

If you've ever been swimming in the ocean or surfing or body surfing, you know that it matters where you are in relation to the waves. There's an enormous difference between being in what is called the "surf zone," where the waves are actually breaking, and being just beyond that point, where the waves are beginning to peak. Out there, a wave of any size just passes under you, and the important thing to realize for this analogy is that it's the same wave; the only difference is in one's relationship to it. The freedom that comes with real mindfulness is never a matter of stopping the waves—of thought or emotion or experience generally; it's a matter of getting out of the surf zone, so that the next wave of anger or regret or fear just passes harmlessly beneath you.