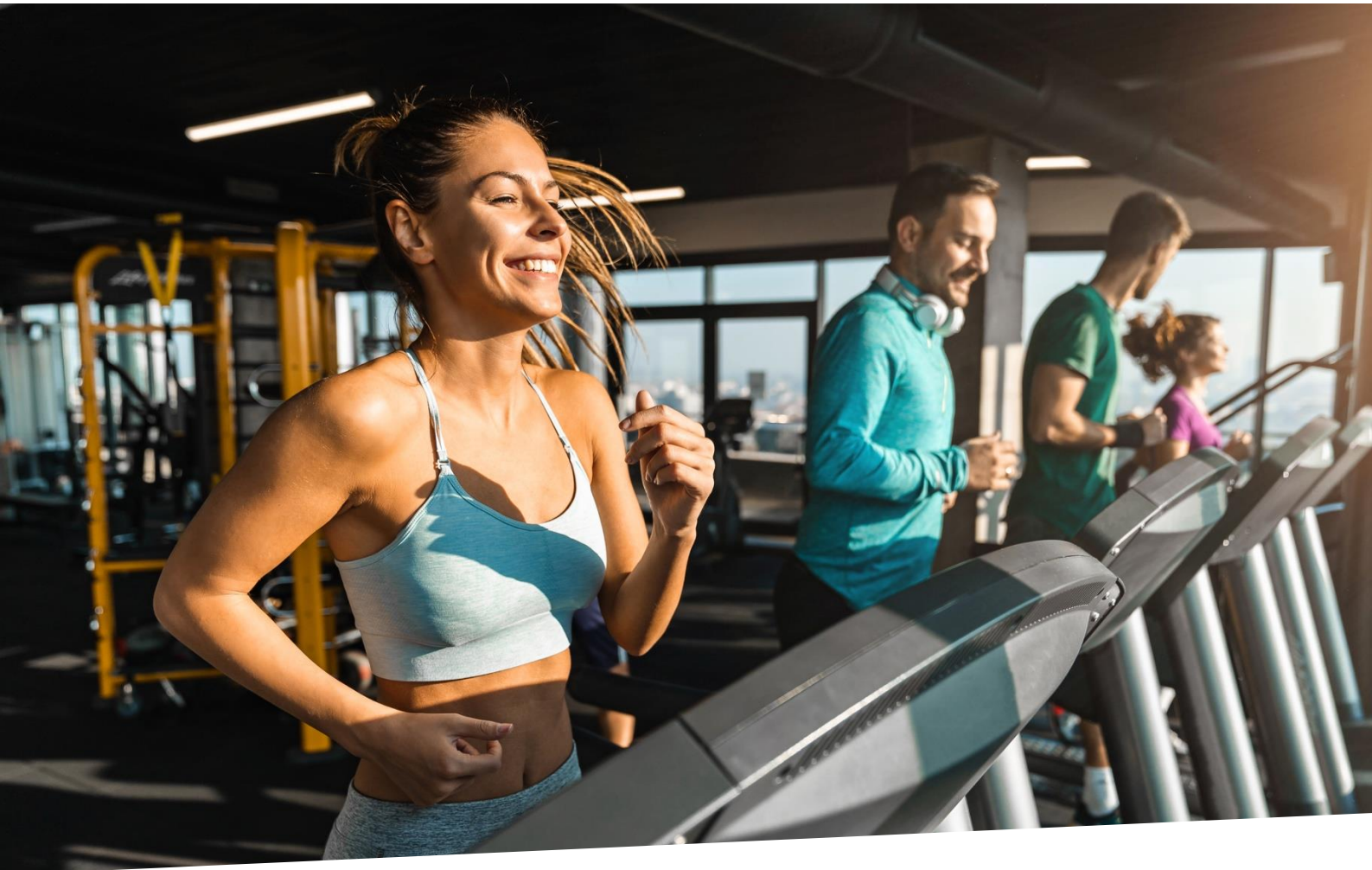




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SEARCH PROJECT

IN – DEPTH SEMINAR n.1

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WHAT ROLE DOES SPORT PLAY IN YOUTH GROWTH?

Welcome to everyone, I'm Daniele Aletti, I'm a teacher and I work in both primary and high school. I also collaborate with the Sapienza University in the field of training and education and moreover I work together with INDIRE. Our role is quite heavy because we have to train future generations, everyone pass by the school: future parents, politicians, doctors etc ect ... and nothing like sport can teach a person the values of a civilization. When we speak of training, we are speaking about education and therefore of psychological structuring. We are talking about resilience and maturation and there is nothing in this sense more formative than sport. The school must make sport assume a cultural depth that it does not currently have. In other words, it is essential to recognize how much psychological maturation and resilience are 2 dimensions that go hand in hand and only sport is able to carry them both at the same time. Let's think about the heroes of history. Heroes are generally those who have a tremendous sense of responsibility that many times care about others. This responsibility implies resilience such as the ability to overcome shocks.

Q1: Why is the school the only institution that can give depth to sport?

Because he is the only one who also tackles it on a theoretical level with the study of manuals. Usually the athletic activity is linked to an intuitive - analogical mode and therefore the school must absolutely integrate it also in a cultural sense and make it clear that sport is really a way of facing life.

Teachers are beauty educators, as we must not only educate the mind but also form a psyche that takes a correct direction. Educating to beauty means making people perceive the



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greatness and passion inherent in every subject and therefore also in athletic activity. The latter has an edge over other disciplines, it is capable of stabilizing the psycho - physical - mental system. The inability to discharge tensions accumulated through the expression of anger, it has effects very serious on the mental and physical health of the person concerned. I give the example of Laborit's mouse experiments. In a first phase of his study he placed a mouse in one cage equipped with an underlying grid capable of conducting electric current. In a second phase of the experiment, the mice were two, placed in the room where we received the same treatment as the first phase namely the anticipated electric shock of the sound without the ability to move. The behavior of the animals was really curious: the mice after having received few electric shocks they began to struggle between them to reduce the accumulated tension.

The plus point of physical education is its being a system for relieving nervousness, stress and dissatisfaction. By discharging this negative energy, physical activity helps us to keep our system stable and therefore teaches us about beauty. The limbic, associative, sensitive and motor systems are actually a single unit. If one of these is affected, we feel the consequences for the others as well. For example when we are afraid we cannot think, we lose our strength so we can notice that if the psychological sphere is hit, it also drags down the physical one and vice versa. Its being a single unit implies the need to maintain sustainability. A sustainable system is a system that renews its energies in a sort of energy exchange, where we not only need to accumulate energy but also to discharge them. Our system energizes itself when we get rid of it.

Q2: Having said that, what does school have to do with it?

The school has the duty to compose the energy in a harmonious way, it must harmonize the mind and body systems. This happens at school because only here the dimension is social, at home there is a psychological dimension. At school the student becomes aware of the truth



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as each discipline represents an aspect of lived reality, and it is for this reason that the discipline must be integrated.

And physical education more than other disciplines marks the path of theory in action, in athletic gesture. It represents the demonstration of an idea that has taken place.

At school, teachers in addition to having to educate the students, each from their own perspective: linguistic, philosophical, mathematical, must help to harmonize the body and mind and this means teaching to be happy in a society where neurosis is widespread due to a strong lack of education regarding the ability to harmonize body and mind.

To make a human being, an happy man, teachers must act on 2 fronts:

1: Educate to beauty, which means being full of content, being curious about the various aspects of life and therefore not being bored. We have to make the student passionate about everything.

2: Educate to resilience. Once we have educated in beauty and therefore made our children passionate about the contents of life, we must prepare them not to give up in the face of difficulties and therefore be resilient. Sport is one of the best ways to teach them resilience.

In fact, resilience also develops with respect for the rules, through the will. Our learning room must become a gym and physical education is one step ahead as all sports have rules to respect.

So we teachers must fill the students with content and passions to avoid contributing to the birth of dissatisfaction and neurosis. What sustains resilience is passion because it causes emotions and the human being wants to get excited.

The human being needs to do and that doing involves the emotional sphere. Sport is able to trigger this mechanism as psycho-physicality is the first language that the child speaks.



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There are two ways to get self-control: one is the psychological one (from the inside to the outside) and the other is the opposite, through the body and its actions, therefore with physical activity, the human being can control himself.

All school disciplines can educate to beauty but physical education more than all as it allows to teach, to lay the foundations for self-control.

So far no school subject can boast of having seen a school that trains students to happiness and therefore to balance and resilience. The latter is the goal of all schools, as life is faced by having passions, communicating them in a balanced way and above all being able to resist the difficulties of life.

I take the example of Manuel Bortuzzo, a young swimmer with the dream of the Olympics. Unfortunately he was a victim of a shooting that sentenced him to no longer be able to train to pursue his dream. Despite this Manuel has always kept a positive attitude, he did not give up and this is the perfect example of what I have said so far.

This boy was trained in beauty and fortitude at the same time; thanks to this, when he lost the most important thing for him, the use of his legs, he kept the system in balance. His reaction represents what should be the goal of all disciplines: to arouse so much passion that you don't see the ugliness of things when they happen.

Q3: Is it possible to connect what has been said with the SEARCH project?

From an institutional point of view, the project plans to train young people to:

- 1) an active citizenship, therefore linking sport to issues such as social inclusion and resilience;
- 2) It also wants to make younger children understand the concept of well-being, which should not be considered only for those who play sport at a competitive level. Well-being is also given by certain positive behaviors, such as: walking, limiting the use of transport etc etc.

This is the spirit of the search project awarded by the European commission.



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Furthermore, sport allows us to recover, to put man back on track. To make you understand this concept better, I bring you an experience not as an athlete but as a teacher. For a while I taught in Casal del Marmo, a juvenile hall in Rome and in this place I was able to feel the power of sport. I had a multicultural class and we organized a soccer match, students against teachers. The soccer field became the best learning classroom we could have. Match after match, the boys learned to play together, making the football field a cross-section of society where it is necessary to cooperate, interact and communicate with respect for others. There was also another episode. During a game, an Albanian boy lost his head, did not let the other boys play and suddenly blaspheme, thus breaking the rules. He was asked to leave the game and leave the playing field and after countless refusals a prison guard took him and took him out. But to re-educate him I asked not to take him to isolation but only to apologize to everyone and resume the game. He did it, and after 5 years he met me by chance and thanked me for that day. This is to say that when we transmit rules, we transmit something powerful that only sport can convey. There are no formulas to be good teachers, what can help us in this mission is to be maximally rigid and at the same time maximally flexible as our activity must be both inclusive and regulatory. Inclusive is understanding, regulatory is strength. Obviously we must have a lot of patience. The image to understand the teacher's work is the "Holding Hug" that is done when a person loses self - control due to a nervous breakdown. The "Holding Hug" makes it clear to those in difficulty that they are being blocked but also loving. I try to make him understand that the strength I'm putting in is for his good and for his return to balance. This feeling is what the sport produces on us every time it is done. Our excess energy is discharged through dreams and physical activity. For this reason everyone should play sports at least 1 hour a day, so as to release all tension and keep our system in balance. The athletic gesture is at the same time strength, beauty, wisdom and resilience. Each athletic gesture follows the rules of the art. What is art? It's the respect of a sum of rules



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through which we carry out an activity. unfortunately the students who practice sport at a competitive level are always pushed aside by the school. This is wrong because they are already complete, rich and could transmit their power to all the other students. They are not used to rationalizing their experience and this is a great loss for schoolmates. The school should value sport and instead is punitive towards these young athletes who do not have a regular attendance due to their sporting missions. Currently there is no specific school path to make physical activity a resource, not only like the others but as a discipline that trains an human being to be a professional.

This is a terrible mistake for the school, as the student athlete is not valued by the school and therefore ends up giving up.