The Three Companions - An Already Here Adventure

A choose-your-own-adventure practice book

An original temple welcome, complete practices, and choices you can follow on paper.

Begin at The temple garden on page 2.

Scenes are shuffled. Follow the page numbers at the end of each scene. You can stop or change direction whenever you choose.

The temple garden

An original fictional welcome

You step through a small gate into a well-kept garden. Beyond it stands a small but beautiful Theravada Buddhist temple. Inside, one man sits in meditation. His face resembles Siddhartha as you have seen him imagined in art. Incense is burning. Three meditation pads lie before him.

You may sit or move on. If you sit, he opens his eyes, smiles, and greets you: “Welcome. The path is wide. You may begin with your own ordinary experience, and see what it reveals.”

Your adventure

The Three Companions. At Gosiṅga, shared work and considerate conduct accompany a life of practice.

“Try each invitation gently. You can question it, change direction, rest, or leave. Keep what helps and let the rest go. Ancient wisdom is an invitation to investigate, not a promise of an experience.”

Reading this book

Start using either choice below. After that, follow the page numbers rather than reading straight through. Scenes are deliberately shuffled; one scene may run over several pages. Choices appear at its end. In a PDF reader you can also click them. Keep a finger or bookmark at your current page when you pause. Two optional meetings with the man lead back to the exact scene you left.

Story and practice

The source story follows its recorded direction. Modern practice pauses and the temple framing are editorial additions, not episodes from the original story.

Detailed adaptation notes and gaps are available at the back of the book, so the telling can unfold without stopping for every editorial explanation.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Sit, listen, and begin - turn to page 18.

Move on and enter the adventure - turn to page 18.

Optional: read how this telling was made - turn to page 35.

Consideration in action

Each companion describes a willingness to put aside an insistence on having his own way. There are three bodies, they say in effect, but their intentions can move together. The image does not require them to become the same person. It shows a shared life in which a preference need not become a small throne.

Their goodwill reaches into the unglamorous parts of the day. Whoever returns first prepares what is needed for the meal. Whoever comes last clears what remains. Water and washing places are kept ready. A person notices work and does it instead of leaving a silent accusation for someone else to discover.

Notice, without grading

Read at your own pace. The next two pauses are contemporary invitations, not recorded events in the source.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to a contemporary practice pause - turn to page 7.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Hands at rest

The welcome is made through small actions before anyone praises harmony. Notice one ordinary way of making room without taking on more than you can offer.

The man pauses before the next part of the telling. You can try this editorial addition in the room where you are, without imagining yourself inside the historical event. There is time to notice what the beginning has stirred.

Practice pause

Hands at rest

1. Notice

Place your hands on a comfortable surface. Notice their temperature and points of contact.

2. Invite

Notice the contact of your palm and fingers separately. If moving is comfortable, lift one finger a little and set it down; otherwise compare two points of contact.

3. Listen

Compare the pressure before and after, or between the two points. Which details can you describe? Temperature or pressure may stay unchanged.

4. Respond

When ready, pick up an ordinary object and notice its contact with your hands.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source's reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Establishing mindfulness

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to the next practice pause - turn to page 25.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Optional: visit the man in the temple - carry only what helps - turn to page 22.

Practice pause · One true point of agreement

Neither impressive speech nor an attractive appearance makes an envious, greedy, dishonest person worthy of respect.

A preference need not become a throne. Try an ordinary perspective-taking pause while keeping your own needs visible.

Here the man allows a longer silence. This editorial addition can be tried without producing the lesson's supposed correct feeling. Notice what the invitation actually does, and stop if ordinary care asks for something else.

Practice pause

One true point of agreement

Take care

A yes is voluntary. Keep no available, respect the other person’s no, and leave coercive or unsafe interactions. Openness does not require trust without evidence, agreement, disclosure, or a personality change. Keep your eyes open if helpful and breathe naturally. Stop if you become dizzy, panicked, disoriented, unusually detached, or overwhelmed. Look around, feel ordinary support, and seek help if the effects persist. Do not push through to prove readiness.

1. Prepare

2 minutes. Write a low-stakes suggestion you might usually dismiss, such as trying a different lunch place. Choose something that does not involve pressure, danger, or an important boundary. Choose a comfortable position and an optional gentle timer. Shorten any phase if needed.

2. Experiment

9 minutes. For three minutes, write your immediate response without acting on it. For three minutes, identify one part you can sincerely acknowledge: the person’s interest, a practical benefit, or a shared wish. For three minutes, say several responses aloud, each adding something true: “Yes, a change could be nice, and I would like somewhere quiet.” If you cannot agree, try “I see what appeals to you; here is what would work for me.”

3. Compare

2 minutes. Which response allows contact without pretending? Notice whether the contribution is specific enough to help someone respond. You do not have to accept the original suggestion.

4. Return

2 minutes. End the deliberate exercise. Look around, name where you are, and notice the chair or floor. Move comfortably if appropriate. Choose one ordinary next action and give yourself time before resuming it. Record a sentence only if useful; an unfinished exploration is enough.

5. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source’s reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Reflection on action

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to the next practice pause - turn to page 11.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Welcoming together

The Buddha asks whether they are managing, whether food is sufficient and the life tolerable. Then he asks about their life together. Are they living in friendship rather than dispute? Anuruddha says they are. The next question matters: how? A warm claim is not left to stand in place of an explanation.

Anuruddha begins with appreciation. He regards the company of these companions as a good fortune. That appreciation is not kept as a private sentiment. It enters bodily actions, speech, and thought, both when the others are present and when they are absent. The account makes friendship something that can be lived when nobody is watching.

Notice, without grading

Read at your own pace. The next two pauses are contemporary invitations, not recorded events in the source.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to a contemporary practice pause - turn to page 27.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Mindful conversation

Shared work can become a field of silent accounting. Let this practice make room for a clear request or a freely chosen contribution.

The turn in the story need not become a demand on you. This editorial addition offers another modest experiment. Something useful may appear; nothing in the characters' lives depends on whether it does.

Practice pause

Mindful conversation

1. Notice

Notice your current posture, breathing, and urge to act.

2. Name

Name the present situation as simply as you can.

3. Choose

Choose this invitation if it suits the moment. You can leave it at any point.

4. Try

Describe the relevant facts, state how you feel, and ask clearly for what you need or say no. Explain why cooperation would help. Keep returning to the objective; use a steady manner and negotiate where appropriate.

5. Observe

Notice what followed, including little or no change. Decide what the situation needs next.

6. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

7. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source’s reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Reflection on action

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue the story - turn to page 15.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Meeting difficulty with care

A mind moving in the wrong direction can harm us more than an enemy can.

Their quiet includes real discussion. Explore the difference between not speaking and remaining available to hear.

The man has not asked for a report. This editorial addition lets you listen to the effects of a practice privately. Keep what is usable, and leave what has become unnecessary work.

Practice pause

Meeting difficulty with care

1. Notice

Bring to mind an ordinary difficulty someone is having.

2. Distinguish

Notice judgment, if present, and the possibility of wishing them relief.

3. Watch

Offer care without taking over their experience. What changes, if anything?

4. Release

Choose practical kindness if appropriate, or leave the intention there.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source’s reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Cultivating care and steadiness

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue the story - turn to page 20.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

The ordinary shared work

If a water vessel is too heavy for one person, help is signaled and another comes. They do not make cooperation depend on an argument about whose task it ought to have been. Their quiet is not a refusal to communicate. They also meet at intervals to discuss the teaching through the night.

The Buddha asks whether such care and diligence have supported anything beyond an ordinary comfortable life. Anuruddha describes deeper collectedness and the development that follows it. The source's account goes much farther than household cooperation. Yet the small shared acts are not discarded as beneath the great subject. They are part of the conditions in which the training is being lived.

Notice, without grading

Read at your own pace. The next two pauses are contemporary invitations, not recorded events in the source.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to a contemporary practice pause - turn to page 16.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Ask without apologizing for the need

The heavy vessel calls for help, not a display of self-sufficiency. Consider a small request that could be made without apology for having a need.

The next part can wait while the lesson meets an ordinary choice. This editorial addition stays close to a real, manageable situation rather than asking you to reproduce the events or achievements in the telling.

Practice pause

Ask without apologizing for the need

1. Notice

Notice where asking feels tense. Let that tension be present while you identify what you need.

2. Invite

Separate the request from the story about what someone should already know.

3. Listen

Say “Would you be willing to…” followed by one observable action and a useful time frame. Compare a rushed version with one at your ordinary speaking pace; notice effort and clarity. Write or use your usual communication method if speech is unavailable.

4. Respond

Ask, then leave room for an answer. Another person can decline; you can still respect your need and consider other options.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source’s reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Reflection on action

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to the next practice pause - turn to page 13.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

A visitor at the park

As a bee takes nectar without harming a flower or its color or scent, let a wise person live gently in the community.

Late in the day, a visitor approaches the forest park where Anuruddha, Nandiya, and Kimbila are practicing. The warden stops him. Three people live there who value quiet, he explains; he should not disturb them. The protection is well meant, but Anuruddha hears the voices and recognizes the visitor. It is their teacher.

He calls his companions. The three come out together, and the welcome becomes practical at once. One receives the bowl and robe, another prepares a seat, and another brings water for washing. Before any discussion of harmony, the account has shown people sharing the work of making room. The question that follows will have something concrete to rest on.

Notice, without grading

Read at your own pace. The next two pauses are contemporary invitations, not recorded events in the source.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to a contemporary practice pause - turn to page 5.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Optional: visit the man in the temple - the garden does not hurry - turn to page 19.

The garden does not hurry

An optional meeting - original fiction

You find the man beside the temple garden. He makes room for you to sit. This meeting is a pause in the adventure, not a required practice.

The man speaks

“Companionship is made visible in ordinary actions: making room, sharing work, and noticing what another person needs. Harmony is something people help create.”

He smiles. “When you are ready, return to where you left the story.”

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Return to “A visitor at the park” - turn to page 18.

Beyond this retelling

The account continues through profound attainments and release, then celebrates the benefit of such companions. It does not say that filling a water vessel by itself produces liberation. The lesson is a life whose care, discussion, discipline, and understanding support one another.

Leave the three companions in their forest park. The modern reader may have a kitchen, a workplace, a shared room, or one friend rather than a monastic community. The recognizable question is still available: what would make goodwill visible here? A task completed, a request made plainly, a preference loosened, or a conversation entered with the intention to understand can give the story somewhere to continue.

Notice, without grading

Read at your own pace. The next two pauses are contemporary invitations, not recorded events in the source.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to a contemporary practice pause - turn to page 31.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

You can leave the story here

Reading, resting, and living the rest of your day are also available. There is no obligation to finish this retelling or return to it.

The man makes no attempt to draw you back into the telling. A story can wait while a person meets the needs of a real day. Leave its characters where they are for now. If you return, the page can be opened without an apology for the time spent elsewhere.

Notice, without grading

Your previous place remains available in your account when signed in, or in this browser for guests when storage works.

An ordinary pause

You may close the book, explore ordinary life, and return to this page whenever you choose. Leaving can be part of walking the path.

Leaving the path

The man in the temple offers a quiet farewell. You can return to ordinary life now, or return to your bookmarked page another day. This pause is not a completed journey.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Visit the temple again - turn to page 2.

Carry only what helps

An optional meeting - original fiction

You find the man beside the temple garden. He makes room for you to sit. This meeting is a pause in the adventure, not a required practice.

The man speaks

“Good company does not remove every difference. Consider what can be offered freely and what needs a clear conversation. Care can be steady without making everyone the same.”

He smiles. “When you are ready, return to where you left the story.”

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Return to “Practice pause · Hands at rest” - turn to page 6.

Practice pause · Ease without a review

A well-directed mind can help us more than a mother, father, or any other relative can.

Return from the forest park to your actual surroundings. Choose whether there is one small thing to continue, or whether rest is what the shared day needs.

For this last editorial addition, the man leaves room to finish. You can set down the exercise along with the book. An unfinished question may remain useful without being carried as an obligation.

Practice pause

Ease without a review

1. Notice

If an easy moment is present, notice it. If not, simply sit comfortably.

2. Distinguish

Distinguish ease from excitement about being calm or checking whether it will last.

3. Watch

Let that extra evaluation rest briefly. Notice what remains.

4. Release

Look around and continue your day. There is no state to preserve.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source's reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Mindfulness of breathing

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Two sorts of thinking

Choose what comes next

Continue the story - turn to page 29.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Knowing this position

The warden's wish to protect quiet was not the whole situation. This pause lets care include the possibility of listening to new information.

The telling remains open while you try another small invitation. This editorial addition does not ask you to decide what the characters should have felt. Let one ordinary experience of your own receive a little attention.

Practice pause

Knowing this position

1. Notice

Notice whether you are sitting, standing, walking, or lying down.

2. Distinguish

How do you know? Notice contact and position without adjusting them.

3. Watch

Stay with that ordinary knowledge briefly.

4. Release

Continue your activity; there is nothing to retain.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source’s reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Establishing mindfulness

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue the story - turn to page 10.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Wishing well

Nothing burns like craving, nothing devours like hatred, nothing traps like confusion, and nothing floods the mind like greed.

Appreciation can be specific rather than compulsory. Consider one real thing another person contributes, without requiring yourself to feel affection on command.

The man leaves the story's image with you rather than explaining it again. This editorial addition is a chance to meet an everyday version of the question. A small, safe example will do.

Practice pause

Wishing well

1. Notice

Think of someone easy to like.

2. Distinguish

Offer a simple wish for their safety and well-being.

3. Watch

Notice the response. Later, if comfortable, include someone you feel neutral about.

4. Release

Let the wish rest. You need not start with a difficult relationship.

5. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

6. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source's reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Cultivating care and steadiness

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to the next practice pause - turn to page 33.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Let the story rest

The retelling and its modern practice pauses can end here. You can read the full wisdom reference, return to ordinary activity, or explore another adventure.

The man closes the telling without turning its reported ending into a result you are expected to claim. The people in the old account have their own training and consequences. What you can carry is a question or an intention that meets your own ordinary life with a little more care.

Notice, without grading

Participation in these pauses does not establish the attainments described in the source.

Back at the temple

You return through the well-kept garden to the small temple. Incense drifts past the three meditation pads. The man opens his eyes, smiles, and welcomes you back.

The man speaks

You saw companionship expressed through considerate actions and shared work. A small ordinary kindness can be part of how people practice together.

“You are welcome to walk another adventure, or return to ordinary life. There is nothing you need to prove before you go.”

An ending

To return to ordinary life, close the book here. Finishing marks participation, not an attainment.

Sources and wisdom

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Sit in the temple and begin a fresh visit - turn to page 2.

Practice pause · After the choice

The source's profound results are not a score for this adventure. Let a practical act of care be worthwhile without making it prove anything larger.

The story is nearing its ending, but your day has its own pace. This editorial addition asks whether anything small can travel with you into that day. It need not resemble the result reported in the account.

A modern practice pause

After the choice

Before you begin

Choose a safe, ordinary situation. You may pause or finish at any time.

Take care

Repair does not require renewed contact with an unsafe person.

1. Invitation 1

Feel your support and recall one actual action from this adventure. If you only rehearsed it, keep that distinction clear.

2. Invitation 2

What effects did you observe on yourself and others? Separate observations from predictions, hopes, and bodily impressions.

3. Invitation 3

If you caused harm, acknowledge the specific action and consider a safe correction or repair. Ask a trusted person for guidance when needed; do not demand forgiveness.

4. Invitation 4

If the action was helpful, identify the conditions that made it easier and one way to repeat them. If the effects are unknown, leave them unknown and check later if appropriate.

5. Invitation 5

Set down the review. Return to an ordinary responsibility or rest; you do not need a verdict about your whole character.

After the practice

What will you keep, change, or check next time?

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source's reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Recognizing the direction

Reflection on action

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue to the next practice pause - turn to page 23.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

Practice pause · Gentle, interested, present

Goodwill behind someone's back is part of the story too. Notice the private rehearsal that may shape your next encounter.

Before the telling moves on, there is another way to approach this moment. As an editorial addition, the exercise belongs to your present life. You can adapt it or let it pass without changing anyone's part in the old story.

Practice pause

Gentle, interested, present

1. Notice

Notice your current posture, breathing, and urge to act.

2. Name

Name the present situation as simply as you can.

3. Choose

Choose this invitation if it suits the moment. You can leave it at any point.

4. Try

Avoid threats or attacks. Listen with genuine interest, acknowledge what is understandable in the other person’s experience, and use an approachable manner. Eye contact and posture can vary; effectiveness does not require a performance.

5. Observe

Notice what followed, including little or no change. Decide what the situation needs next.

6. Return

Let the exploration end. Notice your surroundings and the support beneath you. Resume ordinary activity when you feel ready.

7. Make It Yours

If this works for you, make it part of your practice. If it does not, let it go.

Notice, without grading

What, if anything, was useful in this pause? The source’s reported result is not a result the app can establish.

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Reflection on action

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Choose what comes next

Continue the story - turn to page 4.

Step off the path for now - turn to page 21.

How this telling was made

Original telling and modern practice

The temple man, present-day settings, connective descriptions, and reader choices are original literary framing. Historical stories retain their recorded direction. Dialogue is modern paraphrase, not a claimed historical quotation. Practice pauses are modern invitations; reading an outcome does not establish that outcome in the reader.

About the adaptation

An original short retelling of the cited discourse episode. Historical narrative is distinguished from contemporary practice invitations; no invented choices change the recorded events.

Story, practice, and the full source

This retelling follows the discourse’s narrative, not the translator’s commentarial introduction. Shared work and accommodation are adapted to ordinary relationships; they do not require surrendering consent or boundaries. The extensive attainments described later are not taught or certified by these pauses.

Hands at rest

supporting. Hands at rest: Attending to ordinary physical experience can prepare bodily mindfulness. This modern sensory comparison omits the full mindfulness framework and does not establish insight.

Knowing this position

adaptation. Knowing this position: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: knowing the body. This modern sensory comparison omits the full mindfulness framework and does not establish insight.

Wishing well

adaptation. Wishing well: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: cultivating care. Modern imagery, permission, and interpersonal techniques are adaptations; the full cultivation is not covered.

Gentle, interested, present

supporting. Gentle, interested, present: Pausing and considering a response can support truthful, non-harming speech. Assertiveness or bodily confidence alone does not fulfill right speech; assess truthfulness, harm, and effects.

One true point of agreement

supporting. One true point of agreement: Pausing and considering a response can support truthful, non-harming speech. Assertiveness or bodily confidence alone does not fulfill right speech; assess truthfulness, harm, and effects.

Mindful conversation

supporting. Mindful conversation: Pausing and considering a response can support truthful, non-harming speech. Assertiveness or bodily confidence alone does not fulfill right speech; assess truthfulness, harm, and effects.

Ask without apologizing for the need

supporting. Ask without apologizing for the need: Pausing and considering a response can support truthful, non-harming speech. Assertiveness or bodily confidence alone does not fulfill right speech; assess truthfulness, harm, and effects.

Meeting difficulty with care

adaptation. Meeting difficulty with care: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: cultivating care. Modern imagery, permission, and interpersonal techniques are adaptations; the full cultivation is not covered.

After the choice

adaptation. After the choice: New practice addressing: Conduct in daily life. Original contemporary script. It introduces part of the cited training and requires real-world repetition; no attainment is inferred.

Ease without a review

adaptation. Ease without a review: This invitation adapts an operation from the cited discourse: settling body and mind. Natural breathing and temporary ease do not cover the sixteen trainings or establish deep collectedness.

Sources and wisdom

Analysis of the path

Cultivating care and steadiness

Establishing mindfulness

Mindfulness of breathing

Recognizing the direction

Reflection on action

The three companions at Gosiṅga

Two sorts of thinking

Choose what comes next

Return to the temple garden - turn to page 2.