Managing Your Tinnitus: What to Do and How to Do it

(Session 2 of 2)

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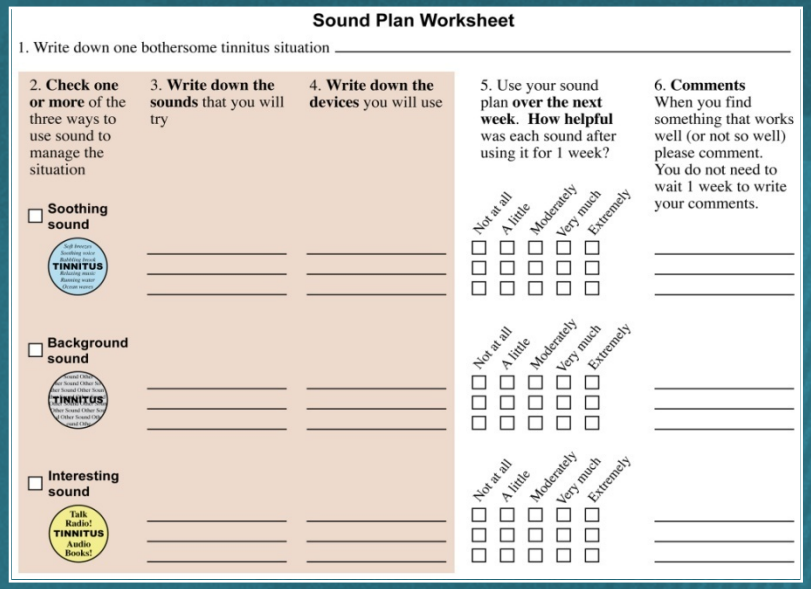
- This workshop was developed by researchers at the VA RR&D National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research (NCRAR), located at the Portland, Oregon VA Medical Center

Materials Needed for This Meeting

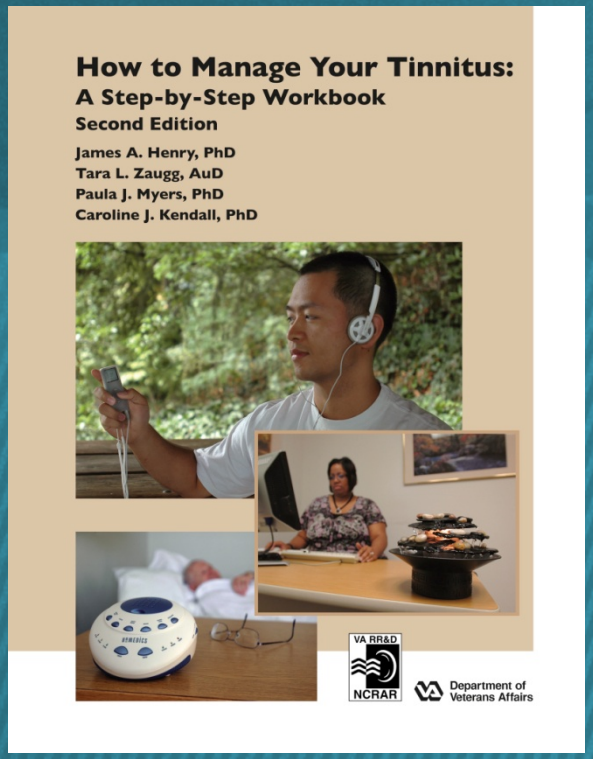
- Completed Sound Plan Worksheet (from last meeting)
- Clean Sound Plan Worksheet
- Your Workbook



Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comments** When you find something that works well (or not so well) please comment. You do not need to wait 1 week to write your comments.
☐ **Soothing sound**			Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely	
☐ **Background sound**			Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely	
☐ **Interesting sound**			Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely	



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Goals of Tinnitus Management (All Methods)

- Emotional reactions are reduced
- Stress is reduced
- Little if any attention is given to tinnitus
- Tinnitus does not affect any life activities in a major way
- Further help is not needed or wanted

Are these *your* goals?

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These goals can be reached even if the sound of your tinnitus doesn’t change!

Today's Workshop: Five Sections

- Review
- Ideas for choosing devices
- Update your "sound plan"
- How does PTM compare to other methods of sound-based tinnitus management?
- Other things you can do

Part 1: Review

- Look at your Sound Plan Worksheet that you filled out at the last meeting
- If you don't have it, get out a clean Worksheet

Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

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☐ **Interesting sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____

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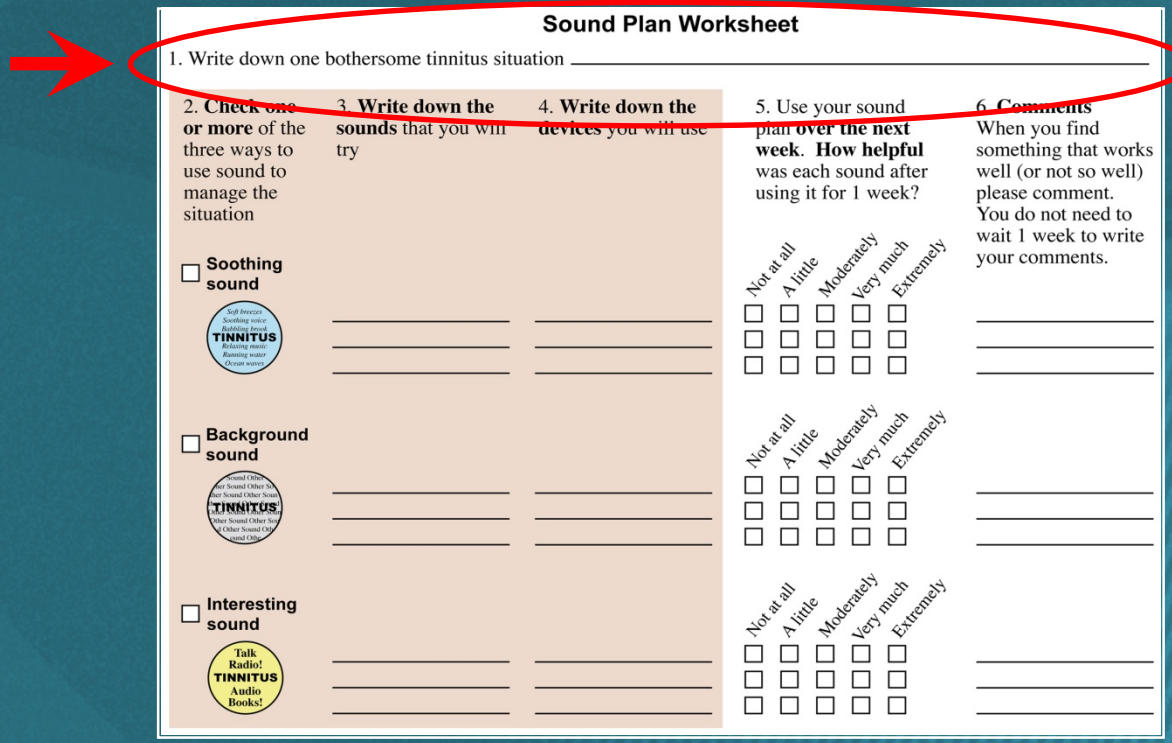
Review: #1 on the Sound Plan Worksheet

- The first step in writing a plan to manage tinnitus is to write down a bothersome tinnitus situation



Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comments** When you find something that works well (or not so well) please comment. You do not need to wait 1 week to write your comments.
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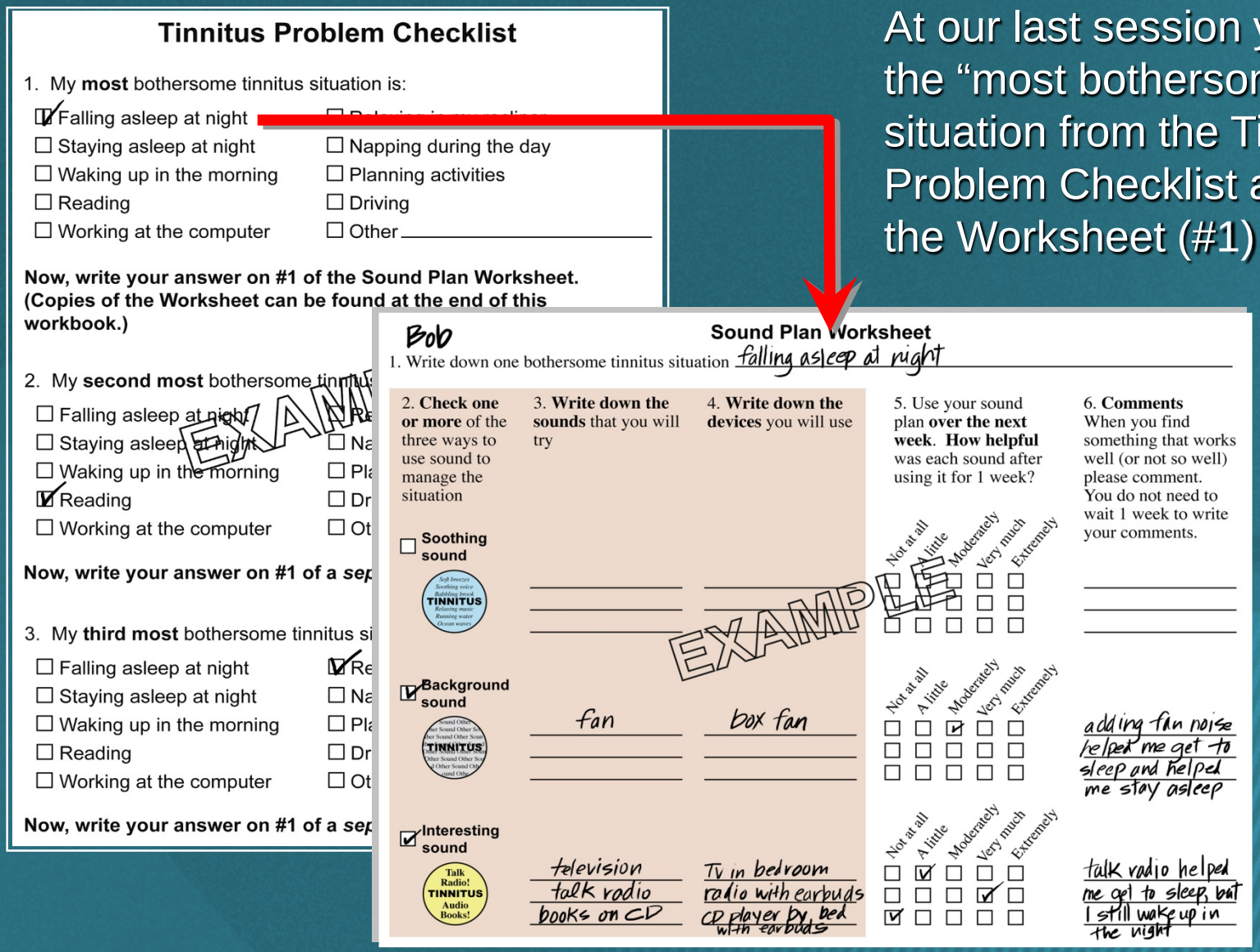

At our last session you wrote the "most bothersome" situation from the Tinnitus Problem Checklist at the top of the Worksheet (#1)

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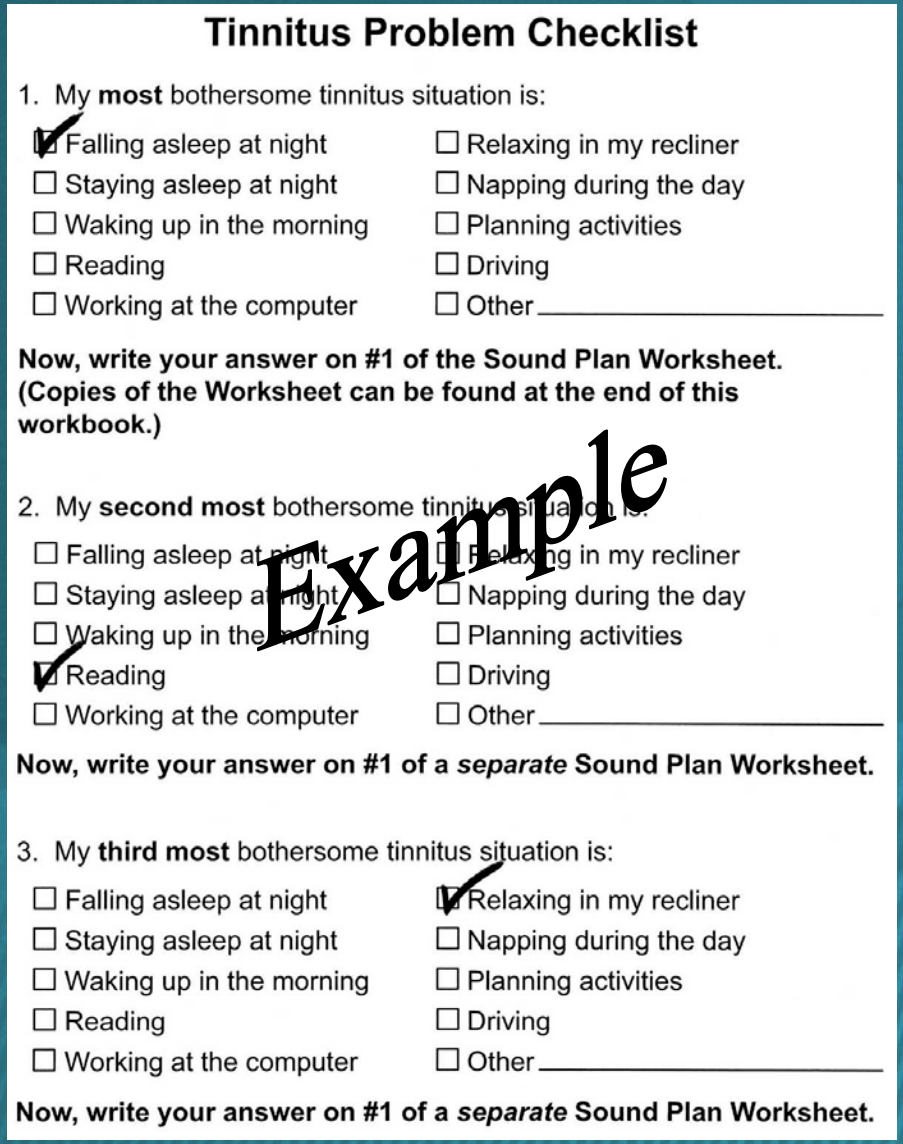
- You can fill out a separate sound plan worksheet for each problem you marked on the Tinnitus Problem Checklist



Tinnitus Problem Checklist

1. My **most** bothersome tinnitus situation is:

☑ Falling asleep at night	☐ Relaxing in my recliner
☐ Staying asleep at night	☐ Napping during the day
☐ Waking up in the morning	☐ Planning activities
☐ Reading	☐ Driving
☐ Working at the computer	☐ Other _____

Now, write your answer on #1 of the Sound Plan Worksheet. (Copies of the Worksheet can be found at the end of this workbook.)

Example

2. My **second most** bothersome tinnitus situation is:

☐ Falling asleep at night	☐ Relaxing in my recliner
☐ Staying asleep at night	☐ Napping during the day
☐ Waking up in the morning	☐ Planning activities
☑ Reading	☐ Driving
☐ Working at the computer	☐ Other _____

Now, write your answer on #1 of a *separate* Sound Plan Worksheet.

3. My **third most** bothersome tinnitus situation is:

☐ Falling asleep at night	☑ Relaxing in my recliner
☐ Staying asleep at night	☐ Napping during the day
☐ Waking up in the morning	☐ Planning activities
☐ Reading	☐ Driving
☐ Working at the computer	☐ Other _____

Now, write your answer on #1 of a *separate* Sound Plan Worksheet.

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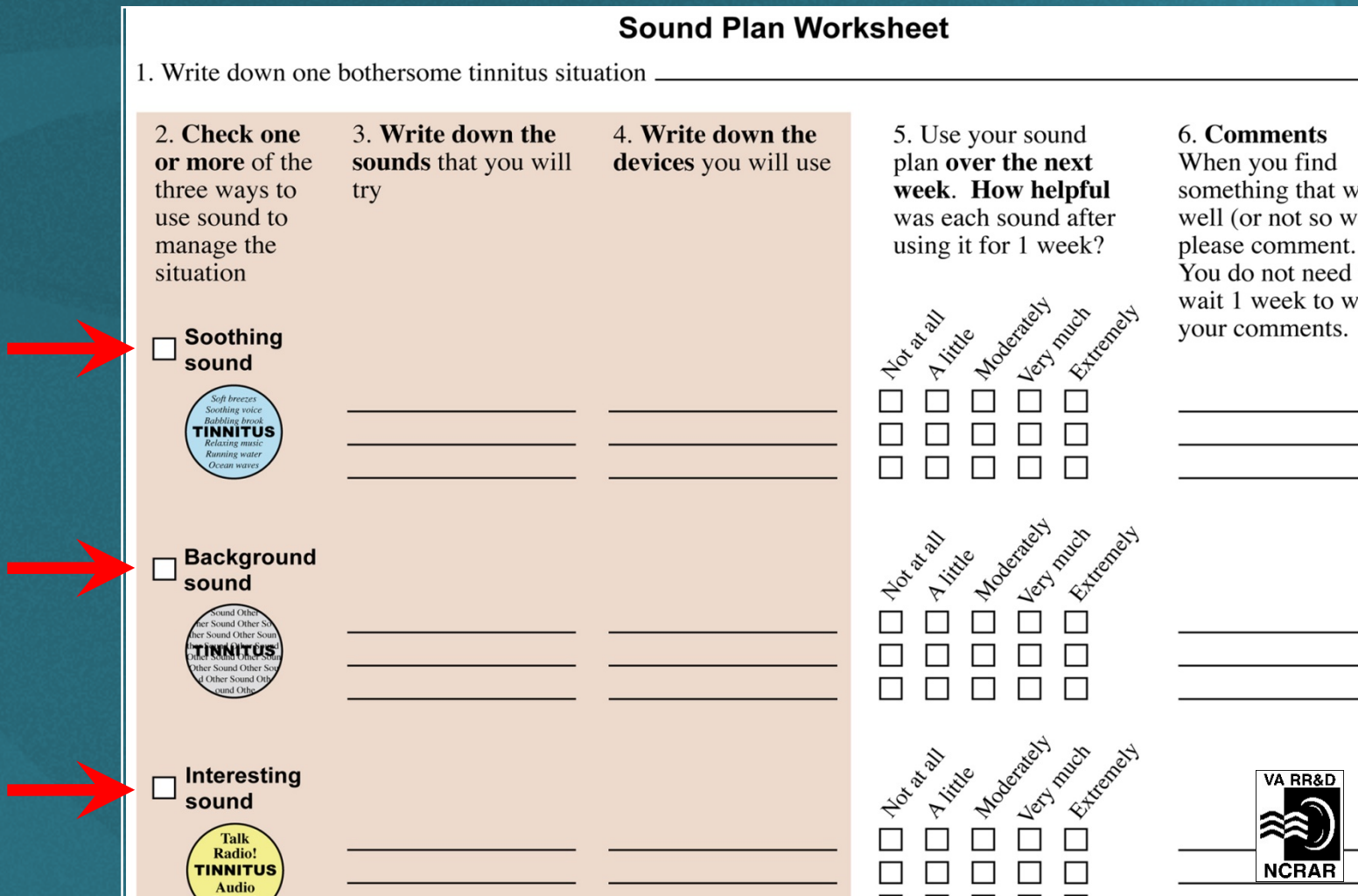
Review: #2 on the Worksheet

- Three types of sound to manage reactions to tinnitus

Three types of sound



Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comments** When you find something that w well (or not so w please comment. You do not need wait 1 week to w your comments.
☐ **Soothing sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____
☐ **Background sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____
☐ **Interesting sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____

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1. “Soothing Sound”

Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. W so we pl Yo wa yo
☐ **Soothing sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____
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☐ **Interesting sound**			Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extrem ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

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Soothing Sound

- What is it?
  - Sound that makes you feel better as soon as you hear it
- How can it help?
  - By giving you a sense of relief from tension and stress caused by tinnitus
- When can it help?
  - Any time your tinnitus bothers you

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Relief Scale (for Soothing Sound)

- Can be used to help find the sounds that give you the best sense of relief
- Recall demonstration from last class

Instructions:

1 Choose a sound that you think will be soothing. (A soothing sound will give you a sense of relief from stress or tension caused by tinnitus.)

2 Adjust the volume of the sound until you find the level that gives you most relief.

3 Answer the question "When I listen to this sound, how much relief do I feel?"

0	1	2	3	4	5
No relief	Slight relief	Mild relief	Moderate relief	Nearly complete relief	Complete relief

Write down the sound that you listened to	How much relief did the sound give you?					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5

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2. “Background Sound”

Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comme** When you something well (or no please com You do not wait 1 wee your comm
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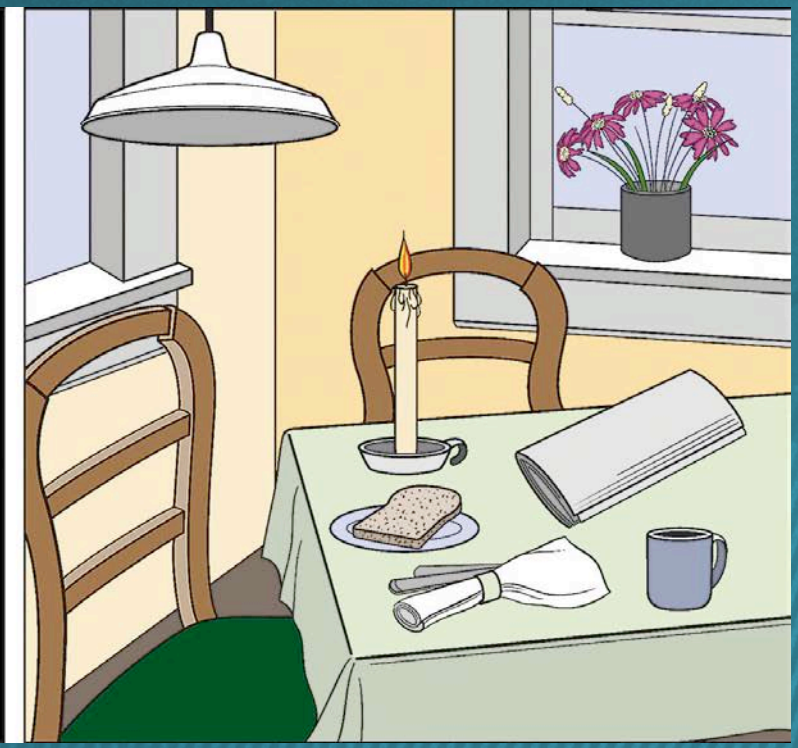
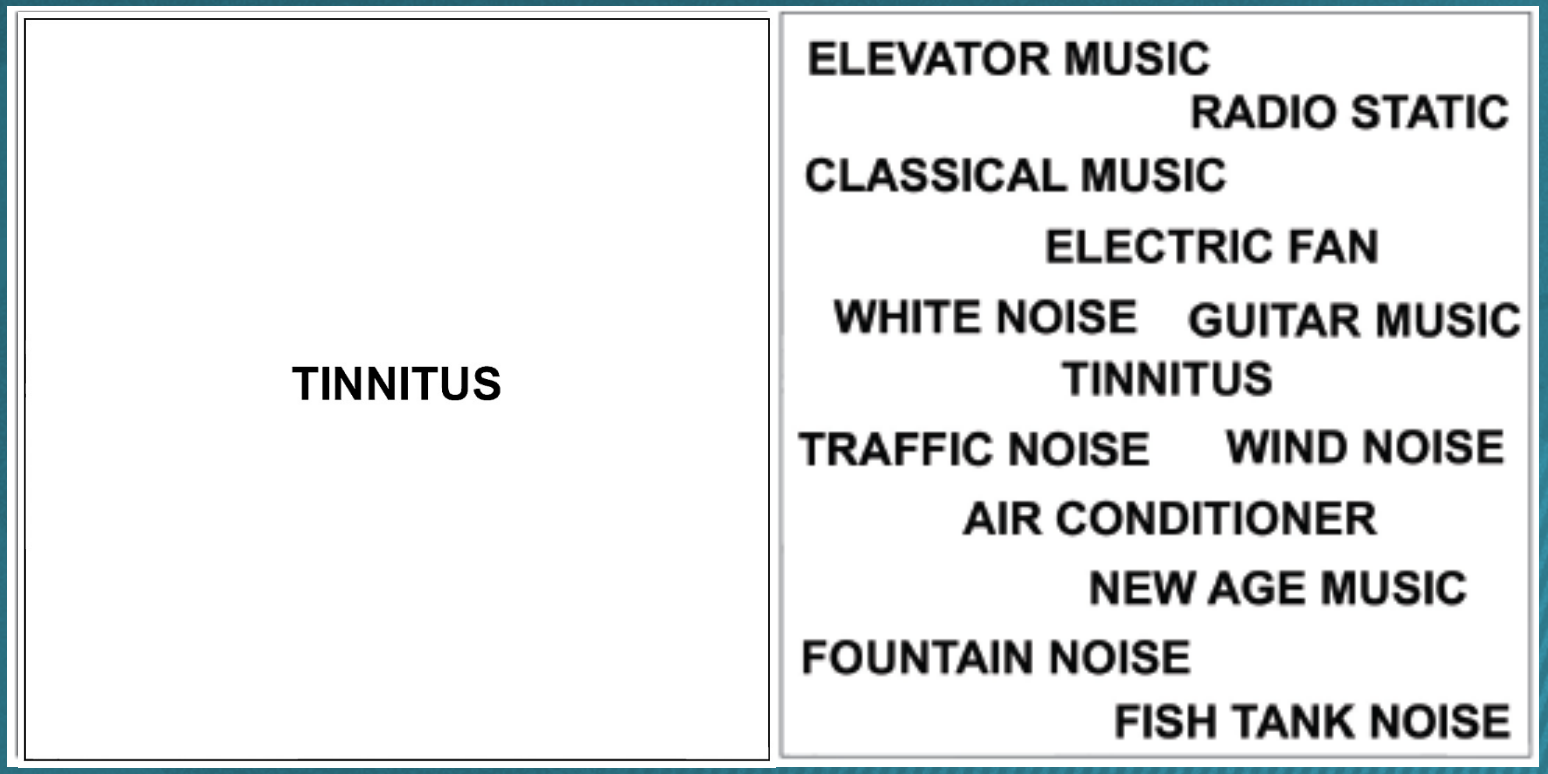
Background Sound

- What is it?
  - Any sound that is neutral (not soothing and not interesting)
- How can it help?
  - Reduces contrast to make it easier to ignore your tinnitus
- When can it help?
  - Any time

Same Candle – Different Backgrounds



Same Tinnitus – Different Backgrounds



Background Sound: Things to Remember

- Tinnitus is less likely to get your attention when you add background sound
- You might not notice background sound helping you right away—that doesn't mean it's not helping you
- Using constant background sound over weeks or months can help you get better at ignoring tinnitus
- Never use sound that is irritating or annoying to you to manage your reactions to tinnitus

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3. “Interesting Sound”

Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comments** When you find something that wo well (or not so wel please comment. You do not need to wait 1 week to wri your comments.
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Interesting Sound

- What is it?
  - Sound that keeps your attention
  - Sound that involves active listening
- How can it help?
  - Shifts your attention away from your tinnitus
- When can it help?
  - When you do not need to concentrate on something else
  - When you want to relax or sleep

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Attention Scale

Audio Books!
Talk Radio!
TINNITUS
Interesting Music!
Dynamic
Speech!

- Can be used to help find the sounds that are most interesting to you—to focus your attention away from the tinnitus
- Recall demonstration from last meeting

Instructions:

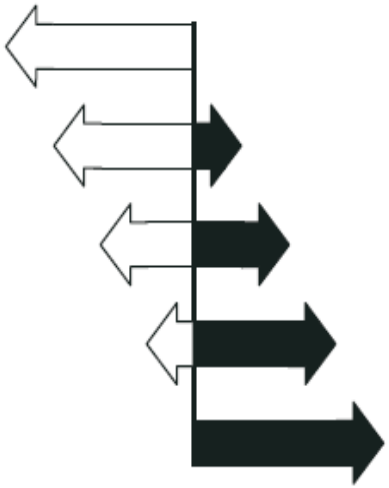
1 Choose a sound that you think will keep your attention.

2 Listen to the sound for at least 1 minute.

3 Choose the percent of attention focused on the sound while listening to it.

Attention focused on:

Tinnitus **Other Sound**



0% of attention focused on Other Sound

25% of attention focused on Other Sound

50% of attention focused on Other Sound

75% of attention focused on Other Sound

100% of attention focused on Other Sound

Write down the sound that you listened to	How much of your attention was focused on the "Other Sound"?				
	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%
	0%	25%	50%	75%	100%

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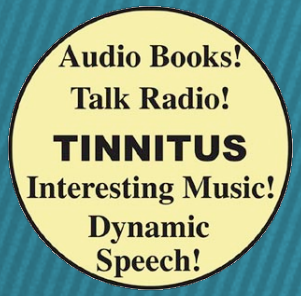
Summary: Types of Sound

- Three types of sound for managing reactions to tinnitus:
  - Soothing Sound – helps to reduce stress or tension that is caused by tinnitus
  - Background Sound – reduces contrast between tinnitus and a quiet environment to make it easier to ignore the tinnitus
  - Interesting Sound – helps to shift attention away from tinnitus



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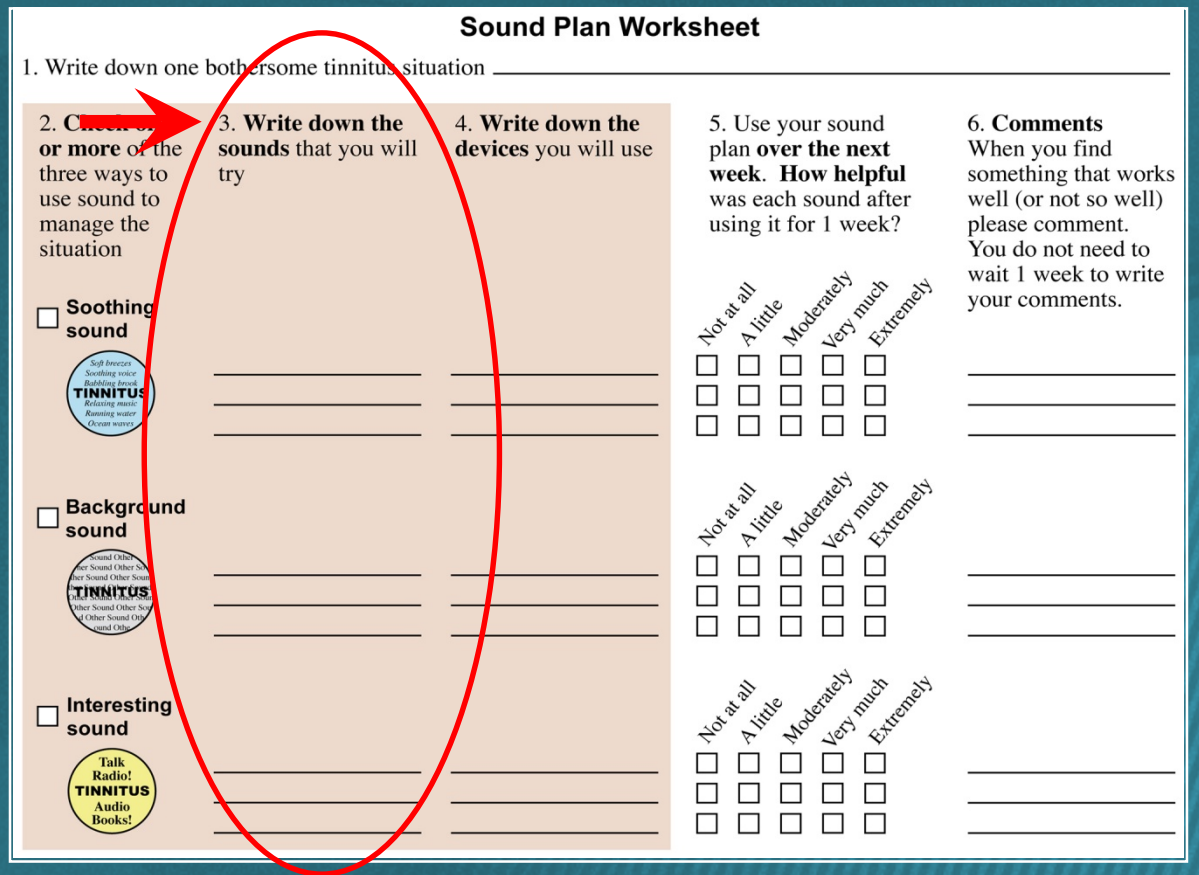
Review: #3 on the Worksheet

- When writing down sounds that you will try, it helps to think about using **environmental sound**, **music**, and **speech**



Sound Plan Worksheet

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☐ **Soothing sound**				
☐ **Background sound**				
☐ **Interesting sound**				

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To help you come up with ideas for choosing sounds…

- For each type of sound…

	Environmental	Music	Speech
Soothing	✓	✓	✓
Background	✓	✓	✓
Interesting	✓	✓	✓

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To help you come up with ideas for choosing sounds…

- You can use…

	Environmental	Music	Speech
Soothing	✓	✓	✓
Background	✓	✓	✓
Interesting	✓	✓	✓

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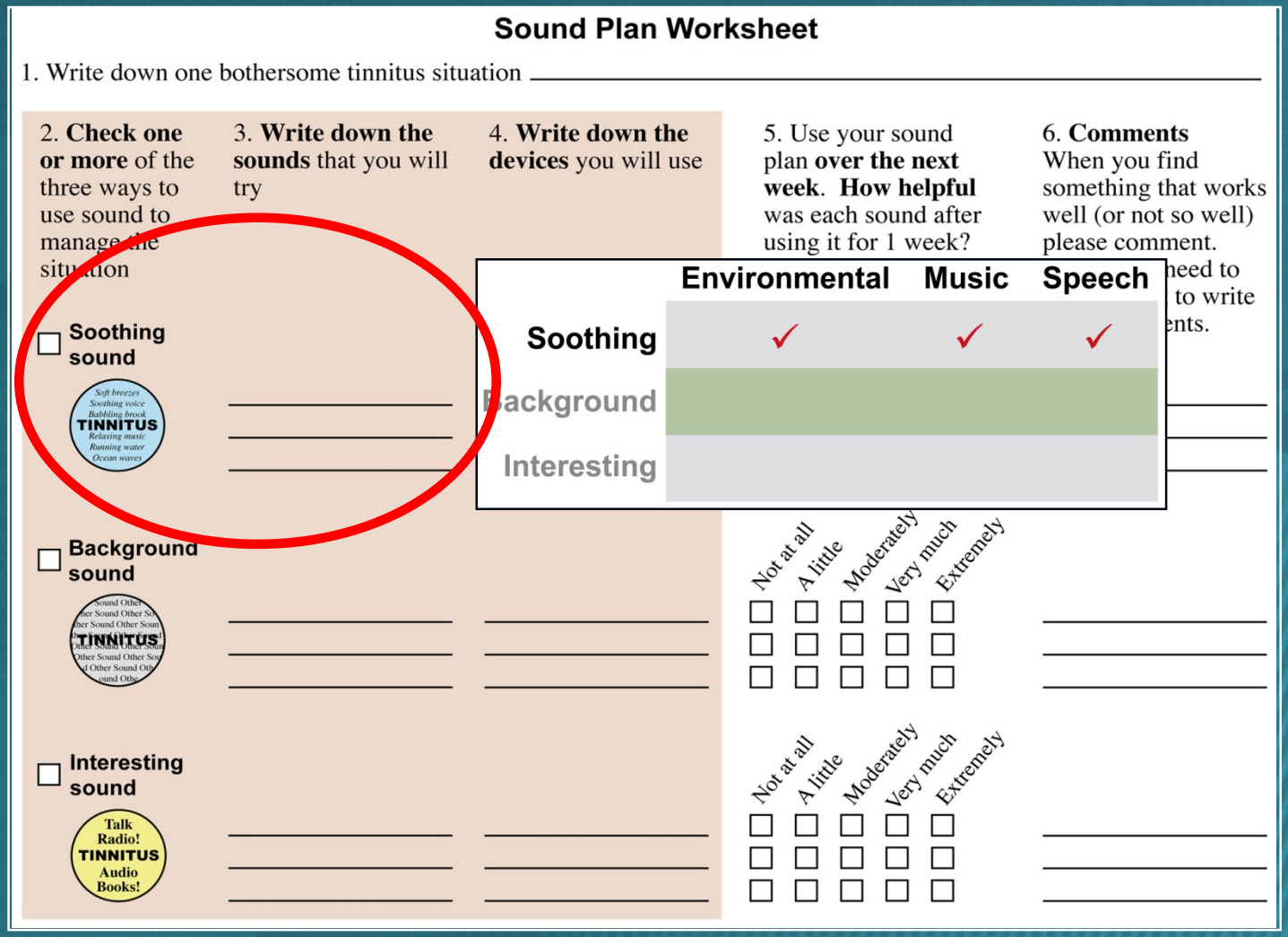
Soothing Sound Can be Environmental Sound, Music, or Speech



Sound Plan Worksheet

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3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try

4. **Write down the devices** you will use

5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?

6. **Comments** When you find something that works well (or not so well) please comment.

	Environmental	Music	Speech
Soothing	✓	✓	✓
Background			
Interesting			

☐ **Soothing sound**

Soft breezes · Soothing voice · Babbling brook · TINNITUS · Relaxing music · Running water · Ocean waves

☐ **Background sound**

Sound Other Sound Other Sound Other Sound · TINNITUS · Other Sound Other Sound

☐ **Interesting sound**

Talk Radio! TINNITUS Audio Books!

Not at all · A little · Moderately · Very much · Extremely

Not at all · A little · Moderately · Very much · Extremely

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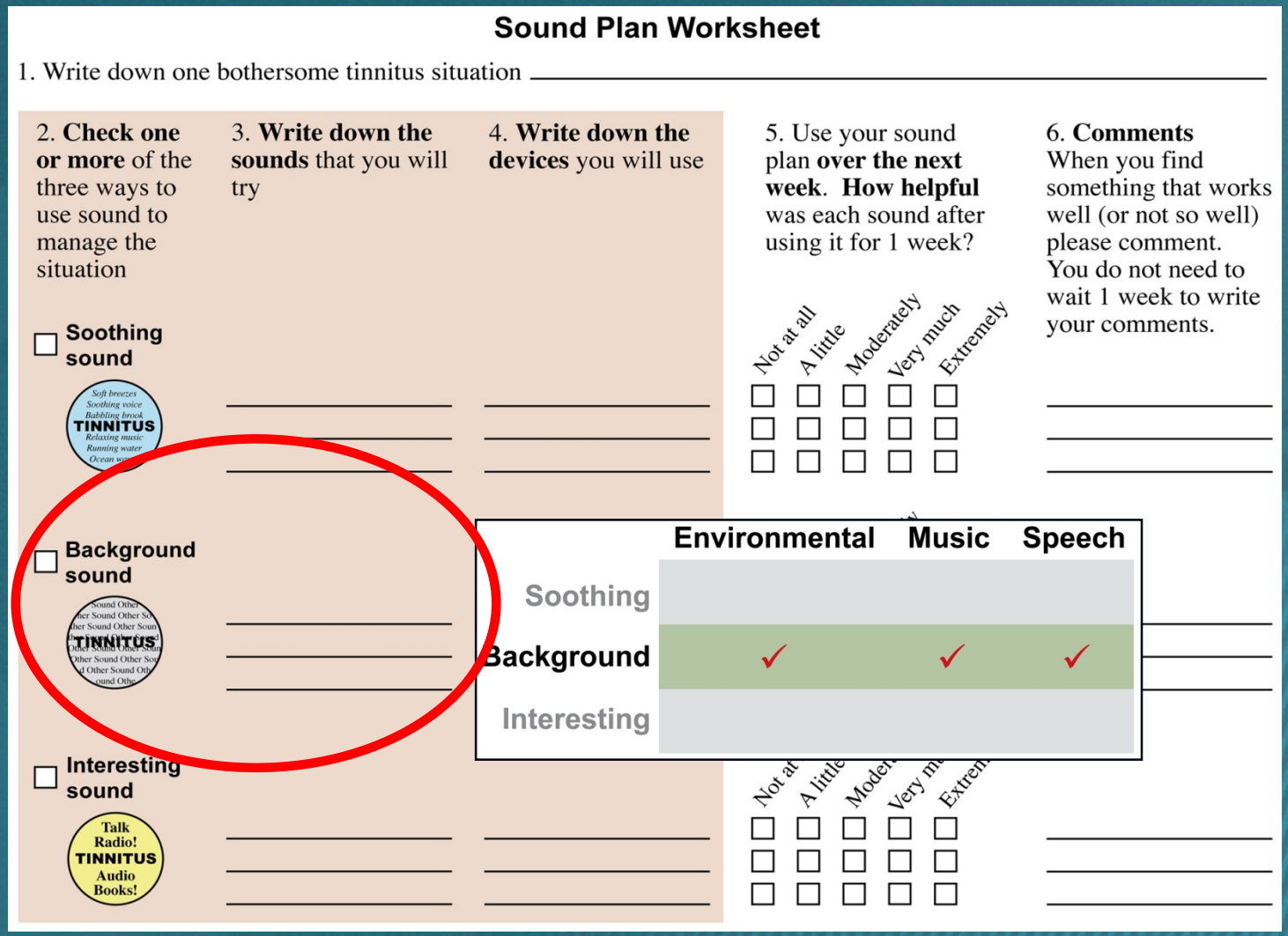
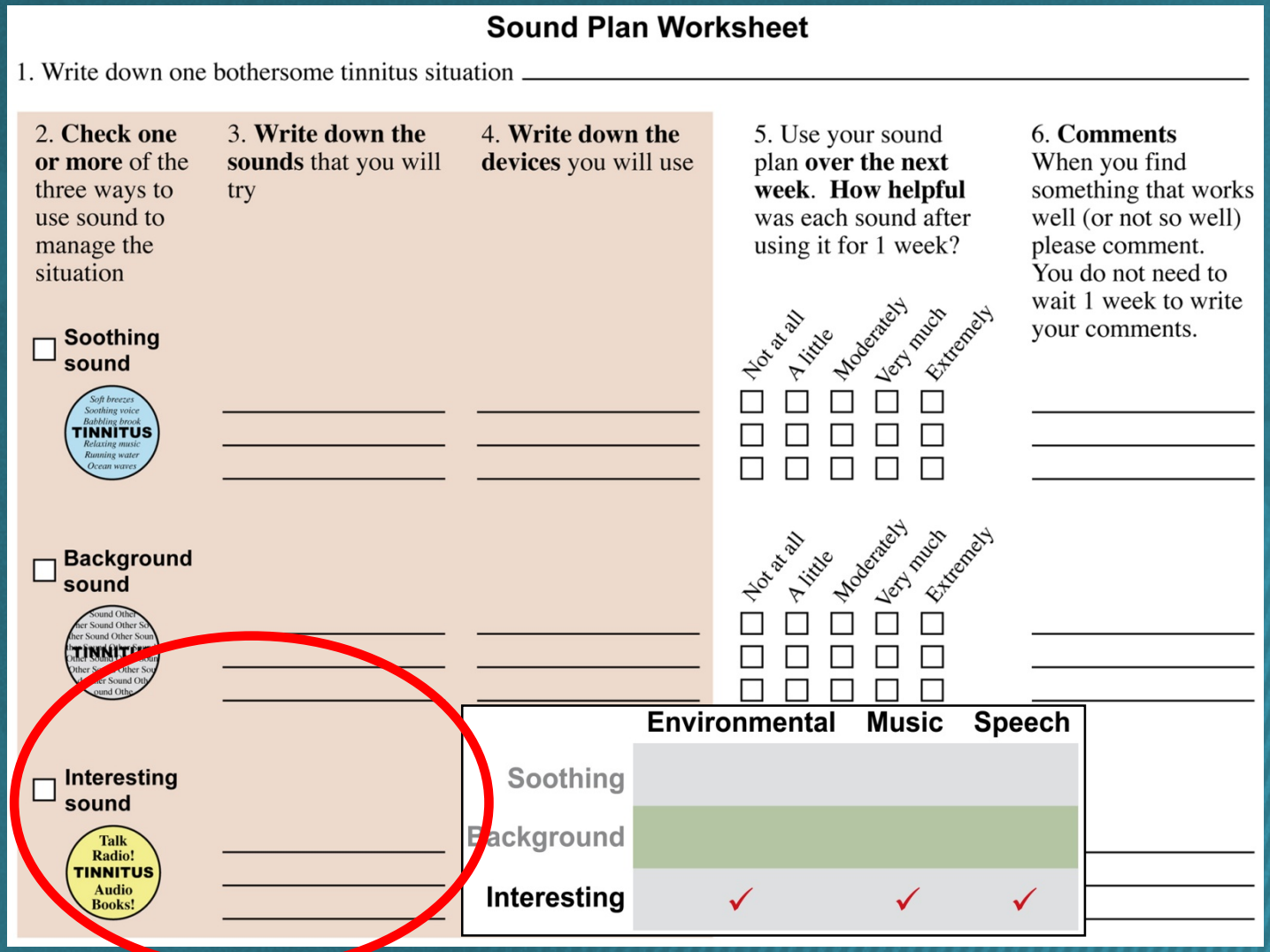
Background Sound Can be Environmental Sound, Music, or Speech



Interesting Sound Can be Environmental Sound, Music, or Speech



Sound Plan Worksheet

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☐ **Interesting sound**				

	Environmental	Music	Speech
Soothing			
Background			
Interesting	✓	✓	✓

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Nine Combinations of Sound to Manage Reactions to Tinnitus

	Environmental	Music	Speech
Soothing	✓	✓	✓
Background	✓	✓	✓
Interesting	✓	✓	✓

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Group Discussion

- Everyone should share the following:
  - What tinnitus problem were you working on (#1 on the Worksheet)?
  - What was your plan (#2, #3, #4)?
  - Were you able to do what you planned (#5)?
  - Was the plan helpful (#5)?
  - Did you run into any problems (#6)?
- Stop here until everyone has had a chance to answer these questions

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Can Your Plan be Improved?

- We reviewed the different types of sound, and how each can be environmental sound, music, or speech
- We discussed your Sound Plan and how well it worked
- Next, we will discuss some new ideas for #4 on the Sound Plan Worksheet
- Then we will work on improving your Sound Plan, or creating a new Sound Plan

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Part 2: Ideas for Choosing Devices

Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week**. **How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comments** When you find something that works well (or not so well) please comment. You do not need to wait 1 week to write your comments.
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☐ **Background sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____
☐ **Interesting sound**	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____	Not at all A little Moderately Very much Extremely ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	_____ _____ _____

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Two Categories of Devices

- Wearable listening devices

- Stationary (tabletop) devices

Wearable Listening Devices

These **eye shades** play nature sounds; you can also plug any device with a standard headphone jack into them

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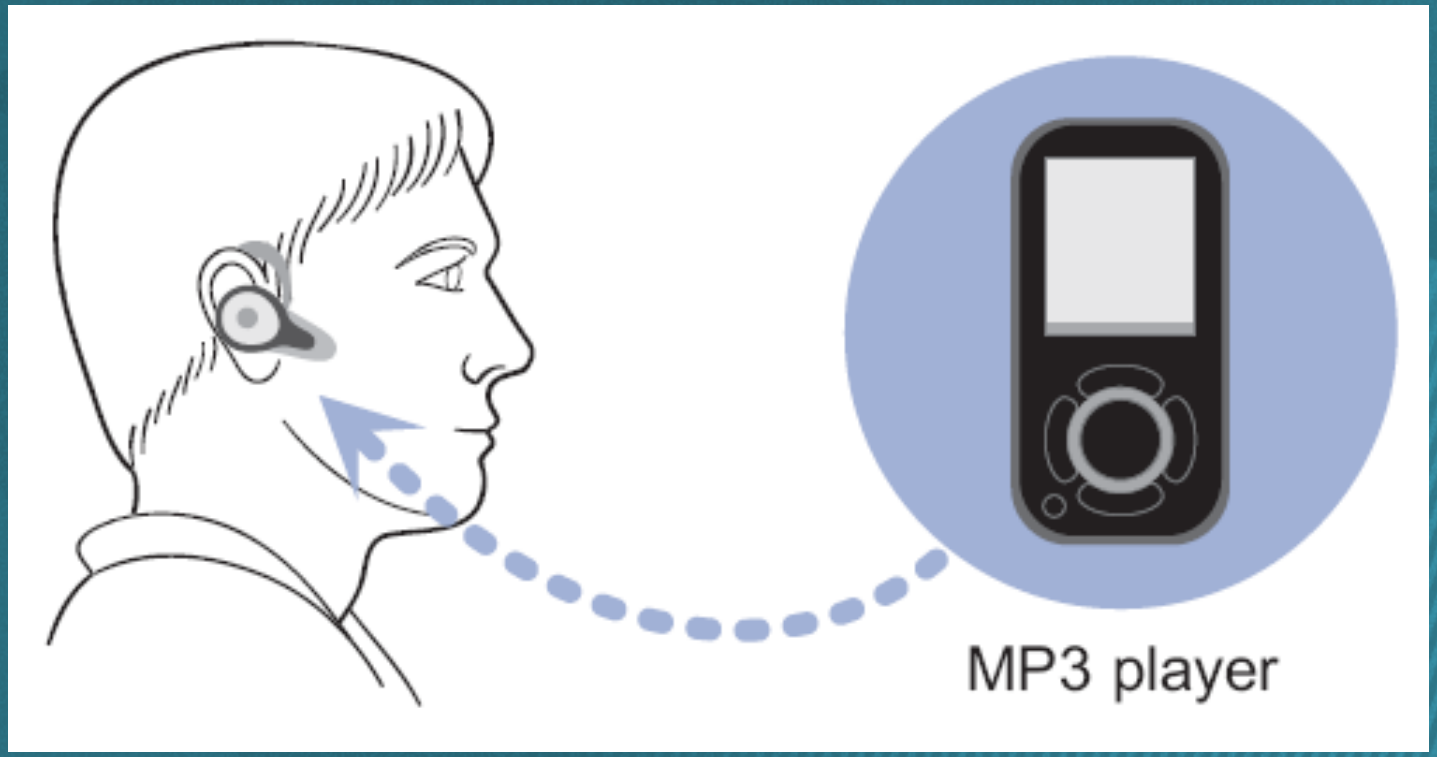
MP3 Players

- Very flexible
- Download any sound from CD or podcast
- Normally use “earbuds”

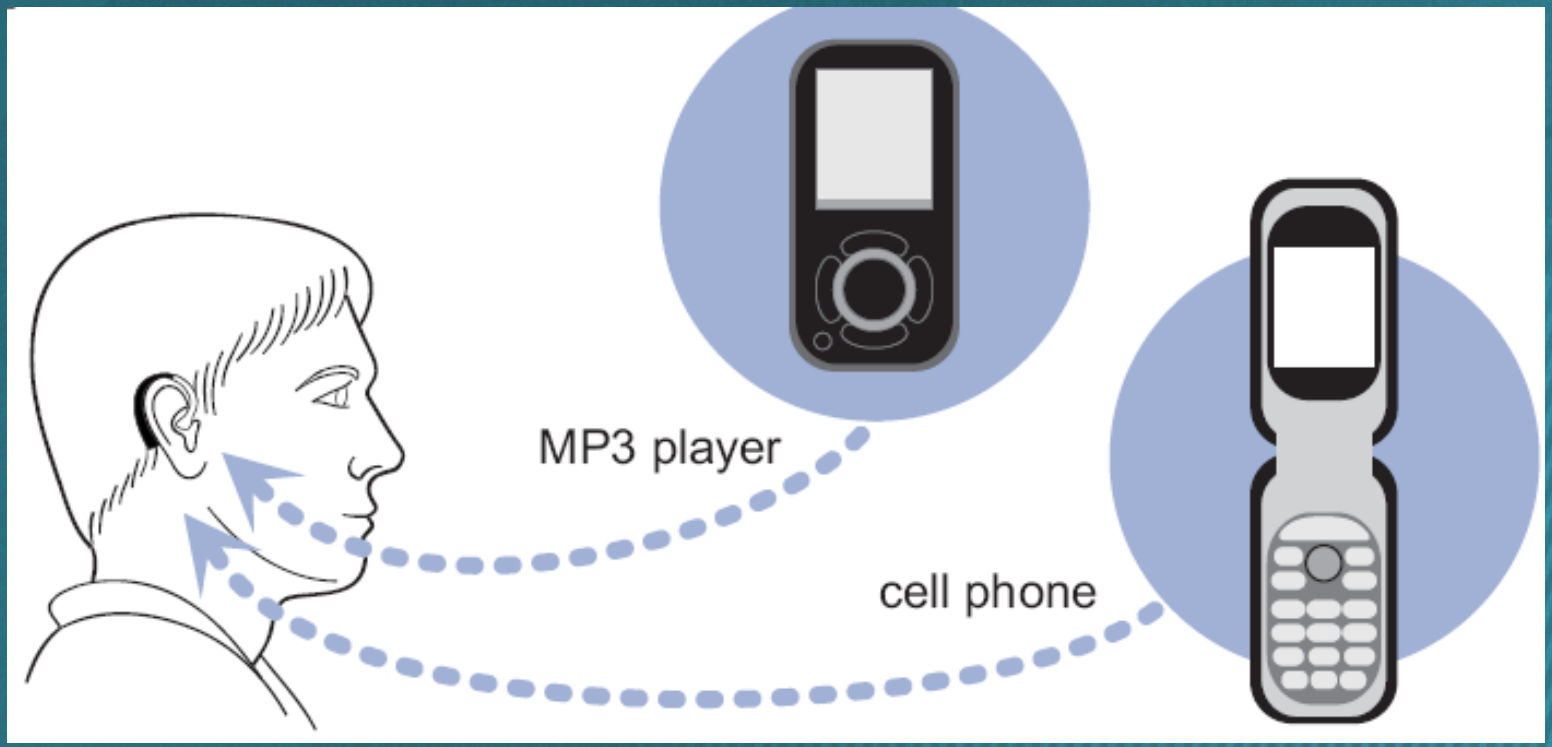
Bluetooth

- Short-range radio technology
- Normally used with cell phones
- Available with some MP3 players



Bluetooth with Hearing Aids

- Available with some behind-the-ear hearing aids
- Hearing aids can receive signal from MP3 player
- Also works with some cell phones



Satellite Radio

- Huge number of listening choices
  - ~160 channels

Hearing Aids with T-coils

- Many hearing aids have a T-coil—sometimes called a telephone program
- Tiny coil of wire in a hearing aid that can pick up electromagnetic signals

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Hearing Aids with T-coils

- This is a satellite radio
- Instead of headphones, a neckloop is plugged into it

Hearing Aids with T-coils

- The neckloop sends a wireless signal up to the hearing aid
- You can plug a neckloop into anything with a standard headphone jack—including cell phones, radios, and MP3 players

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Tabletop Devices: Examples

Tabletop Water Fountain

Tabletop Sound Generators

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Docking Station for an MP3 Player

Electric Fan

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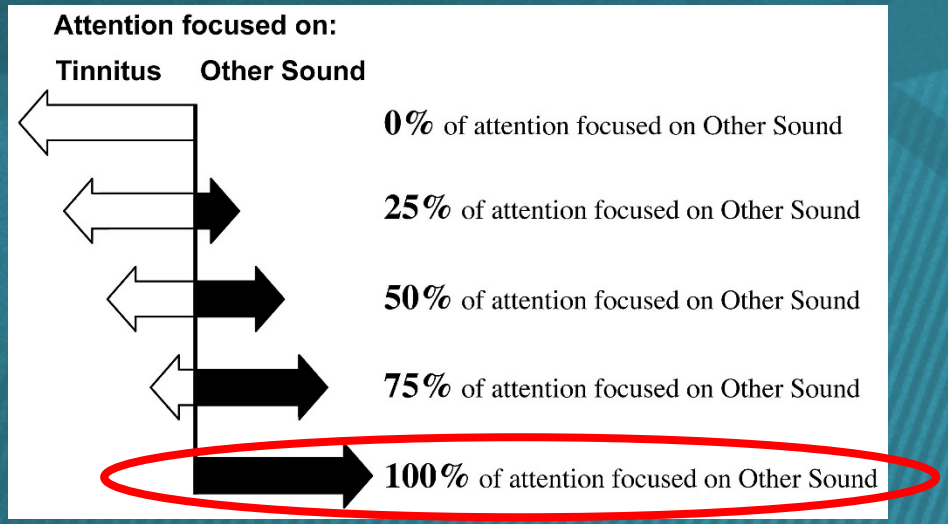
Adding Sight to Sound

- So far, we have talked about using only sound for managing reactions to tinnitus
- Listening and watching together can sometimes be more helpful

I am 100% focused on this football game!



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More Ideas for Using Both Sight and Sound

- Going out to a movie
- Watching a DVD or a TV show
- Going to a play, a concert, or a comedy club

- The content should be meaningful and interesting—to do a better job of keeping your attention
- Special DVDs are designed to show peaceful scenes with relaxing music in the background – makes soothing sound both visual and auditory (see workbook)

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Some Ideas for Using Sound at Night

“Sound Pillow”

- Has a cord that can plug into anything with a standard headphone jack—CD player, MP3 player, radio, TV, etc.
- Sound from device comes through speakers in pillow
- Only you hear the sound
- Disadvantage: sound is usually only heard in one ear

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Fleece Headband with Embedded Speakers

- Originally made for skiers, but can be used comfortably in bed
- Plugs into any device with standard headphone jack
- Only you hear the sound
- Sound is heard in both ears

Neck Pillows

- Sometimes used for sleeping on an airplane
- This idea came from a Veteran who had tinnitus who wanted to wear standard earphones at night – he arranges the pillow so that when he lays his head on it, there's no pressure on the earphones

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Part 3: Update Your “Sound Plan”

Are You Satisfied with How Well Your Tinnitus is Managed?

- If so, then keep doing what you're doing
- If not, update the Worksheet
- Most people need to try several Sound Plans before they are satisfied

Updating Your Worksheet: What *You Will Need*

- Your Worksheet from the last session
- A blank Worksheet
  - You can revise the Worksheet you have been using or you can use a blank Worksheet to write a new Sound Plan

- Stop here until everyone has what they need to update the Worksheet

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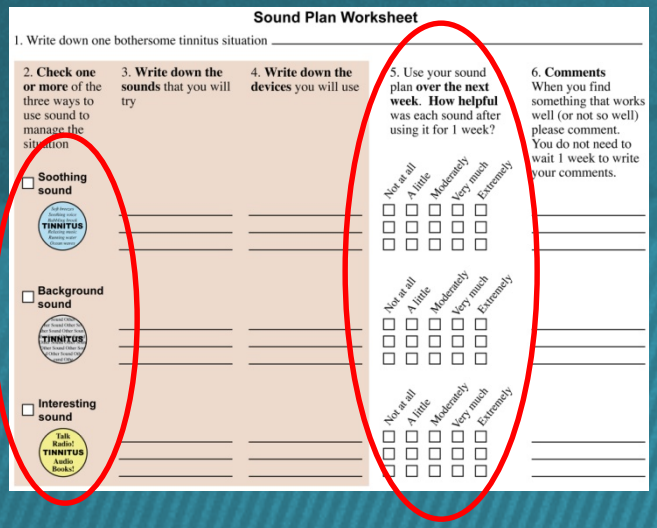
Updating Your Worksheet: What *We Will Do*

- Review #5 from your completed Worksheet
- Revise the Sound Plan to build on the ideas that were most helpful

Which *Types of Sound* Were Most Helpful for You?

- Look at #5 on the Worksheet
- Was one of the three types of sound especially helpful for you over the last 2 weeks?
  - Soothing Sound?
  - Background Sound?
  - Interesting Sound?



Sound Plan Worksheet

1. Write down one bothersome tinnitus situation _____

2. **Check one or more** of the three ways to use sound to manage the situation	3. **Write down the sounds** that you will try	4. **Write down the devices** you will use	5. Use your sound plan **over the next week. How helpful** was each sound after using it for 1 week?	6. **Comments** When you find something that works well (or not so well) please comment. You do not need to wait 1 week to write your comments.
☐ Soothing sound			Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely	
☐ Background sound			Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely	
☐ Interesting sound			Not at all / A little / Moderately / Very much / Extremely	

- Are you seeing any *patterns*?
  - (Make sure you write them down)

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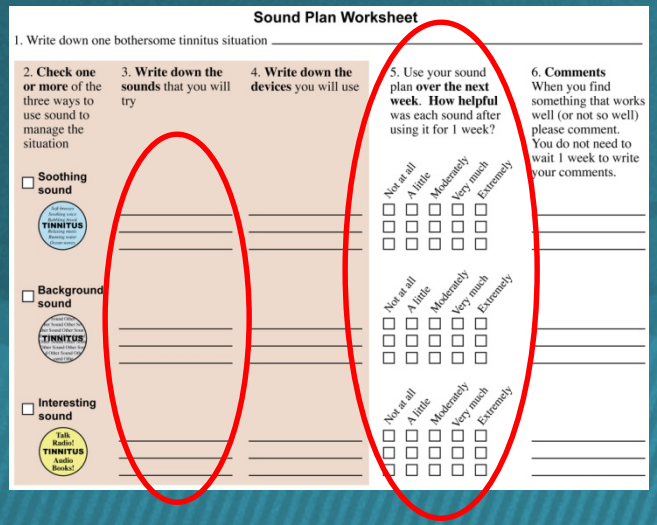
Which *Sounds* Were Most Helpful for You?

- Look at #5 on the Worksheet
- Were some sounds especially helpful for you over the last 2 weeks?
  - Environmental sound?
  - Music?
  - Speech?



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☐ **Soothing sound**				
☐ **Background sound**				
☐ **Interesting sound**				

- Are you seeing any *patterns*?
  - (Make sure you write them down)

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Becoming Aware of Sounds That Are Helpful for You

- It’s OK if you didn’t notice any patterns for what was most helpful
- This can take *time*

Update Your Worksheet Now (to Try to Get Better Results)

- Write on your completed Worksheet
  - Cross out ideas that weren't helpful
  - Add new ideas that you haven't tried yet
- (You can start a new Worksheet if you would prefer that)
- While you're updating your worksheet… (go to next slide)

While You're Updating Your Worksheet:

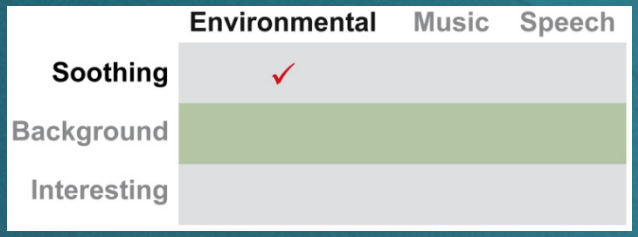
- Think about what worked best for you during the last 2 weeks
- Remember that background sound does not always feel helpful right away, but can help over time
- Feel free to ask questions about modifying your plan
- (Stop here until all Worksheets are updated)

Ongoing Use of the Sound Plan Worksheet

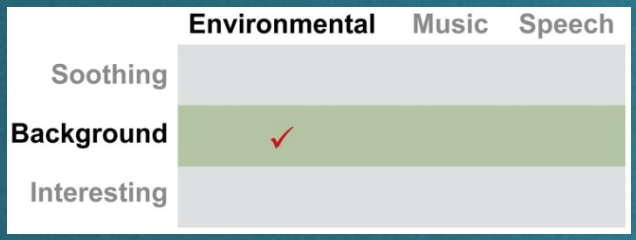
- For every tinnitus-problem situation, make a new Sound Plan
- It takes trial and error to learn what works best in each situation
- Revise your Sound Plans as needed

Part 4: How Does PTM Compare to Other Sound-based Methods of Tinnitus Management?

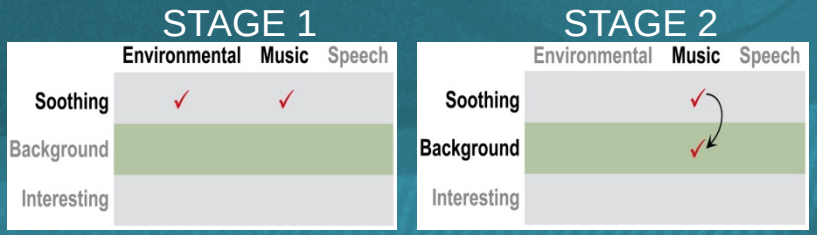
- Tinnitus Masking



- Tinnitus Retraining Therapy



- Neuromonics Tinnitus Treatment



- Progressive Tinnitus Management

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Part 5: Other Things You Can Do

Changing Thoughts and Feelings to Manage Tinnitus

- Part 3 of the Workbook “How to Manage Your Tinnitus: A Step-by-Step Workbook”
  - Describes ways to change your thoughts and feelings about tinnitus
- These can be done in addition to using sound to manage tinnitus

Avoid Loud Noise

The Louder a Sound is, the Faster it Can Damage Your Hearing

		Dangerous after:
Extremely Loud	Firing a gun is so loud that it can damage your hearing immediately	Less than 1 second
	Using a chainsaw for two minutes can damage your hearing	About 2 minutes
Very Loud	Mowing the lawn with a gas push mower for two hours can damage your hearing	About 2 hours
Loud	Driving in city traffic for eight hours can damage your hearing	About 8 hours

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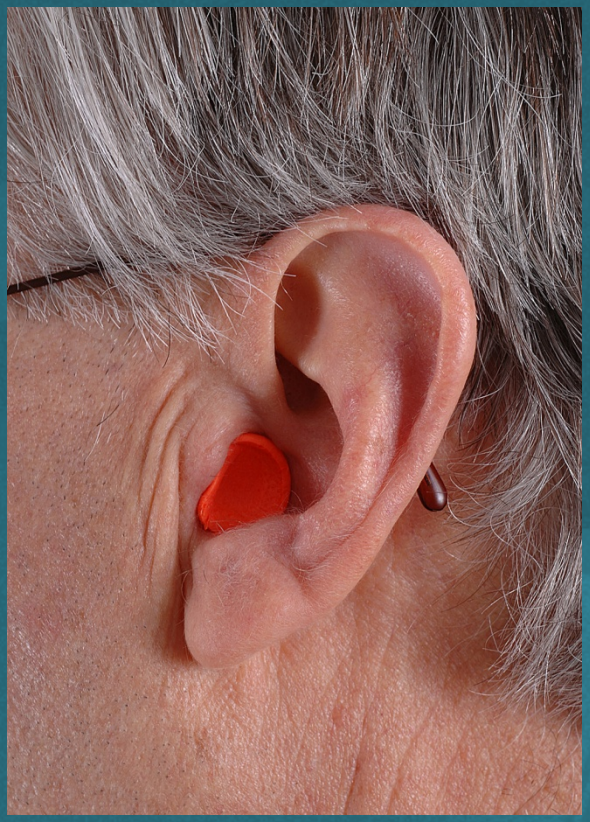
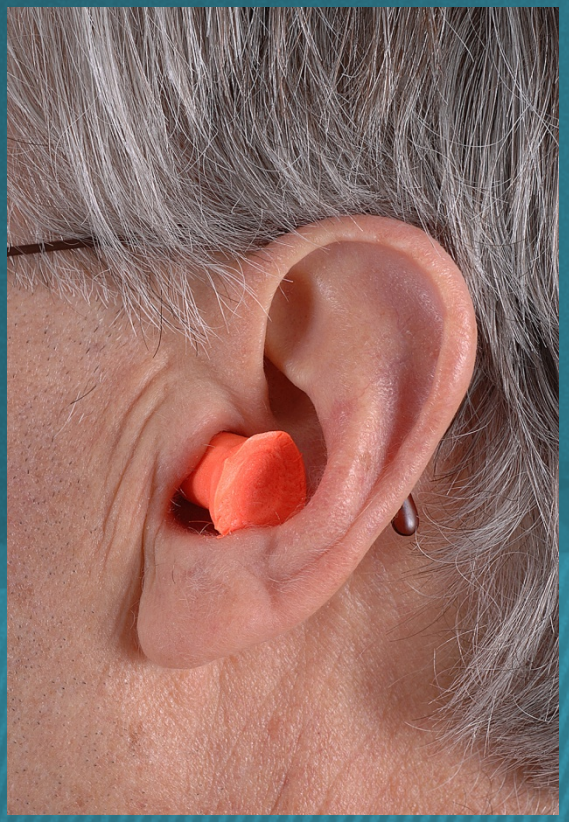
Standard earplugs



Correct use



Incorrect use

Custom earplugs

Hi-fi earplugs

Electronic earplugs

Earmuffs

Take Good Care of Yourself

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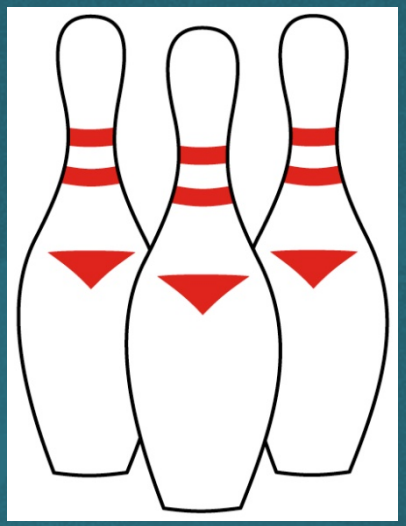
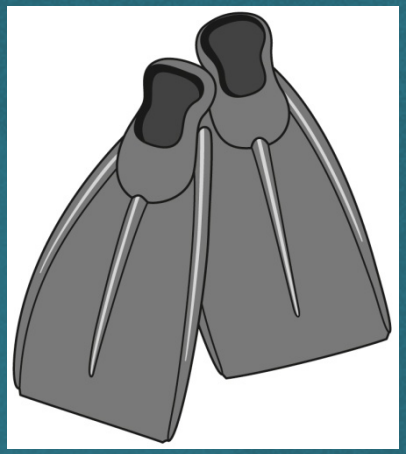
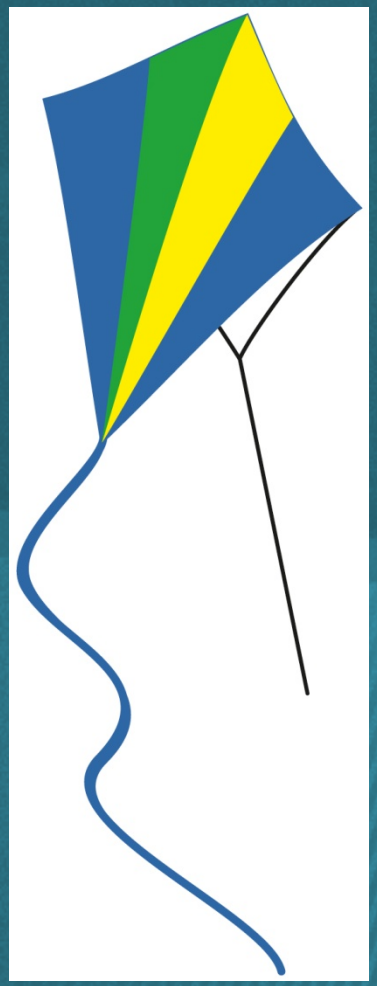
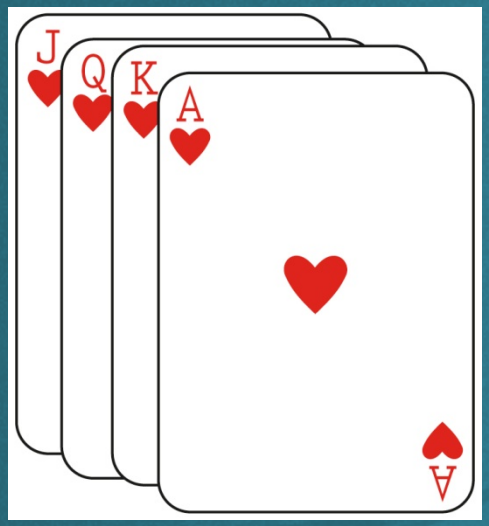
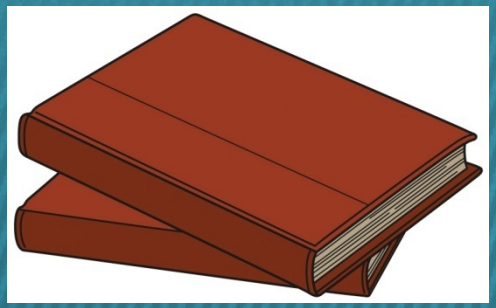
Keep Your Mind and Body Active











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Learn All You Can About Tinnitus

AMERICAN TINNITUS ASSOCIATION

COMMITTED TO A CURE

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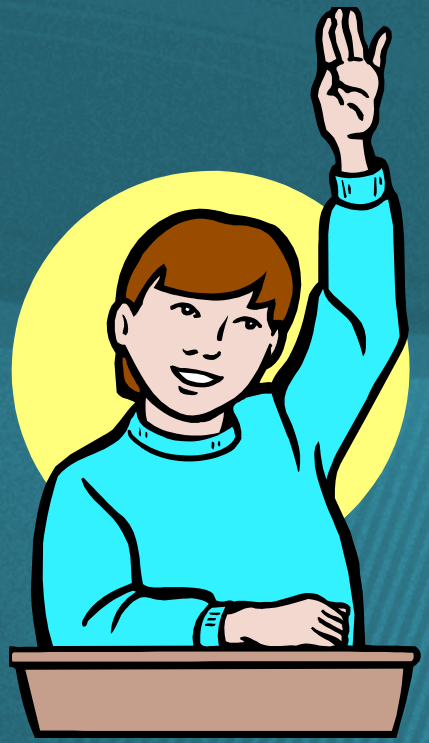
Questions?

- www.ncrar.research.va.gov