

## EMPOWERMENT & SAMAYA

*Samaya* is the dirtiest of words in Vajrayana Buddhism. As we enter the path of Vajrayana, our guides occasionally let us roam blindly. They are reluctant to talk about samaya, those vows we take as part of our commitment to Secret Mantra. Some think that if they reveal the truth, students will run away. What's more, incorrect assumptions about samayas might even be brandished as weapons to threaten and intimidate students. In such ways, rather than being properly educated about this complex commitment we have taken on, we are often left uninformed.

Yet, this cannot simply be dismissed as some modern-day problem. As Tsele Natsok Rangdrol addressed it back in the 17th Century:

Obviously, the vital point of empowerment is to receive the blessings so that original wakefulness dawns in our being ... In these times, questions regarding the nature of the empowerment, the way to implement it in practical experience, and the points of the samaya commitments, etc., are left behind on the pages of books, and masters as well as disciples do as they please and what feels most enjoyable.

Nevertheless, there are samayas we need to keep, those related to empowerment, to our teacher, to the teachings, and to our dharma friends. And a clear understanding of samayas gives us a road map for our conduct, leading to our eventual realization.

So, be unapprised no more! This book, *Empowerment and Samaya*, offers detailed explanations, both traditional and in modern language, about these profound topics on many different levels. It contains comprehensive information of the manifold aspects of ritual, the various samayas, and a wealth of instructions on innumerable key points of practice, especially those relating to the paths of Mahamudra and the Great Perfection, the training in simplicity and directness.



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