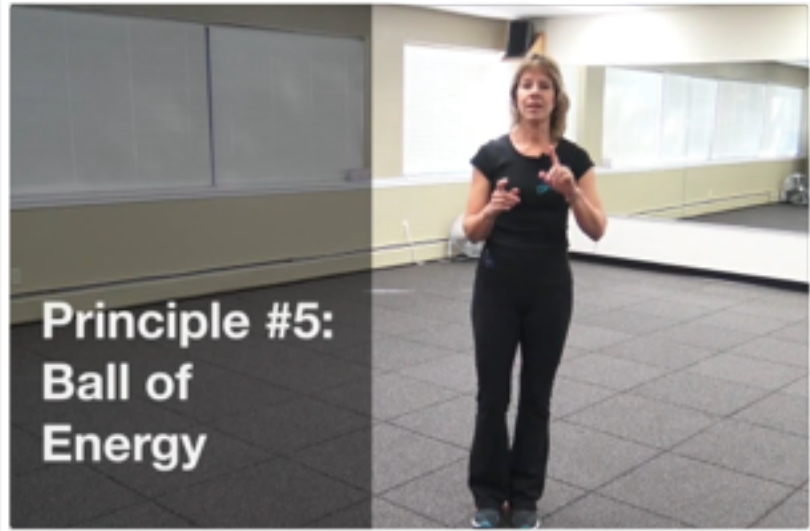




Principle #5 Ball of Energy

Movement energy

The center of your Chi or energy is the dan tian. However, in the form, you should be very aware of the ball of energy that is created by your movements.

Try to direct the energy, or the Chi to your extremities. As you move, recognize the circular patterns in your movement. Think about the martial arts application and where you would want the full force of your energy to be felt. Imagine energy between your hands as a ball that can change size and force.

Class #13

Focus: Ball of energy

Postures: 1-9

Teaching points:

Find the ball

In each posture, you should be able to find the "ball", or the focus of your energy. Obviously, "hold the ball" is an easy move to see the ball. And remember that it is just a transition move. Your goal is not to "hold the ball" of energy for yourself. Your goal is to gather the energy and release it.

Warm-ups: 25 minutes

- Step side to side
- Step side to side, holding ball
- Arm circles
- Chi walking
- Part the wild horse's mane
- Brush knee
- Repulse the monkey
- Ward off sequence

Form practice: 15 minutes

Practice the first 9 moves in the form and concentrate on finding the ball. Think about gathering energy and releasing it.

Cool-downs: 5 minutes

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

Homework:

Practice holding the ball, rolling the ball, feeling the energy between your hands.

Class #14

Focus: Ball of energy/Hand position and circular movements

Postures: 10-24

Teaching points:

Notice the position of your hands throughout each move and begin to develop the sense of energy as you move the ball. By the end of the class, you should be able to feel the energy between your hands. Start to recognize the circular patterns that exist throughout the form and remember that the symbol for Tai Chi is the Yin/Yang circle. The two opposing energies flow into and out of each other continuously. It should feel the same as you perform Tai Chi. The circular motions in the form help the energy to continually flow.

Warm-ups: 25 minutes

- Step side to side, holding ball
- Arm circles
- Step side to side and kick
- Chi walking
- Wave hands like clouds
- Fair lady works the shuttle
- Snake creeps, Pheasant stands
- Deflect, intercept and punch
- Return the tiger to the mountain

Form practice: 15 minutes

Using the last half of the form, start to develop the energy flow of a circular pattern. Notice that the ball of energy is even in the circular movements that connect one move to another.

Cool-downs: 5 minutes

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

Homework:

Practice ward off, grasp the birds tail, pushing chi focusing on the ball of energy

Class #15

Focus: Ball of energy/Rounding and Straightening

Postures: 1-24

Teaching points:

As it becomes easier to find the ball and control it throughout the form, start to translate the gathering and releasing of the energy to your entire body. This is done by rounding and straightening. And it all begins the Preparation. As you summon the desire to regulate your chi, you begin by pulling it up through your body and then settling the chi into your lower dan tian. Maintain your control of that energy by keeping your focus on that "ball" and keeping the circular movements flowing.

Warm-ups: 20 minutes

- Step side to side, holding ball
- Chi walking
- Preparation
- Part the wild horse's mane
- Brush knee
- White crane spreads its wings
- Ward off, grasp the birds tail
- Snake creeps, pheasant stands
- Repulse the Monkey

Form practice: 20 minutes

Practice the entire form 4 times through. The first time, just focus on finding the ball in each move. The second time, identify the circular patterns throughout the form. The third and fourth times, focus on gathering and releasing the energy - both with your hands and with your body by rounding and straightening.

Cool-downs: 5 minutes

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

Homework:

Practice part the wild horses mane noticing the ball as a transition and rounding as you begin, straightening as you end.