Principles of the Cheng Man-Ch’ing Simplified Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan

Five Basic Principles:
(Represented with the Acronym BURST)

B: Beautiful Ladies Hand
   Straight relaxed wrists
   No tension in arms, wrists or fingers

U: Upright Body
   Coccyx tucks in slightly to straighten lower back
   Imagine that tail bone is if pulled down with weight
   Chin turns slightly down
   Top of head is pulled up as if lifted with a string
   Lower body is pulled down to the ground with gravity
   Upper body floats loose and free as if suspended

R: Relax
   Be aware of and let go of any tension in the body
   This is the pivotal principle in Tai Chi

S: Separate the Weight
   Weight not to be distributed evenly on both legs
   One leg is ‘Substantial’ and the other is ‘Insubstantial’
   (Except for in the Preparation Posture)

T: Turn the Waist
   Never move the body independently of the hips/waist
   All movements come from the hips/waist
   Move from the hips/waist
   Power comes from the legs
   Is controlled by the waist/hips
   Is expressed through the fingers

Additional Concepts:

Softness (Yielding)
   Water is the softest element in the universe yet
   unstoppable. Soft always overcomes the hard

Momentate (Made up verb)
   Momentum from one movement leads into the next
   Movements always flow from the previous movement
   In essence; Only one movement from start to finish

Silk Reeling
   Movements are steady with no break between postures
   Like pulling silk from a cocoon

Natural Breathing (as opposed to reverse breathing)
   Breathe through the nose
   Tongue lightly touching upper palette
   Breathe like a little child
   Abdomen expands when inhaling
   Abdomen contracts when exhaling
   Additional inhalation into the back of the lungs
   Allow chest to sink

Rooting
   Weight falls naturally with gravity to the ground
   Imagine you are being rooted to the ground through feet

Swimming in Air
   Air has substance which you will feel as you relax
   Tai Chi is like swimming in air