

Keeping Commitments Buddies Program Guidelines

January 2026

The Keeping Commitments Buddies program offers support through accountability for participants in keeping their stated commitment.

The privileged environment is the cornerstone of our practice. These guidelines and program requirements are intended to assist us all in maintaining the privileged environment.

Program Elements

The duration of the program is one quarter. You choose a commitment to practice with. You may change your commitment any time during the quarter.

You will be assigned a Buddy, to whom you will send one commitment text per day, saying whether or not you met your commitment on that day. Your Buddy will reply with “Gasshō” to acknowledge receiving the commitment text. If no text is received, the Buddy will send a text stating “A text was not received. Gasshō”.

You will also act as a Buddy for another participant. That person will send one commitment text to you per day. You will reply with “Gasshō” to acknowledge receiving the text. If no text is received, you will send a text stating “A text was not received. Gasshō”.

Program Logistics

The First Day of the Program

On the morning of the first day of the quarter, the program will send an email with the first names and phone numbers of the participants with whom you will be texting for the quarter.

Example:

*Dear Beryl,
You will be **sending** your commitment texts to Charlie, 888-555-1234.
You will be **receiving** commitment texts from Anita, 877-555-5678.*

On the first day, you will send an initial text containing a brief description of your commitment.

Examples:

- *I will record and listen twice a day.*
- *I will do 20 minutes of yoga every day.*
- *I will work on painting my garage for at least 20 minutes each day.*

You will also receive an initial text describing a fellow practitioner's commitment and schedule. Please reply to that initial text simply with "Gasshō".

Sending Daily Commitment Texts

Each day you will send a commitment text to your Buddy. Your text will consist of 1-2 sentences about whether or not your commitment was kept that day:

- *I kept my commitment today.*
- *I did not keep my commitment today.*

If your commitment changes at any point in the quarter, simply let your Buddy know via text what the new commitment is. Examples:

- *I finished painting the garage, now I will weed the garden 20 minutes each day.*
- *My new commitment is to make Gasshō each time I pass through a door.*

Replies to Daily Commitment Texts

- Reply to incoming commitment texts simply with "Gasshō".
- If you do not receive a text, please send the response "A text was not received. Gasshō".
- During the quarter, you may receive notification of a change in commitment from the participant who is sending you commitment texts. Please respond "Gasshō".
- Always include a line over the 'o' in 'Gasshō'.

When to Text

The texting window is 8am-5pm Pacific Time (for those in Europe, 8am-5pm London Time), unless the program has provided a different texting window.

When to send commitment texts

- Please send commitment texts during the texting window.
- Please send only one commitment text per day.
- Should you not send a text within the texting window, this is considered a missed text, and would not be sent late or on another day.

When to reply

- A timely reply, soon after receiving a text, is encouraged whenever possible.
- In any case, please reply no later than shortly after the end of the texting window.
- If an expected text is not received, send the message "A text was not received. Gasshō", shortly after the end of the texting window.

- Should you miss sending a reply to your participant, this is considered a missed reply, and would not be sent later or on a different day.

Absences

If you will be unavailable to text for four days or fewer, please *inform your buddies directly by text*.

- To maintain the privileged environment, do not include anything in your text except for the dates you will be away:
 - *I will be away from October 3-5. Gasshō*
 - *I will not be texting Nov 9-12. Gasshō*
- If you receive such a text from your buddy, please reply only “Gasshō”.

If you will be away for five days or more, please *email the program* with the dates you will be away.

- We will communicate with your buddies and arrange substitute coverage.
- Please notify the program even if your absence will be due to a Living Compassion retreat or other event.
- Advance notice is appreciated.

The Last Day of the Program

The last day of the quarter is a regular practice day with commitment texts and replies as usual. Toward the end of the day, all participants will receive an email notification that the quarter has ended.

Nothing Else

The program consists of only five types of texts:

- Describing a commitment
- Reporting whether or not a commitment was met
- Acknowledging a text with “Gasshō”
- Acknowledging non-receipt with “A text was not received. Gasshō”
- Informing buddies of an absence of four days or fewer

Please keep the privileged environment by limiting communication only to the above. Do not include questions, greetings, or emojis in your texts, nor use your name or your buddies’ names. It is not expected to include process information in your commitment texts, simply whether or not the commitment was met.

Should you receive any texts other than the above, should any other response seem necessary, or should you notice a pattern of missed texts, please email the program at commitmentsupportbuddy@livingcompassion.org for assistance.

If you have any questions about the program, emailing to seek guidance is always encouraged.

Only One Rule

In this practice we have many guidelines and only one rule:

We will use everything in our experience to see how we cause ourselves to suffer so we can drop that and end suffering.

Gasshō