



March 21-25, 2022
San Francisco, CA

How to Talk About Positive Behavior

Weszt Hart (Head of Player Dynamics, Riot Games)

#GDC22





Weszt Hart

Head of Player Dynamics



When we last spoke...



Where to improve

Beyond disruption and harm



10.0	Positive behavior ²
10.1	Defusing conflict
10.2	Teaching, providing helpful guidance
10.3	Friendly banter and icebreaking
10.4	Celebrating success
10.5	Encouraging someone who feels like giving up
10.6	Assisting a teammate in need
10.7	Giving in-game kudos (e.g. high-fives)
10.8	Gifting
10.9	Donating

Personal and community resilience

¹ From Taxonomy of Prosocial and Problem Behaviors (Caldarella, Merrell)

² From Riot's work-in-progress taxonomy of positivity behaviors

Things I've been thinking about since...

Things I've been thinking about since...

1

We need a lot more positivity

“Bad is stronger than good”

Bad Is Stronger Than Good

Roy F. Baumeister and Ellen Bratslavsky
Case Western Reserve University

Catrin Finkenauer
Free University of Amsterdam

Kathleen D. Vohs
Case Western Reserve University

The greater power of bad events over good ones is found in everyday events, major life events (e.g., trauma), close relationship outcomes, social network patterns, interpersonal interactions, and learning processes. Bad emotions, bad parents, and bad feedback have more impact than good ones, and bad information is processed more thoroughly than good. The self is more motivated to avoid bad self-definitions than to pursue good ones. Bad impressions and bad stereotypes are quicker to form and more resistant to disconfirmation than good ones. Various explanations such as diagnosticity and salience help explain some findings, but the greater power of bad events is still found when such variables are controlled. Hardly any exceptions (indicating greater power of good) can be found. Taken together, these findings suggest that bad is stronger than good, as a general principle across a broad range of psychological phenomena.

Centuries of literary efforts and religious thought have depicted human life in terms of a struggle between good and bad forces. At the metaphysical level, evil gods or devils are the opponents of the divine forces of creation and harmony. At the individual level, temptation and destructive instincts battle against strivings for virtue, altruism, and fulfillment. “Good” and “bad” are among the first words and concepts learned by children (and even by house pets), and most people can readily characterize almost any experience, emotion, or outcome as good or bad.

What form does this eternal conflict take in psychology? The purpose of this article is to review evidence pertaining to the general hy-

pothesis that bad is stronger than good (see also Rozin & Royzman, in press). That is, events that are negatively valenced (e.g., losing money, being abandoned by friends, and receiving criticism) will have a greater impact on the individual than positively valenced events of the same type (e.g., winning money, gaining friends, and receiving praise). This is not to say that bad will always triumph over good, spelling doom and misery for the human race. Rather, good may prevail over bad by superior force of numbers: Many good events can overcome the psychological effects of a single bad one. When equal measures of good and bad are present, however, the psychological effects of bad ones outweigh those of the good ones. This may in fact be a general principle or law of psychological phenomena, possibly reflecting the innate predispositions of the psyche or at least reflecting the almost inevitable adaptation of each individual to the exigencies of daily life.

This pattern has already been recognized in certain research domains. This is probably most true in the field of impression formation, in which the *positive-negative asymmetry effect* has been repeatedly confirmed (e.g., Anderson, 1965; Peeters & Czapinski, 1990; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). In general, and apart from a few carefully crafted exceptions, negative information receives more processing and contrib-

Roy F. Baumeister, Ellen Bratslavsky, and Kathleen D. Vohs, Department of Psychology, Case Western Reserve University; Catrin Finkenauer, Department of Psychology, Free University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Ellen Bratslavsky is now at the Department of Psychology, Ohio State University.

We thank the many people who have contributed helpful comments and references. This work is dedicated to the memory of Warren.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Roy F. Baumeister or Kathleen D. Vohs, Department of Psychology, Case Western Reserve University, 10900 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44106-7123. Electronic mail may be sent to either rfb2@po.cwru.edu or kdv3@po.cwru.edu.

Things I've been thinking about since...

1

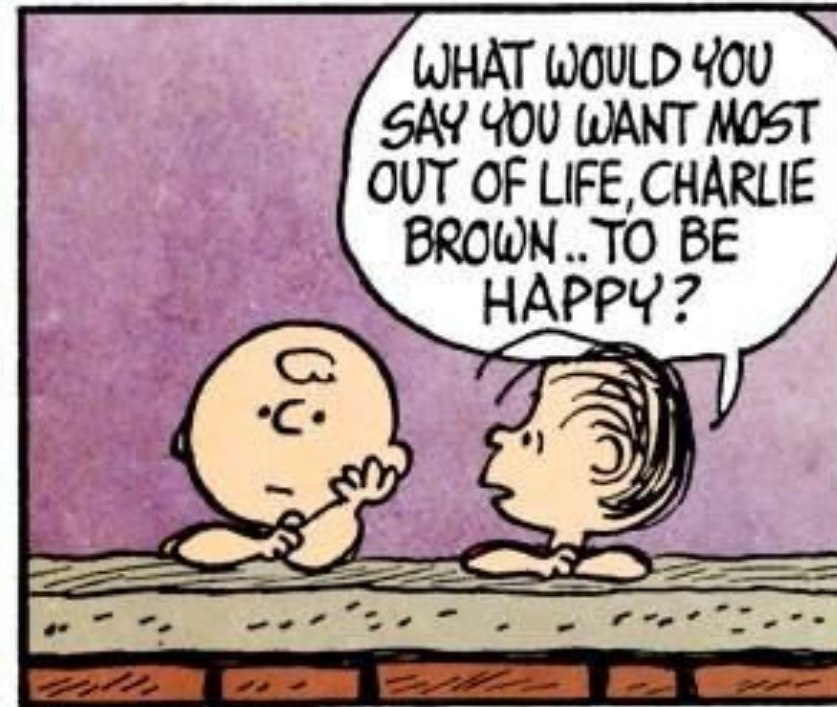
We need a lot more positivity

“Bad is stronger than good”

2

Less bad ≠ more good

No one sells less bad



Things I've been thinking about since...

1

We need a lot more positivity

“Bad is stronger than good”

2

Less bad \neq more good

No one sells less bad

3

Lewin's behavior equation

Behavior is a function of a person in their environment

LEWIN'S BEHAVIOR EQUATION

$$B = f(P, E)$$

Behavior is a function of a person in their environment

$$B = f(P, E)$$

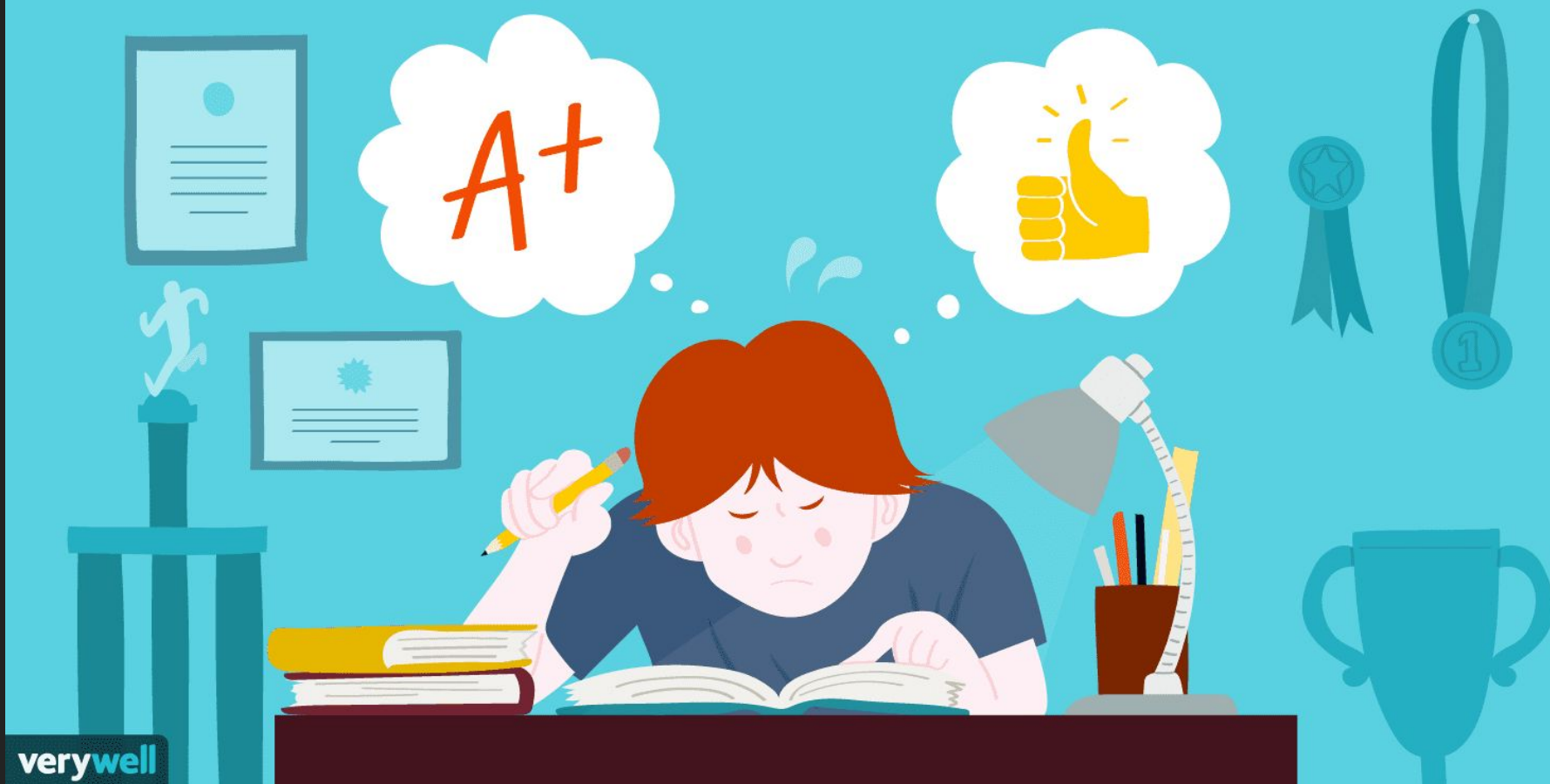
Change the environment to change the behavior

Things I've been thinking about since...

- 1 We need a lot more positivity**
"Bad is stronger than good"
- 2 Less bad \neq more good**
No one sells less bad
- 3 Lewin's behavior equation**
Behavior is a function of a person in their environment
- 4 "Positive" doesn't always need a lure**
Consider both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

Extrinsic Motivation

Behavior is driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades, and praise



Intrinsic Motivation

Engage in a behavior because it is personally rewarding, not for an external reward



Things I've been thinking about since...

- 1 We need a lot more positivity**
"Bad is stronger than good"
- 2 Less bad \neq more good**
No one sells less bad
- 3 Lewin's behavior equation**
Behavior is a function of a person in their environment
- 4 "Positive" doesn't always need a lure**
Consider both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation
- 5 A fresh perspective is overdue**
Given what we've learned

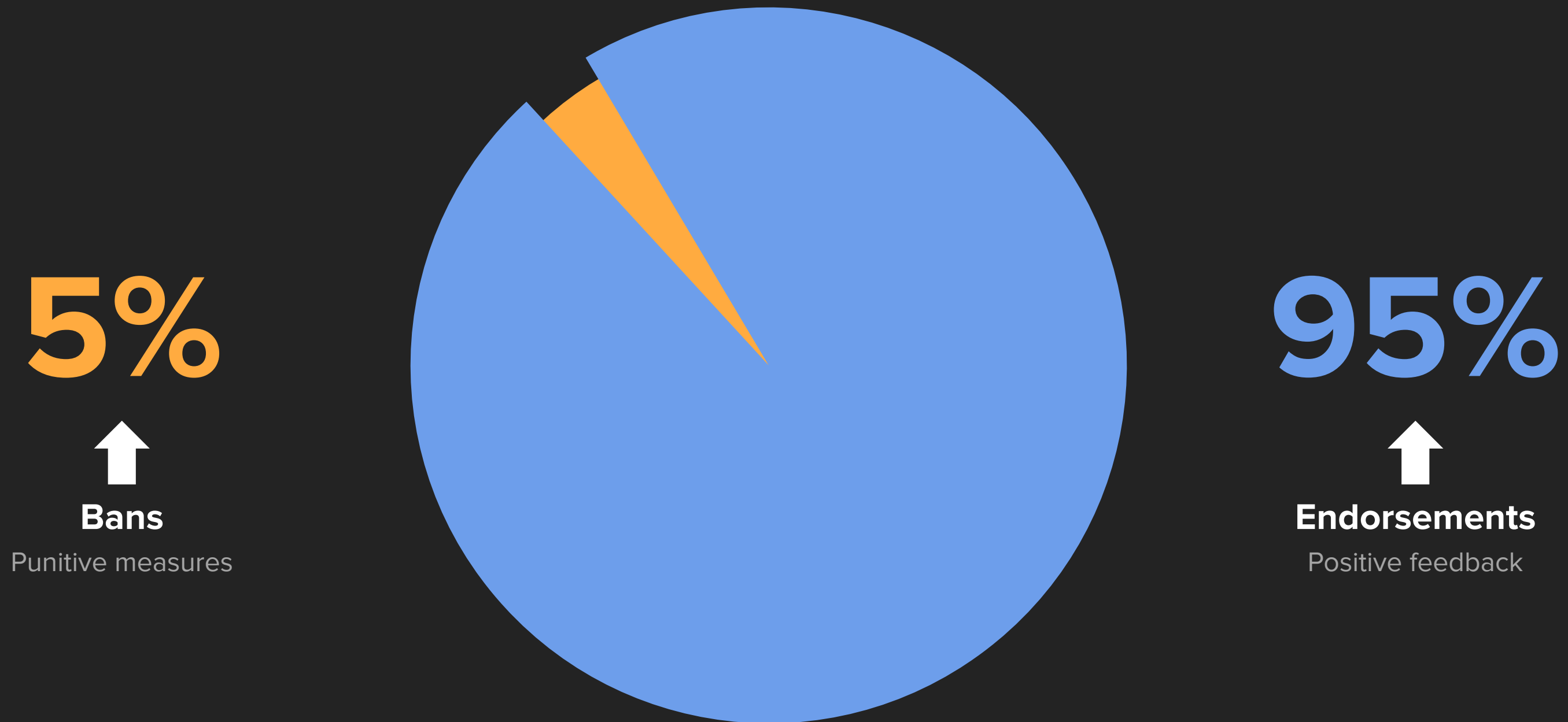
“Toxic” game communities are a myth*



*"Dispelling Common Player Behavior Myths" by Natasha Miller (GDC 2018)

**Everybody is disruptive to
somebody *sometime***

Different groups respond *differently**



*"Dispelling Common Player Behavior Myths" by Natasha Miller (GDC 2018)

95%

is a *very* positive number

**But do we know how to talk about
positive behavior?**

**But do we know how to talk about
positive behavior?**

Maybe we need a new framework?

Today's goals

1

**Find some
guiding stars**

2

**Develop a
working map**

3

**Introduce an
exciting project**

**Let's find some guiding stars
of positive behavior!**

Let's find some guiding stars
of positive behavior!

**Well... what your humble presenter
understands of it**

Guiding stars of positive behavior

The background is a stylized night landscape. In the foreground, there's a dark blue lake reflecting the sky. Behind the lake, a range of dark blue mountains is visible. The middle ground is filled with numerous dark green evergreen trees. In the upper half, the sky is a deep teal color, dotted with small white stars. A large, bright white circle representing the moon is positioned on the right side of the sky. A white dashed rectangular box is superimposed on the sky, spanning from the left side to the right, and from the top to the bottom. Inside this box, the text "add constellation here" is written in a white, sans-serif font. A thin white curved line, resembling a comet or a meteor, starts from the left edge of the dashed box and curves upwards and to the right.

add constellation here

Guiding stars of positive behavior

Prosocial



Prosocial

Intended to benefit one or more other people

Prosocial

Intended to benefit one or more other people

Helping

Sharing

Comforting

Cooperating

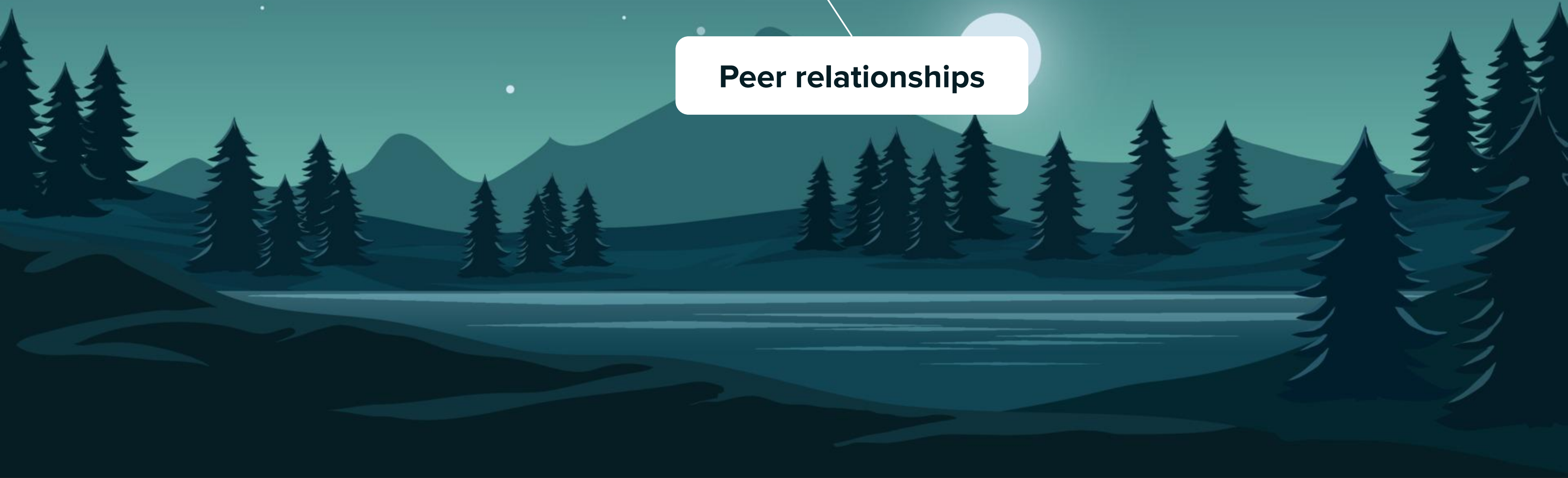
Gifting

Including

Guiding stars of positive behavior

Prosocial

Peer relationships



Peer relationships

Successfully establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with peers

Peer relationships

Successfully establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships with peers

Offering assistance

Leadership

Complementing

Empathy

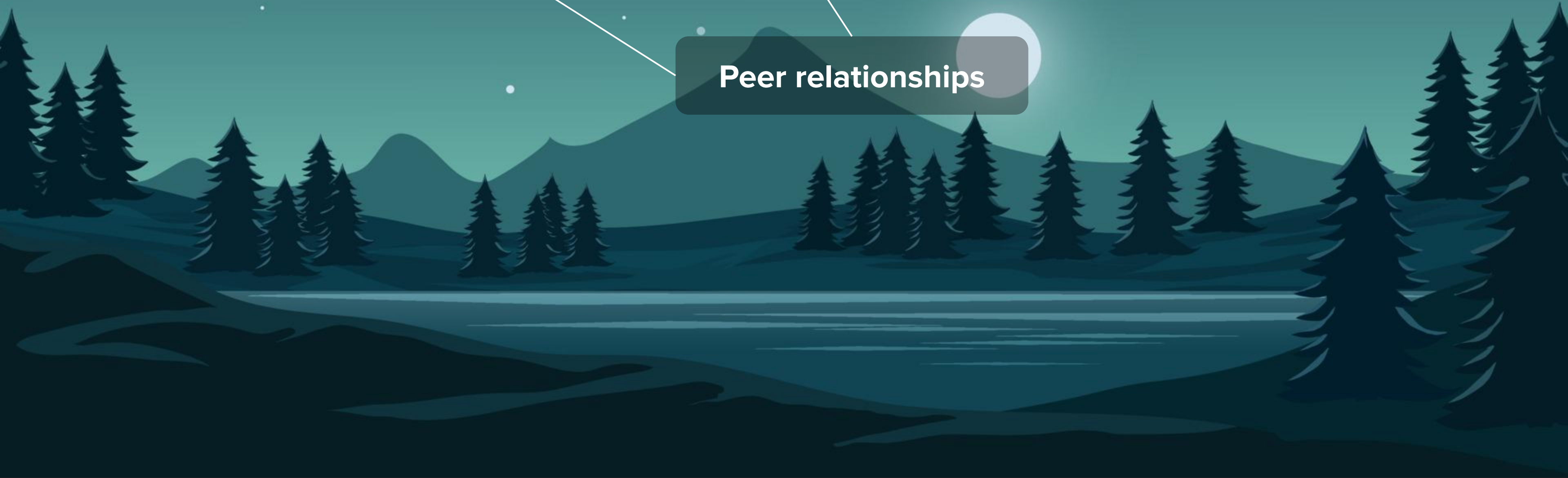
Cooperating

Guiding stars of positive behavior

Sportsmanship

Prosocial

Peer relationships



Sportsmanship

Showing respect for the game and everyone involved –
with or without the objective of mastery

Sportsmanship

Showing respect for the game and everyone involved –
with or without objective of mastery

Supporting your teammates
and coaches

Shaking hands and helping
fallen opponents

Encouraging everyone

Accepting the rulings of
officials

Doing your best

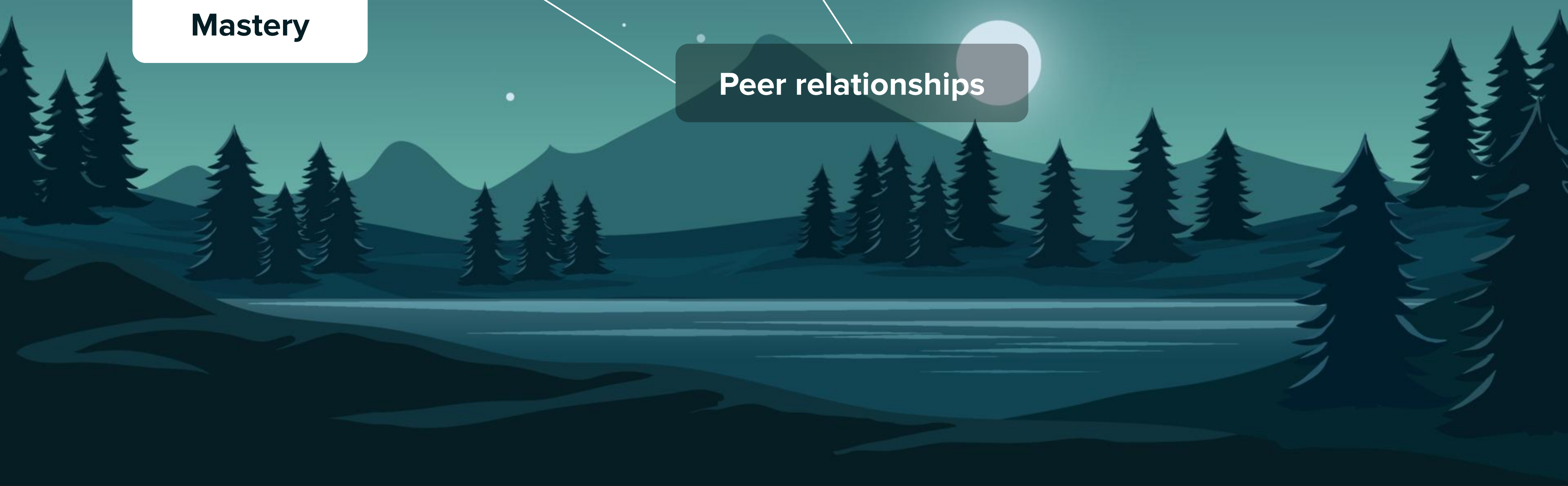
Guiding stars of positive behavior

Sportsmanship

Prosocial

Mastery

Peer relationships



Mastery

Pursuit of gaining comprehensive knowledge or skill
in a specific area

Mastery

Pursuit of gaining comprehensive knowledge or skill
in a specific area

Practicing deliberately

Showing attention to detail

Seeking frequent,
constructive feedback

Dedicating to an outcome

Guiding stars of positive behavior

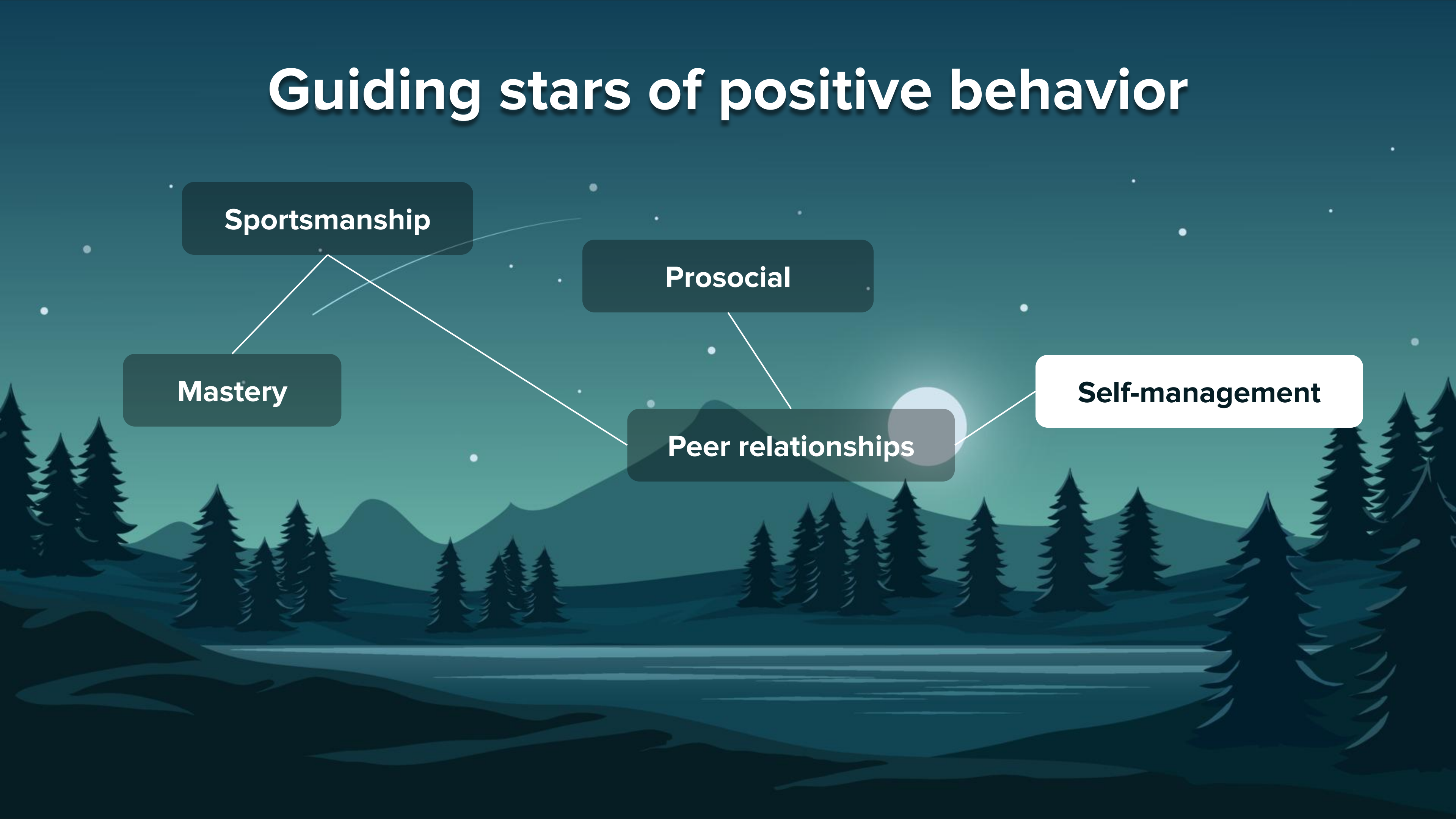
Sportsmanship

Prosocial

Mastery

Self-management

Peer relationships



Self-management

Managing one's personal actions, thoughts, and emotions
consciously and productively

Self-management

Managing one's personal actions, thoughts, and emotions
consciously and productively

Controlling temper

Monitoring emotions

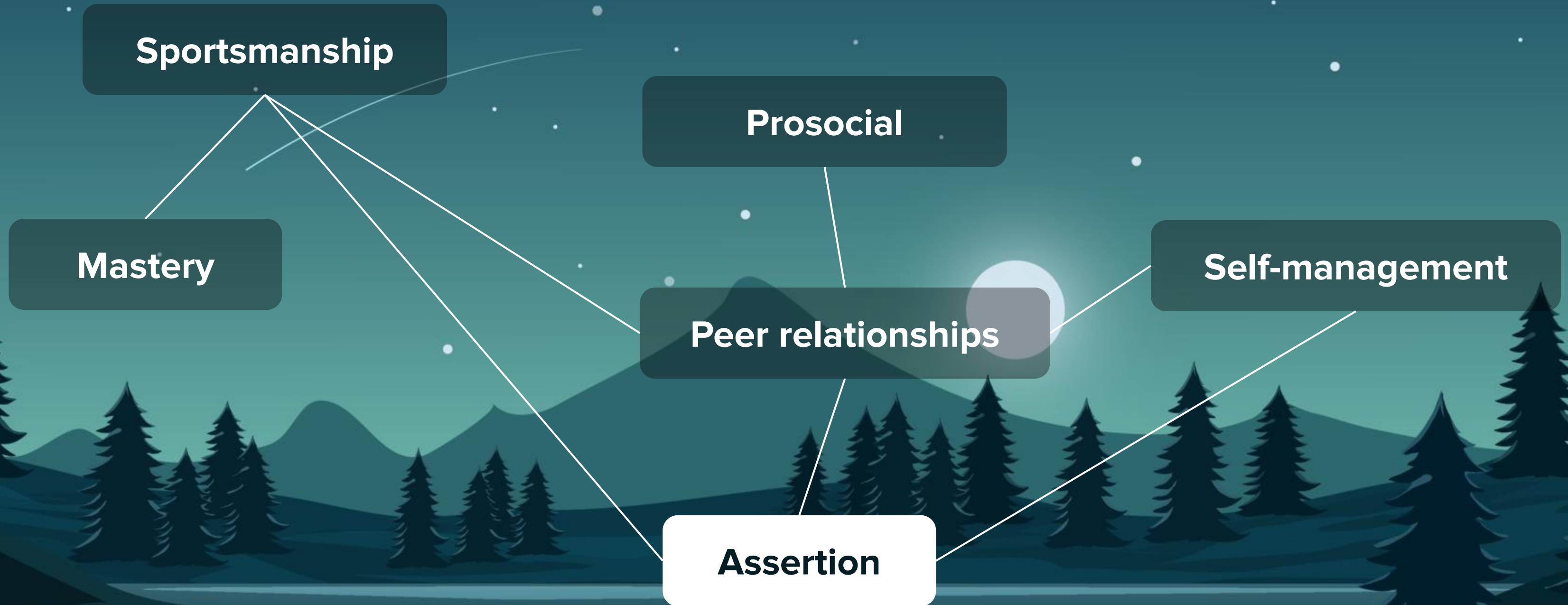
Responding appropriately
to criticism

Following rules

Planning and following
through

Prioritizing well

Guiding stars of positive behavior



Assertion

Appropriately expressing personal thoughts, feelings, beliefs, opinions, and rights

Assertion

Appropriately expressing personal thoughts, feelings, beliefs, opinions, and rights

Verbalizing feelings

Giving praise or compliments

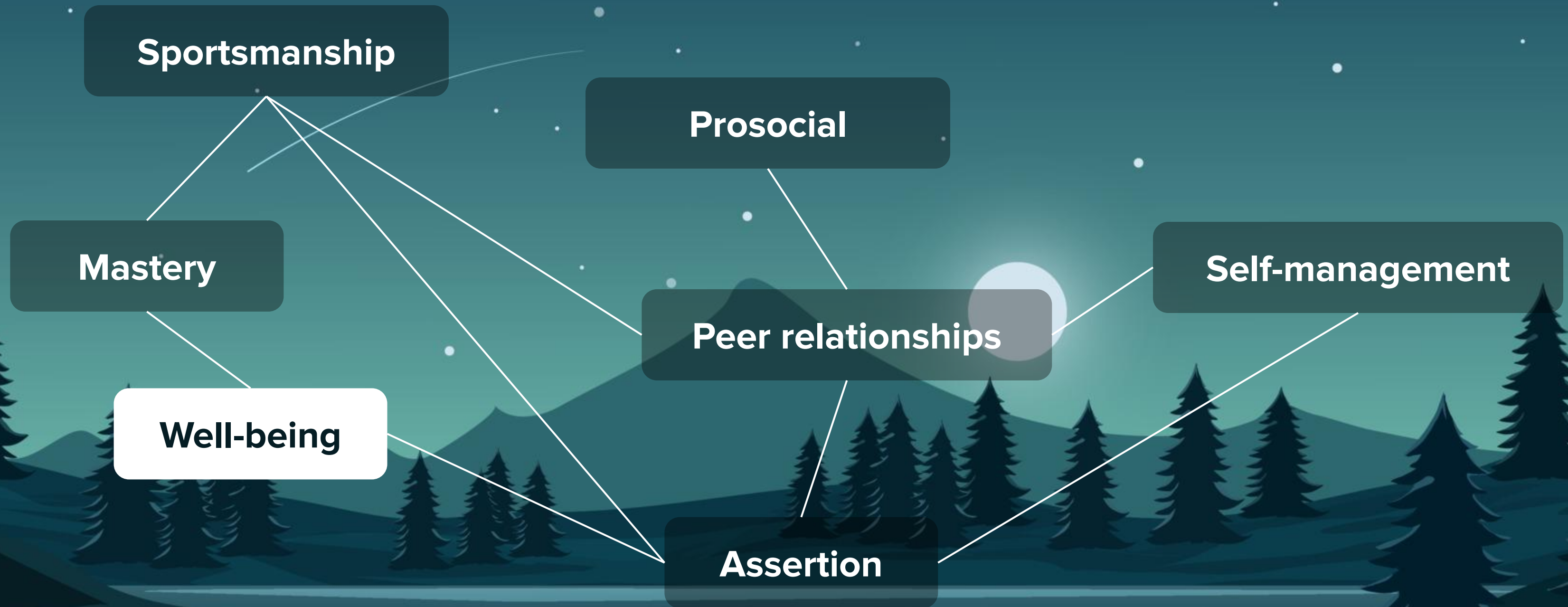
Joining activities in-progress

Inviting others to join

Starting conversations

Standing up for oneself

Guiding stars of positive behavior



Well-being

Desire and ability to feel happy, healthy, socially connected,
and purposeful

Well-being

Desire and ability to feel happy, healthy, socially connected,
and purposeful

Being active

Connecting socially

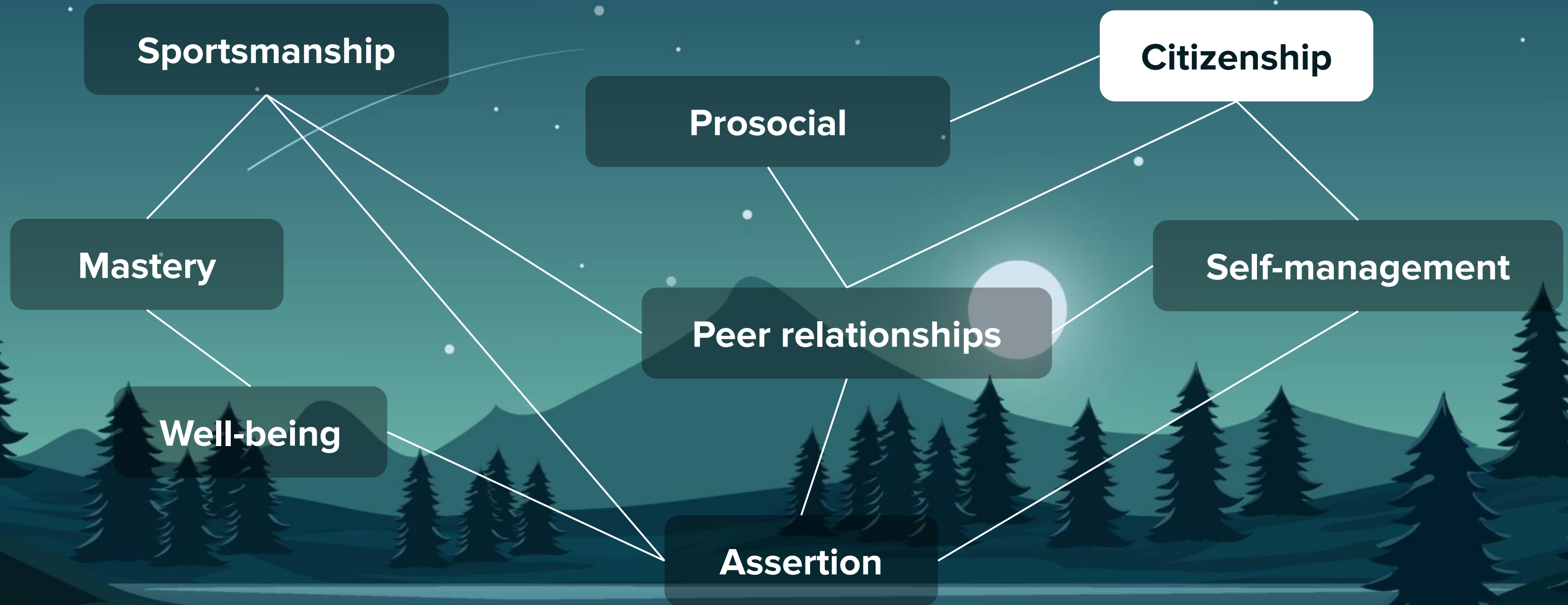
Self-regulating

Accepting oneself

Protecting oneself

Adapting to change

Guiding stars of positive behavior



Citizenship

Fulfilling a community's potential through active contribution and self-actualization of the individual

Citizenship

Fulfilling a community's potential through active contribution and self-actualization of the individual

Obeying rules and laws

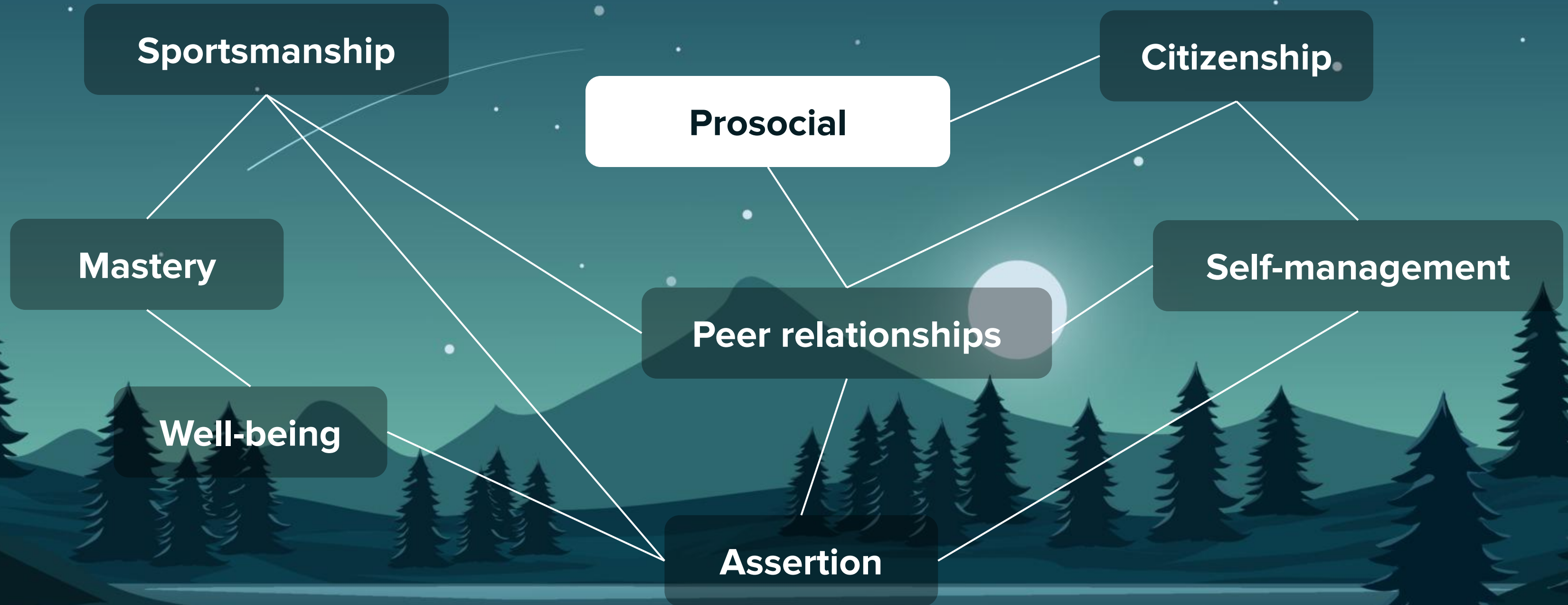
Devoting to the community and the improvement of all, including oneself

Helping others

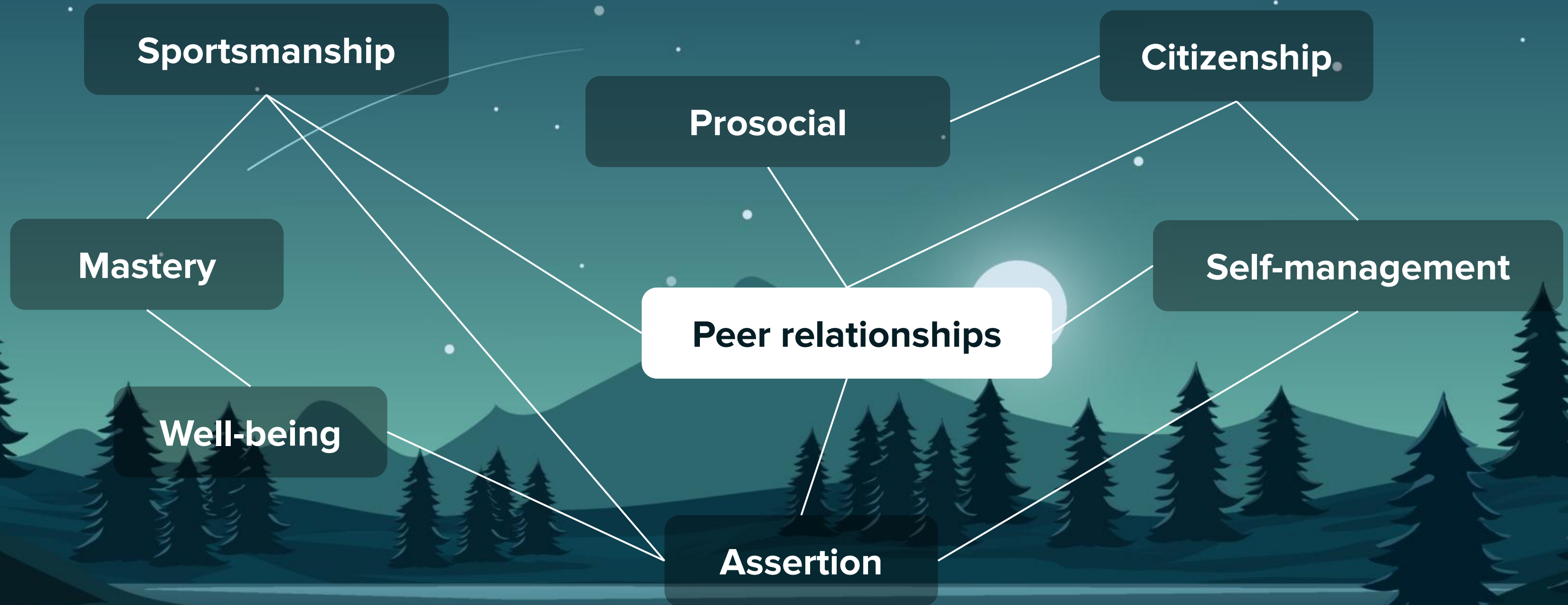
Being responsible for one's own actions and how they affect others

Let's review...

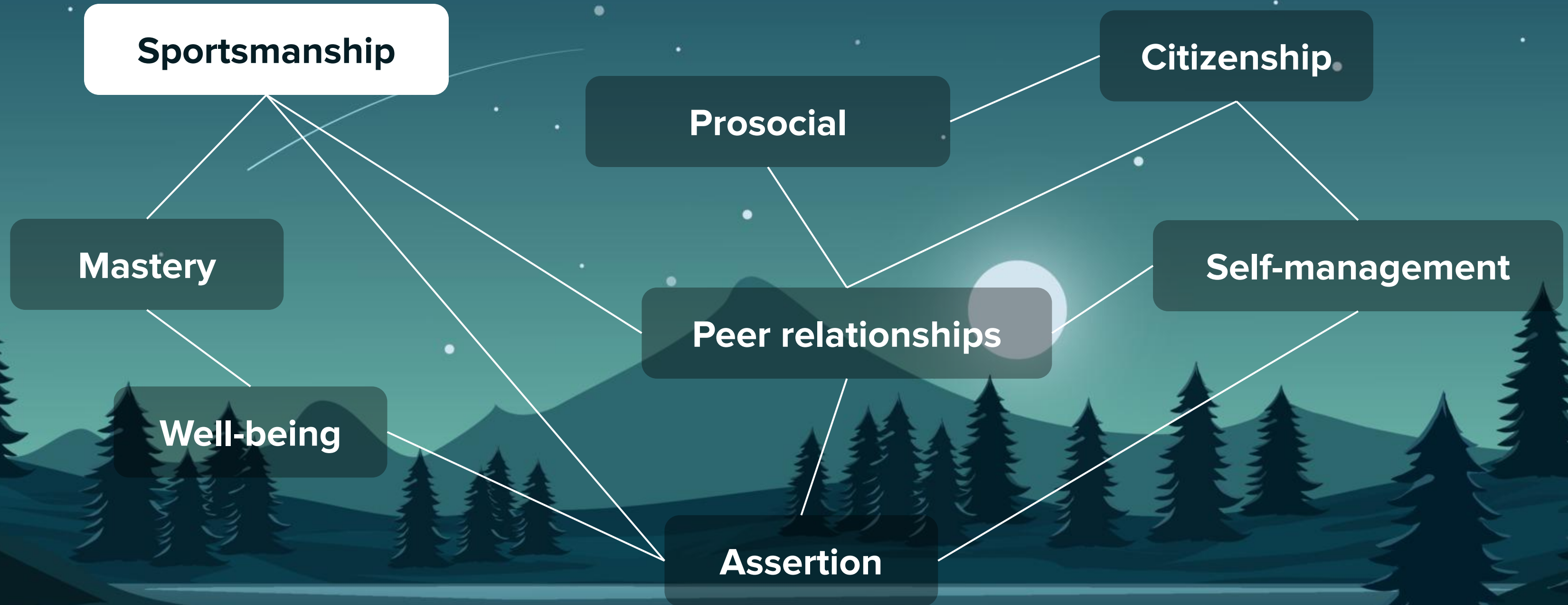
Guiding stars of positive behavior



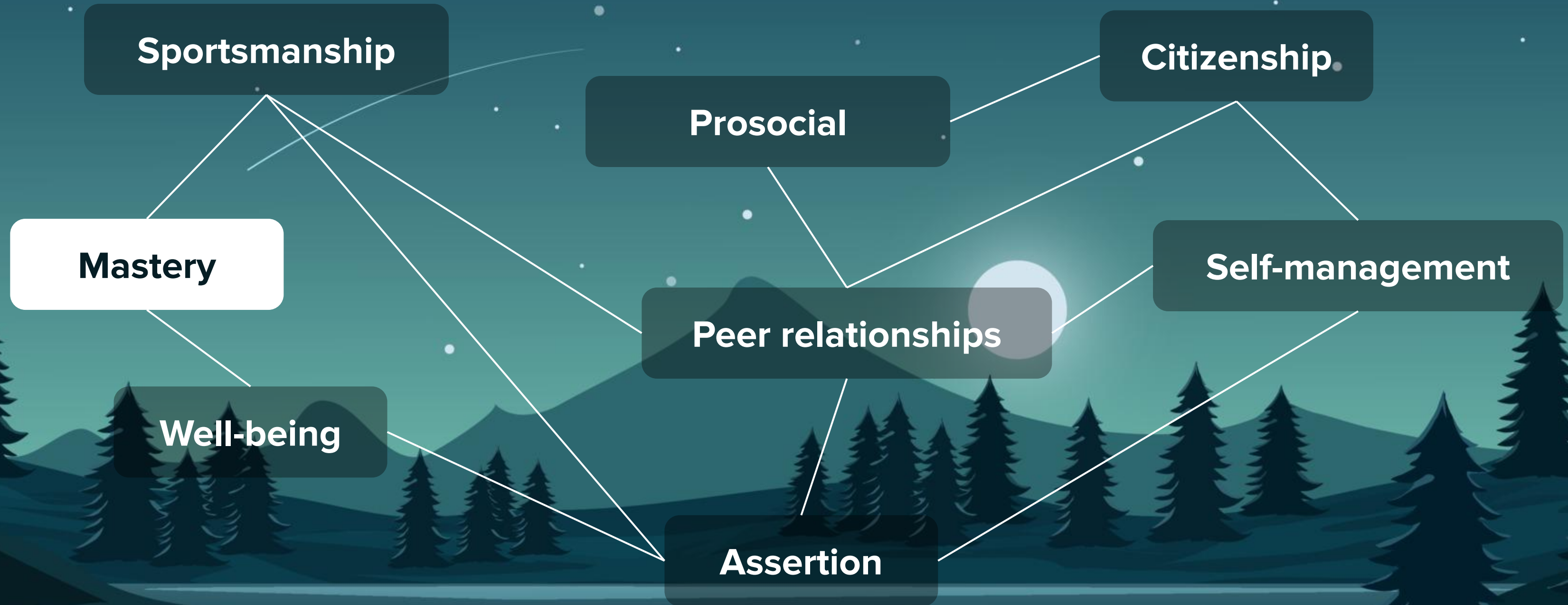
Guiding stars of positive behavior



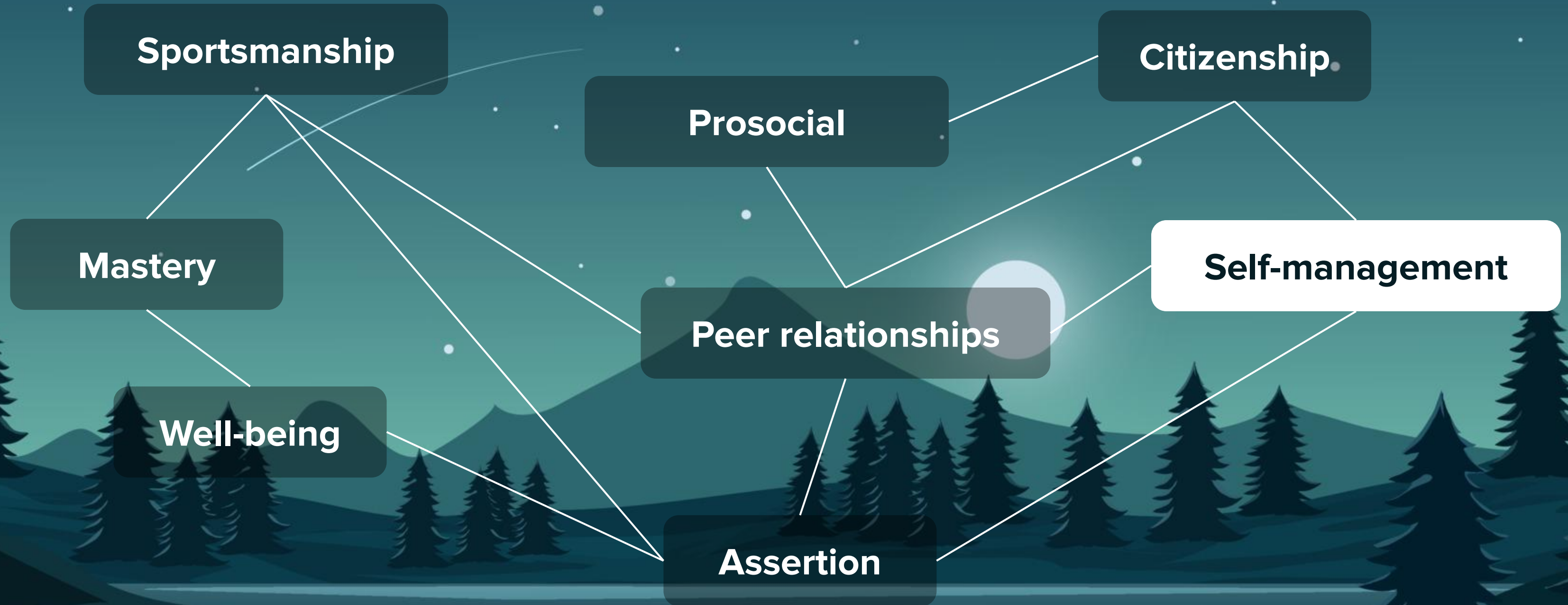
Guiding stars of positive behavior



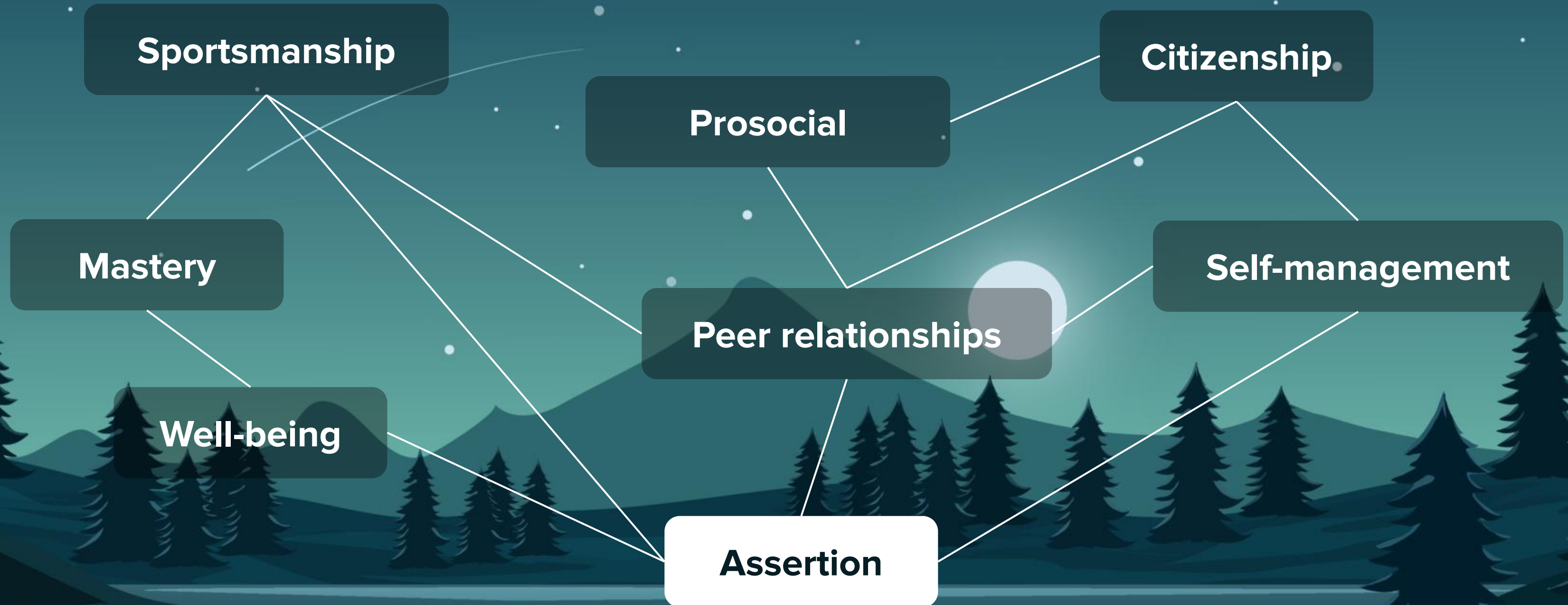
Guiding stars of positive behavior



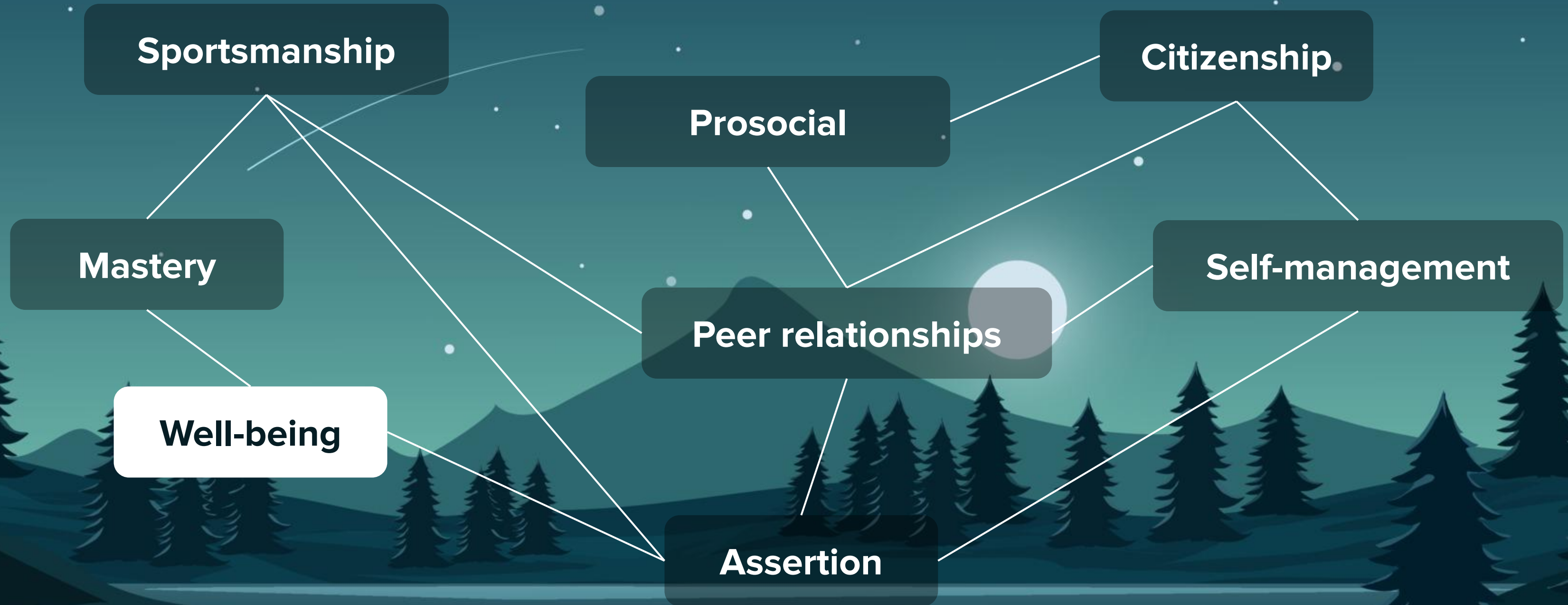
Guiding stars of positive behavior



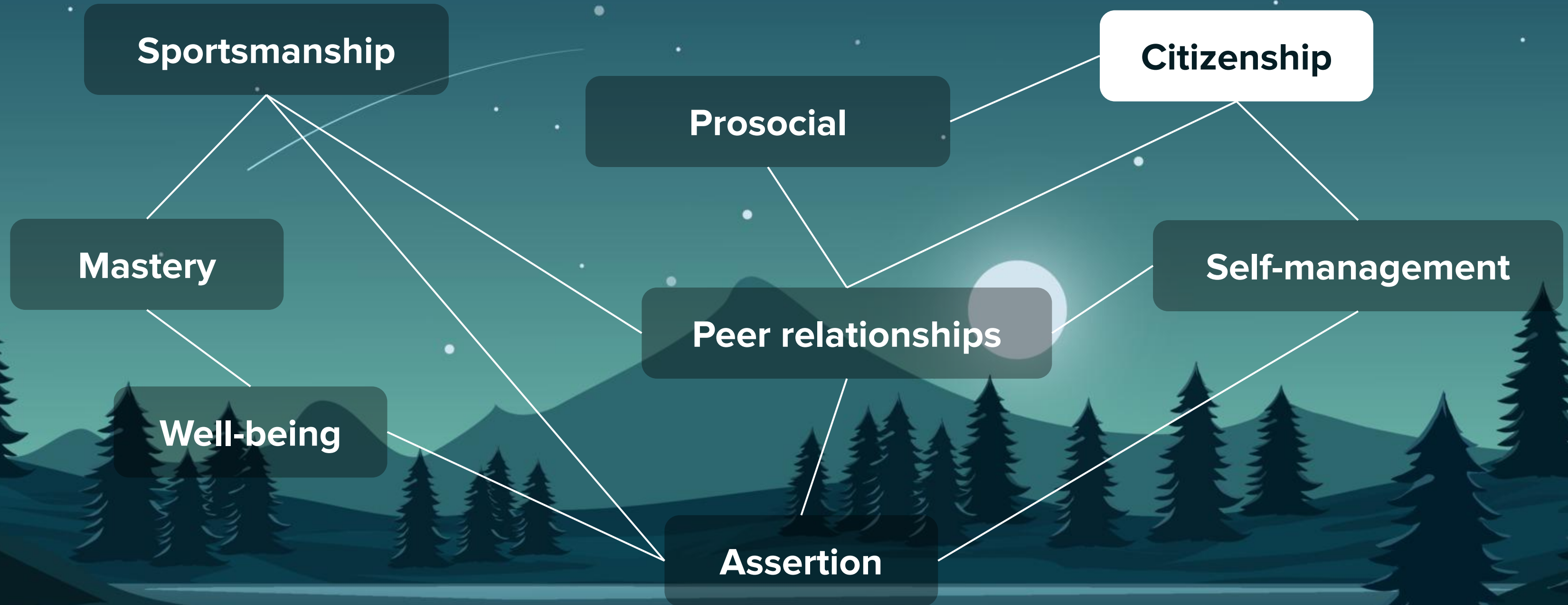
Guiding stars of positive behavior



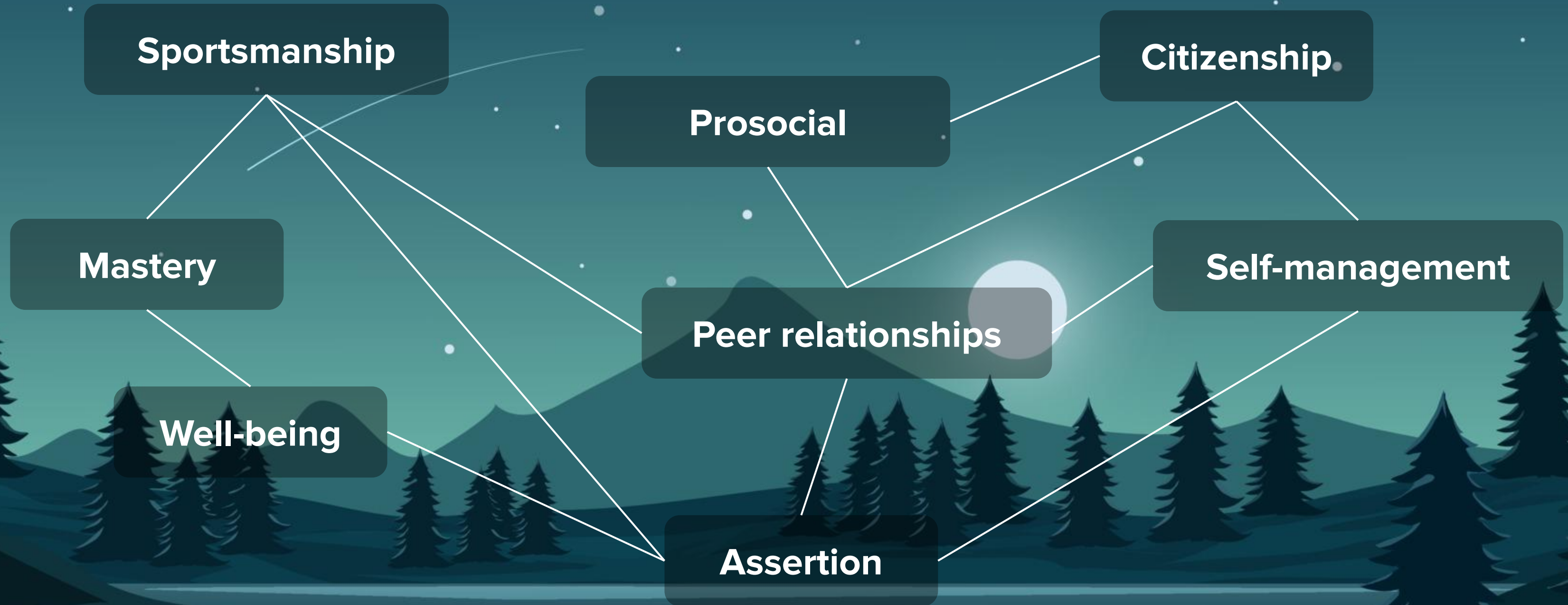
Guiding stars of positive behavior



Guiding stars of positive behavior

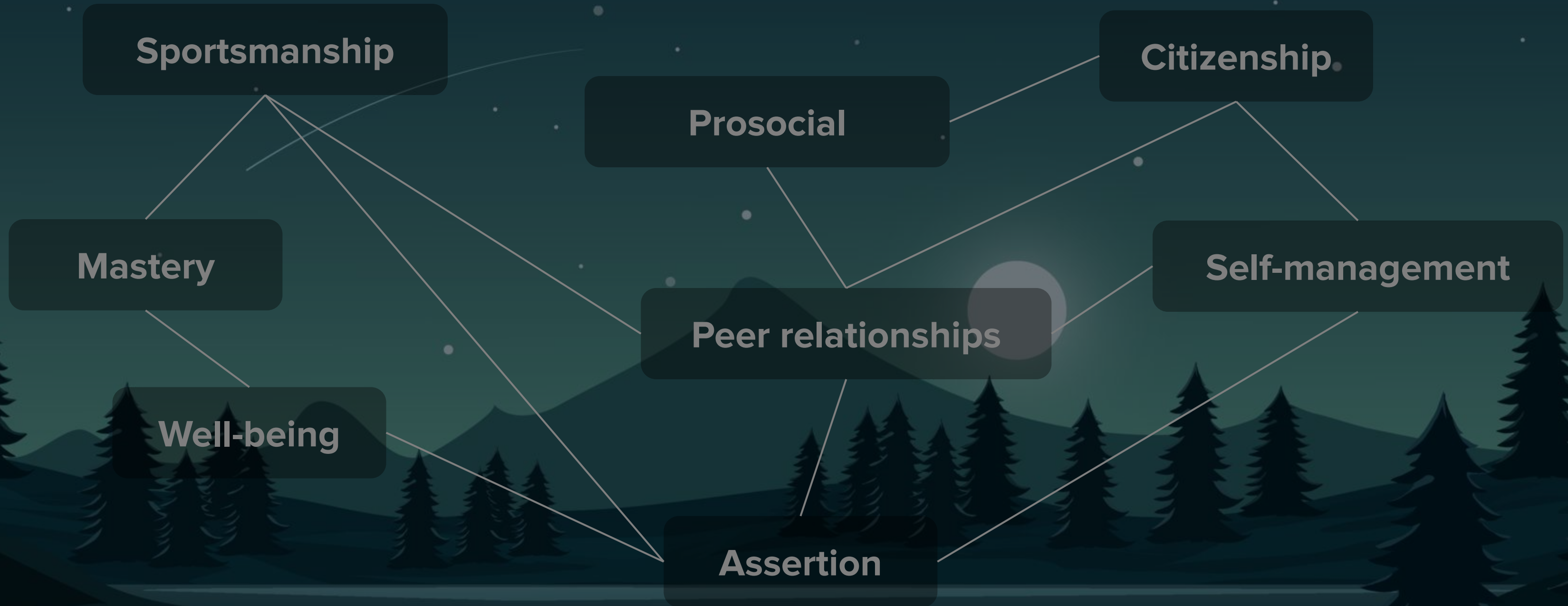


Guiding stars of positive behavior



Working map ~~Guiding stars~~ of positive behavior

We did it!



**Obviously our map is a bit
rough and incomplete**

Working map ~~Guiding stars~~ of positive behavior



So what's next?

**Announcing a very positive collaboration
with a very positive organization...**



Joan Ganz Cooney Center



Joan Ganz
Cooney Center

**We'll build something
positive together.**

Details soon!

**Knowing how to talk about positive behavior
opens up a world of possibilities for *everyone*.**

Knowing how to talk about positive behavior
opens up a world of possibilities for everyone.

And possibility is the whole point of what we do.

Knowing how to talk about positive behavior
opens up a world of possibilities for everyone.

And possibility is the whole point of what we do.

**Possibility is why players come to our games –
for the promise our games offer.**

**Possibility is why players come.
Positivity is why they stay.**

**Isn't it time to talk about
something **positive**?**

How to Talk About Positive Behavior



Weszt Hart

whart@riotgames.com

[linkedin.com/in/weszt](https://www.linkedin.com/in/weszt)