

Optimistic Parenting: A New Approach to PBS for Families

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Research Question

- Are we helping all families or just the ones who fully participate in our interventions?



Predicting Later Problems

- Best Predictor?
- Parental pessimism



Attitudinal Barriers

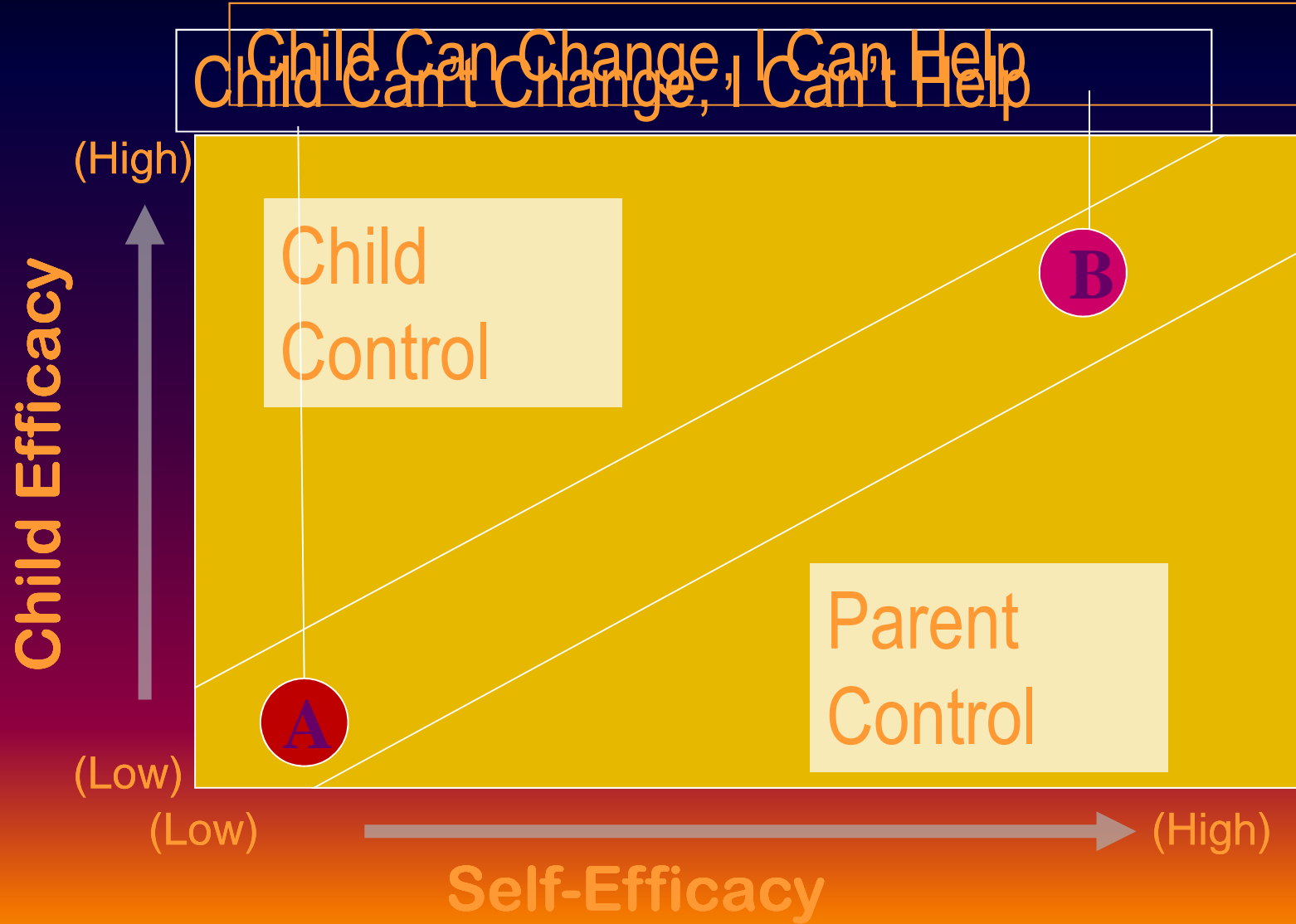
- Self-Efficacy
- Child Efficacy



Self-Talk Themes

Self-Efficacy Statements	% Responses
I can not control my child.	83.3%
My child's behavior reflects negatively on me.	75.0%
Dealing with my child's problem behavior is difficult.	75.0%
I must sacrifice and do everything for my child.	50.0%
Child Efficacy Statements	% Responses
Things will get worse.	75.0%
My child is not capable	50.0%
My child's problem behavior is caused by the disability.	41.7%

Attitudinal Influences



Pessimistic or Optimistic?

Pessimistic

- My child is disabled
- Shopping with my child is a disaster

Optimistic

- My child needs help learning new skills
- My child is not ready yet for long shopping trips

Pessimistic or Optimistic?

Pessimistic

- I will never have my own life

Optimistic

- I am working toward more time to myself

Pessimistic or Optimistic?

Pessimistic

- That won't work with my child!
- I tried that already and it didn't work!
- Oh, no. Here we go again.

Optimistic

- I'll try it.
- I'm willing to try it again.
- OK, I'm ready for this.

Pessimistic or Optimistic?

Pessimistic

- He can't do this because of his autism.
- She has enough to deal with. I'm not going to push her.

Optimistic

- He can learn to behave better.
- She will need to learn how to control herself.

Current Approaches

- Providing Intervention Strategies
- General Family Support



Positive Family Intervention

- Can we make pessimistic families more optimistic?
- Integrating *cognitive-behavioral intervention* with *positive behavioral support*

Positive Family Intervention

```
graph TD; A[Positive Family Intervention] --> B[Help  
Positive Behavior Support]; A --> C[Hope  
Optimistic Parenting]; B --> D[Assess  
Prevent  
Replace]; C --> E[Confidence  
Awareness  
Gratitude];
```

Help

Positive Behavior Support

Assess
Prevent
Replace

Hope

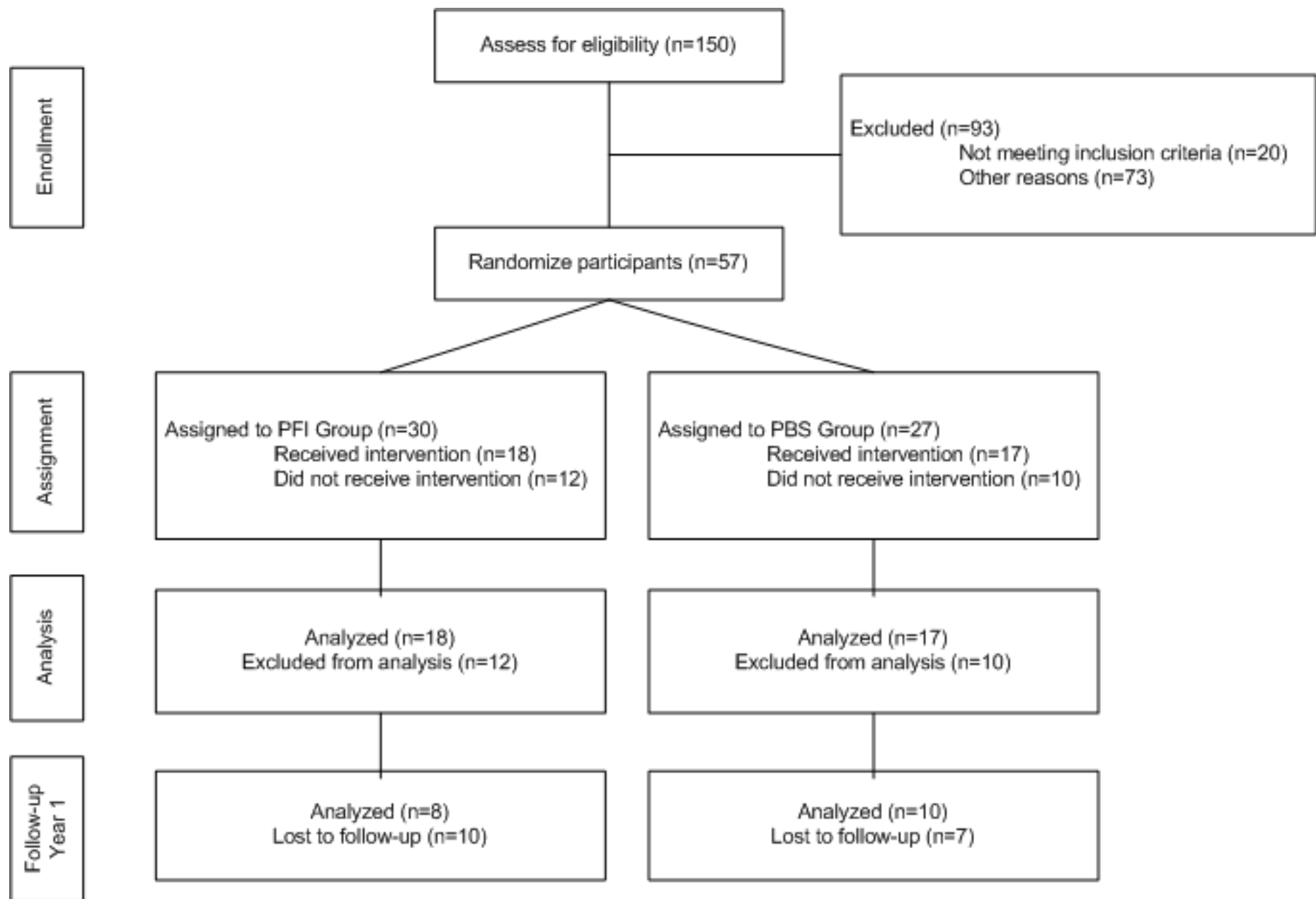
Optimistic Parenting

Confidence
Awareness
Gratitude

Positive Family Intervention

- Standard protocol
- 8 weeks
- 1 ½ hours per individual session
- Standardized measures





PFI Protocol

- Review homework (e.g., information gathered; strategies attempted)
- Share a difficulty and a success and thoughts/feelings associated with the event; introduce strategies
- Teach PBS: presentation, examples, application, and practice
- Analyze self-talk throughout session

Positive Family Intervention

- Session 1: Establishing Goals
- Session 2: Gathering Information
- Session 3: Analysis and Plan Design
- Session 4: Preventing Problems
- Session 5: Managing Consequences
- Session 6: Replacing Behavior
- Session 7: Putting Plan in Place
- Session 8: Monitoring Results

```
graph TD; A[Positive Behavior Support] --- B[Assess the Function of Behaviors]; A --- C[Short-Term Prevention]; A --- D[Replace];
```

Positive Behavior Support

Assess the
Function of
Behaviors

Short-Term
Prevention

Replace

Self-Talk Journal – Session 1

Situation What happened (success or difficulty)?	Beliefs What did you think or feel (self-talk)?	Comments

Self-Talk Journal

<u>Situation</u> What happened? (success or difficulty)	<u>Beliefs</u> What did you think and feel?	<u>Consequences</u> What happened as a result? (actions)
<i>When my son sat down for dinner, he started whining and crying. (difficulty)</i>	<i>I thought "We will never have a normal dinner" and felt defeated, thinking that meals will always be a problem.</i>	<i>I gave him cookies so he would stop crying.</i>

Session 2: Gathering Information

- To explore the relationship between thoughts and behavior
- To understand the purpose and goals of behavior
- To learn how to gather information through:
 - observing behavior
 - interviewing people
 - recording information
- To begin gathering information

Situations & Beliefs

- Identify situations that provide triggers to negative thinking (e.g., What was exactly happening? Where were you? What did your child and others do?)
- Identify beliefs associated with the event (e.g., What were you feeling and thinking while this was going on? What did you say to yourself?)

Identifying Situations & Beliefs



ANAS Mom Identification 3.wmv

Example from Protocol

- **Homework (i.e., information gathered through watching and recording; MAS)**
- **Ask them to share a difficulty and thoughts/feelings associated with the event**
- **Ask them to share a success and thoughts/feelings associated with the event**

Share a Difficulty

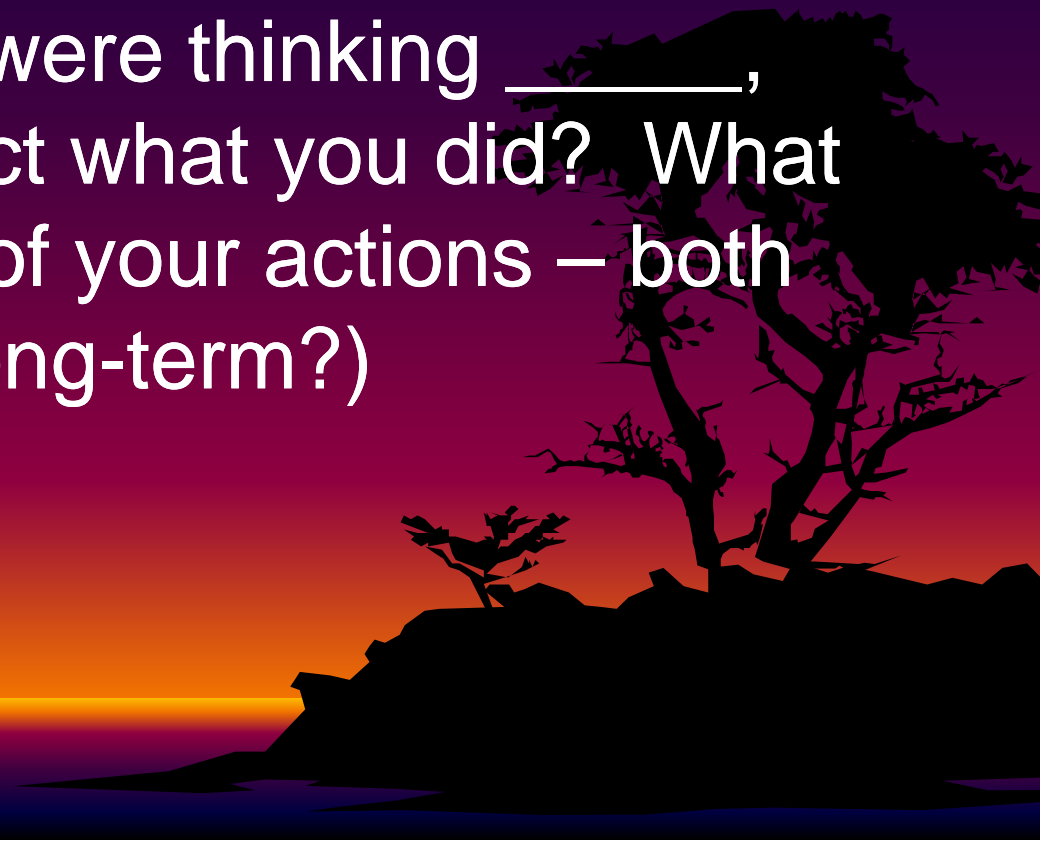
- **Example - “She wouldn’t leave the TV to go to school.”**
- **What were you thinking?**
- **Pessimistic Scenario – “Here we go again.”**
- **Optimistic Scenario – “I knew this might happen and I have a plan to handle her if she tantrums.”**

Share a Success

- **Example - “My son sat through a whole meal without yelling.”**
- **What were you thinking?**
- **Pessimistic Scenario – “He must be in a good phase.”**
- **Optimistic Scenario – “My efforts and patience are beginning to pay off.”**

Consequences

- Identify the consequences or results of the negative (and positive) thinking (e.g., When you were thinking _____, how did that affect what you did? What were the results of your actions – both immediate and long-term?)



Recognizing Consequences



JOER Consequences.wmv

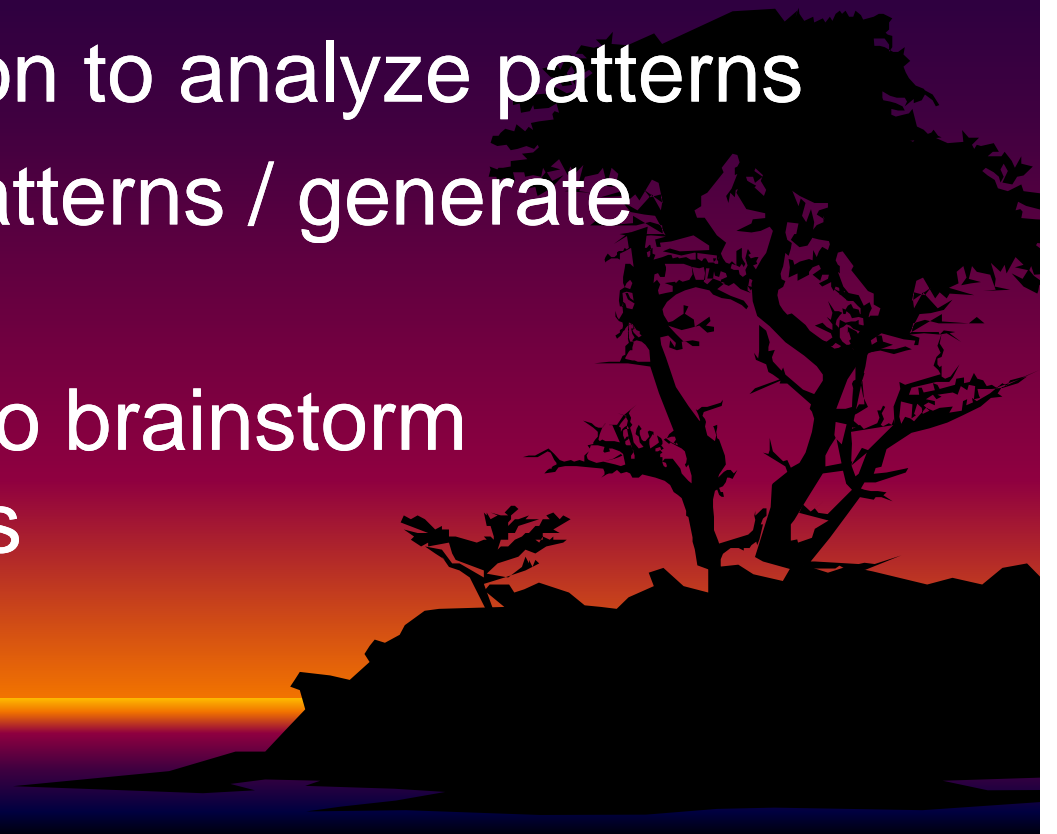
Recognizing Consequences

- Parenting “in the moment”



Session 3: Analysis and Plan Design

- To use distraction to deal with unproductive self-talk
- To use information to analyze patterns
- To summarize patterns / generate hypotheses
- To use patterns to brainstorm intervention ideas



Distraction

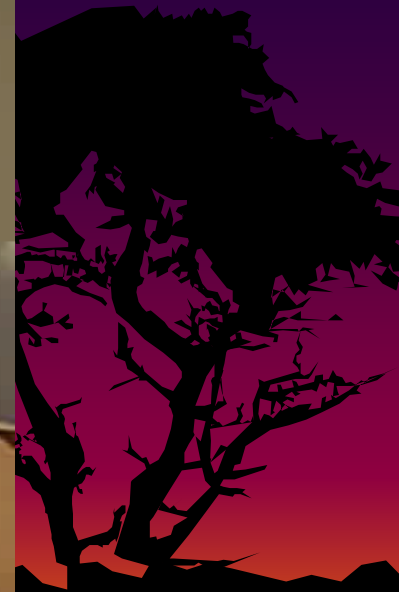
- Strategy to help with pessimistic beliefs
- Distracting oneself from the pessimistic thoughts



Distraction



CRNG Distraction Example



Session 4: Preventing Problems

- To understand the disputation process
- To discuss circumstances that increase the likelihood of behavior
- To learn strategies for avoiding difficult situations
- To learn strategies for improving difficult situations
- To learn ways to provide a child with choices
- To learn strategies for prompting good behavior



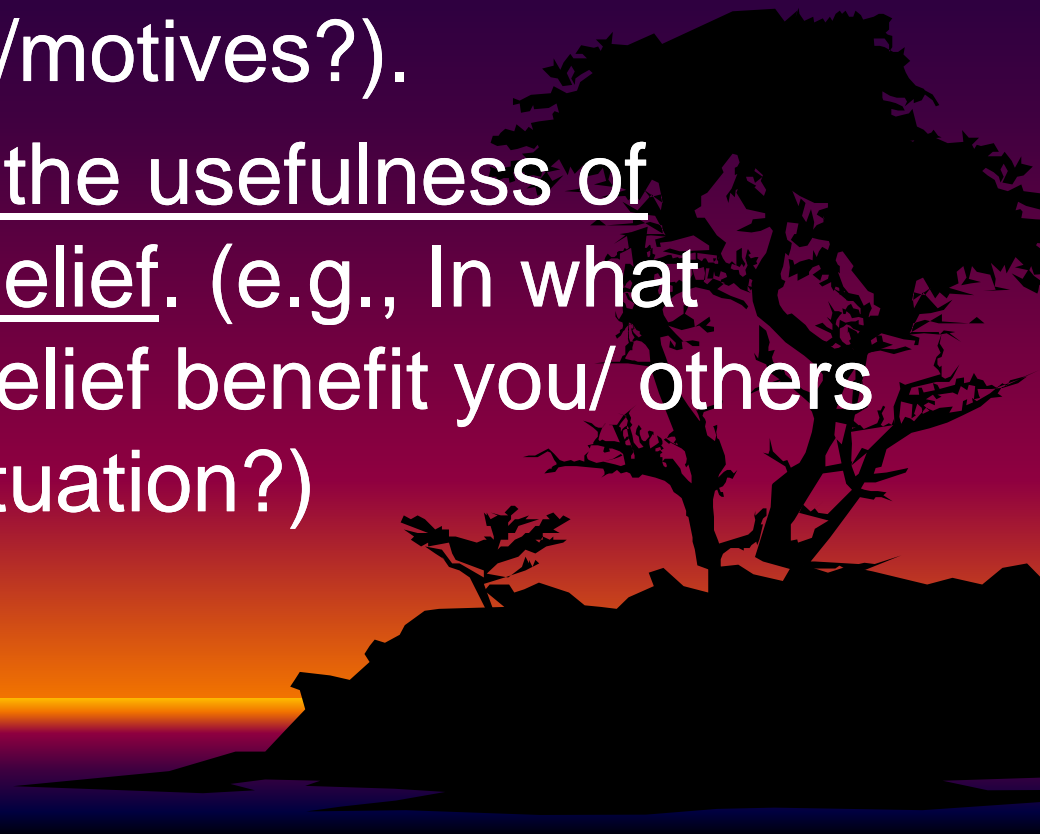
Disputation - *A strategy for challenging beliefs*

- Step 1: Identify the negative belief (e.g., What exactly do you say to yourself that is pessimistic?).
- Step 2: List evidence that supports the belief. (e.g., What makes you believe that to be true?)

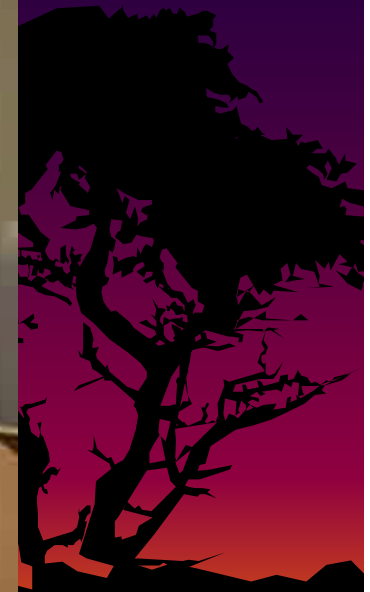


Disputation

- Step 3: Find alternative explanations for the problem (e.g., Are there other possible reasons/motives?).
- Step 4: Evaluate the usefulness of maintaining the belief. (e.g., In what ways does that belief benefit you/ others or improve the situation?)



Disputing Negative Beliefs



CRNG Disputation.wmv

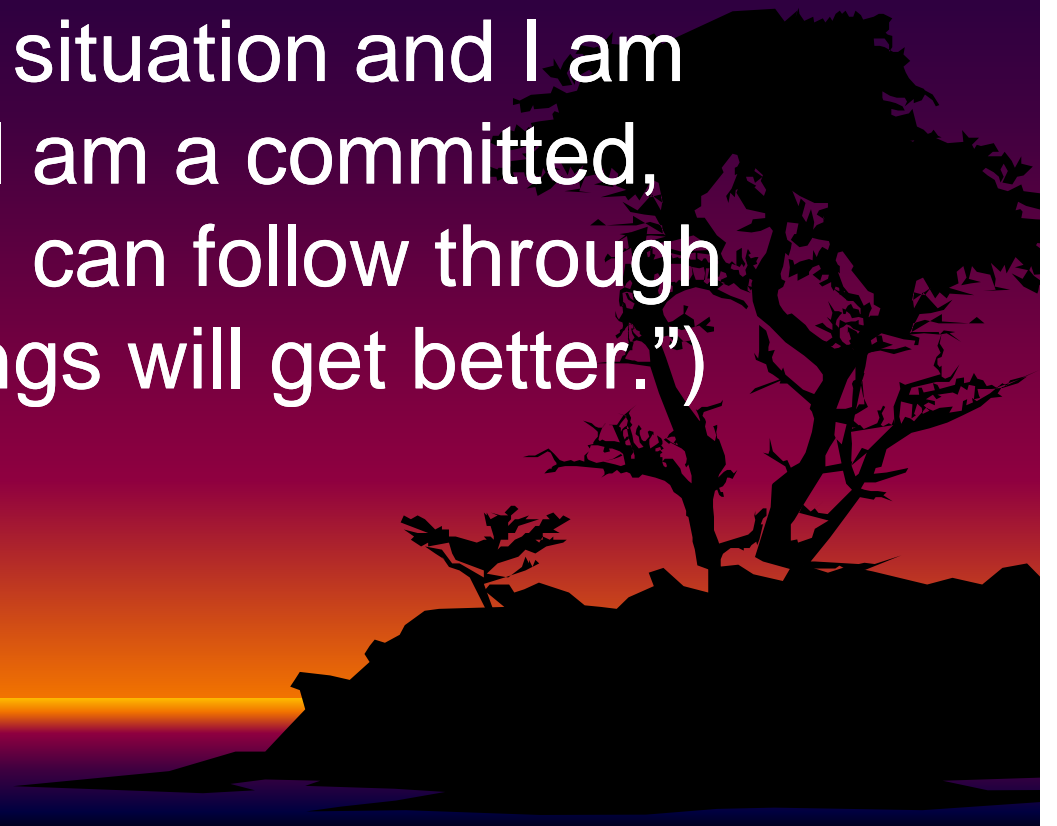
Session 5: Managing Consequences

- To use affirmations to replace pessimistic beliefs
- To understand how reactions may maintain your child's behavior
- To learn how to manage consequences
- To take precautions when using punishment



Substitution

- Replace the pessimistic ideas with positive thoughts or affirmations (e.g., “This is a difficult situation and I am handling it well. I am a committed, loving parent. If I can follow through with my plan, things will get better.”)



Substituting Positive Thoughts



RASA Substitution.wmv

Session 6: Replacing Behavior

- To practice cognitive restructuring
- To select replacement behaviors for your child
- To teach your child skills



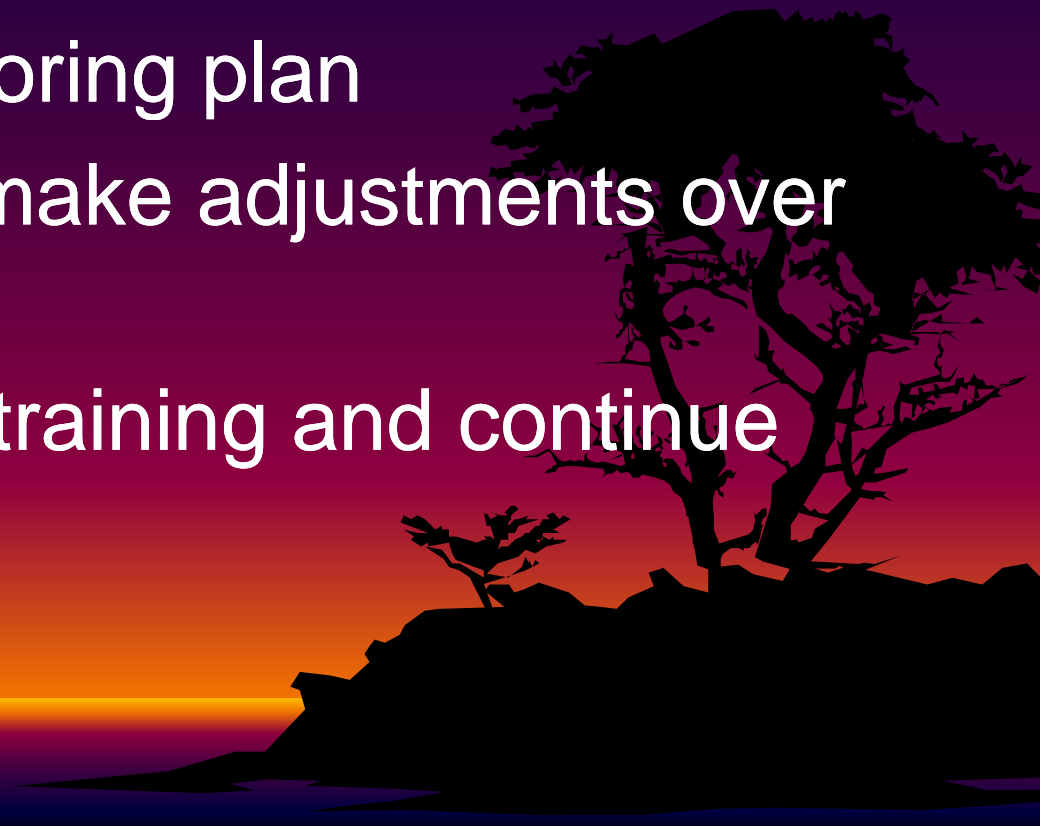
Session 7: Putting Plan in Place

- To review self-talk and apply cognitive strategies
- To design a behavior plan
- To make sure the behavior plan fits
- To improve your child and family's lives
- To create an action plan

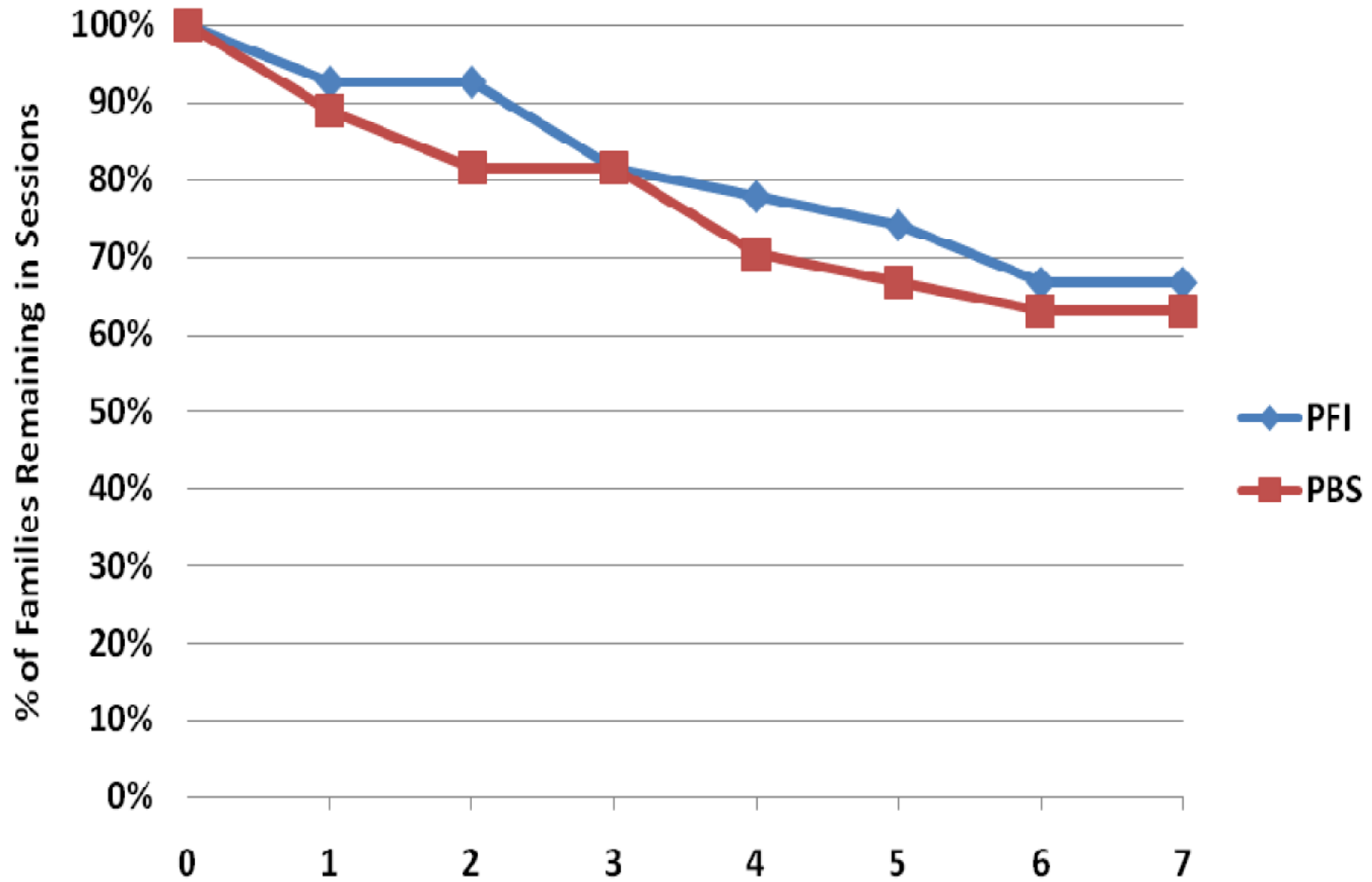


Session 8: Monitoring Results

- To review self-talk and continue to apply cognitive strategies
- To make a monitoring plan
- To learn how to make adjustments over time
- To complete the training and continue on your own



Families Remaining in Treatment

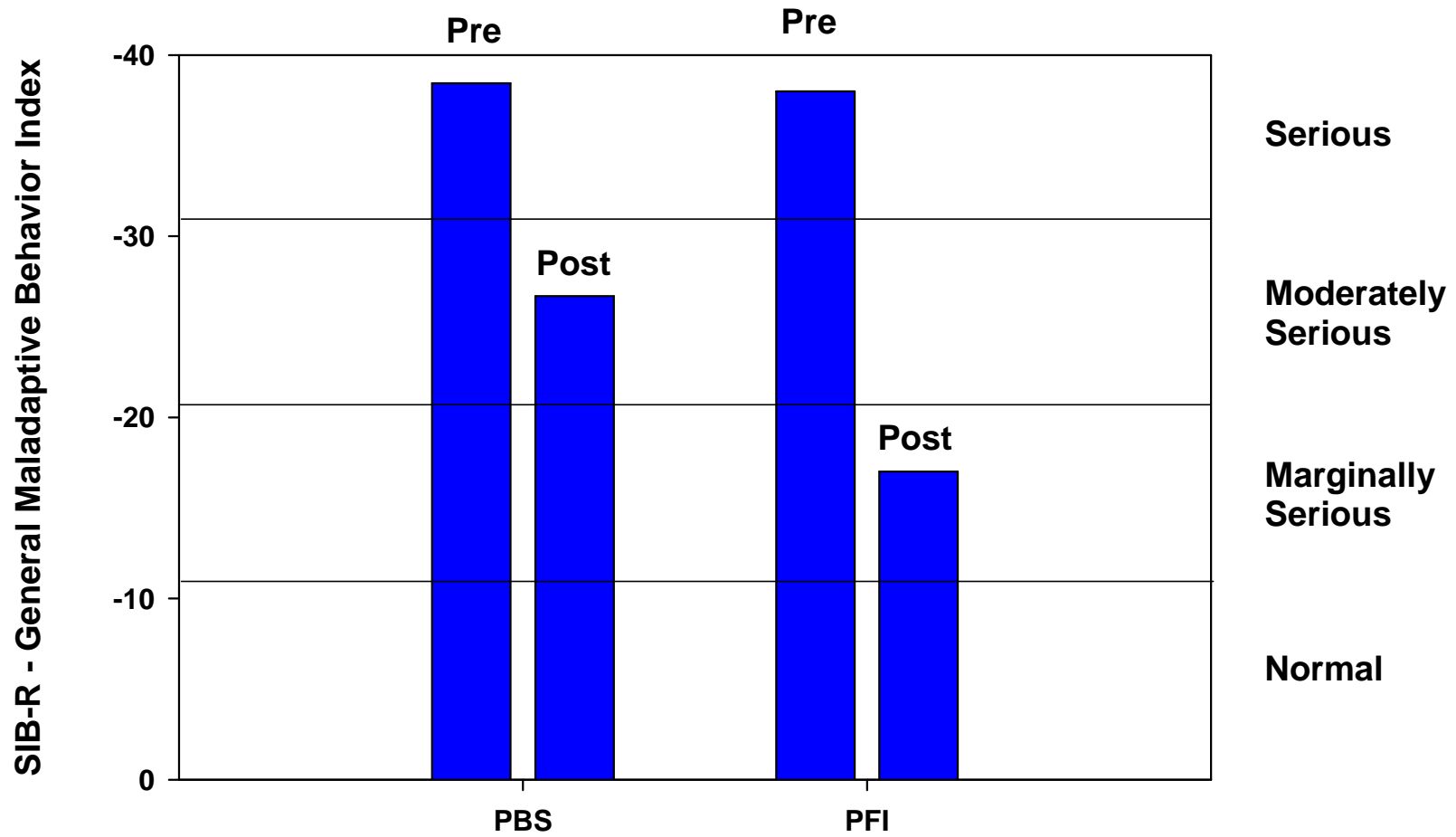


Child Outcomes

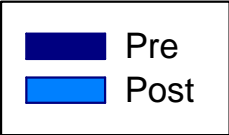
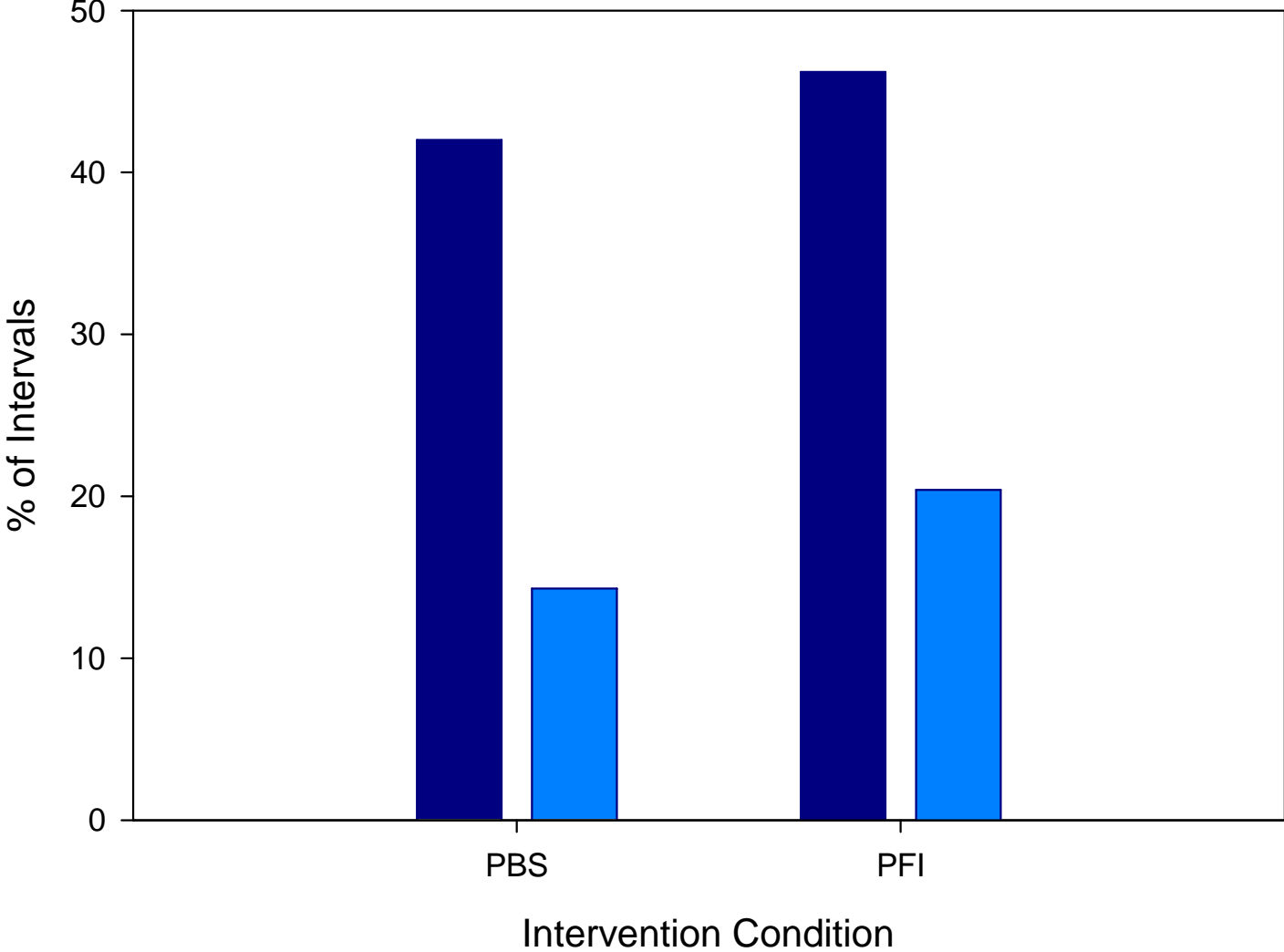
- A two-way repeated measures ANOVA on the SIB-R GMI scores - significant differences between pre and post treatment.
- PBS - (Cohen's $d = 1.25$)
- PFI - (Cohen's $d = 2.20$)
- PFI Versus PBS Post Treatment (Cohen's $d = 0.94$)

Effect Sizes - small, $d = 0.2$, medium, $d = 0.5$, and large, $d = 0.8$

Standardized Behavior Change Data
SIB-R GMI (N=34)

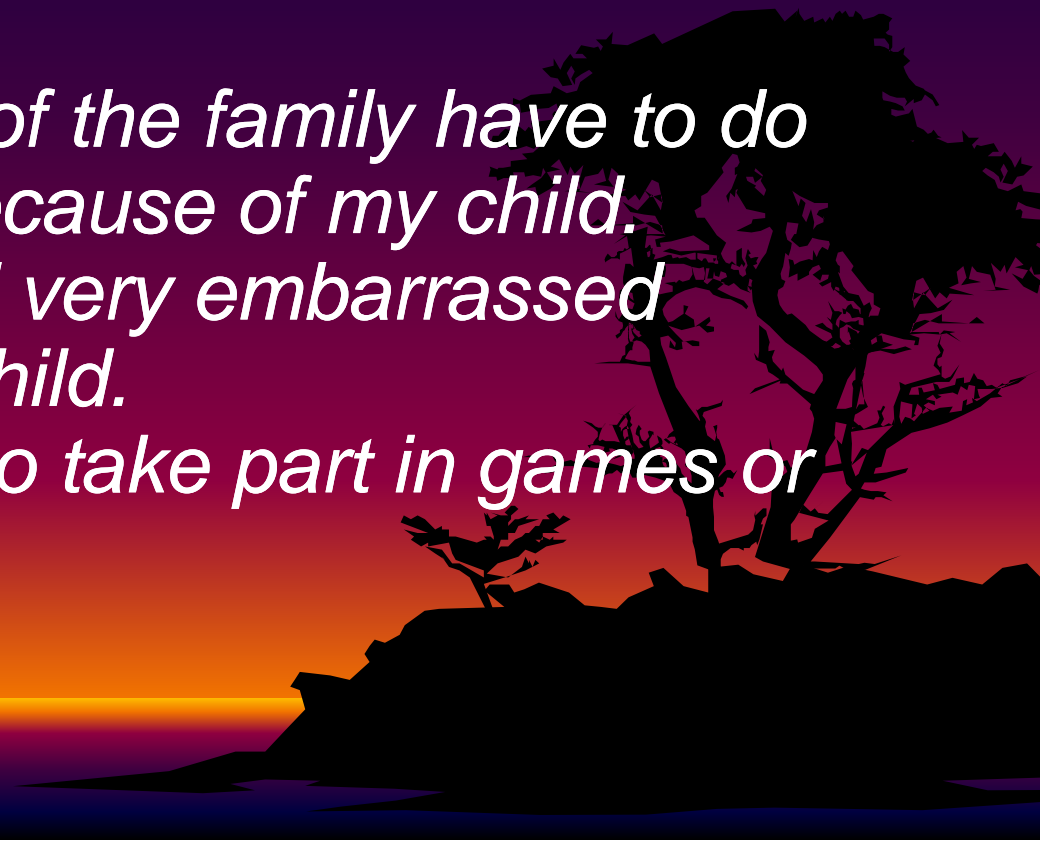


Observational Data



Quality of Life

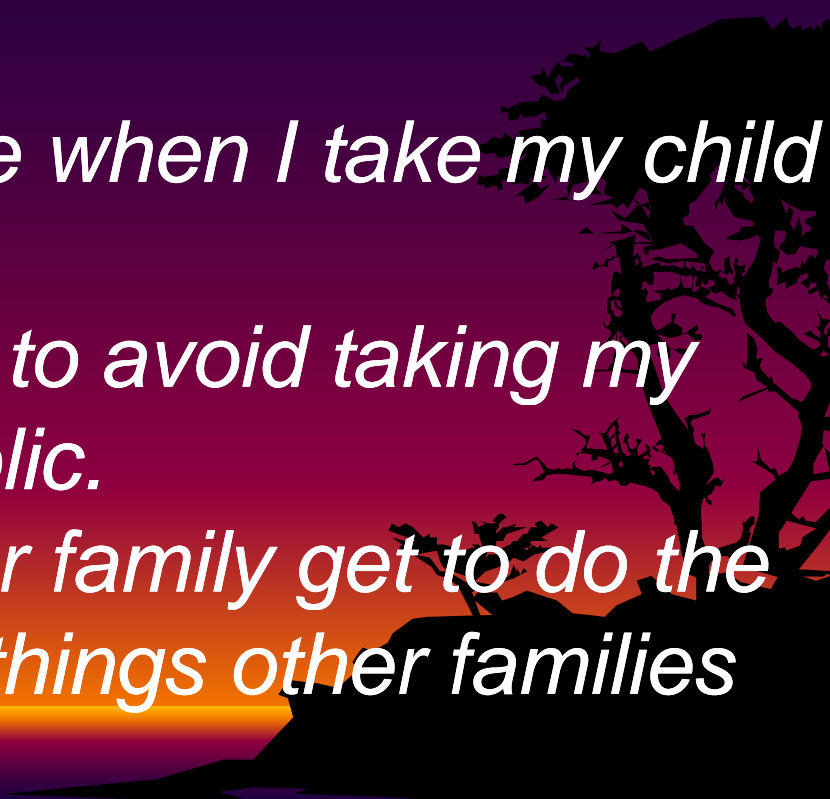
- Families from both groups reported significant improvements on following questions;
 - *Other members of the family have to do without things because of my child.*
 - *Sometimes I feel very embarrassed because of my child.*
 - *My child is able to take part in games or sports.*



Quality of Life

- Mothers in PFI condition reported improvement on these questions;
 - *My child will be limited in the kind of work he/she can do to make a living.*
 - *I get almost too tired to enjoy myself.*
 - *There is a lot of anger and resentment in our family.*
 - *I am worried much of the time.*

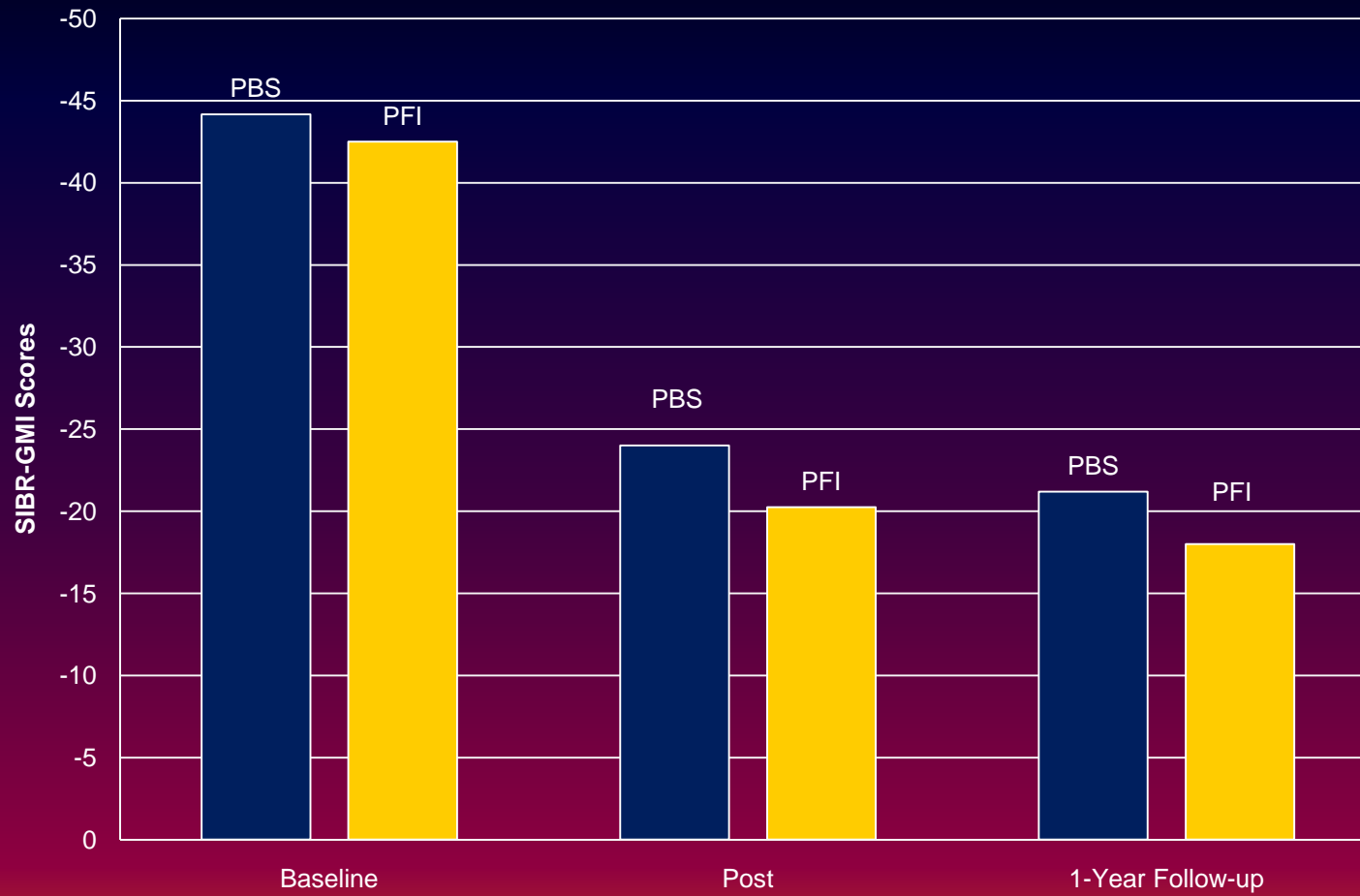
Self-Efficacy

- PFI group responded more positively than mothers in the PBS groups.
 - *I feel less tense when I take my child out in public.*
 - *I am less likely to avoid taking my child out in public.*
 - *Members of our family get to do the same kinds of things other families do.*
- 
- A silhouette of a tree is positioned on the right side of the slide, set against a background of a sunset or sunrise. The sky transitions from a deep purple at the top to a bright orange and yellow near the horizon, with a dark blue area at the bottom. The tree's branches are dark and detailed, extending across the right half of the slide.

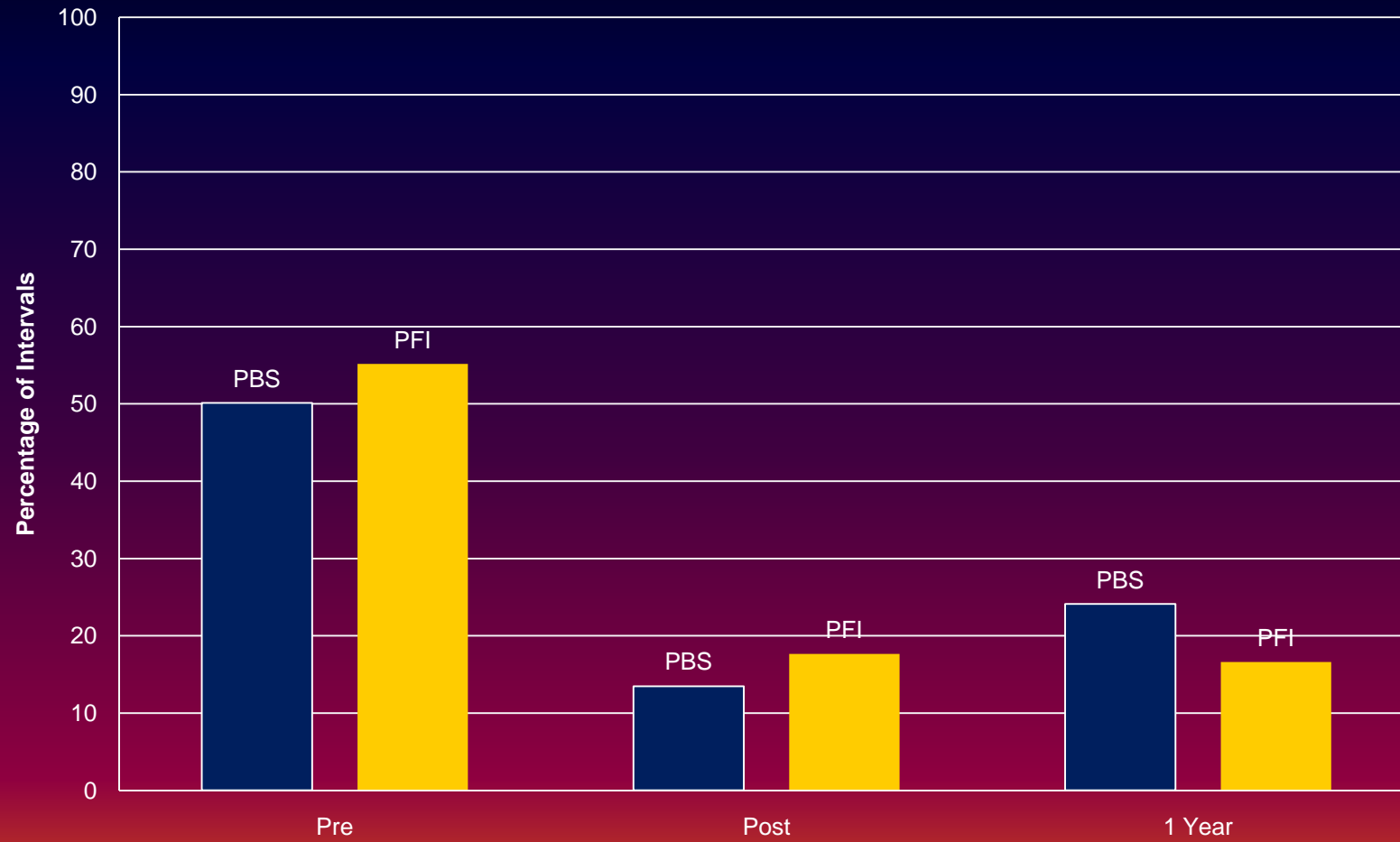
The background of the slide features a silhouette of a large, leafy tree on the right side, with a smaller tree to its left. The ground is represented by a dark, jagged silhouette of a landscape. The sky is a gradient of colors, transitioning from a bright orange and yellow at the bottom (representing the horizon) to a deep purple and blue at the top. The text is overlaid on the upper left portion of this background.

Child Behavior Change Data One Year Follow-Up

Child Behavior - Standardized Data (N=10)



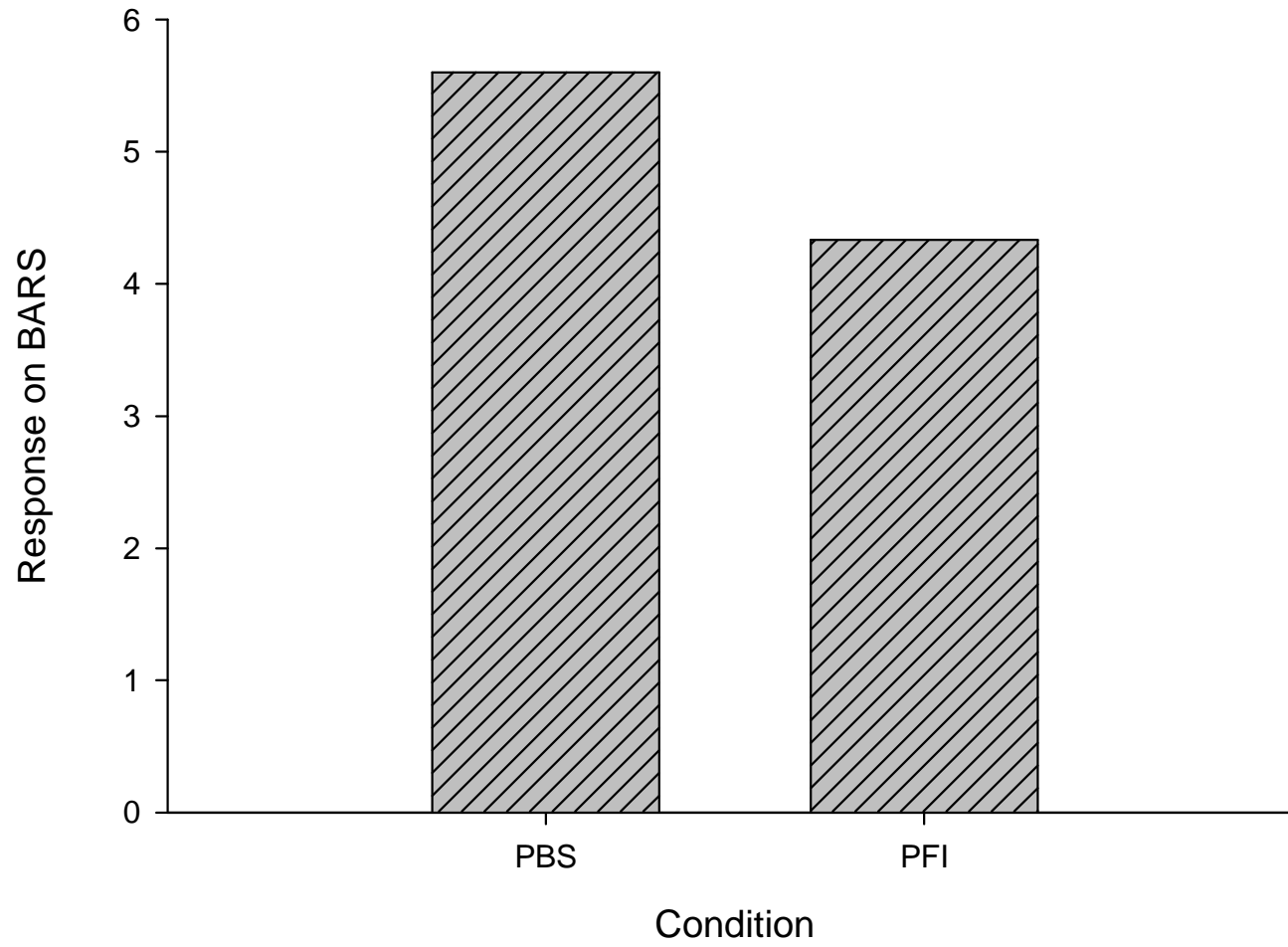
Child Behavior - Observational Data (N=10)



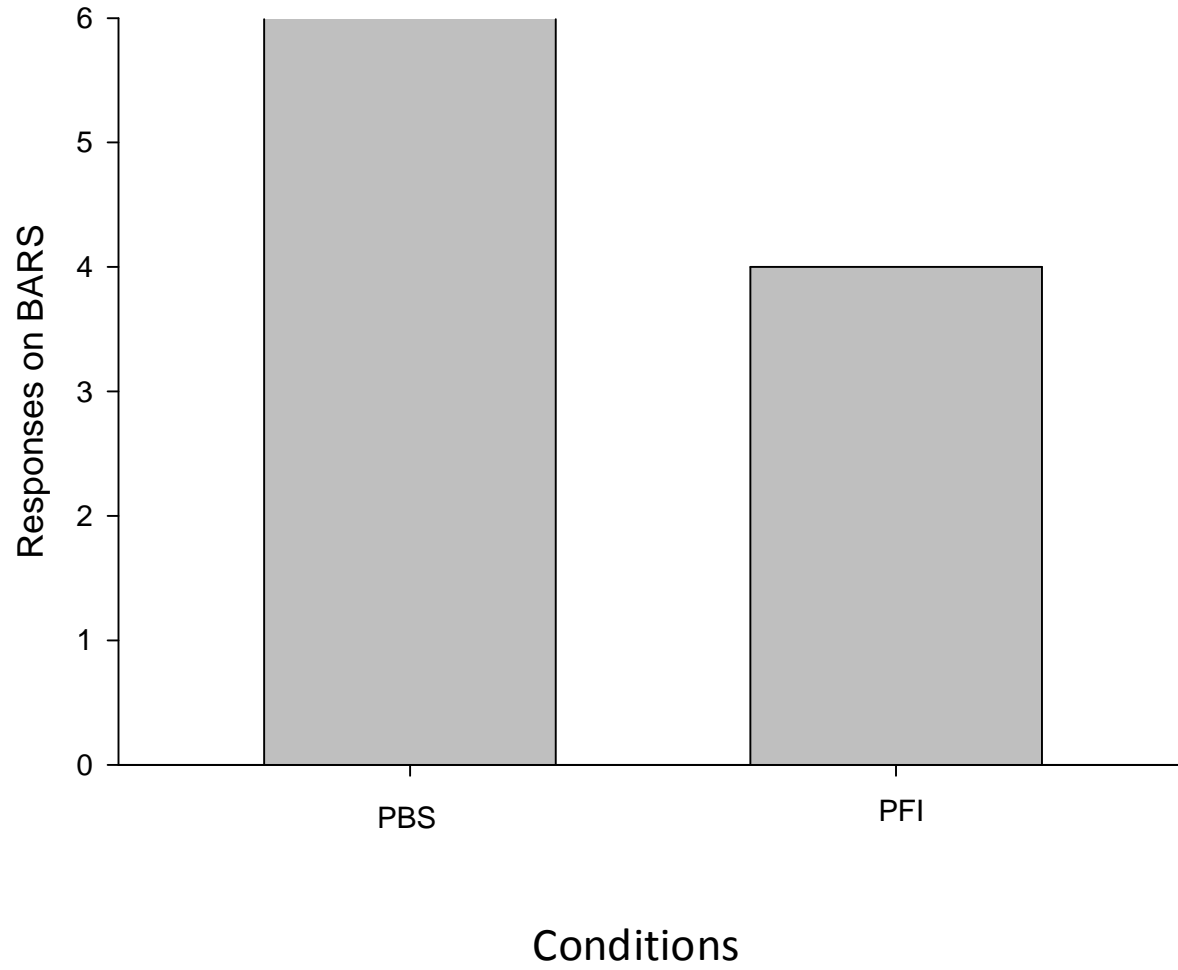
The background of the slide features a silhouette of a large, leafy tree on the right side, with a smaller tree to its left. The ground is represented by a dark, jagged silhouette of a hill or cliff. The sky is a gradient of colors, transitioning from a bright orange and yellow at the horizon to a deep purple and blue at the top. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Parent Fidelity Data Post Intervention and One Year Follow-Up

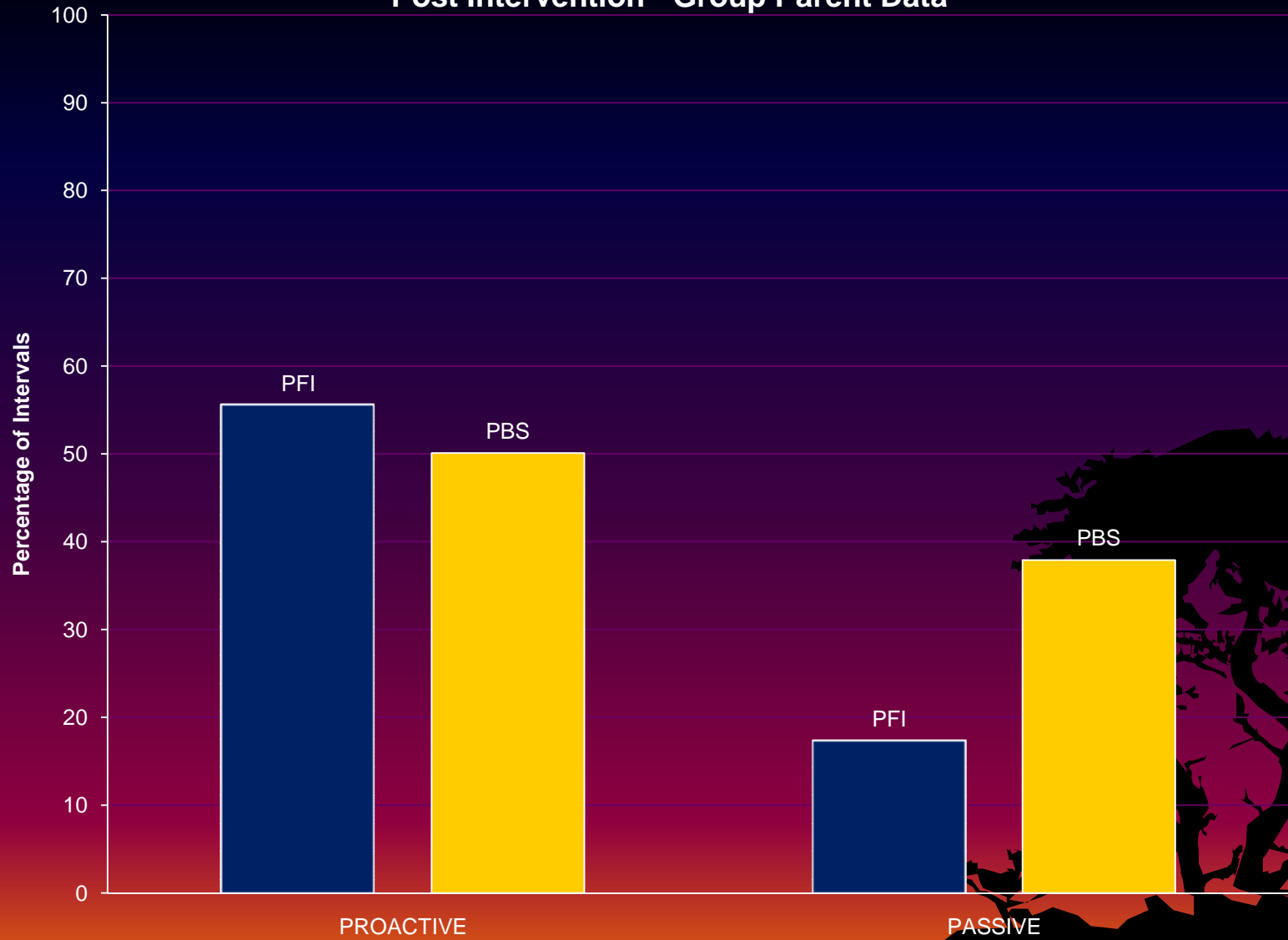
Use of Prevention Strategies Post-Intervention



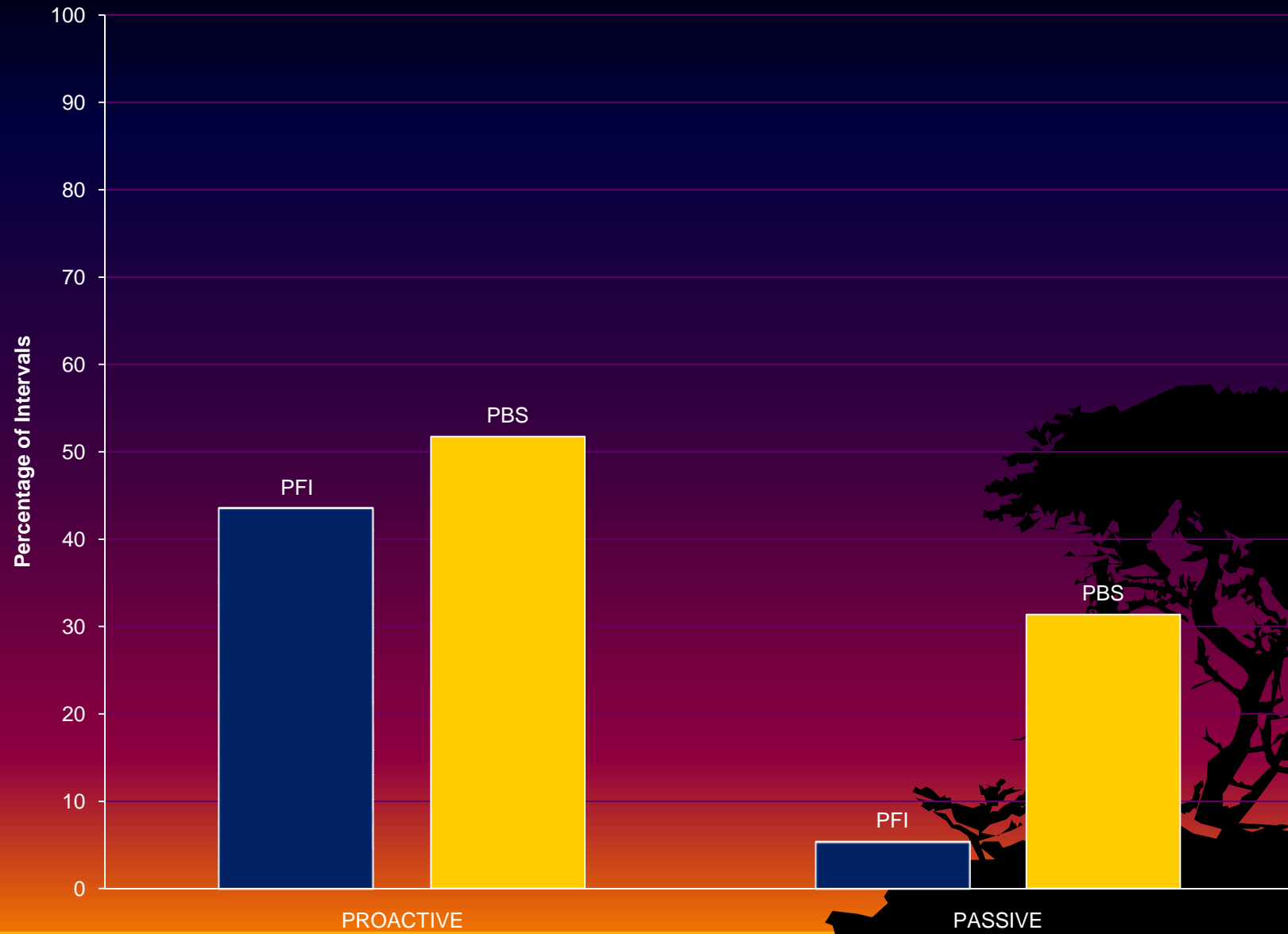
Use of Prevention Strategies One Year Post-Intervention



Post Intervention - Group Parent Data



One Year Follow-Up - Group Parent Data



Summary of Results

- Both PBS and PFI result in significant improvements in child behavior
- These improvements continue after one year
- Parents report overall improvements on QoL



Summary of Results

- PBS families tend to use avoidance strategies to improve child behavior
- PFI families tend to use more active strategies
- PFI families report more community involvement with their children and less anxiety



The Concession Process

- The tendency to change environments and approaches to avoid problem behavior



Positive Family Intervention

- Addresses the needs of children with challenging behavior
- Addresses the need of family members who carry out the plans
- Better outcomes when we address both



How Effective Are We?

- Are our interventions only successful with highly motivated families/professionals?
- We need to begin to design our strategies to reach those families who need our help the most.



Optimistic Parenting

- Durand, V.M. & Hieneman, M. (2008). *Helping parents with challenging children: Positive family intervention, Facilitator's guide*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Durand, V.M. & Hieneman, M. (2008). *Helping parents with challenging children: Positive family intervention, Workbook*. New York: Oxford University Press.

