*The Penn State Worry Questionnaire (PSWQ)[1] is designed to provide a trait assessment of pathological worry. More specifically, the PSWQ provides "a measurement of the tendency of an individual to engage in excessive, generalized, and uncontrollable worry."[2] The PSWQ has been shown to have good validity, and to have good internal consistency and test-retest reliability. There is evidence that the PSWQ can be useful as a screening instrument in the detection of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).[3] Although cutoff scores have not yet been firmly established, in a sample of 272 individuals, some with GAD and others with no present or past history of an anxiety or depressive disorder, a PSWQ score of 45 or higher correctly identified 99% of the individuals with GAD (.99 sensitivity) and correctly identified 98% of those who did not have GAD as not having GAD (.98 specificity). Using a cutoff score of 40 resulted in 100% correct identification of those with GAD (1.00 sensitivity), but also resulted in a decrease in correct identification of those without GAD (.93 specificity). In a sample of 2449 college students, a PSWQ score of 54 or higher correctly identified 92% of the students with GAD (.92 sensitivity) and correctly identified 71% of the students who did not have GAD (.71 specificity). Using a lower cutoff score of 49 increased the PSWQ's ability to detect GAD (.96 sensitivity), but resulted in a considerable decrease in correct identification of those without GAD (.57 specificity). Further, it was found that the presence of a comorbid condition does not limit the ability of the PSWQ to detect GAD.[3] The PSWQ has also been shown to be sensitive to the change in anxiety symptoms in response to treatment.[1]*

**Penn State Worry Questionnaire (PSWQ)**

Enter the number that best describes how typical or characteristic each item is of you, putting the number next to each item.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not at all typical | | Somewhat typical | | Very typical |

____ 1. If I don't have enough time to do everything, I don't worry about it.
____ 2. My worries overwhelm me.
____ 3. I don't tend to worry about things.
____ 4. Many situations make me worry.
____ 5. I know I shouldn't worry about things, but I just can't help it.
____ 6. When I'm under pressure, I worry a lot.
____ 7. I am always worrying about something.
____ 8. I find it easy to dismiss worrisome thoughts.
____ 9. As soon as I finish one task, I start to worry about everything else I have to do.
____ 10. I never worry about anything.
____ 11. When there is nothing more I can do about a concern, I don't worry about it any more.
____ 12. I've been a worrier all my life.
____ 13. I notice that I have been worrying about things.
____ 14. Once I start worrying, I can't stop.
____ 15. I worry all the time.
____ 16. I worry about projects until they are all done.

**Scoring:** Reverse score items 1, 3, 8, 10, and 11, and then sum the scores of all 16 items.

[1]**Meyer TJ, Miller ML, Metzger RL,** & **Borkovec TD.** Development and validation of the Penn State Worry Questionnaire. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 28:487-495, 1990.

[2]**Molina S** & **Borkovec TD.** The Penn State Worry Questionnaire: Psychometric properties and associated characteristics. In Davey G & Tallis F (Eds), *Worrying: Perspectives on Theory, Assessment, and Treatment.* Sussex, England: Wiley & Sons, 1994.

[3]Correspondences from **ES Behar** and **TD Borkovec.** The first sample consisted of advertised-for worriers as well as advertised-for nonworriers/nondepressives. The individuals then underwent a formal assessment interview to determine whether GAD criteria were met according to DSM-IV. In the college sample, an "analog" diagnosis of GAD was assessed based on students' responses to a questionnaire designed to determine whether GAD criteria were met according to DSM-IV. (DSM-IV refers to the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* 4th Edition, 1994.)