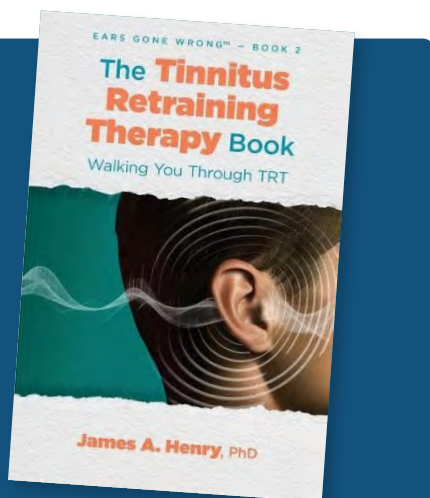


# Demystifying Tinnitus Retraining Therapy for Patients and Practitioners

## The Book I Wish I Had 20 Years Ago

Review by Julie Prutsman, AuD



**Title:** *The Tinnitus Retraining Therapy Book: Walking You Through TRT*

**Author:** James A. Henry, PhD

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### With today's advancements in

health and technology, some people expect there to be a pill for everything. Whether it is anxiety, weight control, heart conditions, or a myriad of other health concerns, people assume there

is a prescription they can take to treat their pain or symptoms. Unfortunately, when it comes to tinnitus, there is no "magic pill."

To make matters worse, many healthcare providers mistakenly believe that nothing can be done for tinnitus and that people need to "learn to live with it." Sometimes audiologists offer only amplification to ease their patients' suffering, a treatment protocol that addresses only half of the population who is living with tinnitus. Only a fortunate few people access true tinnitus professionals who provide proven tinnitus management techniques that help eliminate the effects of tinnitus.

One of the most effective techniques is Tinnitus Retraining Therapy, or TRT. Demonstrated to help 80 percent of tinnitus patients, TRT was developed by Pawel Jastreboff, PhD. Since the late 1980s, Dr. Jastreboff has been teaching clinicians like me the neurophysiological model of tinnitus that TRT is grounded on.

TRT aims to help patients habituate to the reactions their tinnitus causes in multiple systems of their brain;

habituation is the blocking out or canceling of the perception of tinnitus over time. Patients who successfully habituate no longer perceive their tinnitus unless asked to "find it" or "focus on it." Although not a cure, habituation enables a person to eliminate the effects of tinnitus, thus allowing them to regain focus and concentration and improve sleep and overall mood.

Fundamental to the TRT approach is the ability to offer patients a combination of sound therapy and educational counseling on the neurophysiological model as it relates to achieving habituation to tinnitus. To be an effective clinician, you must comprehensively understand the neurophysiological model of tinnitus. To achieve that goal, you must have an excellent teacher.

For the past 35 years, James A. Henry, PhD, has dedicated his life to tinnitus and Tinnitus Retraining Therapy. He has conducted clinical trials, written research articles, and taught and presented TRT to students and professionals in the United States and internationally. Most recently, Dr. Henry added to his series of books

published by Ears Gone Wrong a volume titled *The Tinnitus Retraining Therapy Book: Walking You Through TRT* (2023).

This book differs from anything previously published about TRT because it speaks directly to people experiencing tinnitus who want a step-by-step guide through the TRT process. Even though it is a lot of reading owing to the neuroscience involved, it is written to be understandable to anyone from any background.

This book can also help anyone who may have been unsuccessful with TRT in the past because it presents the full model in its most accurate and complete format. By gaining a better, more thorough understanding of Tinnitus Retraining Therapy, an individual will likely achieve a better outcome.

I have dedicated my career to and built my practice around eliminating the misconception that nothing can be done for tinnitus. As an audiologist and business owner overseeing the care of thousands of tinnitus patients, I wish I had this book for myself and my team of audiologists 20 years ago.

Dr. Henry explains key concepts of the neurophysiological model of tinnitus in novel ways and uses impactful analogies that clarify concepts. He provides a clear map of the process of TRT and what it should look like when administered in its entirety. I also appreciate his use of relatable case studies of real patients to demonstrate the impact TRT can have on a patient's life and provide hope for those suffering. Although unstated, it is evident that Dr. Henry


***“...this book elevates awareness and understanding of tinnitus across all fields of medicine and provides hope and motivation for those in need of relief.”***

hopes his readers can identify with the case studies as a way to grasp a deeper understanding of TRT.

Starting in Chapter 4, Dr. Henry speaks directly to patients from the perspective of a TRT practitioner and walks them through every step of the process. As I read, I pictured myself as a patient receiving TRT counseling from Dr. Henry. Since the book is packed with important information, I strongly suggest that readers digest each chapter systematically and take notes rather than trying to absorb it all at once.

Two chapters in the book dedicate nearly 70 pages to giving the background on the neurophysiological model of tinnitus and explaining it. Then Dr. Henry explains why follow-up visits with a tinnitus specialist are necessary and what to do if you are not seeing progress with TRT.

The book's final chapter provides a summary, suggestions on how to optimize success with TRT, and additional resources. Five appendices provide the evidence base for TRT and a further discussion on how to evaluate and treat decreased sound tolerance using this method.

In summary, *The Tinnitus Retraining Therapy Book: Walking You Through TRT* may not provide people with the quick-fix solution, but it will absolutely help people who invest the time and effort in reading this book and understanding the TRT process. Both patients and practitioners can benefit from Dr. Henry's teachings in this masterpiece. My desire is that this book elevates awareness and understanding of tinnitus across all fields of medicine and provides hope and motivation for those in need of relief. 



*Julie Prutsman is a third-generation audiology professional whose grandfather entered the field in the 1950s. She founded Sound Relief Hearing Center in December 2011 to treat patients*

*with tinnitus, decreased sound tolerance, and related hearing health issues using Tinnitus Retraining Therapy. The practice has since grown to nine centers operating in Colorado and Arizona.*

*Dr. Prutsman has tinnitus in one ear from loud noise exposure, which has had a profound impact on how she relates to her patients struggling with the condition. She also serves on the American Tinnitus Association Board of Directors.*