



## Take-A-Knee Spring Soccer 2026

### Practice One- Discipline

Gymnasts are probably the closest thing you'll ever see to an actual Jedi Knight. They move with amazing speed, confidence, and strength. They move their bodies in amazing twists and bends.

How do they do it? Do they wake up one day, pour a bowl of Ninja Flakes and gain super-human powers? No. Probably not. But they do have a secret: Practice. Training. Discipline.

They don't do one cartwheel and then go home and play video games. They do ten cartwheels. Then they do ten more. Then they do a hundred more. Then they do a thousand more. And they do a thousand backflips and a thousand front flips and a thousand front handsprings and round-offs and whatever other crazy flippy bendy things they do, because that's how you get good at something.

You do it UNTIL you're good at it. Not once. Not ten times. But thousands of times. If you want to succeed, you must be willing to work. You must be willing to give up afternoons sitting on the couch playing video games. You must be willing to put healthy food into your body. You must give up something you like for something you love.

**"No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way."  
Hebrews 12:11**

### Practice Two- Control

How many of you like to win? It feels good to win, doesn't it? And how many of you like to lose? Losing doesn't feel good. In fact, losing can sometimes make us angry, so angry, in fact, that we might even do something foolish. Who has ever thrown something in anger or stomped your feet or slammed a door out of frustration? Sometimes our anger can make us lose control.

Fencing is a sport that's all about maintaining control. It involves two people in heavily padded suits and mesh facemasks trying to poke each other with special swords. It has nothing to do with fences, but if you or your opponent loses control of your emotions, it's very possible for someone to get hurt. You know how frustrating it can be to lose and you know how tempting it is to lash out in anger. Now, imagine that you're filled with anger and frustration and you have a sword in your hand. Do you understand how important it is to keep control?

One of the first things a good fencing coach teaches his students is to respect your opponent. Having respect for your opponent means that you're able to recognize their skill and value as a person and a competitor. It can go a long way towards helping you keep control of your emotions.

**"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry."  
James 1:19**

## Practice Three- Trust

An Ironman triathlon includes a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride, and a 26.2-mile marathon run, totaling 140.6 miles of grueling physical exertion. Triathletes know what to expect. They know that they'll need to swim and they'll need to cycle, and they'll need to run.

They can't control the weather or the road conditions. A bike chain might break, or a shoe could fall apart. There are a lot of things that could go wrong that a triathlete can't plan for. But one thing every triathlete knows is that there will be swimming, cycling, and running. So that's what they train for. They don't get distracted by what could go wrong. They do their best with the trials that they know about.

We can't always know what life is going to throw at us and that makes it difficult to plan ahead, but sometimes planning means being ready to accept whatever happens. If we have faith in God, that He's in control, that His plan is best, and then we don't need to plan out every detail. We can be ready for anything because of our trust in God.

**"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace.  
In the world, you will have trouble. But take heart; I have overcome the world."  
John 16:33**

## Practice Four- Choices

The Canoe Slalom probably isn't anyone's favorite Sport to watch. It isn't very relatable or dynamic; it's people in canoes darting around some flags. But there is a very important lesson to be learned from these athletes. Paddling a canoe is not as simple as you might think. You must balance out your strokes. For every left-handed stroke the canoe turns a little bit to the right and for every right-handed stroke the canoe turns a little bit to the left. So, if you want to go in a straight line, it won't do you any good to only paddle on one side of your canoe. You'd end up going in a big circle and you'd never get where you want to go. If you put all your energy into only one part of your life, you won't get to where you want to go either.

If you spend all your time focused on sports or videogames, you'll be missing out on other important things in life. You'll be moving, but it might not be in the direction you wanted to go. If you want to move your life in the right direction, you must find balance. It can't all be work and it can't all be play. You must paddle on both sides of your canoe.

**"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight. Proverbs 3:5-6**

## Practice Five- Character

Diving is an impressive sport. Athletes launch themselves from a high platform above a swimming pool, twisting and turning and flipping elegantly before gently slipping into the water, leaving a few ripples on the water's surface as the only evidence of their passing. Do you suppose the divers wait until they jump from the edge of the platform to decide what skills they'll do? Absolutely not! They know when they wake up that morning what kind of dive they'll be doing.

They have practiced that dive repeatedly until they can't think of anything else. Wouldn't it be nice if everything in life was so predictable? Things would be a lot easier if we knew what events would occur and what kind of conversation we would have. We could plan our jokes and avoid the hard moments. It would be great.

But life is completely unpredictable. That's why it's important to know what kind of person you want to be. Knowing the kind of person you want to be will help you decide how to act. If you know you want to be a kind and generous person, you must make decisions that are kind and generous. If you want to be rude and selfish, you make decisions that are rude and selfish. If you want to make people laugh, then you make silly jokes. You can't always know what's coming in life but knowing what kind of person you want to be will help you make the best choices no matter what happens.

*"Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowances for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you."  
Colossians 3:12-13*

## Practice Six- Faith

Have you ever seen a rugby match? It's confusing and frightening and if you don't know what's going on it can look an awful lot like a bunch of sweaty people fighting over a large egg. Imagine American football but without the helmets, pads, or any rules, it would seem. In rugby, players race back and forth pitching the ball to teammates, kicking it occasionally, getting knocked down and trampled, until one team manages to score.

It's a very rough game. Injuries are common, expected even. Broken fingers are ignored; bloody noses are shrugged off. Rugby players understand that every time they step onto the rugby pitch, they're taking a risk. They've made their choice. They expect the pain. They expect to get hurt. That's the price of rugby and they're willing to pay it.

When God created humans, He knew what was going to happen. He knew that there would be sin in the world. He knew what kind of problems would arise. And He knew that the only way to fix all those problems was to send His son, Jesus. He knew it would be painful. He knew there would be fear and sadness and suffering. But He was willing to pay that price. He loves us so much that He was willing to go through all that trouble just for the chance to be with us. You mean that much to God.

*"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."  
Romans 5:8*