eyes a couple of times around Auckland, by chance, before they finally spoke eight years ago. From the start, Peter sensed she was somebody special.

'You know, the third time I saw Sal, I was in a bar with a mate,' he recalls. 'He was actually telling me about that dating book, *The Game*, when I looked up and there she was again. That girl. It was fate, as far as I'm concerned.'

Although *Shortland Street* is 'almost a religion' in NZ, former luxury brand manager Sally didn't have a clue who the handsome stranger was.

'She's not a mainstream sort of girl. She thought I was a fashion designer for some reason!'

Still scarred by the past – his father walked out when Peter was just 11 and his beloved aunt tragically passed away – he admits he was scared to love fully.

'There was a lot of fear, but you just have to make that jump, that leap of faith,' he says.

Peter admits Sally, now 47, and

Cade have transformed his life.

'I'm blessed every day because, for me, it was all about death and leaving and destruction and negativity, so I am just joyful to have each day come and it to be light.'

Moving back to his native Sydney three years ago, the NIDA graduate is more in demand than ever as an actor, teacher and voiceover artist. He's even a sought-after auctioneer for McGrath Estate Agents and various charities.

Peter's recent work includes David Williamson's play *Jack Of Hearts* for the Ensemble Theatre, a short film, *Wurinyan* – which screened at the Cannes Film Festival this year – and Channel Nine's *Bond* biopic, as well as much-anticipated *Blue Murder* sequel *The High Road*, and the upcoming launch of an e-course, *The Art of Presenting On Camera*.

'I work six days a week, but Sunday is for Cade,' chuckles the keen surfer, runner and former yoga fanatic.

'I used to be a mad yoga guy until I met Sally. Then I thought: "I can't be doing this for one-and-a-half hours every day!"'

'Now I do the Five Tibetan Rites (see right) every morning to stay in shape and boost my energy, and that only takes 12 minutes! There's a force, you know, and if you can get into the flow of it, everything works.'

Adds Peter: 'I believe I've been here a few times but hopefully, this time, I'm getting it right. I'm a strong believer in karma. If you do good, you get good. We are here to learn and grow.'

'But to be old and wise, first you have to be young and stupid, and I was plenty stupid,' he laughs. 'It hasn't always been an easy road but I'm proud of what I have achieved – my family.'

By Jenny Brown

Photos: Marty Lochmann NZ

THE FIVE TIBETAN RITES

Aside from yoga, a workout Peter loves for enhancing flexibility is the Five Tibetan Rites, or the Fountain of Youth, because this practice effectively strengthens and stretches all the main muscles in your body. Begin with five to seven repetitions of each rite, and build up to 21 reps.

Rite one

Stand with your arms outstretched and horizontal to the floor, palms down. Keep arms in line with your shoulders. Draw the crown of your head towards the ceiling. Focus on a spot in front of you so you can count your rotations. Spin around clockwise until you become a little dizzy. Gradually increase the number of spins from two to 21. Inhale and exhale deeply as you spin.

Tip

If you feel super-dizzy, interlace your fingers at your heart and stare at your thumbs. Also have a chair nearby to grab onto to steady yourself if you feel you are going to fall.

Rite two

Lie flat, fully extend your arms along your sides and place palms on the floor. As you inhale, raise your head, tucking your chin into your chest. Simultaneously lift your legs, knees straight, into a vertical position. If possible, extend your legs over your body towards your head. Slowly exhale, lowering your legs and head to the floor, keeping knees straight and big toes together.

Rite three

Kneel on the floor, toes curled under. Tuck your chin towards your chest. Slide your hands down the back of your thighs, drawing your shoulders back and head up (arching your upper back more than your lower back). Move your head back like you're drawing a line on the ceiling with your nose. Slowly return to an upright position. Repeat. Inhale as you arch and exhale as you return to an erect position.



Rite four

Sit on the floor with your legs straight out and feet 30cm apart. Place palms on the floor alongside your sitz bone. As you gently drop your head back, raise your torso so your knees bend while your arms stay straight (tabletop position). Slowly return to your original sitting position. Rest a few seconds then repeat. Breathe in as you rise up, hold your breath as you tense your muscles and breathe out as you come down.

Rite five

Lie on your belly, palms down and in line with your bra strap. Breathing in, press up into upward-facing dog by curling your toes under, lifting your heart and drawing your shoulders back. Arms should be straight. Look straight ahead or draw your head back, taking your eyes toward the sky. Breathing out, draw your hips up and back, extending your spine into downward facing-dog. Repeat.