

# International Tinnitus & Hyperacusis Society

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## A multidisciplinary approach is essential for tinnitus

ONE REASON FOR divergent views on tinnitus and hyperacusis and their management is the particular perspective of different disciplines upon these symptoms. The inadequacy of any one discipline or

perspective to perceive tinnitus and hyperacusis in their entirety is well illustrated by an ancient Sufi story, retold by Senge (1990):

“As three blind men encountered an elephant, each exclaimed aloud. ‘It is a large rough thing, wide and broad, like a rug,’ said the first, grasping an ear. The second, holding the trunk, said ‘I have the real facts. It is a straight and hollow pipe.’ And the third, holding a front leg, said ‘It is mighty and firm, like a pillar.’ Given these men’s way of knowing, they will never know an elephant.”

Working with tinnitus patients requires one to find new ways of

knowing, and of integrating perspectives from different disciplines. Thus insights gleaned from psychological, audiological and neuroscience perspectives can potentially be usefully combined in such a way that the greater whole may then be seen, rather than each stumbling around individually like the blind men of the story. This is not to say that each individual involved with tinnitus work should



*David Baguley*

