STRESS MASTERY QUESTIONNAIRE (SMQ)

James C. Petersen, Ph.D.
THE STRESS MASTERY QUESTIONNAIRE* (SMQ)

WHAT IS THE SMQ?

The SMQ is a scientifically developed stress self-assessment tool that provides clear and precise information about how well one is mastering stress. The SMQ is the starting point in the total Stress Mastery Program and is used to help individuals gain a deeper understanding of their personal stress; in effect, the SMQ is a "self-diagnostic" that helps identify key behaviors and attitudes that reflect the level of stress one is experiencing. As a result, the SMQ enables each person to focus on specifically what to change in order to reduce and master stress.

HOW WAS THE SMQ DEVELOPED?

The SMQ is grounded in the evidence-based research on stress by Dr. James Petersen, Ph.D., author of the SMQ, and others notable psychologists as Hans Selye, MD (Stress Theory), Friedman and Rosenmann (Type-A Personality), Aaron Beck (Cognitive Restructuring), Albert Ellis (Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy - REBT), Herbert Benson (Relaxation Response) and many others.

The SMQ was created by Dr. James Petersen for use with clients in his Biofeedback and Stress Management Clinic. The purpose of the SMQ was to help people with chronic stress and stress related disorders to gain insight into how they are responding to life/work stressors and to develop a clearer view of their unique. The SMQ was created using standard psychometric techniques with a focus on designing questions that had content and construct validity related to stress.

After a few years of successful use in the clinic, the University of Arizona Medical School requested to use the SMQ in a stress management program called Project Well Aware funded by the Kellogg Foundation. Dr. Petersen was asked to create a shorter version of the SMQ. Through consultation with experts in the field of psychology, along with a careful review of all questions, a short-form of the SMQ was created and, then, used successfully in the program.

In 1982, Dr. Petersen received a grant from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to conduct a validation study of the SMQ. At the time, there were few valid tools to measure available. A research study was designed and the SMQ administered to a stratified random sample of employees from seven different companies. Upon completion of the study, the data were statistical analyzed to determine the validity of the scales using Factor Analysis, Discriminant Analysis, and other standard statistical procedures. The result demonstrated the validity of the scales and the current version of the SMQ was created.

HOW IS THE SMQ COMPLETED?

While a print version of the SMQ is available, most SMQ assessments are taken online via the Internet. Each person is provided an Internet Link and a unique Access Code. The Access Code is sent to the participant or client via e-mail by the instructor or counselor. Once the code is entered, the assessment begins. After answering the 87 SMQ questions, along with a few demographic items, the results are calculated and a one-page Stress Risk Profile is provided showing the participant's "risk" level on each of the 11 SMQ scales.

Click here to CONTACT US for a complimentary SMQ Assessment

Jpetersen@stressmaster.com | 480-778-7178 | www.Stressmaster.com | Skype “TheStressmaster”
WHAT DOES THE SMQ ASSESS?

While the stress response is universal, how stress reveals itself varies from person to person. In addition, people adapt to increasing levels of stress and "tune-out" the warning signs that stress may be a problem. Using 87 psychometrically created questions, the SMQ provides a way to view personal stress in three (3) key areas with 11 unique scales:

**STRESS WARNING SIGNS**

- Hostility/Anger
- Time Urgency
- Perfectionism
- Disappointment
- Burnout
- Under-Achievement
- Tension

**STRESS EFFECTS**

- Physical Stress Effects
- Life/Work Satisfaction

**STRESSORS**

- Life Events
- Hassles

WHO USES THE SMQ?

Stressmaster International and our Independent Stressmaster Associates provide stress mastery programs, services and products to companies in 15 countries around the world. Our clients range from large multi-national corporations to small businesses, government agencies and non-profit organizations. Here are a few of the clients...
THE STRESS MASTERY PROGRAM

The Stress Mastery Program begins with the SMQ that is taken online. After completing the SMQ, each person receives the following:

PERSONAL STRESS REPORT & STRESS PROFILE

After taking the SMQ details of the scores for each scale are shared with the participants and/or clients via the Stress Report. The Stress Report is a 3 page summary of one’s stress "risk" scores for each of the 11 scales, along with how they actually answered each question within areas of Stress Warning Signs, Stress Effects and Stressors. The Stress Report is included with each SMQ assessment taken online and is typically sent directly to the Trainer or Coach to use in the program. Click to SEE THE STRESS REPORT.

STRESS MASTERY GUIDE: A ROAD MAP TO RESILIENCE

Each person who completes the SMQ also receives a copy of the STRESSMASTERY GUIDE which is an essential part of the STRESS MASTERY PROGRAM. The Guide (34pp) provides a comprehensive understanding of each scale and the meaning of stress risk, and for each scale, evidence-based techniques, recommendations and suggestions for mastering stress on a daily basis. The Guide can be immediately downloaded after taking the SMQ or provided to the person by the trainer or coach. The Workbook is available in Print or via PDF. Click see the GUIDE EXAMPLE.

STRESS MASTERY PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

The Workbook provides the information on how to reduce, manage and master stress. The Workbook is a way for each person, whether in a workshop, seminar or coaching program, to record the most important concepts and ideas being presented or discussed. Each scale’s questions are shown to the person with a place to write in reflections on the meaning of that scale and what he or she might want to do to reduce stress or build stress resilience. The Workbook is available in Print or via PDF. Click to see an examination copy of the PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK.

GROUP REPORTS FOR TRAINERS - OPTIONAL

For stress mastery trainers or program facilitators, a variety of charts, graphs and reports are available for use in planning as well as in group presentation and discussion. These optional reports show the "risk" scores for both individuals as well as how the team or group overall performed. As the scores are shown in charts and graphs, this information can be helpful to the HR department and/or managers in identifying key "risk" areas and for planning future training or coaching. All reports can be "de-identified" so as to protect the identity of the participant, trainee or employee. Click to see an example of ALL REPORTS.
Dear Dr. Petersen,

I would like to personally thank you for creating a great stress assessment tool. As an executive coach, trainer, and team developer, I have searched for a good stress assessment tool for use in our programs. Having scoured the internet for over 10 years, we have found your stress “risk” assessment tool, called the Stress Management Questionnaire (SMQ), to be the best tool for the programs we do with our corporate clients.

We’ve been using your SMQ diagnostic tool since early 2000 as part of our PEAK PERFORMANCE II program (with Citibana-mex in Mexico). This program focuses on how to improve personal performance through employee engagement. Decreasing stress in the workplace is essential to improving organizational performance.

Thank you for working with us and our clients, as Stressmaster and your Stress Management Questionnaire will remain as an integral part of our program going forward. I sincerely appreciate the fact that you have worked with us to translate the Stressmaster into Spanish for one of our large financial clients in Mexico. Over the next 5 years, they plan to enroll their high potential group into the Peak Performance program as part of their cultural transformation process. They are trying to reach close to 5000 people in a period of 5 years. This is a pretty aggressive target. We are currently rolling out Peak Performance II to all the graduates of our Peak I program. Currently we are targeting 3000-5000 people for Peak I and then Peak II. Thank you for being such a great partner.

Susan Robertson
Co-Founder and Managing Partner Stop At Nothing, Inc.

Dr. Petersen has developed a comprehensive stress questionnaire that provides users with a comprehensive analysis and report that enables the participant to gain a greater understanding of potential triggers of stress within their lives that can be used to develop an effective stress management action plan to improve their overall health & well being.

PB
Preventative Medicine Professional

Hi Jim,

I took the SMQ, and would be very interested in getting a full report. I love the Guide that comes with completion too! This is all very comprehensive and well done.

Dr. Petersen's work is devoted to helping employees in high-stress organizations do more than "cope" with stress. Instead, they are guided to the awareness and tools that allow them to thrive, achieving mastery over stress.

Inspired by this message and excited to partner with the promise of Dr. Petersen's organization, I became a Stressmaster Associate. Dr. Petersen is a wealth of knowledge on the industry, and his Stress Management Questionnaire (SMQ) is an essential stress risk assessment tool. With it, I am able to better serve my clients, and, thereby, change the world.

AT
Live A ZenLife

Hi Jim,

I just got finished looking over the materials to the SMQ and I have to say that I am quite impressed. There is a place for this on a global level for sure. At the very least for people in the health care world as a staple instrument... I just wanted you to know that you really did a great job with this. The entire package is brilliant. (Later) I took the SMQ. I am sure that you will not be surprised to know that, I was impressed on first sight.

Lawrence F. (Licensed Psychologist - NY and CA)

I would just like to recommend the Stress Management Questionnaire (SMQ) as a key organisational tool to help employers to effectively identify and help manage stress within the workplace.
Hello Dr. Petersen,

I just took the assessment and I think it is great! It was simple, didn't take too long, and easy to understand. I really liked the guide as well, especially the Contract For Change section, as many of the clients we work with have difficulty with follow through. I will be trying this assessment with a client next week Wednesday and will also be presenting this to the occupational therapists and social workers. Thank you very much for being prompt and providing trials for us to try to determine the need for the assessment. I will keep you posted! Thank you.

YN, OTS

Hi Jim,

What has consistently been commented on in regard to the SMQ is the participants seeing how their companions rate them, compared to their own self evaluations. Longer-term married couples tend to mirror each other on the graph, while there are often big disparities between self and companion on those in less structured relationships, or less intimate relationships (i.e. siblings, friends, coworkers). Also, many remarked that they did not know they were as affected by stress until seeing the SMQ. I think stress is a badge of honor among some—if you are not stressed, you are not working hard enough. The SMQ allows them to see the importance of balance between work/home and the need for decompression "me" time. I think the SMQ has been a great educational tool in the fact that participants realize that stress is more of an enemy of productivity (professionally and personally) than they had previously believed.

One of the key areas we focus on in our District Manager training is for the participants to not only address their stress, but also help their direct-reports (Store Managers and CSRs) with stress.

As mentioned, this remains a very popular course. Right now we are projecting about 50 participants this year, but there is a possibility we will offer this as part of a stand-alone program (as opposed to a block of instruction in a 5-day course).

Chris

Trainer at a Large Convenience Store Chain

Dear Dr. Petersen,

Following is a summary of the participant (60+ Senior Partners at a KPMG) evaluations you received as an instructor for our recent session of Managing Stress, held in Houston. This was one of the most valuable investments we have made available for our employees. Out of a possible score of 5 with 5 being most favorable...

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<td>Prepared</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity of Information</td>
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<td>Instructor Knowledge</td>
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<td>Interest in Student Success</td>
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<td>Overall</td>
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These results reveal a strong, positive view of the program.

Senior Partner - KPMG

“I've been using the SMQ for over the last 14 months and have given it to about 750 people. It has been extremely useful in our Stress Management Program and I've received much positive feedback from the Participants. Some remarks have been:

‘The (SMQ) guide has helped me change my life.’

‘I get better insight every time I go through the Report and Guide.’

‘The SMQ helped me know myself a lot better. I'm a better manager because of that."These remarks make me feel good about the effectiveness of the instrument as we apply it in the Stress Management Program.”

PD - Training Psychologist for State of Arizona

Dr. Petersen,

I have been reading my "HIGHS" (scores on the SMQ) and I thank you for hitting it on the head. My anger, time urgency, tension highs describe me perfectly. I will be using the info taking it to my group counseling sessions for discussion input.

BF - New Port Richey
Dr. Petersen

I would just like to recommend the Stress Management Questionnaire (SMQ) as a key organizational tool to help employers to effectively identify and help manage stress within the workplace. Dr. Peterson has developed a comprehensive stress questionnaire that provides users with a comprehensive analysis and report that enables the participant to gain a greater understanding of potential triggers of stress within their lives that can be used to develop an effective stress management action plan to improve their overall health & well being."

P.B Wellness Provider (UK)

The SMQ is easy to complete and a good tool for engaging individuals, raising awareness of stress/stressors and more comprehensive than for example, giving someone a Homes & Rahe Stress Scale to complete (although that does provide a quick snapshot). I think the SMQ naturally leads people on to wanting to drill-down and learn more about the issues that are flagging-up as medium-high/high stress. I imagine it is also a good tool for bringing corporate clients on board too.

M.K. (UK)

The large number of advisors who turned out for the presentations (by you) and the enthusiastic response to the material presented attests to the excellent job you did! (And)…we heard nothing but compliments on the programs being conducted for the advisors."

JTN - National Law Enforcement Council

Dear Dr James,

First of all thank you so much for the SMQ. I did it just now and it is spot on. It is really good because it shows you in what area of your life you have stress and also how much the stress is. It is not time consuming at all, that is a really big plus. People don't want to sit for instance an hour or more filling in answers. I can see now why this is really successful :)

EA (U.A.E.)

Hi Jim

I have had a stress free day. After looking at your site extensively I then completed the assessment. I have been looking for some time to find a resource to use with my clients dealing with stress, really like the approach you take.

Rev. Paul Bailey, MA

Canada

Thanks James,

You are a gentlemen and a scholar! (PS that is a compliment). I have been working with an executive team the last two days providing feedback regarding StressMaster and I am loving the practicality and richness of the information. We used it in Namibia for Executive Wellness, and conducted three assessments before meeting the team. The StresMaster gave us the authoritative stance to go in and present sanitised actual averages for the small team’s stress levels and this clenched the deal.

Cobus du Plessis
Stressmaster Associate

We’ve been working with Jim and his Stressmaster Assessment for close to 20 years. What Jim has developed is one of the best assessments that I’ve seen out there for helping people understand their stress load and then being able to manage their stress and overcome their stress.

S. R. SAN

I am one of a small team of Training & Development consultants here at Capita who provide a number of stand-alone courses in addition to our more bespoke consultancy work. One of these courses is Peak Performance Under Pressure - designed to help people to understand a little more of the nature of stress, their stressors, their stress response, and exploring preventative measures and coping mechanisms. The SMQ is used within the context of this course. Delegate feedback has been universally very positive, ranging from the benefit of having one's self-awareness reinforced, through to some real epiphanies. On a personal note, I have found the SMQ to be a robust, informative tool, based on sound theory and practice. I am definitely an advocate of the Stressmaster philosophy!

JL (UK Consultancy)