

**Westerbeke, February 2022**  
**Tai Chi is Slow, Low, and Rooted**  
by Nora Privitera

All of Tai Chi begins with the premise that you move from your center, which is the root of your body's power, that you coordinate your movement with your breath, and that you keep your feet apart by at least a hip's width distance. In addition to these fundamental principles, there are many others that can help you enhance your Tai Chi practice.

This session will explore the concepts of keeping your Tai Chi low, slow, and rooted.

**Low**, meaning that you are usually a little bit bent, not from the waist but from the hip points, almost as if you were sitting on a high barstool. By bending from the hip points, you have room to move up and down, which creates a more dynamic, more engaged movement. Tai Chi is not static or always upright. Bending and stretching, as if your body were elastic, allows you to have both flexibility and strength in your movement. This doesn't mean that you have to go very low; it only means that you should sink low enough to feel it.

**Slow**, so that you can control every move, rather than rushing through, which can lead to a person stumbling from one move to the next. By moving slowly, you have time to really concentrate on each movement, on whether your center is really guiding your movement, and how your weight should shift, and how your feet should move, and on how your hands and arms should respond to your waist movement. Imagine you're moving through water, really delve into each movement, and enjoy every part of it. movement. Let it become meditation in motion.

**Rooted**, so that you feel solid, grounded, and in control of your movements. If your weight is on one leg, that leg should feel solid, like a tree trunk, while the other feels empty, light and airy, and easy to lift up. When you change weight, pay attention to the shift from solid to empty and vice versa, as the Yang leg changes into Yin, and vice versa. It is in those changes, the transitions from empty to solid, and Yin to Yang, that the Chi is generated. Thus, your movement will feel strong, grounded, supple, and easy.

