

Eight Strayings from Mahamudra

Oral commentary by Ken McLeod		Lamp of Mahamudra by Tsele Natsok Rangdrol	Clarifying the Natural State by Dakpo Tashi Namgyal
STRAYING FROM THE ESSENCE Having a little experience of emptiness, regarding appearances as a problem, or just talking about emptiness.	basic straying	Clinging to emptiness.	Instead of recognizing the essential point of the training to be the indivisible unity of perception and emptiness, to disregard good and evil by thinking it is an unreal empty state in which faults and qualities are totally inconsequential.
	temporary straying	Treating emptiness as a thing rather than experiencing it.	Although one has understood the exact meaning of the essential training and is able to explain it, the temporary straying is to fail to bring it into personal experience.
STRAYING FROM THE PATH anticipating the results of practice	basic straying	Regarding the path as something outside of present experience, you want something other than what you're experiencing.	Instead of recognizing that the training is the indivisible unity of path and fruition and that this fruition is present as a natural possession, one believes the path is the training, while the fruition will be attained at another point.
	temporary straying	Doing the practice in the present isn't enough, one grasps for certain mental states rather than ordinary wakefulness.	Although one possesses the exact training, to distrust it and seek it elsewhere, hoping for something superior, or to meditate while adding something better.

Eight Strayings from Mahamudra (continued)

STRAYING FROM THE REMEDY trying to fix emotions	basic straying	Trying to fix emotions, one uses various techniques rather than just knowing the essence of emotions.	When something such as a disturbing emotion arises, not to know how to take its essence as the path and instead to meditate on some other technique.	Instead of recognizing the training as the indivisible unity of discard and remedy, and that by knowing your natural face the discard becomes its own remedy, to regard the emotion to be discarded and the training as separate, and so to use the training as a remedy against the emotion.
	temporary straying	Suppressing or blocking emotions to get rid of disturbance before meditating.	Not knowing how to take whatever arises, such as a thought, as the path, but to block off that instance, or having to destroy it before resting in meditation.	Whenever a thought moves or when encountering a difficult situation, to believe one can only be composed in meditation after the difficulty has been overcome.
STRAYING INTO GENERALIZATION dropping out of experience by conceptualizing	basic straying	Thinking about descriptions of emptiness rather than experiencing it. Using the “universal cop-out of “everything is empty” as a way of dismissing what arises.	Not understanding that the natural state of the mind-essence is primordially empty and rootless, and fabricating such thoughts as “It does not possess a self-nature!” or “It is emptiness!” or “It is just temporarily empty!”	Instead of recognizing that the training is the indivisible unity of means and knowledge and that all phenomena are the essence itself, to generalize with conceptual focus that phenomena are devoid of self-nature.
	temporary straying	Thinking about how nice your meditation is; thinking that thinking about resting is the same as resting.	Thinking, “Formerly I was distracted following after thoughts, but now I am meditating nicely!” and then remaining in the state of perpetuating that thought, or thinking you have mindfulness when you do not.	Rather than putting the training to use, to generalize by wanting to recreate a past experience, or to believe that meditation should interrupt thoughts: “I am dissatisfied with the present state. I must create a better one!”