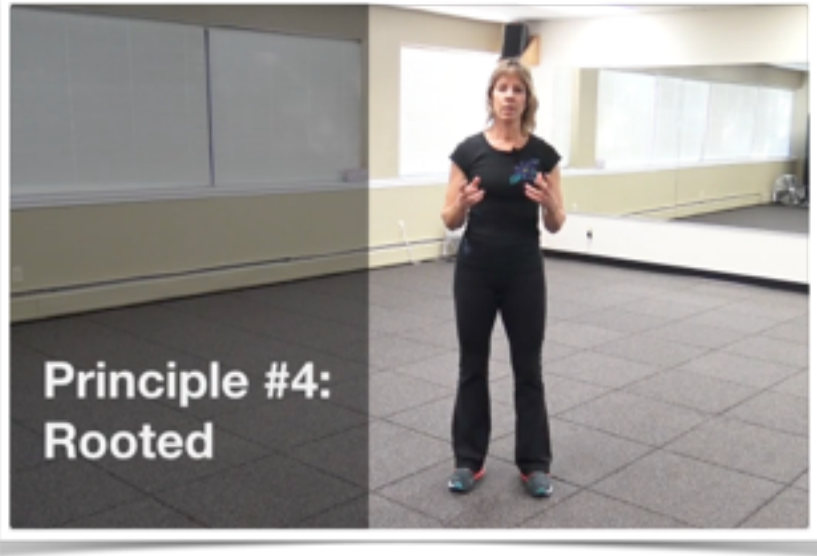




## Principle #4 Rooted

### Fluid strength

**The concept of being rooted in Tai Chi means that you are stable and in firm contact with the ground. It starts with relaxing your body.**

**You want to be able to stand in any of the postures and feel all your muscles relax. You want to think of the concept of settling into each posture and creating a balance that will not allow your opponent to gain an advantage.**

**This balance includes sinking into your stances as deeply as you personally can achieve. As you work on being rooted, don't confuse this concept with having your feet glued to the ground. You must still have fluid movement throughout the form.**

## Class #10

**Focus:** Weight shift/substantial and insubstantial/proper alignment  
Postures 1-11

### **Teaching points:**

Weight shift and the concept of substantial and insubstantial play a big part in keeping yourself rooted. Try to imagine your whole body as a tree whose roots go both deep and wide. The substantial leg will be firmly in contact with the ground. As you move through the form, however, you must shift your weight and change from substantial to insubstantial easily and fluidly.

As you attempt to get deeper into each posture, make sure that your toes stay in alignment with your knees. Focus on allowing your feet to adjust and not letting them be "glued" to the ground in one position.

### **Warm-ups:** 25 minutes

- Step side to side
- Step side to side, holding ball
- Chi walking
- Part the wild horse's mane
- Brush knee
- Repulse the monkey
- White crane spreads its wings
- Ward off sequence
- Wave Hands like Clouds

### **Form practice:** 15 minutes

Using the first 11 postures, identify the weight shift necessary to achieve substantial and insubstantial. Point out the rooted positions while allowing the feet to be fluid and track with the toes.

### **Cool-downs:** 5 minutes

- Pushing chi
- Roll the ball
- Ball right to left
- Heaven and earth

### **Homework:**

Practice pushing chi on both sides, getting deeper each time. Complete 10 slow squats (or chair sits) each day.

## Class #11

**Focus:** Sinking the body and settling/Balance/Proper knee position  
Postures 10-24

### **Teaching points:**

As you become more rooted in the form, you must begin to lower your stances. Think about sinking your weight into your dan tian. As your center of mass lowers, you become more balanced. Obviously, each person must decide how low they can comfortably go, but make sure everyone understands the proper position for their knees. Don't allow knees to extend past the toes.

### **Warm-ups:** 25 minutes

(As students perform certain postures, try pushing on them to make them off balance. If they are deep enough, you will be able to push them off balance.)

- Step side to side, holding ball
- Step side to side and lift
- Step side to side and kick
- Chi walking
- Wave hands like clouds
- Kick, smash and box the ears
- Fair lady works the shuttle
- Pick the needle up from the sea bottom
- Return the tiger to the mountain
- Snake creeps/pheasant stands

### **Form practice:** 15 minutes

Perform each posture as deeply as possible. Focus on moving from the dan tian and feeling centered and balanced.

### **Cool-downs:** 5 minutes

- Pushing chi
- Roll the ball
- Ball right to left
- Heaven and earth

### **Homework:**

Practice snake creeps, pheasant stands on both sides, getting deeper each time. Complete 10 slow lateral lunges to each side every day.

## Class #12

**Focus:** Rooted/Deepness of Stances  
Postures 1-24

### **Teaching points:**

Understanding the intention and purpose of each movement helps to understand how to become rooted and pulls together the concepts of substantial/insubstantial, balance, sinking and centering.

When you consider the martial arts application of the movement, you can create the posture needed to be in the best position to defend an attack. If you are not properly rooted, your opponent will easily gain the advantage by pulling/pushing you off-balance.

Proper balance is the product of centering, settling and relaxing. Ask the students to get into a good "ward off" stance and then take a minute to walk around and gently push them. If they can easily be pushed off balanced, it demonstrates they need to sink a little lower and maybe even widen their stance a bit.

### **Warm-ups:** 20 minutes

- Step side to side, holding ball
- Step side to side and lift
- Step side to side and kick
- Chi walking
- Part the wild horse's mane
- Brush knee
- Repulse the monkey
- Deflect, Intercept and Punch
- Wave hands like clouds
- Snake creeps, pheasant stands
- Ward off, grasp the birds tail

### **Form practice:** 20 minutes

Go through the entire form 4 times. The first time through, just focus on the deepness of each stance. Then maintaining that deepness, go through the form 3 more times adding the concepts of substantial/insubstantial, moving from the dan tian and relaxation. Try to remember the intention and purpose of each move as well.

**Cool-downs:** 5 minutes

- Pushing chi
- Roll the ball
- Ball right to left
- Breathing in and out (up and down)
- Pushing the mountains
- Heaven and earth

**Homework:**

Practice the Ward off sequence maintaining a deep stance throughout. Focus on settling your body and relaxing all the muscles.