

What's all the Buzz About?

Tinnitus Education Session

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Overview of Tinnitus Session

- Definition of Tinnitus
- Prevalence of Tinnitus
- Causes of Tinnitus
- Treating and Management



Definition of Tinnitus

Latin origin: meaning “to ring or tinkle”

ti-NIGHT-us :: typically used by patients and laypeople

TINN-a-tus :: typically used by clinicians and researchers

Perception of Sound – must be heard

Involuntary – not produced intentionally

Originates in Head – not super hearing of an external sound

Tinnitus is a symptom, like hearing loss

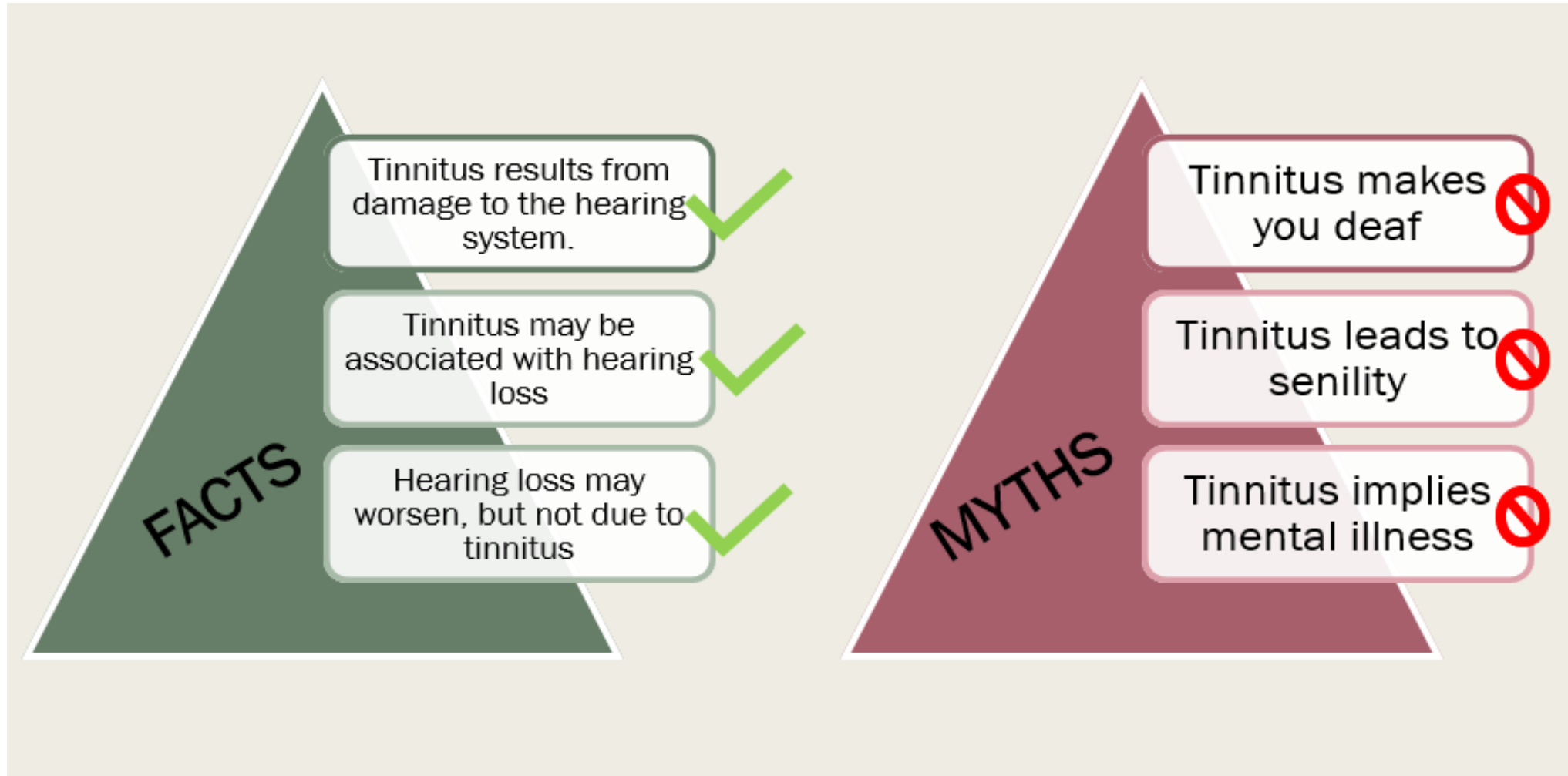


Tinnitus is Common

- 15% people have tinnitus
- 1% people have troublesome tinnitus
- 30% people over 60 years old have tinnitus



Tinnitus Fact vs. Myth



Tinnitus does cause a reaction for the one who suffers...



Two different types of Tinnitus

- Subjective – can only be heard by the individual
- Objective – potentially heard by others (very rare)

Several subtypes of Tinnitus

- Neurological
- Auditory (sensory)
- Somatic (physical movement or touch)
- Pulsatile (also called conductive)



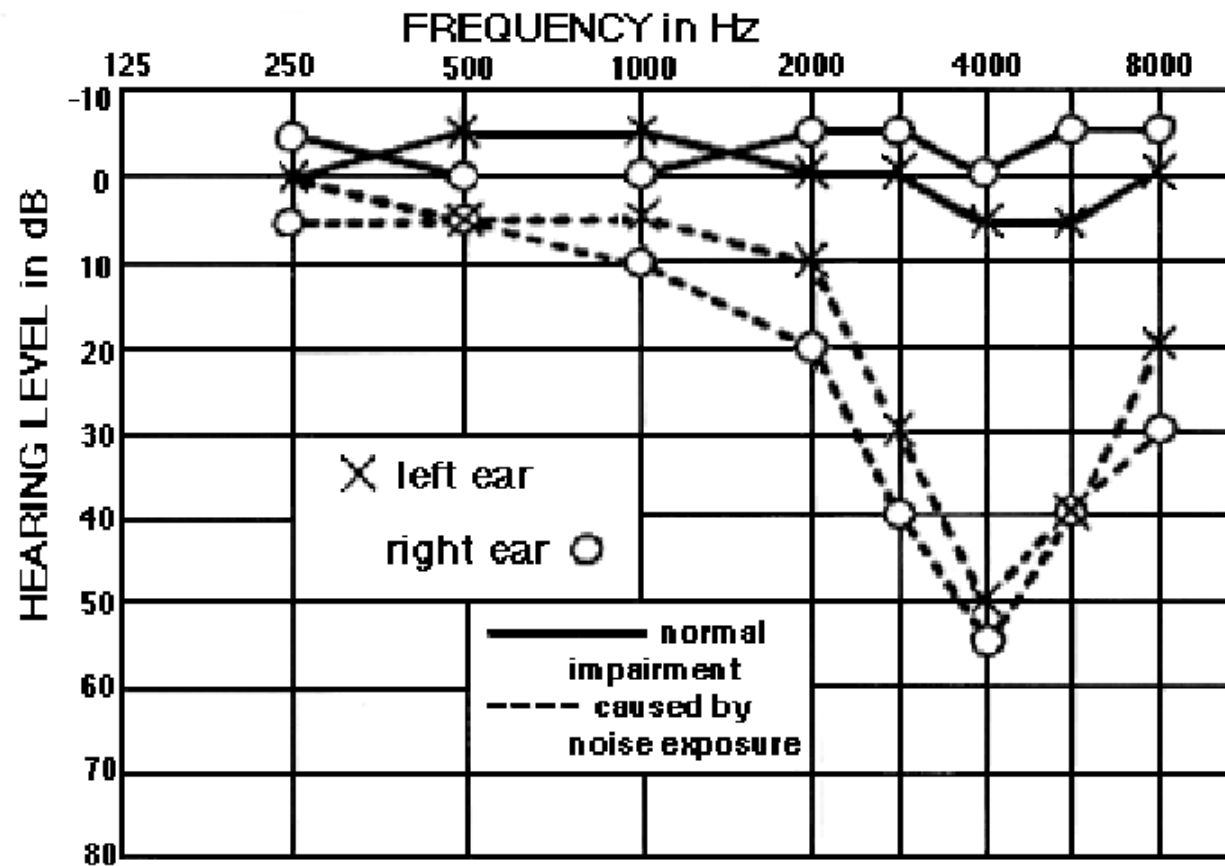
There are many different causes of Tinnitus



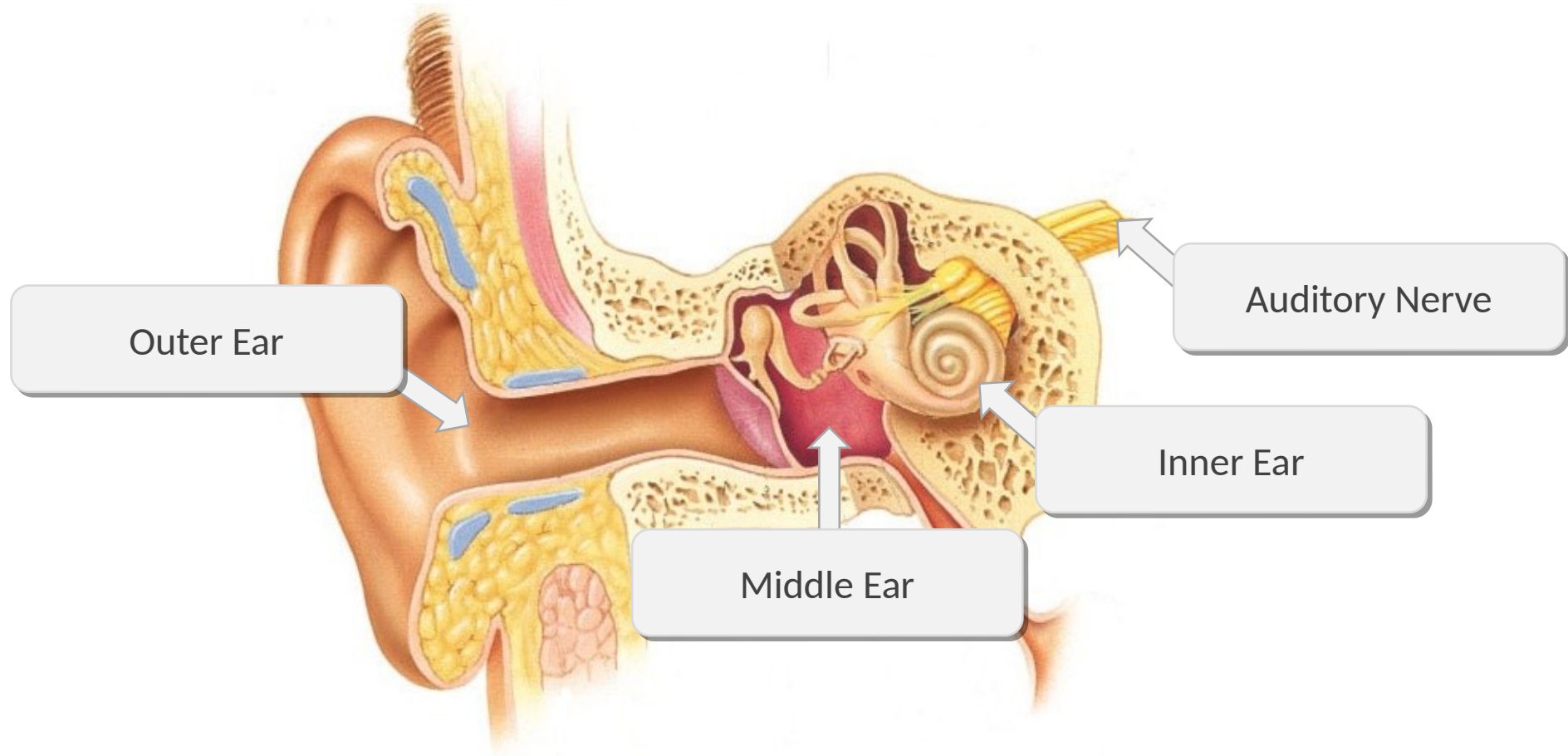
What do you think caused your Tinnitus?



Tinnitus is usually accompanied with Hearing Loss

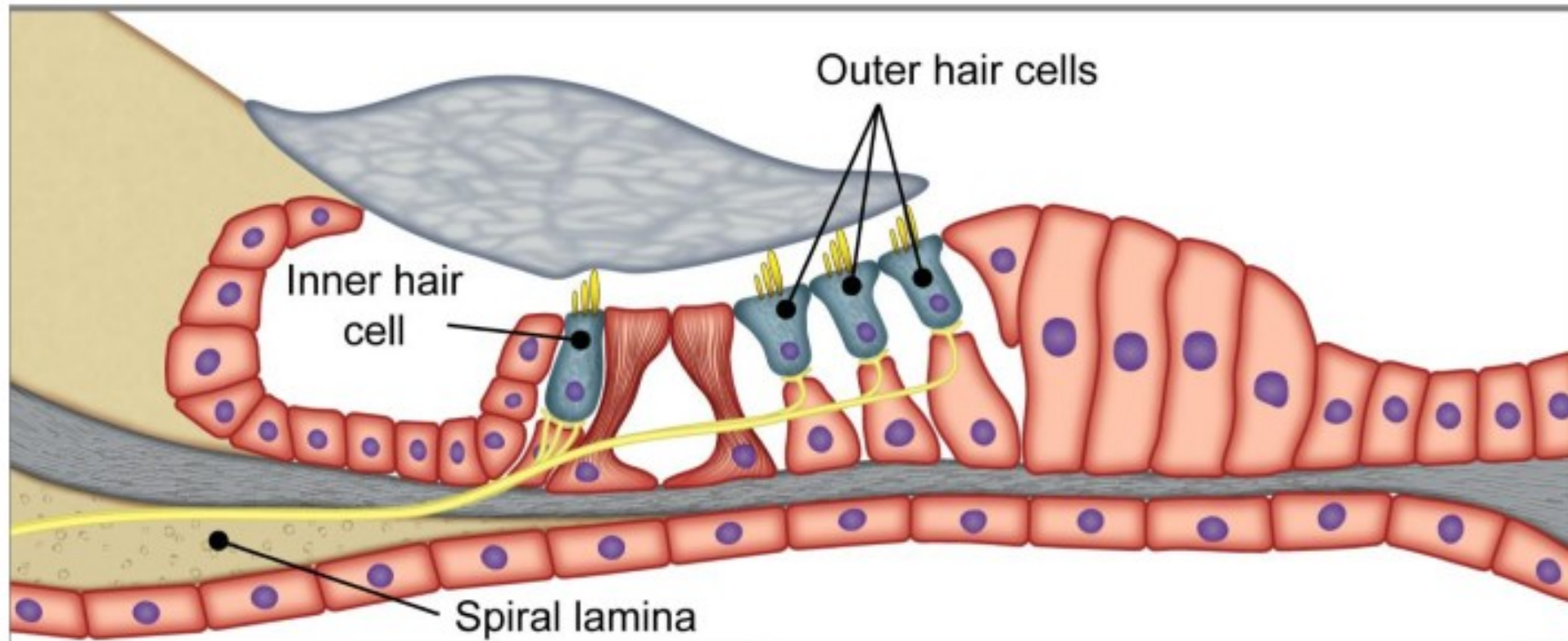


Basic Ear Anatomy

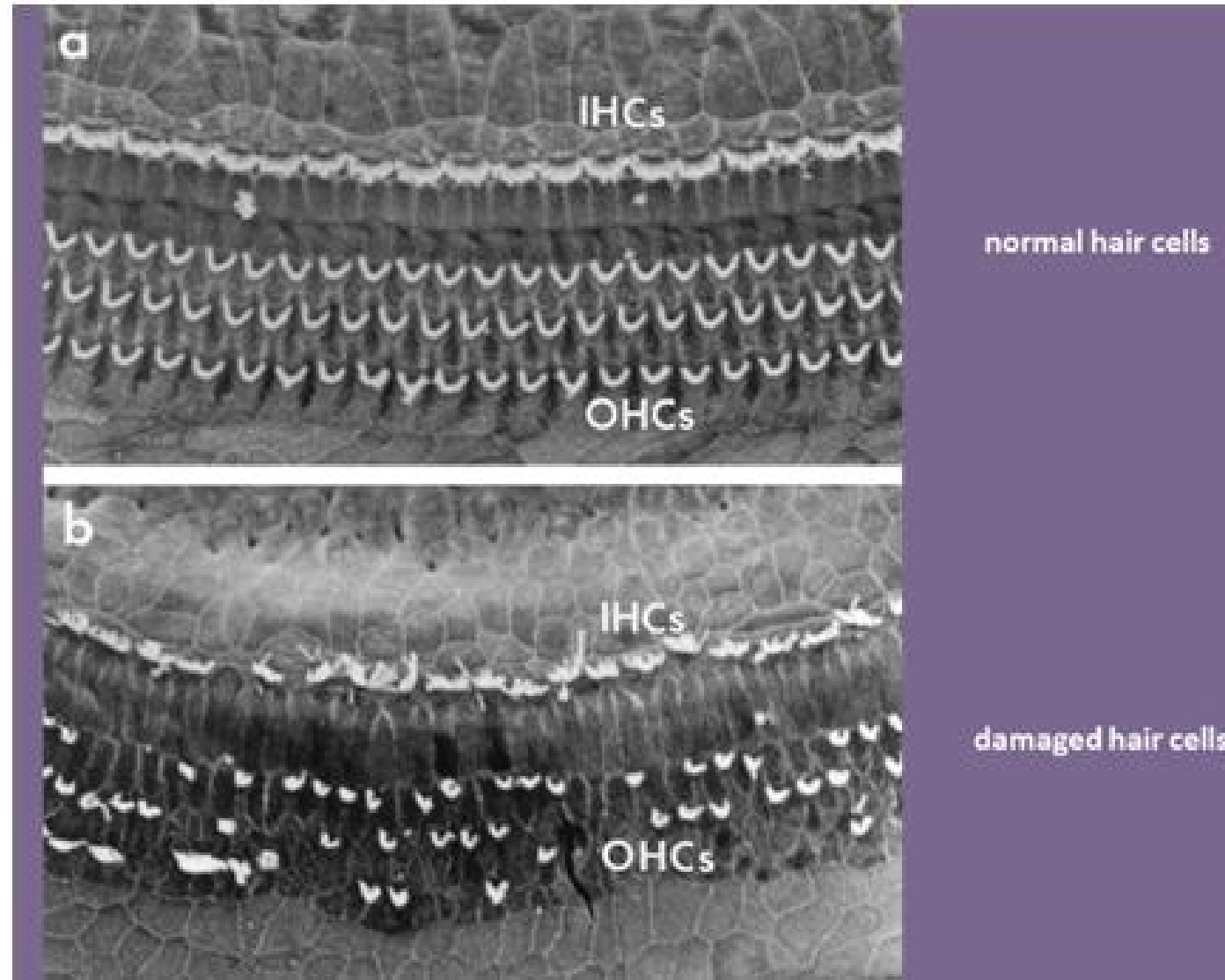




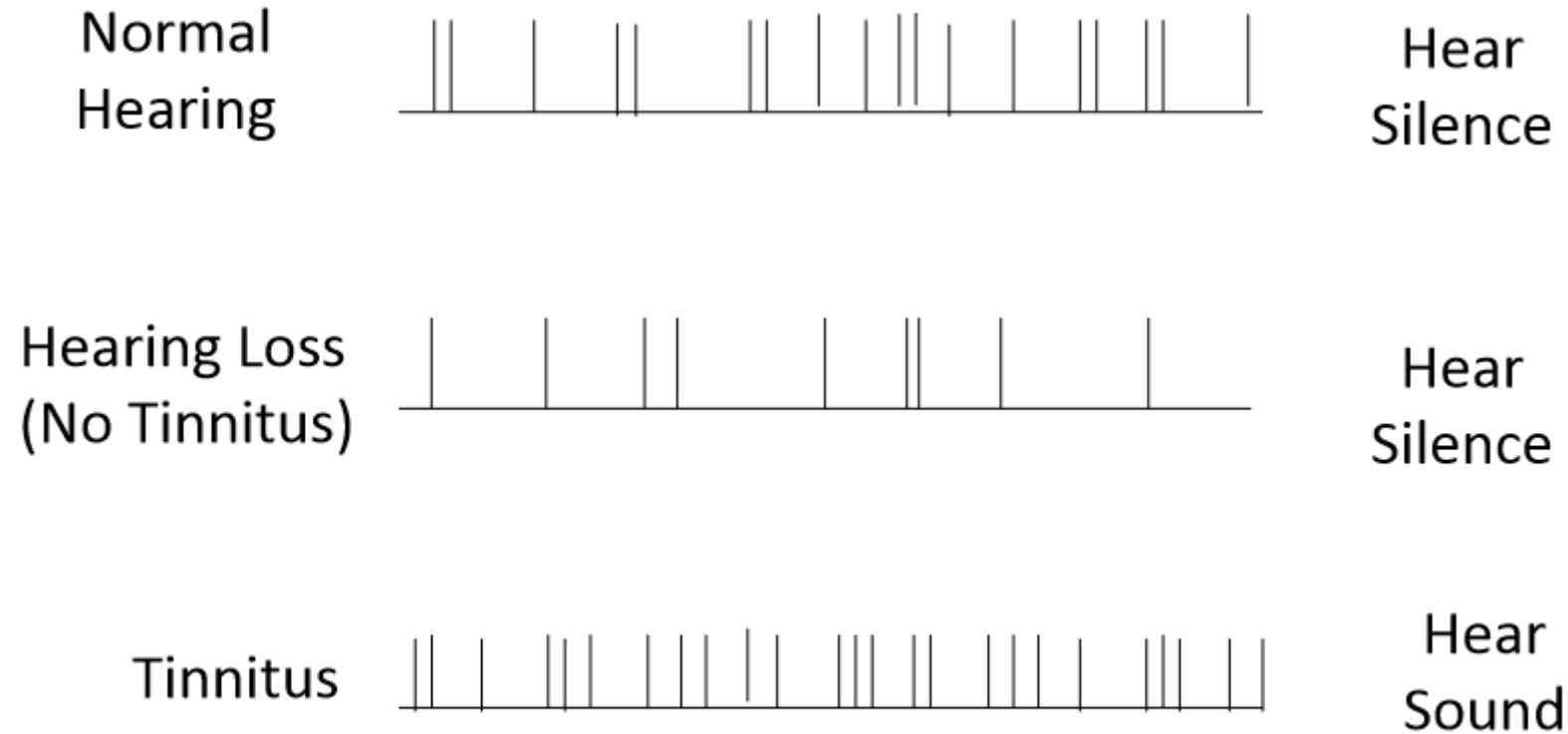
Hair Cells in the Cochlea



Damaged Hair cells = Hearing Loss



Tinnitus is an increase in Spontaneous Nerve Activity



Nerve Fiber Response



Expectations for relief

- At this time, there are no widely accepted cures for tinnitus
 - No medications
 - No supplements
 - No surgeries

There are effective drugs and treatments for:

- Sleep
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Hearing loss



**What do you feel has been the
biggest problem caused by your
tinnitus?**



How does it affect you?





**The more you think about your
tinnitus...**

the more your going to think about your tinnitus

It just gets
Bigger and
Bigger



Primary areas where tinnitus interferes

1. Thoughts and emotions



2. Hearing Difficulties



3. Sleep



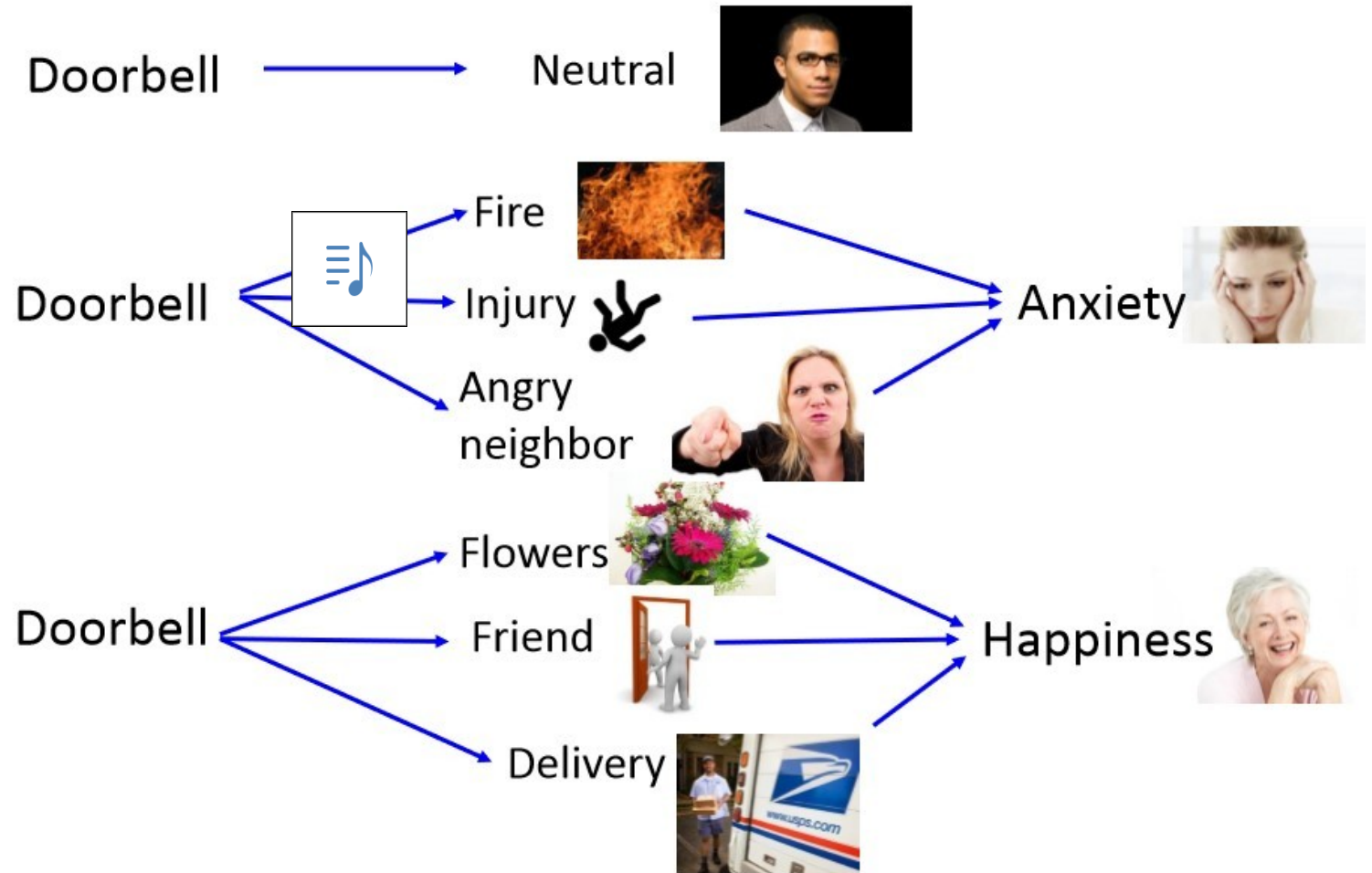
4. Concentration



Thoughts and emotions

Reaction management strategies

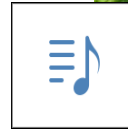
Change our
emotional reaction
to how we react to
the sound



Thoughts and emotions

Reaction management strategies

Change
interpretation of
importance



It's not the sound
itself, it's how we
react to it



Thoughts and emotions

Reaction management strategies

Reduce contrast
between
background sounds
and tinnitus

Low level noise
makes tinnitus
more difficult to
detect



Thoughts and emotions

Reaction management strategies

Re-focus on other activities

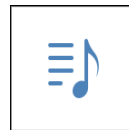


What can distract you
from your negative
thoughts?





"His snoring is just loud enough to mask my tinnitus."



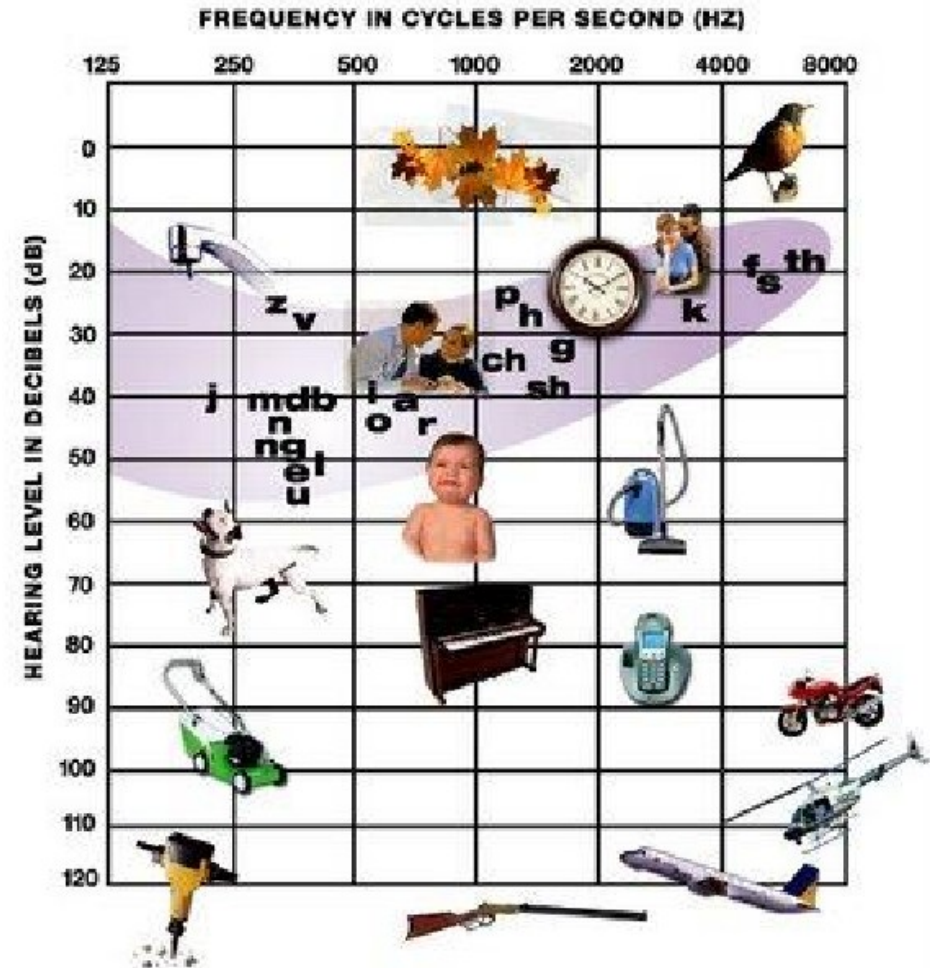


Factors Affecting Communication

Hearing loss

“If my tinnitus would just go away, I could hear better”

- Amplification will help you discover new sounds
- The ability to hear ambient sounds may distract you from the tinnitus
- New opportunities to participate in conversations to distract you from your tinnitus
- Have you had your hearing checked?



Hearing Aids

- Improves hearing and communications
- Reduces stress of effortful listening
- Hearing aids often help tinnitus
 - Facilitates positive reactions to tinnitus
 - Helps to mask tinnitus sound
 - One of the most effective treatments of tinnitus
 - Ability to stream audio from television and phone directly to HA's
 - Allows for sound therapy



Factors Affecting Communication



Background noise

Is your tinnitus the background noise interfering with your ability to hear?

Can you limit the amount of background noise to enhance your hearing ability

If you could hear better in background noise, would your tinnitus be as bothersome



Factors Affecting Communication

Ability to see who is speaking

Watching a newscaster is much easier to understand than a sitcom

Sitting closer to a speaker in a group

Watching lips in a well lit room make communication much easier

- Watching faces
- Good lighting
- Sit closer to the speaker
- Minimize noise
- Minimize visual distractions
- Watch lips



Factors Affecting Communication



Familiarity with the topic discussed

Grab a program or agenda to follow along

Pay close attention to become familiar with the topic

Ask people to rephrase rather than repeat



Factors Affecting Communication

Stress level

Your stress level can affect your ability to communicate

The harder you have to work at communication, the more frustrating it gets

Tinnitus get the blame

You keep thinking about your tinnitus



Recap of factors affecting Concentration

- Get your hearing checked
- Avoid background noise when trying to communicate
- Watch the speaker
- Be familiar with the topic
- Reduce the stress as much as possible



Sleep



What disrupts a good night's sleep

- Stress and emotions
- Environment
- Poor or no regular sleep schedule
- Learned sleeplessness
- Medications
- Time changes
- Caffeine
- Nicotine
- Alcohol



Strategies for good sleep

During the day

- Exercise
- Avoid napping
- Develop a routine

Create curfew at least 1.5 before bedtime. During curfew, do not:

- Stress
- Exercise
- Smoke
- Drink alcohol
- Eat

Develop a routine and stick to it



No

- Lights
- TV or computers
- Food or drinks
- Reading
- Stress

Add

- Comfortable mattress, pillows, and bedding
- Cooler temperature

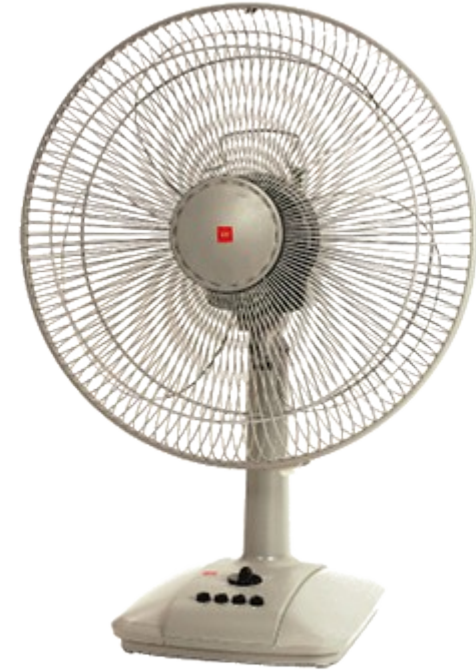
And

- You're ready to sleep



Sound

- Add low-level background sound
 - CD player
 - Radio
 - Relaxing sound player (nature sounds)
 - Fan, humidifier, etc.

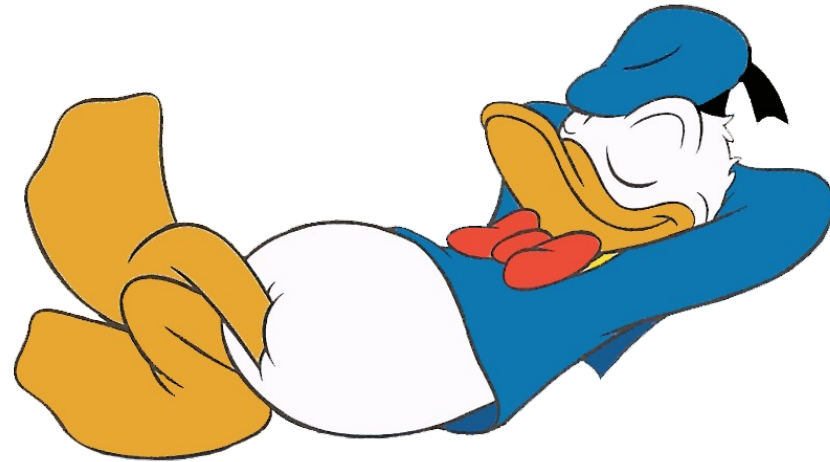


It's helpful to be able to control to volume level.



Relaxation

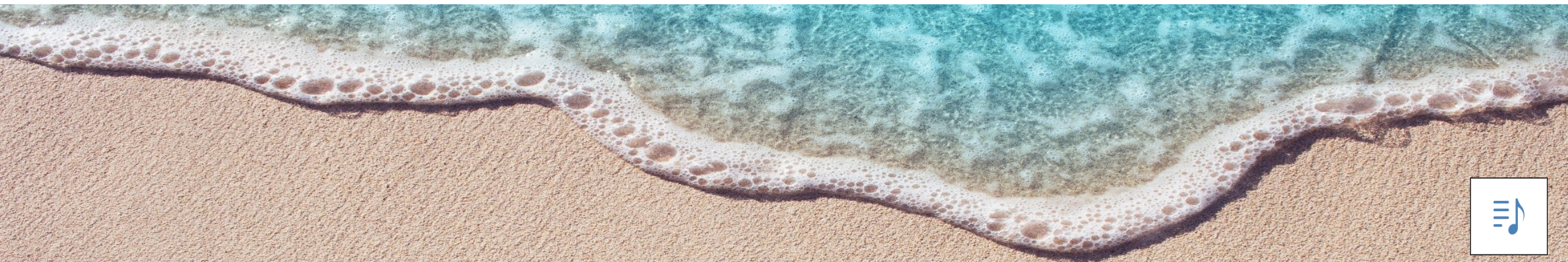
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation Technique
 - Deliberately apply tension to a muscle group
 - Stop the tension
 - Notice how the muscles feel when they relax



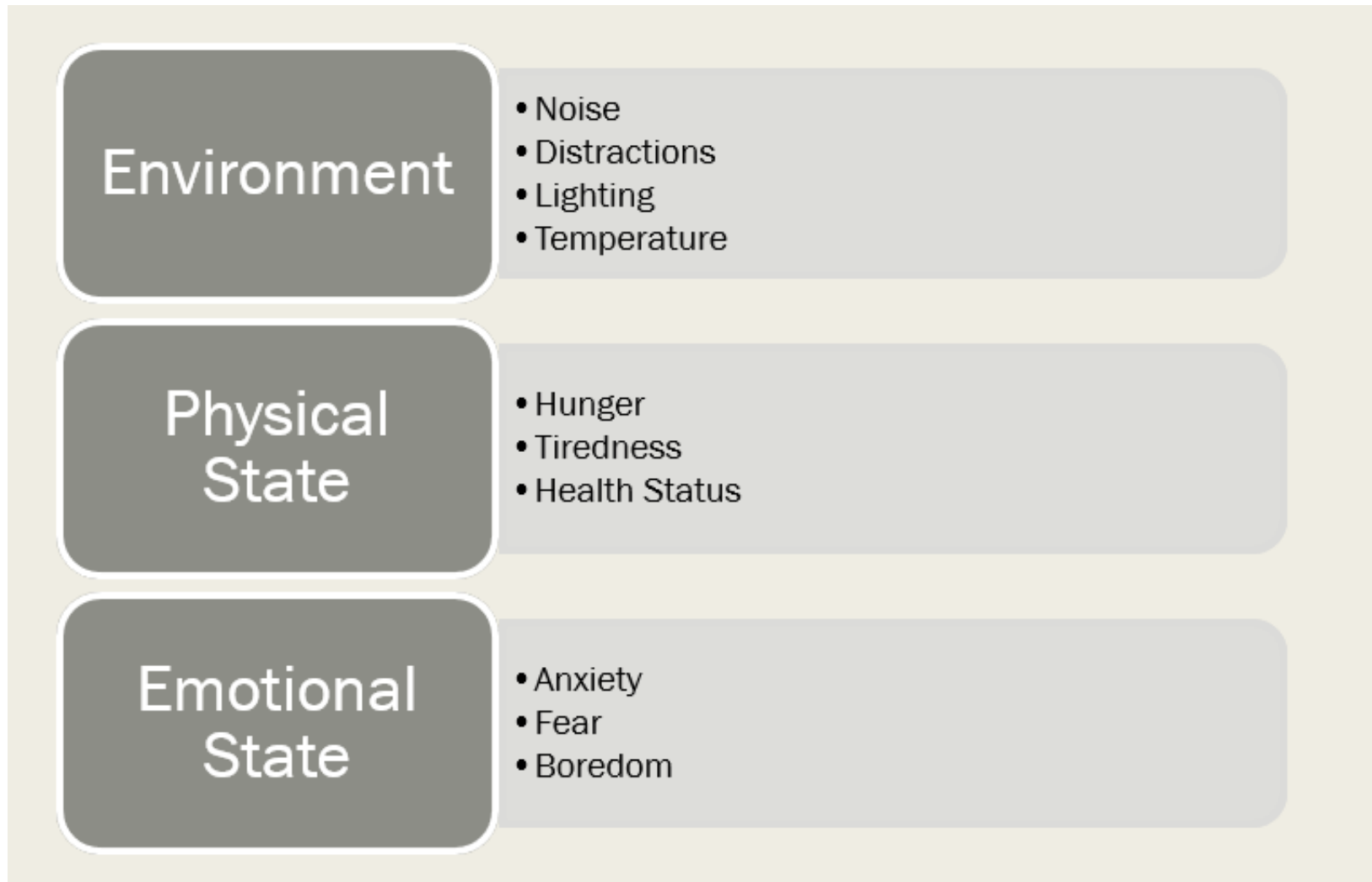
Imagery

Let's try it!

1. Close your eyes
2. Think of a relaxing scene (like a beach)
3. Try to imagine the scene as clearly as you can – add details!
4. How does it feel? Smell? Sound?
5. Allow yourself to relax as you imagine the location in your mind



Factors affecting concentration



Concentration strategies to consider

- Eliminate distractions
- Adjust work habits
- Stay focused
- Consider task difficulty
- Decrease prominence of tinnitus
- Take control of your attention



Tinnitus and Concentration

- If brain determines tinnitus is not important, the tinnitus can be ignored
- If brain determines tinnitus is important, we will pay attention to it





Excellent options to treat tinnitus

- Individual counseling
- Sound therapy
- Wearable tinnitus devices
- Hearing aids



Sound Therapy Options

- Non-wearable sound generators

- Sound Pillow
- Sound Generators
- Smartphone Applications
- CD's, radio, TV, etc



Treatment for Tinnitus

- What have you tried?
- What has been successful?
- Try reducing your reactions and stress associated with your tinnitus



Individual Tinnitus Evaluation and Counseling

- Please download and complete the Tinnitus Questionnaire at www.prescotthearing.com/tinnitus
- Send questionnaire to doug@prescotthearing.com for a review of the areas where you are having the most difficulty
- Address your most difficult areas in the order of how it affects you...
 - Thoughts and emotions
 - Hearing and communication
 - Sleep
 - Concentration
- Reduce the associated stress relating to your reactions to your tinnitus
- Keep notes in your tinnitus diary. Download at prescotthearing.com/tinnitus



Summary

- Hearing loss and tinnitus are related
- Tinnitus is a change in spontaneous activity of auditory nerve
- There is no cure for tinnitus
- Treatment options include
 - Counseling
 - Sound therapy
 - Hearing aids
 - Tinnitus devices



Questions



Thank you

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