

Tinnitus Activities Treatment

Summary session

Overview

1. Thoughts and Emotions
2. Hearing and Communication
3. Sleep
4. Concentration



Where do
YOU want to
start?



How has tinnitus influenced your life?

There Are Many Different Causes of Tinnitus

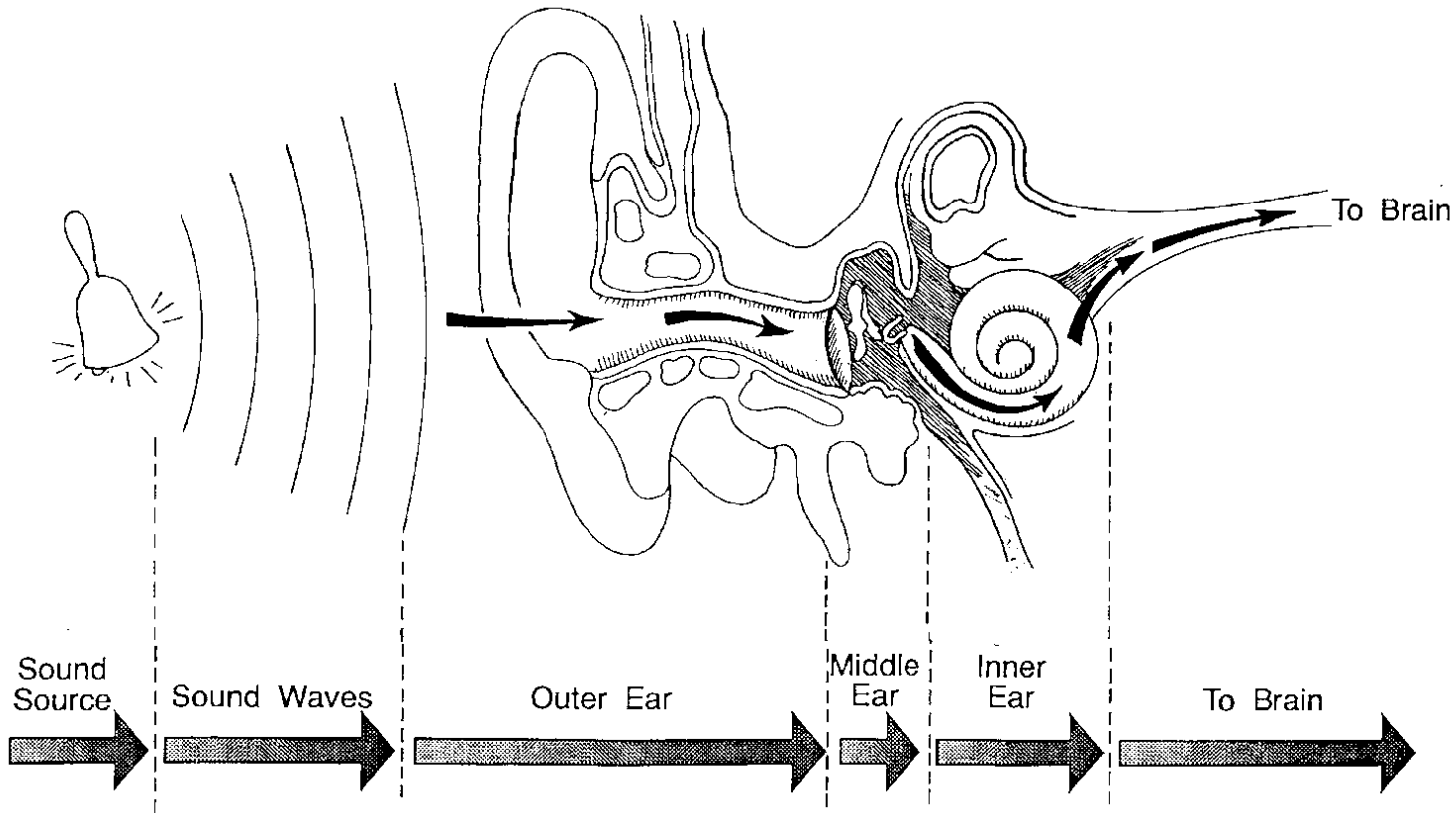


Part 1. Thoughts and Emotions

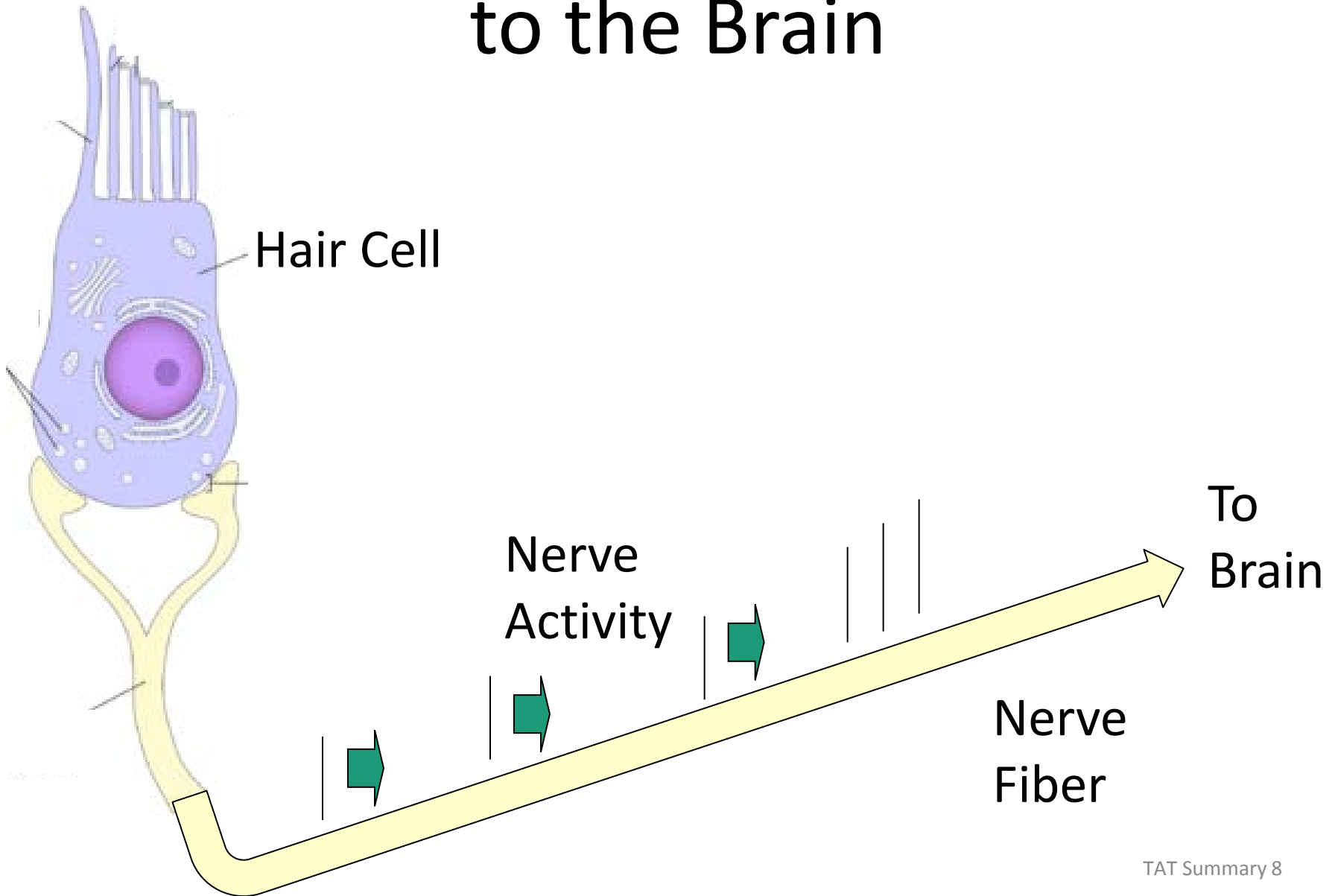
1. Hearing, hearing loss, and tinnitus
2. Attention, behavior, and emotions
3. Changing your reactions to tinnitus



1. How We Hear



Nerve Activity Carries Information to the Brain



Tinnitus is an Increase in Spontaneous Nerve Activity

Normal
Hearing



Hear
Silence

Hearing Loss
(No Tinnitus)



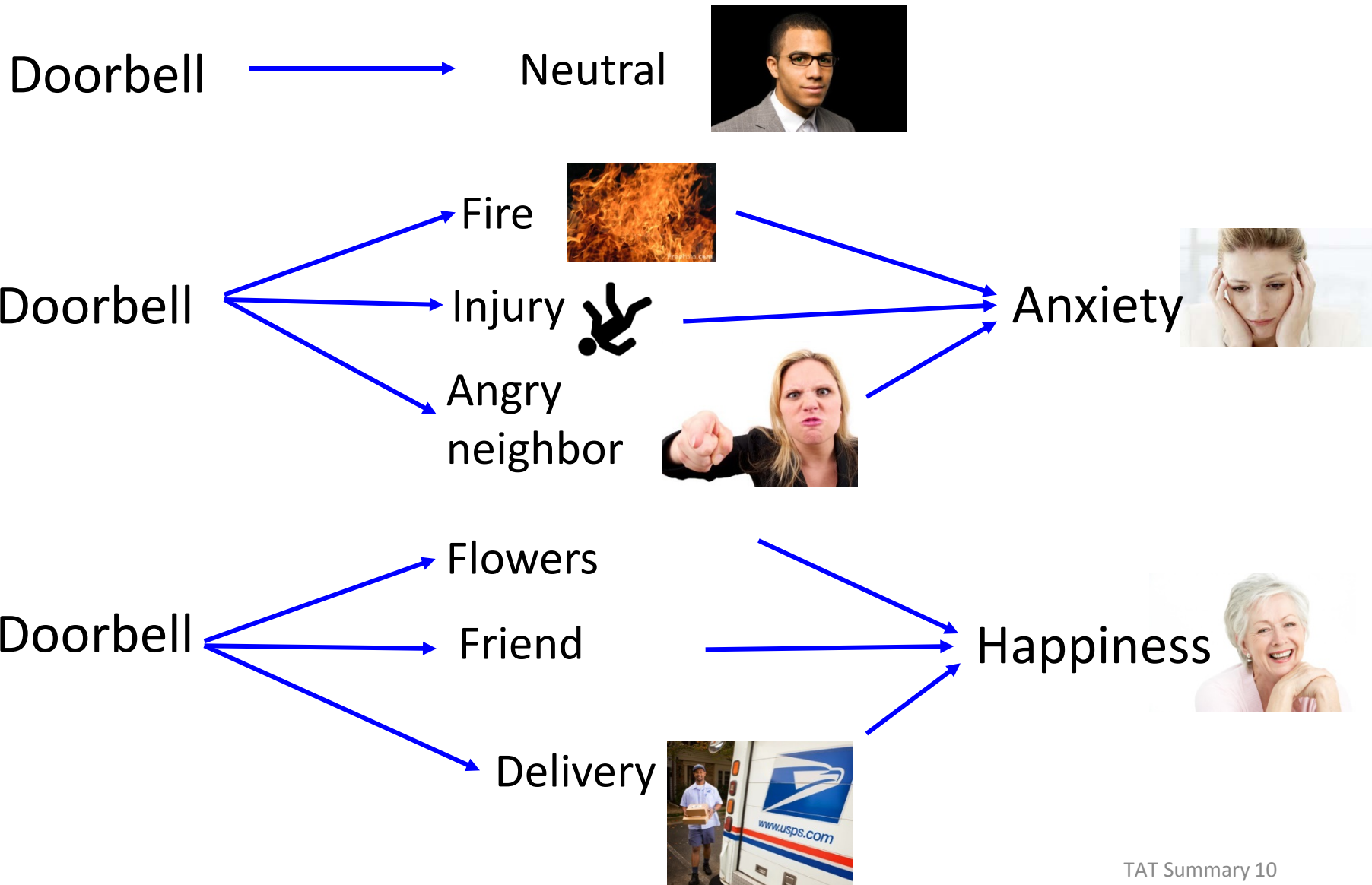
Hear
Silence

Tinnitus



Hear
Sound

2. Our Thoughts and Emotions



Things That Capture Our Conscious Attention



Unusual



Important

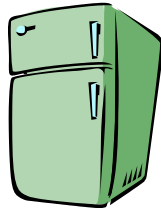


Scary

Unexpected



We Notice Important Things And Ignore Unimportant Stimuli



Refrigerator: Ignore



Lion: Cannot ignore



Crowd: Monitor information automatically

Tinnitus and Attention

If brain determines
tinnitus is not important,
the tinnitus can be ignored



If brain determines
tinnitus is important,
we will pay attention to it

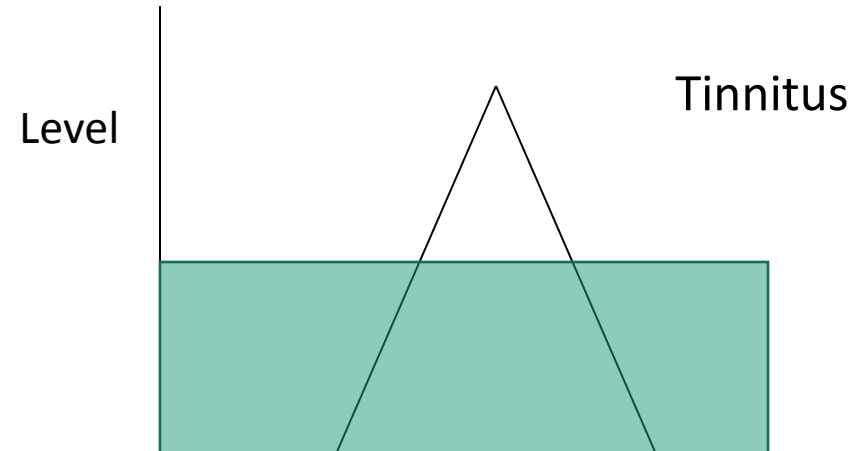
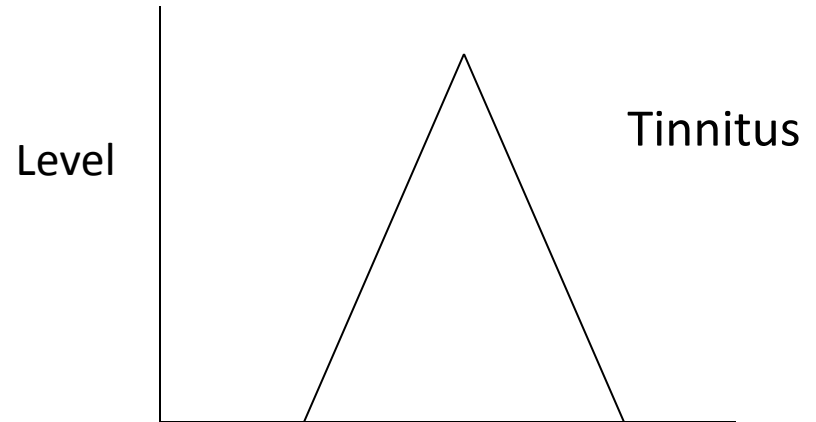


3. How to Change Our Reaction to Tinnitus

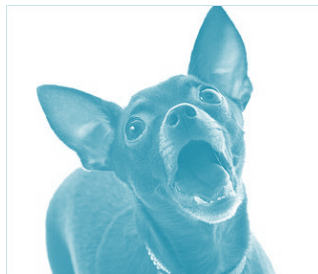
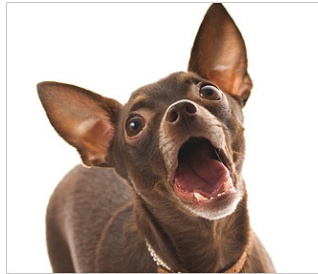
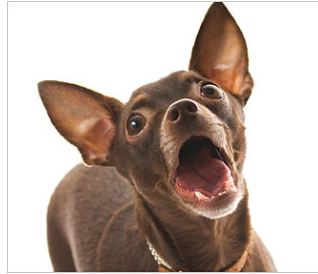
- Change Interpretation of Importance
- Change Emotional Reaction
- Refocus on Other Activities
- Reduce Contrast Between Background Sound and Tinnitus



Decrease Prominence of Tinnitus



Background sound masks unwanted sounds

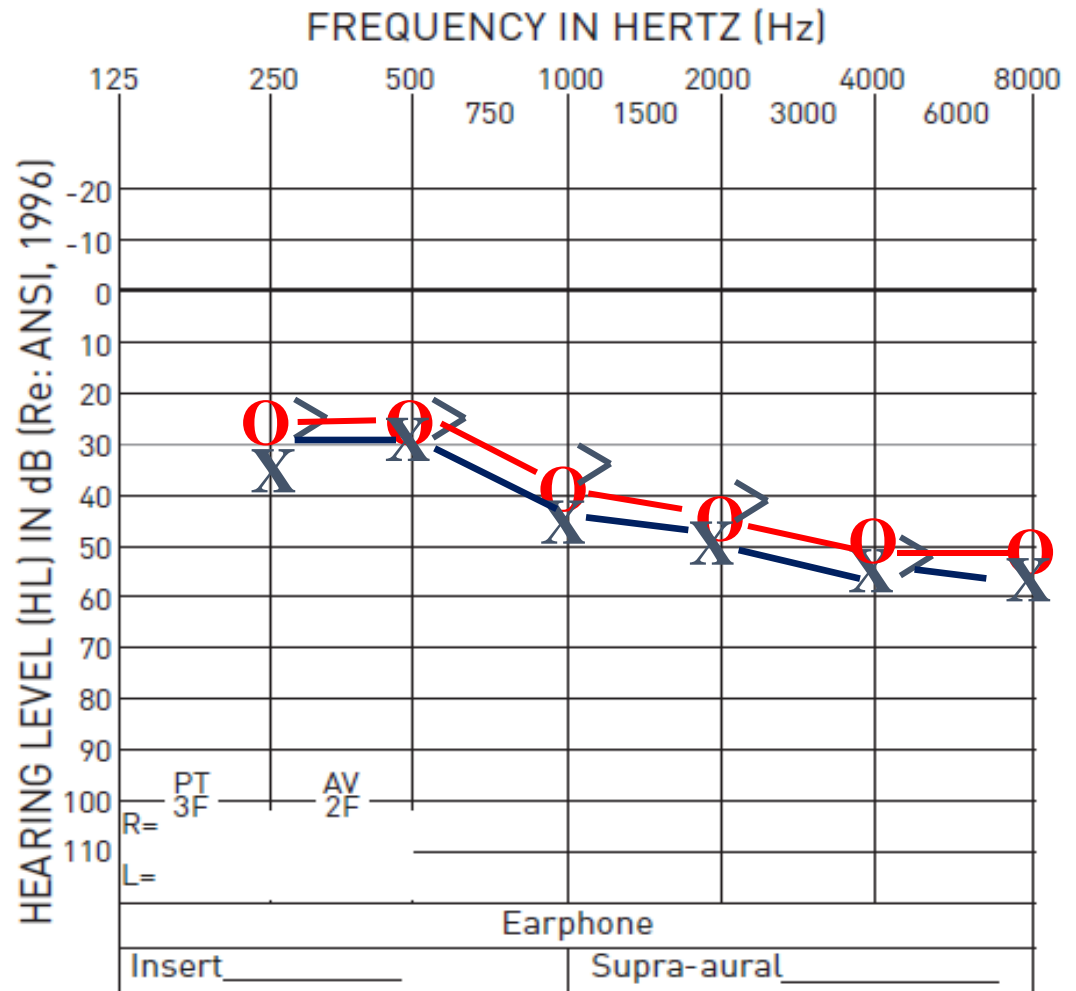


Part 2. Hearing and Communication

1. Hearing and communication difficulties
2. How tinnitus can affect hearing
3. How to improve your hearing



1. Your Audiogram



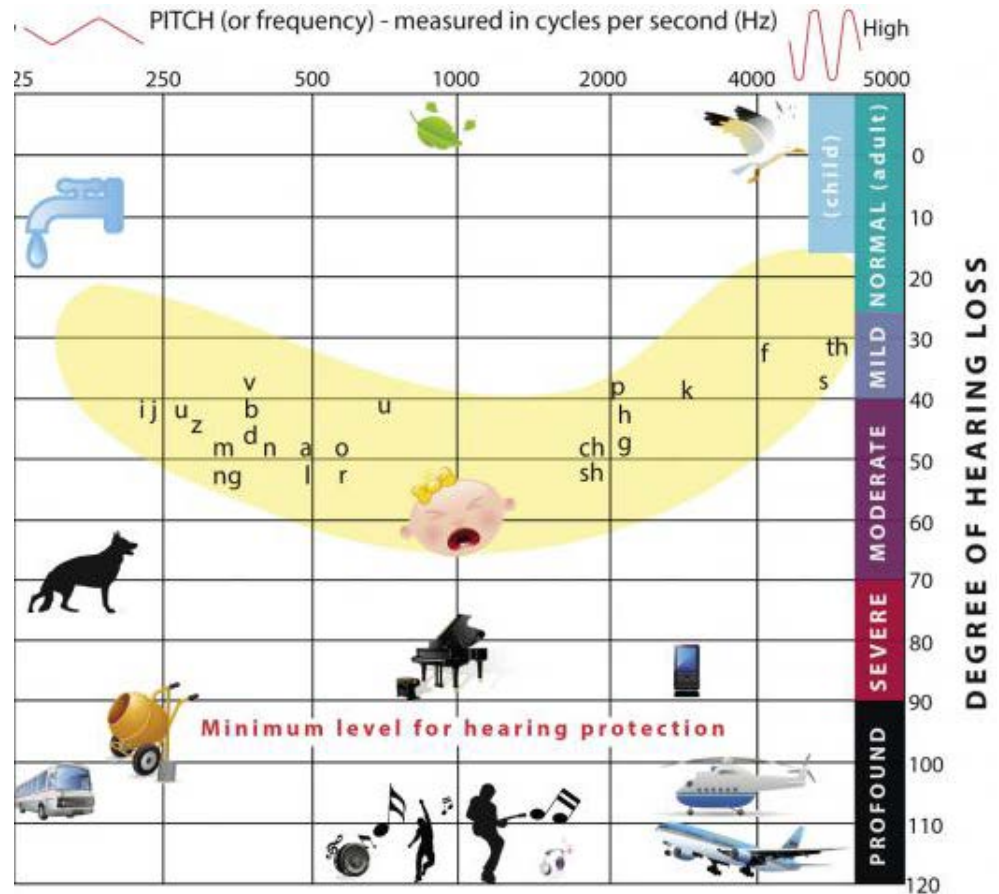
Factors that Affect Communication

- Hearing loss
- Background noise
- Ability to see the talker
- Familiarity with talker
- Familiarity with topic of discussion
- Stress level



How Hearing Loss Affects Communication

- Some sounds are not heard at all (high pitches)
- Some sounds may be distorted and less clear
- Low-pitched sounds are usually louder, so a high-pitched loss often is not noticeable
- May experience fatigue from struggling to communicate



2. How Tinnitus Can Affect Hearing



- Tinnitus is not damaging your hearing
- Tinnitus can make it harder to hear sounds and distract one from listening
- Tinnitus can also mask some sounds

3. Use Amplification

- Improve hearing and communication
- Reduce stress of effortful listening
- Hearing aids often help tinnitus:
 - Facilitates positive reactions to tinnitus
 - Helps to mask tinnitus sound



Part III.

Sleep

1. Normal sleep patterns
2. Tinnitus and sleep
3. Activities to facilitate sleep
4. Waking up at night



1. Normal Sleep Patterns

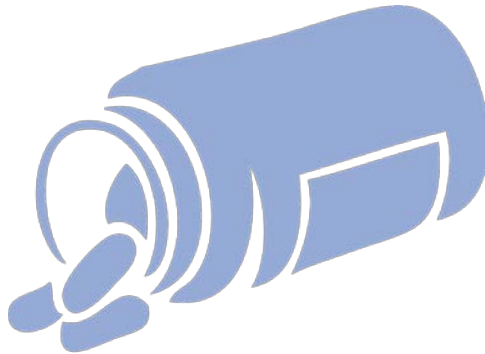


- The amount of sleep varies greatly from one individual to another
 - 6.5-9 hours/night
- Normal sleep includes several periods of light sleep or awakenings
 - Older adults have more awakenings
- Tinnitus doesn't usually wake people

2. Things That Affect Sleep

- Stress and emotions
- Environmental factors
 - Noise
 - Light
 - Temperature
- Irregular work schedules
- Learned sleeplessness patterns
- Jet lag/time zone changes





Things That Affect Sleep, continued

- Physical conditions (sleep apnea, restless leg)
- Medications
- Caffeine (coffee, tea, cola, chocolate)
- Nicotine (smoking)
- Alcohol (excessive)
- Tinnitus

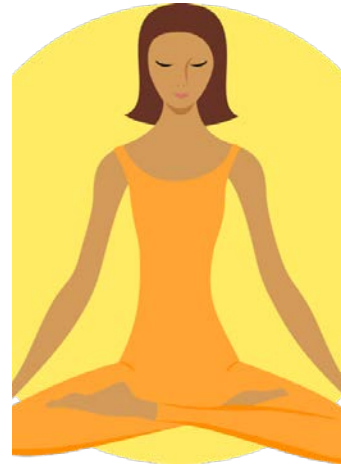
3. Activities to Facilitate Sleep

- Avoid napping
- Get regular exercise
- Create a curfew separating day and night
- Avoid food, drink, stress or exercise right before bed
- Go to bed only when you are tired enough to sleep



Preparing for Sleep

1. Listen to low-level background sound
2. Use Relaxation techniques to ease stress and tension



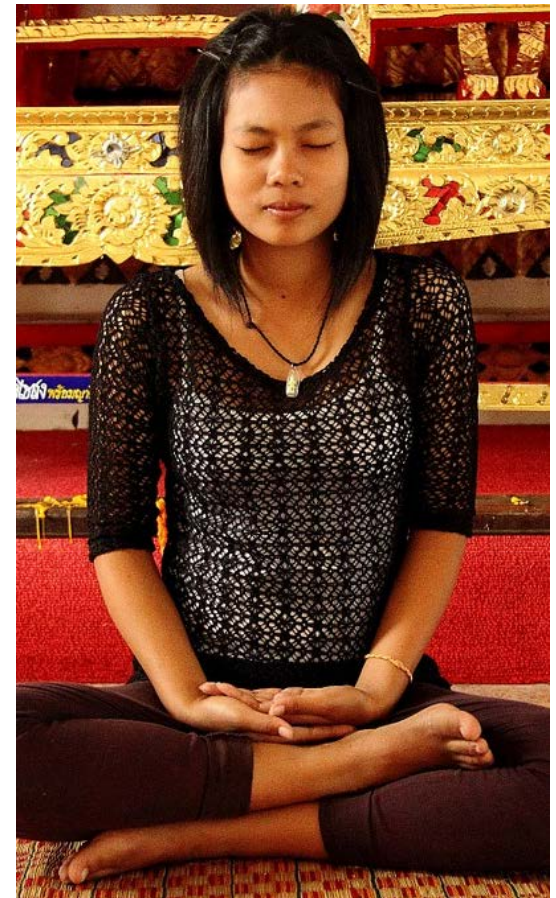
4. Waking Up At Night

- Do not lie in bed if you are unable to fall or stay asleep
- Find something to do and return to bed when you feel tired
- Use background sound



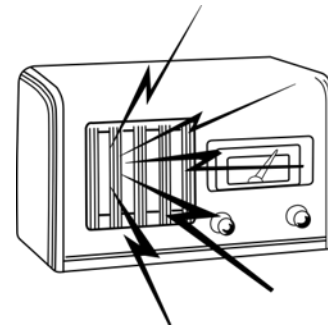
Part 4. Concentration

1. Things that affect concentration
2. How tinnitus affects concentration
3. Strategies to improve concentration



1. Things That Affect Concentration

- The environment (noise, temperature)
- Your physical state (hunger, fatigue)
- Your emotional state (anxiety, fear)



2. How Tinnitus Affects Concentration

- When we focus attention to our tinnitus, it is harder to concentrate on other things
- Observe effects of tinnitus on concentration for simple and complex tasks
- Complex tasks are more demanding—tinnitus is less noticeable



3. Strategies to Improve Concentration



1. Interpret tinnitus as not important
2. Eliminate distractions
3. Stay focused
4. Adjust work habits
5. Decrease prominence of tinnitus
6. Take control of your attention

Take Control of Your Attention

- The focus of our attention is largely under voluntary control
- You can learn to control the focus of your attention under various conditions
- By bringing the focus of attention under control, tinnitus-related distress will be reduced at certain times

