SUMMARY

The purpose of the present chapter is to present the Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand et al., 2003) and show its importance for sport and exercise psychology. Passion is defined as a strong inclination toward a self-defining activity that people like (or love), find important, and in which they invest time and energy. Specifically, the model proposes the existence of two types of passion (harmonious and obsessive). Harmonious passion is hypothesized to lead to more adaptive outcomes than obsessive passion. This is because with harmonious passion people autonomously engage in the activity that they love. Conversely, with obsessive passion, people engage in the activity that they love because of an internal pressure. Results of several studies reveal that passion matters with respect to a number of important outcomes for sport and exercise psychology such as emotions, psychological well-being, cognitive processes, physical health, performance, and interpersonal relationships. Also discussed in this chapter are the development of passion and the practical applications in the domain of sport and exercise.

INTRODUCTION

Each day, millions of individuals engage in sport and exercise. For many of them, sport and exercise represent more than just an ordinary activity they engage in routinely. It is something special, something that they are passionate about. They love their favorite sport or exercise, find it meaningful and important, and engage regularly in it. Such a passion for this activity leads them to experience a number of positive outcomes. Yet, at times, less positive outcomes may be experienced. The purpose of this chapter is to present a recent conceptualization of passion (Vallerand, 2008, 2010; Vallerand et al., 2003), the Dualistic Model of Passion, and show its applicability to the realm of sport and exercise. Through the presentation of the model, it will become clear why passion sometimes leads to positive outcomes, and sometimes it does not. Following a discussion on the concept of passion and the presentation of the model, we review research on the role of passion as it
pertain to intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes. We then discuss the development of passion. Finally, we conclude with suggestions for practical applications.

The stories of Mary and William illustrate briefly how passion may influence athletes and exercisers. Mary has been playing soccer her whole life. On the other hand, William has been running ever since he was able to stand up. Both Mary and William love their respective activity, find it important and spend lots of time and energy on it. Their activity has come to define them, as it is now part of who they are. Mary is a soccer player, just as William is a runner. This passion for their activity has led them to work hard for several years, enabling them to attain excellence in their respective field, as Mary has recently been offered a scholarship to play soccer in college, while William is in tremendous shape and has recently completed his first marathon. Nevertheless, while both are passionate toward their respective activity, they differ in some ways when it comes to their activity involvement. For instance, Mary takes soccer very seriously and trains really hard. She is focused on the task at hand and remains positive. Her life, however, isn’t only about soccer. She can shift her attention to other important life activities, such as studying or spending time with friends. She manages to achieve balance between the demands of her sport and the other aspects of her life. Like Mary, William trains really hard and takes running very seriously. However, running is all that matters for William. He thinks and talks about it all the time, even at the expense of his enjoyment of other life activities. When training, he is focused solely on his performance. When not training, he feels guilty for wasting precious running time. He doesn’t find much interest in other life activities such as work, as he’s always thinking about his next running session. Thus, William’s passion for running is interfering with other life activities and, as a result, he is not as happy as he should be, both while running and when doing something else.

One reason why these two individuals are both similar and different with respect to the practice of their respective activity has to do with passion. They are undoubtedly both passionate for their activity, but they experience their passion differently and because of this, experience different outcomes.

OBJECTIVES
After reading this chapter, you should have:

1. An understanding of the Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP; Vallerand et al., 2003).
2. A better understanding of its applicability to the realm of sport and exercise.
5. Comprehension of research that provides support for our conceptualization of passion.
6. An understanding of practical implications for developing passion in sport and exercise.

THE DUALISTIC MODEL OF PASSION
Despite much attention from philosophers (see Rony, 1990, for a review), little empirical attention has been given to the concept of passion from a psychological standpoint. The Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP) was developed in order to address this issue. In line with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), the DMP posits that people engage in
various activities throughout life in the hope of satisfying the basic psychological needs of autonomy (a desire to feel a sense of personal initiative), competence (a desire to interact effectively with the environment), and relatedness (a desire to feel connected to significant others). With time and experience, most people eventually start to display preference for some activities, especially those that are enjoyable and allow the satisfaction of the aforementioned basic psychological needs. Of these activities, a select few will be perceived as particularly important and enjoyable and will have some resonance with how we see ourselves. These activities thus become passionate activities.

According to the Dualistic Model of Passion (Vallerand, 2008, 2010; Vallerand et al., 2003), passion is defined as a strong inclination toward a self-defining activity (person or object) that one likes (or even loves), finds important, and in which one invests time and energy. Thus, four elements characterize a passion for a given activity: we love the activity, we highly value it as it is important and meaningful for us, we engage in it on a regular basis (i.e., several hours per week), and it is part of our identity as it comes to define us. In fact, passionate activities are so important to people that they become part of our identity. For example, those who are passionate about playing soccer or running refer to themselves as “soccer players” and “runners” rather than individuals who merely enjoy their sport. This process, through which the activity comes to define us, is called internalization. Internalization refers to the process by which what was once “out there” – in the outside world – becomes part of us (Deci, Egharri, Patrick, & Leone, 1994). In other words, what was once external to the self becomes a part of it. Thus, the passionate activity (e.g., playing basketball) becomes internalized into one’s identity (see Deci et al., 1994; Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997) because of its importance to the individual (see Deci et al., 1994).

Of major importance is that the internalization of a passionate activity can take place in two different ways, which leads to two different types of passion. One type of internalization is referred to as an autonomous internalization. An autonomous internalization of a passionate activity occurs when individuals freely accept the activity as important for them (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Sheldon, 2002; Vallerand, 1997). This type of internalization leads to a harmonious passion, as people choose to engage in their passionate activity without any contingencies attached to it. The activity thus remains in harmony with other aspects of the person’s life as it occupies a significant, but not overpowering, space in the person’s identity. With harmonious passion the authentic integrating self (Deci & Ryan, 2000) is at play, allowing the person to fully partake in the passionate activity with an openness that is conducive to positive experiences (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). In other words, with harmonious passion, our inner self is at play. The passionate activity is under our full control and connects well with other aspects of our self and life. There is a smooth integration between who we are (our identity) and this activity. Consequently, with harmonious passion, people should be able to fully focus on the task at hand and experience positive outcomes both during and after task engagement. Furthermore, when prevented from engaging in their passionate activity, people with a harmonious passion should be able to adapt well to the situation and focus their attention and energy on other tasks that need to be done. Thus, there should be little or no conflict between the person’s passionate activity and other life domains. Finally, with harmonious passion, the person is in control of the activity and can decide when and when not to engage in the activity. In our example above, Mary is harmoniously passionate about soccer.

The second type of internalization is referred to as controlled internalization (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Sheldon, 2002; Vallerand, 1997).
A controlled internalization of a passionate activity originates from intra- and/or interpersonal pressure attached to the activity, such as contingencies of self-esteem or social acceptance (e.g., Crocker & Park, 2004; Mageau, Carpentier, & Vallerand, 2011), or because the feeling of excitement derived from activity engagement is uncontrollable. A controlled internalization leads to obsessive passion. In other words, the activity becomes part of us because not only do we love it but also because it brings us other more extrinsic benefits such as being popular or liked by other people or giving us a boost in self-esteem when we do well. Thus, the controlled internalization of the activity is not as “pure” as with the autonomous internalization. As such it is more superficial, includes extrinsic elements, and thus does not fully access the authentic or inner self. One consequence of this less than optimal internalization is that one’s passion for the activity is not fully under the control of the self. Consequently, people with an obsessive passion can find themselves in the position of experiencing an uncontrollable urge to partake in the activity they view as important and enjoyable. They cannot help but to engage in the passionate activity, as the passion controls them. Consequently, people with an obsessive passion risk experiencing conflict and other negative affective, cognitive, and behavioral consequences during and after activity engagement. Individuals with an obsessive passion come to display a rigid persistence toward the activity, as they often cannot help but to engage in the passionate activity. While such persistence may lead to some benefits (e.g., improved performance in the activity), it may also come at a high cost for the individual, potentially leading to less than optimal functioning within the confines of the passionate activity because of the lack of flexibility that it entails. In addition, such a rigid persistence may lead the person to experience conflict with other aspects of his/her life (when one should be doing something else, for instance), as well as to frustration and rumination about the activity when prevented from engaging in it. William, in our example, is obsessively passionate about running.

Over the past 10 years or so, over 100 studies have been conducted on harmonious and obsessive passion, both by our own research group and by other research laboratories around the world. Such research has been conducted in a number of contexts, one of which is sports and exercise. In the present chapter, we focus on research carried out in this life context. For a discussion on the role of passion in other contexts (e.g., work, leisure, video gaming, gambling, etc.), the reader is referred to Vallerand (2008, 2010). In addition, although much research has been conducted in a number of different laboratories around the world, because of space limitation, we focus on our own research. Finally, it should be noted that research in sport has been conducted with most types of sport participants, including athletes (e.g., Vallerand et al., 2006), coaches (e.g., Lafreniere, Jowett, Vallerand, Donahue, & Lorimer, 2008), referees (e.g., Philippe, Vallerand, Andrianarisoa, & Brunel, 2009), and fans (e.g., Vallerand, Ntoumanis et al., 2008). Again, because of space limitations, we focus here on research with athletes and exercisers. Readers interested in research with the other types of sport participants are referred to Vallerand, Donahue, & Lafreniere (2011) and Vallerand (2012a).

We begin our review with a description of the initial research conducted in Vallerand et al. (2003, Study 1), followed by research on the intra- and interpersonal consequences of passion. We then present research on the development of passion. Finally, we conclude the chapter with some practical applications and a summary.
Initial research on the concept of passion

The purpose of the initial validation study (Vallerand et al., 2003, Study 1) was to test some of the basic premises of the conceptualization of passion. To that end, college students were asked to complete a questionnaire containing the Passion Scale with respect to an activity that they liked, that they valued, and in which they invested time and energy on a regular basis (i.e., the passion definition). Interestingly, although this activity could be in any area (e.g., music playing, video gaming, reading, etc.), over 60% of our sample indicated that their passionate activity involved either a sport or a type of physical activity. This finding underscores the fact that the results from this study are highly pertinent for the field of sport and exercise. In addition to the Passion Scale, participants completed other scales allowing us to correlate the Passion Scale with other constructs of theoretical interest. This study yielded several findings of interest, including four discussed here. First, results revealed that 84% of the participants had at least a moderate level of passion toward an activity in their lives. Thus, it would appear that it is a majority of people who have a passion for an activity in their lives, and not simply a privileged minority (this finding has been obtained repeatedly; see Vallerand, 2010). Second, participants reported spending an average of 8.5 hours per week on the activity. It thus appears that passionate activities entail heavy involvement. Third, participants had been engaging in the passionate activity for an average of almost six years. This finding underscores the fact that such activities do not simply reflect a passing interest but are meaningful to people and remain so over a long period of time.

A fourth finding of interest is that the results of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses provided strong support for the existence of two separate constructs corresponding to harmonious and obsessive passion. Subsequent research has supported the bi-factorial structure of the Passion Scale in a number of life contexts and activities including sports and exercise (see Vallerand, 2010, for a review). For instance, Marsh et al. (2013) have shown that the scale is reliable and valid and is equivalent both in English and French, for both men and women, across various age groups, and for a number of different activities. Thus, the scale can be readily used for most if not all types of sports and forms of exercise.

Finally, results from this initial validation study also revealed that both harmonious and obsessive passion were positively associated with measures of activity valuation, with time involvement, and with the perception that the activity was a passion, thereby providing support for the conceptual definition of passion. In addition, while both types of passion were seen as being part of one's identity, only obsessive passion was positively related to a measure of conflict with other life activities. In sum, initial research has provided preliminary support for some of the basic premises of the Dualistic Model of Passion. Subsequent research focused on the study of outcomes associated with the two types of passion, as well as its development.

Passion and affective consequences

The DMP postulates that the type of passion one holds toward an activity plays a significant role in the affective consequences he or she is likely to experience both during and after activity engagement, as well as when prevented from engaging in the passionate activity. More precisely, harmoniously passionate individuals ought to experience more positive affective consequences and less negative affective consequences than individuals with an obsessive passion. This is because with harmonious passion, people volitionally engage in the passionate activity with an openness (Hodgins & Knee, 2002) and a mindfulness (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007) that allow them to fully partake in the activity and thus to experience
positive affective experiences more fully. This is not the case with obsessive passion where one's engagement is more defensive and is less conducive to full engagement in the activity.

The above hypotheses were tested and supported in the initial validation study by Vallerand and colleagues (2003, Study 1). Results showed that when controlling for obsessive passion, harmonious passion was positively related to positive affect during task engagement, but was negatively related to negative affect, especially shame. Conversely, when controlling for harmonious passion, obsessive passion was positively related to negative affect, such as shame and anxiety and was unrelated to positive affect. These results were replicated in two studies with basketball players (Vallerand et al., 2006, Studies 2 and 3). Specifically, when controlling for obsessive passion, harmonious passion was positively related to vitality and positive affect in basketball, while unrelated to negative affect. In contrast, obsessive passion was only positively related to negative affect. Moreover, when people are prevented from engaging in their passionate activity (playing basketball), obsessive passion is positively related to negative affect (e.g., guilt, anxiety) while harmonious passion is not (Vallerand et al., 2003, Study 1).

Because passionate activities are a central part of one's identity, they also come to influence one's life in general. Results of a longitudinal study involving intercollegiate (American) football players (Vallerand et al., 2003, Study 2) showed that, over the course of an entire season, harmonious passion predicted increases in positive affect in life in general but was unrelated to negative affect, whereas obsessive passion was associated with increases in negative affect but was unrelated to positive affect.

Finally, passion research has also looked at the ability of passionate individuals to predict their future affective states (i.e., affective forecasting) following success and failure events within the purview of the passionate activity. Because it is more closely connected to the self than obsessive passion, harmonious passion should be able to make more accurate predictions of their future emotional states. This hypothesis was supported in a study with sport fans (Verner-Filion, Lafreniere, & Vallerand, 2012). In this study, it was found that harmonious passion was associated with greater accuracy (or better affective forecasting) when predicting the emotional consequences following a win or a defeat of their favorite team. In contrast, obsessive passion was unrelated to affective forecasting accuracy.

In sum, it would appear that passion for sports and exercise matters with respect to the emotions that people experience both inside and outside the purview of the activity. Harmonious passion is associated with more positive emotions, both in the activity and in life in general. In contrast, obsessive passion is related to the experience of negative emotions in the activity, when prevented from engaging in the activity, and in life in general. Similar results were obtained with coaches (Lafreniere et al., 2008, Study 1; Philippe et al., 2009, Study 1). In addition, harmonious passion seems to lead one to being able to correctly identify the positive and negative emotions likely to be experienced under success and failure more than obsessive passion (Verner-Filion et al., 2012).

Passion and psychological well-being

Psychological well-being entails being satisfied with one's life, perceiving that one's life is worth living, and also that one is living up to his or her potential (i.e., high levels of self-realization). Because it allows one to experience positive affective states on a regular basis, it was hypothesized that harmonious passion for a given activity should be positively associated with psychological well-being, whereas obsessive passion should not. These hypotheses have been confirmed repeatedly as pertains to a variety of passionate activities (see, Vallerand, 2012b). These findings have also been obtained with sport and exercise participants. For instance, harmonious passion has been
found to be positively related to subjective well-being, while obsessive passion was unrelated to these indices with water polo players and synchronized swimmers (Vallerand, Mageau et al., 2008, Study 2) and basketball players (Vallerand et al., 2006, Study 2).

Research has also focused on the mediating processes involved in the relationship between passion and psychological well-being. In line with Fredrickson’s (2001) Broaden-and-Build theory, it is proposed that positive emotions play a mediating role between harmonious passion and psychological well-being. This is because positive emotions allow one to have access to the self and full set of cognitive repertoire, thereby facilitating the use of adaptive processes. Because obsessive passion is typically unrelated to positive emotions, it should not be related to psychological well-being. Rousseau and Vallerand (2008) tested this hypothesis in a study with older adults who were passionate exercisers over a two-month period. Results from a path analysis revealed that harmonious passion positively predicted positive affect while exercising, which led to increases in psychological well-being over time. In contrast, obsessive passion was unrelated to positive affect but positively predicted negative affect. However, negative affect was unrelated to psychological well-being.

Overall, empirical evidence reveals that harmonious passion may positively contribute to psychological well-being. Furthermore, it appears that the positive effects of harmonious passion on psychological well-being takes place through its impact on positive affect. On the other hand, obsessive passion does not seem to contribute to psychological well-being and may even detract from it through its impact on negative affect and conflict with other life activities (see Vallerand, Paquet, Philippe, & Charest, 2010).

### Passion and cognitive processes

Based on the DMP, it would be expected that harmonious passion facilitates adaptive cognitive processes (such as concentration, flow, and better decision making), whereas obsessive passion should not, or at least should have less positive effects than harmonious passion. As mentioned previously, this is because harmonious passion entails an open, mindful, task engagement while obsessive passion facilitates a more defensive form of activity engagement. Research supports this hypothesis in a number of contexts and activities (e.g., Vallerand et al., 2003, Study 1). For instance, in research with soccer referees, harmonious passion correlated more strongly with concentration on the passionate activity than on the obsessive passion (Philippe et al., 2009). Other research with soccer fans also demonstrated that obsessive passion in soccer fans prevented full concentration on other life activities taking place on the same day as the passionate activity, while this was not the case for harmonious passion (i.e., game; Vallerand, Ntoumanis et al., 2008).

Another interesting cognitive concept is flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1978). Flow refers to a desirable cognitive state that people experience when they become completely immersed in an activity. Much research in a number of areas has shown that harmonious passion positively predicts the experience of flow during task engagement, while obsessive passion does not (e.g., Forest, Mageau, Sarrazin, & Morin, 2011). Results from the Vallerand et al. (2003, Study 1) research as well as that conducted in sports with soccer referees replicated these findings (Philippe et al., 2009). Finally, in the latter study, referees with a harmonious passion displayed better decision-making than those with an obsessive passion.

In sum, the two types of passion lead to different levels of cognitive functioning. Harmonious passion leads to the most adaptive types of cognitive processes, whereas obsessive passion leads to the least adaptive types.

### Passion and physical health

Passion may affect physical health in a number of ways. For instance, passion may positively
Passion and performance

The Dualistic Model of Passion posits that passion represents a key determinant of high-level performance. This is so because passion leads athletes to engage in a specific form of practice that focuses on improving one's skills, called deliberate practice (Ericsson & Charness, 1994). Indeed, if one is to engage in an activity for long hours for several years (sometimes a lifetime) to get better at one's sport or form of exercise, one must love the activity dearly, and have the desire to keep on practicing even when times are rough. Given what we know about passion, both forms of passion should lead participants to engage in deliberate practice that, over time, should lead to improved performance. This relationship was supported in several studies in a variety of activities ranging from music, dramatic arts, and sports and using objective indicators of performance (see Vallerand, 2010, for a review).

With respect to sport, one study with basketball players (Vallerand, Mageau et al., 2008, Study 1) revealed that both types of passion led to engagement in deliberate practice that, in turn, led to higher levels of objective performance. Another study was conducted with water polo players and synchronized swimmers (Vallerand, Mageau et al., 2008, Study 2) in order to examine exactly how passion contributes directly to deliberate practice, and indirectly to sport performance. In line with Elliot (1997), it was proposed that achievement goals should represent important mediators between passion and deliberate practice. Results identified the existence of two roads to high-level athletic performance. The first is triggered by harmonious passion that fuels mastery goals (a focus on the development of personal competence and task mastery) that lead to deliberate practice that, in turn, leads to performance. The second road to performance is more complex and emanates from obsessive passion. This type of passion fuels mastery goals (that lead to performance through deliberate practice) but mostly performance-
approach goals (a focus on the attainment of personal competence relative to others) and performance-avoidance goals (a focus on avoiding incompetence relative to others) that negatively and directly influences performance. In addition, only individuals with a harmonious passion experience psychological well-being while attempting to reach high levels of performance in sport. These findings run contrary to the popular adage: “no pain no gain”. Rather, it appears that it is possible to reach the highest levels of performance through a painless, even happy, passionate engagement in the sport and exercise to the extent that it is harmonious in nature.

**Passion and interpersonal outcomes**

The coach–athlete relationship is one of the most important ones in sport (Mageau & Vallierand, 2003). A better understanding of this relationship is important if we are to help athletes and exercisers reach their goals in sport and exercise while feeling good during engagement in sport and exercise. We believe that the type of passion one holds for sport or exercise represents an important factor that should allow both athletes and coaches to experience high quality relationships. Specifically, harmonious passion should be more likely to foster positive relationships with others in the context of their sport because it leads people to fully immerse themselves in the activity and to experience positive emotions that may be shared with others. Initial research conducted on this issue in a field setting revealed that athletes’ harmonious passion toward their sport was positively related to various indices of relationship satisfaction with their coach, whereas obsessive passion was mostly unrelated to those relationship indices (Lafreriere et al., 2008, Study 1). This first study, however, did not address the mediating role of emotions in the process. A subsequent research with coaches did so (Lafreriere et al., 2008, Study 2), and confirmed the role of positive affect, generally experienced by coaches while coaching, as a mediator of the relation between harmonious passion toward coaching and perceived relationship quality with their players. Obsessive passion was unrelated to positive affect or relationship with the athletes.

Subsequent research with basketball players replicated these findings with respect to teammates. Specifically, it was found that harmonious passion led the athletes to experience positive emotions during the basketball camp. In turn, positive emotions predicted the quality or relationships that developed among teammates over the course of the week-long basketball camp (Philippe, Vallierand, Houlfort, Lavigne, & Donahue, 2010, Study 3). Furthermore, it was found in this study that obsessive passion led to relationships of lower quality with teammates through its influence on negative affect.

In sum, preliminary evidence reveals that harmonious passion matters with respect to the development and maintenance of positive relationships between coach and athletes, as well as among teammates. Conversely, it appears that obsessive passion leads to more negative relationships. Such effects seem to be mediated by either positive or negative emotions, as pertains to harmonious and obsessive passions, respectively.

**ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PASSION**

The above research documents the role of passion in a variety of outcomes. As such, it would thus appear important to have a better understanding as to how passion develops. According to the DMP (Vallerand, 2008, 2010; Vallerand et al., 2003), there are at least three processes through which an interesting activity such as sport and exercise can transform into a passionate activity: 1) activity selection; 2) activity valuation; and 3) the type of internalization process that takes place.
First, activity selection refers to the person's preference for the activity over other activities. To the extent that the person feels that such selection reflects true choice and interests and is consonant with her or his identity, it should promote the development of passion toward that activity. Activity valuation (or the subjective importance given to the activity by the person) is expected to play an important role in the internalization of the identity. Research has indeed shown that when the object of interest is highly valued and meaningful, one is inclined to internalize the valued object, to make it part of him- or herself (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992; Deci et al., 1994). The more important (or valued) the activity is, the more the activity will be internalized in the person's identity and the more passionate the person will be toward the activity.

Furthermore, the DMP proposes that the type of passion that will develop depends on the type of internalization that takes place. To the extent that the internalization process takes place in an autonomous fashion, then a harmonious passion will develop; if the internalization is carried in a controlled fashion, an obsessive passion will develop. The DMP further posits that social environment and personal factors will influence the internalization process. More precisely, social environment (i.e., parents, coaches, peers, etc.) and personal factors (i.e., individual differences and personality processes) that promote a person's autonomy will facilitate the autonomous internalization process and thus lead to the development of a harmonious passion. In contrast, controlling social environment and personal factors will facilitate the controlled internalization process and thus lead to the development of an obsessive passion.

The role of social environment in the development of passion was explored in a recent study with students who had never played a musical instrument (Mageau et al., 2009, Study 3). Results demonstrated that high autonomy support from close adults (parents and teachers) as well as children's activity valuation were conducive to the development of harmonious passion. However, high levels of parental perceived valuation and lack of autonomy support (i.e., controlling behavior) were found to predict the development of obsessive passion. As for personal factors, research conducted with water polo players and synchronized swimmers (Vallerand et al., 2006) demonstrated that valuation of the sport activity coupled with an autonomous personality (as assessed by the Global Motivation Scale; Guay, Mageau, & Vallerand, 2003) predicted harmonious passion. In contrast, valuation of the activity coupled with a controlled personality style predicted obsessive passion. Moreover, harmonious passion was conducive to subjective well-being over time while obsessive passion was unrelated to it.

The DMP further posits that a passion for an activity continues developing in an ongoing process after it has initially developed. It is proposed that variations in activity valuation will lead to subsequent modulation in the intensity of the passion. In addition, the presence or absence of social and personal factors that pertain to the autonomous versus controlled internalization process will influence the ongoing development of passion in a corresponding fashion. Thus, although the predominant type of passion is usually in operation, it is possible to reinforce the predominant passion or to make the other type of passion operative depending on which type of social or personal factors is made salient.

In sum, results presented in this section provide support for the DMP as it pertains to the development of passion. Research is needed to determine more clearly how passion develops, as well as how the newly developed passion varies as a function of prevalent social and personal factors in sport and exercise.
PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Research reviewed in this chapter has shown that harmonious passion is generally more positively related to positive consequences than obsessive passion. Therefore, it would seem appropriate to propose ways to facilitate harmonious passion. Promoting harmonious passion can be done at each of the three steps of the development of passion described previously, namely activity selection, activity valuation, and the internalization of the activity in identity. More specifically, the role of the social environment at each of the three stages is crucial, especially with children and adolescents. Adults are in a prime position to promote children’s harmonious passion, especially if they nurture their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Vallerand, 1997, 2010). With respect to the first step of activity selection, parents and physical educators should encourage children to engage in a variety of sports and exercises. Trying out different sports and forms of exercise should help children (and teenagers) select activities that they enjoy, that make use of their abilities and strengths (see Forest et al., 2012), and that fit with the their sense of identity. Consequently, such activities should be subsequently internalized in identity and eventually become a passion.

Autonomy support is also recommended for the two other stages of passion development. For instance, with respect to the second step in the passion development process, namely valuation of the selected sport activity, noncontrolling and supportive parents, physical educators should encourage children to engage in a variety of sports and exercises. Trying out different sports and forms of exercise should help children (and teenagers) select activities that they enjoy, that make use of their abilities and strengths (see Forest et al., 2012), and that fit with the their sense of identity. Consequently, such activities should be subsequently internalized in identity and eventually become a passion.

Finally, providing autonomy support to children while engaging in their valued, selected activity should also ensure that the internalization of activity, which takes place in the third step of passion development, is autonomous in nature, thereby leading to harmonious passion for the activity. Thus, promoting children’s sense of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2000) by providing opportunities for choice, ownership, or “voice” regarding decisions and behaviors should facilitate the development of harmonious passion. For example, athletes who have recently started playing soccer would be more likely to develop a harmonious passion toward this sport if their coaches clearly explain to them why it is important to practice daily and give them opportunities to choose from a variety of practice regimens. Conversely, the chances are that coaches who impose pressure or coerce athletes to practice more are likely to lead to the development of obsessive passion. Later on, once harmonious passion has developed, providing autonomy support and minimizing pressure still remains important to ensure that harmonious passion is maintained.

CONCLUSION

Sport and exercise play a significant role in many people’s lives. More often than not, people engaged in sport and exercise are not simply motivated, they are passionate toward their activity. The purpose of the present chapter was to present the DMP (Vallerand, 2008, 2010; Vallerand et al., 2003), a conceptualization on passion that enables us to have a better understanding of the psychological forces that may lead athletes, exercisers, and other sport participants (e.g., coaches, fans and referees) to sustain intense engagement in sport and exercise and to experience different types of outcomes in the process.
Specifically, this chapter has shown that two types of passion, namely harmonious and obsessive passion, matter greatly for athletes and exercisers, because they lead to a host of consequences (affect, cognitions, subjective well-being, performance, physical health, etc.). Harmonious and obsessive passions typically lead to adaptive and maladaptive outcomes, respectively. Furthermore, we have described the nature of processes through which passion develops. Harmonious passion results from an important and valued activity that has been internalized in one's identity in an autonomous fashion. In contrast, obsessive passion results from an important and valued activity internalized in one's identity in a controlled fashion. Moreover, we have proposed practical applications especially as pertains to the development of passion. Autonomy support (i.e., providing choices in activity selection and in decision regarding the activity, developing noncontrolling and supportive relationships with parents and coaches, etc.) is recommended for the development of harmonious passion.

In sum, it would appear that the construct of passion aptly describes the phenomenological experiences, processes, and outcomes that sport participants and exercisers go through in their activity.

LEARNING AIDS

1 Define passion.

Passion is defined as a strong inclination toward a self-defining activity (person or object) that one likes (or even loves), finds important, and in which one invests time and energy.

2 Explain the two types of internalization process.

An autonomous internalization of a passionate activity occurs when individuals freely accept an activity is important for them. This type of internalization leads to a harmonious passion, as people choose to engage in their passionate activity without any contingencies attached to it.

A controlled internalization of a passionate activity originates from intra- and/or interpersonal pressure attached to the activity, such as contingencies of self-esteem or social acceptance, or because the feeling of excitement derived from activity engagement is uncontrollable. A controlled internalization leads to obsessive passion.

3 Describe the two types of passion.

Harmonious passion: Passionate activity in which people engage without any contingencies, which occupies a significant, but not overpowering, space in the person’s identity, allowing the person to fully partake in the passionate activity with an openness that is conducive to positive experiences, both during and after task engagement. The activity is thus under full control and connects well with other aspects of the self. There is little or no conflict between the person's passionate activity and other life domains, as people can decide when to and when not to engage in the activity.
Obsessive passion: Passionate activity in which people engage because of both the intrinsic (i.e., pleasure, love for the activity, etc.) and the extrinsic (i.e., self-esteem contingencies, social recognition, etc.) benefits attached to the activity. Thus, the activity is not fully under control of the self and people cannot help but engage in the passionate activity. Therefore, people with an obsessive passion display a rigid persistence toward the activity, leading to conflict with other aspects of the self.

4 Discuss the “two roads to performance”.

The harmonious road: Harmonious passion fuels mastery goals and deliberate practice, which in turn lead to performance. Furthermore, individuals with harmonious passion experience psychological well-being while attempting to reach high levels of performance in sport.

The obsessive road: Obsessive passion also fuels mastery goals (that lead to performance through deliberate practice) but mostly performance-approach goals and performance-avoidance goals that negatively and directly influence performance. Furthermore, obsessive passion is not associated with the experience of psychological well-being.

5 Explain how autonomy support contributes to the development of a harmonious passion.

First, autonomy supportive parents, physical educators, and coaches may provide the necessary impetus for young athletes to invest further in the sport activity and value it even more. Peers are also important, especially toward puberty. Enhanced valuation of the selected activity may then lead to its internalization in identity.

Second, providing autonomy support to children when engaging in their valued, selected, activity should also ensure that the internalization of activity is autonomous in nature, thereby leading to harmonious passion for the activity. Providing opportunities for choice, ownership, or “voice” regarding decisions and behaviors should promote children's sense of autonomy, and thus, the development of harmonious passion. Even once harmonious passion has developed, providing autonomy support and minimizing pressure remains important to ensure that harmonious passion is maintained.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1 What are the criteria that characterize passion?
2 How is harmonious passion defined? How is obsessive passion defined?
3 Which type of passion is more likely to contribute to positive psychological adjustment and why?
4 What are the two roads to excellence?
5 What are the processes involved in the development of passion? Describe each process.
6 How can harmonious passion be best achieved? How can obsessive passion be achieved?
**EXERCISES**

Jim is a volleyball player. He has been playing since he was little, as both his parents also are volleyball players. Early on, Jim’s parents directed him toward this sport. Even though Jim wanted to try other sports, his parents were always reluctant as they both thought volleyball was the best sport for him. However, Jim always felt that he had to continue playing volleyball because he did not want to disappoint his parents, even though he loves this sport and spends a lot of time and energy practicing hard.

On the other hand, Emily has a passion for dancing. This passion developed gradually, however. During her childhood, her parents allowed her to discover and experience various activities. They provided her with choices, alternative and great support in her decisions. With time, Emily chose to invest more time and energy in dancing, which was the activity that satisfied her the most.

1. What is the type of passion that Jim is most likely to have developed toward volleyball? What about Emily? Explain why.
2. Explain the role of Jim and Emily’s parents in the development of their respective passion.
3. What kind of emotions is Jim most likely to experience when playing volleyball? Or when he is prevented from playing other sports? Explain.
4. Who is more likely to attain high levels of performance? Jim or Emily? What consequences might be associated with the attainment of such level of performance for Jim? And Emily?

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**ADDITIONAL READING**


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**REFERENCES**


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