

Summary

Session 10

Review

- Thoughts and Emotions
- Hearing and Communication
- Sleep
- Concentration

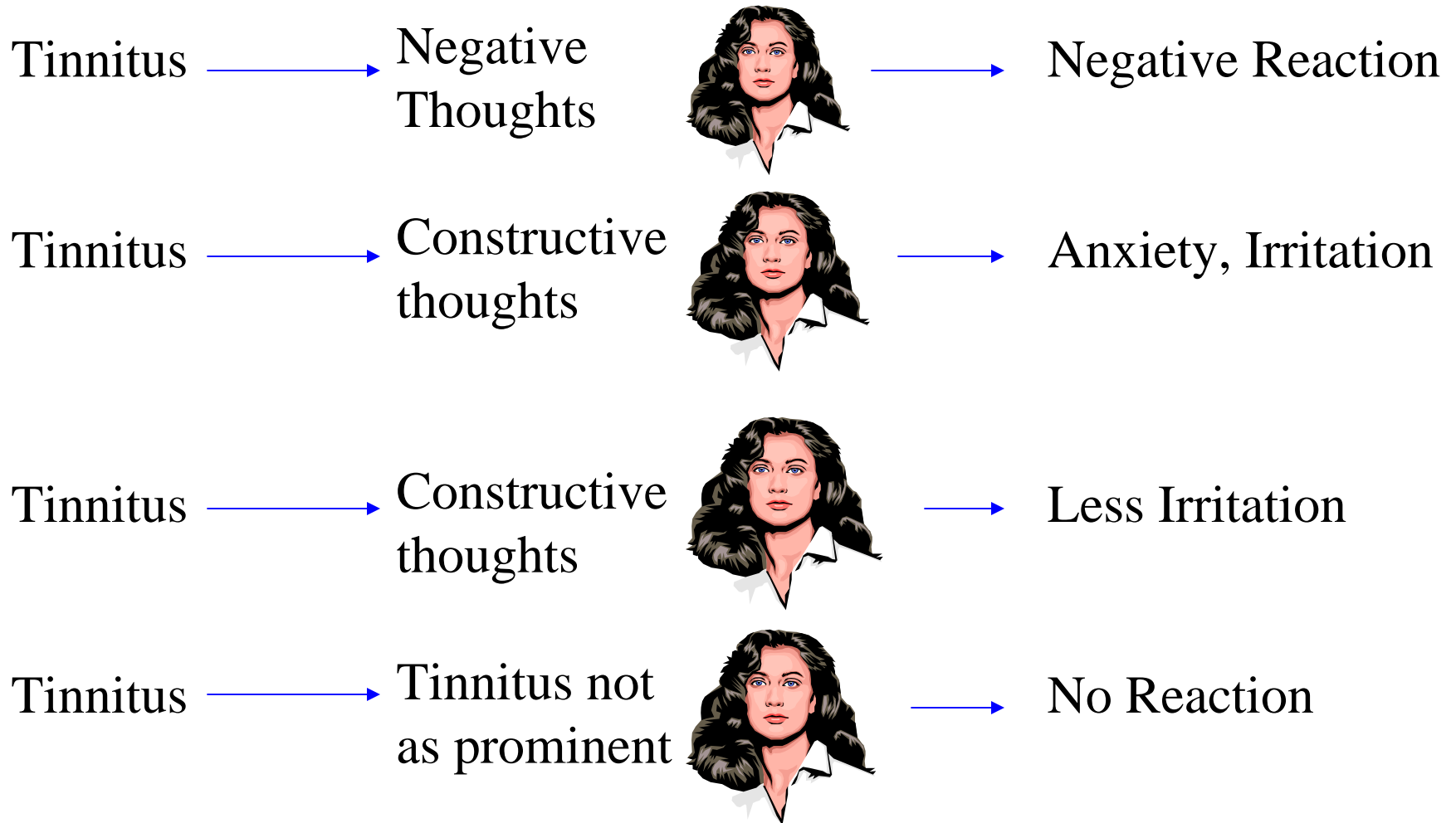
Thoughts and Emotions

- Tinnitus is likely the result of increased spontaneous nerve activity
- Many people have tinnitus – you are not alone
- Tinnitus is not threatening your health or hearing
- Tinnitus and your reaction to tinnitus are two different things
- You can change your reaction to tinnitus

Decreasing Attention

- 2 kinds of attention:
 - Conscious and Subconscious
- Background sounds are monitored all the time
 - this is normal
- We attend to important, strange, or fearful sounds
- Sounds that we believe are important will be monitored more closely
- If you believe tinnitus is not that important, it is less likely you will attend to it

You Can Change Your Emotional Reactions



Hearing and Communication



- Use devices to help with hearing loss
- Reduce or move away from background noise
- Make sure you can see the talker

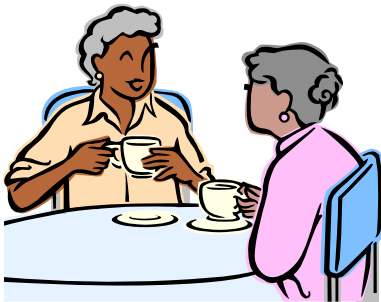
How Tinnitus Can Affect Hearing

- Tinnitus is not damaging your hearing
- When you are focused on your tinnitus, it is harder to pay attention to your communication partner
- Tinnitus might make some sounds difficult to hear



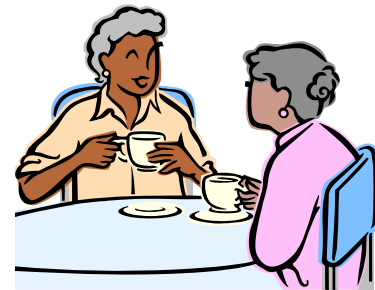
Repair Strategies

- Ask communication partner to:
 - Repeat
 - “Could you please repeat that?”
 - “I’m sorry, I missed what you said because of the noise over there.”
 - Rephrase
 - “Could you rephrase that? I heard you say something about a baseball game.”



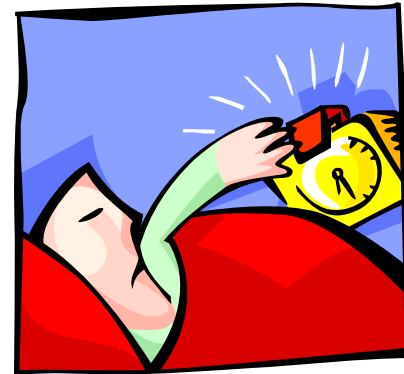
Repair Strategies continued

- Reduce - length of phrase
 - “Could you summarize the most important points for me?”
- Elaborate – provide more information
 - “I’m having a little difficulty following, could you give me a little more information?”



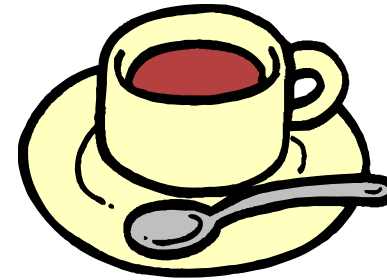
Things That Affect Sleep

- Stress
- Environmental factors (noise, lights, temperature)
- Irregular work schedules
- Learned sleeplessness patterns



Things That Affect Sleep

- Medications
- Caffeine (coffee, tea, cola, chocolate)
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Tinnitus



Good Sleep Habits

- Separate ‘day’ and ‘night’ activities
 - (e.g. 8 pm)
- Before 8 pm
 - Physical exercise, stressful activities, food
- After 8 pm
 - Reduce food, drink, activities

Preparing for Sleep Using Sound

- Choose soft pleasant sounds you enjoy
 - Music (calm, soothing, steady, classical, piano)
 - Sounds of nature (waves, waterfalls, raindrops)
 - Broadband noise (‘ssshhh’)



Preparing for Sleep with Relaxation



Techniques:

- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Imagery

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



Concentration

- Try easy and difficult tasks
- Attempt to focus on a task for a brief period
 - Vary the amount of time spent on each task
 - Build up the time spent on each task
- Do not restrict only to simple tasks
 - Easier for tinnitus to intrude when task is less interesting
- Try more challenging tasks
 - Tinnitus may be less intrusive when more effort is put into the task or when task is more enjoyable

Attention Control Exercises

- Learn to switch attention from one stimulus (e.g. object, sensation, thought, activity) to another at will
- Refocus your attention from your tinnitus onto other stimuli, external or internal



Questions...

- Are there any questions you have about your tinnitus?
- How has your outlook on tinnitus changed?
- Is there anything else I can help you with in this process?
- What resources do you have available if you need further assistance?

Plan for the future

- Annual hearing checks
 - sooner if you notice a significant change
- Use ear protection
- Please contact us again if you want to discuss your hearing or tinnitus