

Sifu Chen Chene Nan on “got qi”

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Sifu Chen Chene Nan and his disciples

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Tai Chi is one kind of Qigong exercise. It is essential that Qi is cultivated during practice. The term “got qi?” was coin-phrased by [Gene Ching*](#), Editor of [Kungfu Tai Chi Magazine](#) in 2001, inspired by the “[got milk?](#)” campaign and the [YOLK Magazine’s](#) “got rice?” t-shirt. Many martial artists bought the concept and wear Kungfu Magazine’s “got qi?” t-shirts. So, have you really got Qi in practice? What are the indicators of “got qi” in Tai Chi practice? Sifu [Chen Chene Nan](#) of Taipei, Taiwan, a lineage holder of Grandmaster [Cheng Man-Ch’ing](#), shares his secrete of “got qi”.



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Sifu Chen came from a family that appreciates and enjoys [martial arts](#). At age 5, he studied Shaolin White Crane and later Judo. While attending college, he lived with Grandmaster [Gan Xiao Zhou](#) for two years and learned Tai Chi directly from the Grandmaster. Grandmaster Gan was one of the well-respected and highly accomplished in-chamber disciples of Grandmaster Cheng Man-Ch'ing. Tai Chi and Push Hands are closely related. Tai Chi is the foundation and Push Hands is the application. Without abundance of Qi, neither Tai Chi nor Push Hands is effective. Grandmaster Gan was known for his amazing power in Push Hands. His students won Push Hands titles in all the tournaments. In a private letter, Grandmaster Gan praised Sifu Chen for his brilliance and the superb skills that Sifu Chen developed in a relatively short period of time in comparison with majority of Tai Chi practitioners. Sifu Chen's Push Hands is extremely powerful and seldom meet its match.

Grandmaster Gan also studied Qigong with an Eastern Indian Qigong master and developed his own Five Animal Routine. His Five Animal Routine consists of eighteen different movements, imitating nine different animals (Clam, Phoenix, Monkey, Rooster, Bird, Horse, Cat, Fox, and Eagle). According to Sifu Chen, the benefits of this routine include helping to relax a practitioner's body quickly and helping to loosen joints as well as promote the feeling of Qi. Sifu Chen adheres to Grandmaster Gan's teaching method and always starts his class with a round of Five Animal Routine to help the Qi going for his students.

To Sifu Chen, Tai Chi fundamentals are very important. "Grasp The Sparrow Tail" are five movements in [Cheng Man-Ch'ing's famous 37 Form](#). Together, they consist of Ward-Off (*Peng*), Roll-Back (*Lu*), Squeeze (*Ji*) and Pressing down (*An*) methods or called Four Square Front (*Si Zheng Shou*). Sifu Chen has his students practice this set non-stop by keeping turning to eight different directions for a few

minutes in each class. He insists that all his students including his disciples practice this daily. He instructs them to do this as slow as possible; therefore Qi can travel through our meridian system well. He also teaches them to make the movements subtle and postures not too big. His explanation is that too much muscle movement or contraction will deplete Qi. His training method yields impressive results. After practicing this segment for a few minutes, students perspire even in wintertime. Normally his students will have very strong Qi feeling along with the following symptoms:

- The hands will become warm, swell, and feel a little bit numb. They also experience electricity or a magnetic type of pulling or pushing between hands if hands are close to each other.
- The arms will increase in size, become warm, and feel a little bit numb. Sometimes, there is a static feeling as if someone else is gently touching the arms.
- The neck will become warm, swell and feel a little bit numb. Additionally, it feels that the hair is standing up on the neck.
- The feet will become warm, swell, and a little bit numb.
- The inner thighs will become warm, swell, and feel a little bit numb.
- If the Qi fully sinks to lower Dan Tian, the *Hui-yin* meridian will feel movement. The testicles will also move.

Sifu Chen advises practitioners not to think too much during practice because thinking consumes Qi. He recommends not learning too many movements at once. Practitioners should fully learn each movement and can do it without thinking before learning a new one. Otherwise, too many movements or forms can only confuse people. Once people think too hard in practice, their Qi cannot accumulate as fast.

At the end of each class, Sifu Chen will ask the students to do Qigong massage including a tailbone massage (*Cuo Wei Lu*). You can see photos of tailbone massage from the slide show on the left-hand-side.

* To know more about Sifu Chen and his Nineth Heaven Tai Chi Group, you can click the link [here](#). To read more about how “got qi” came about, visit the following link [here](#).

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