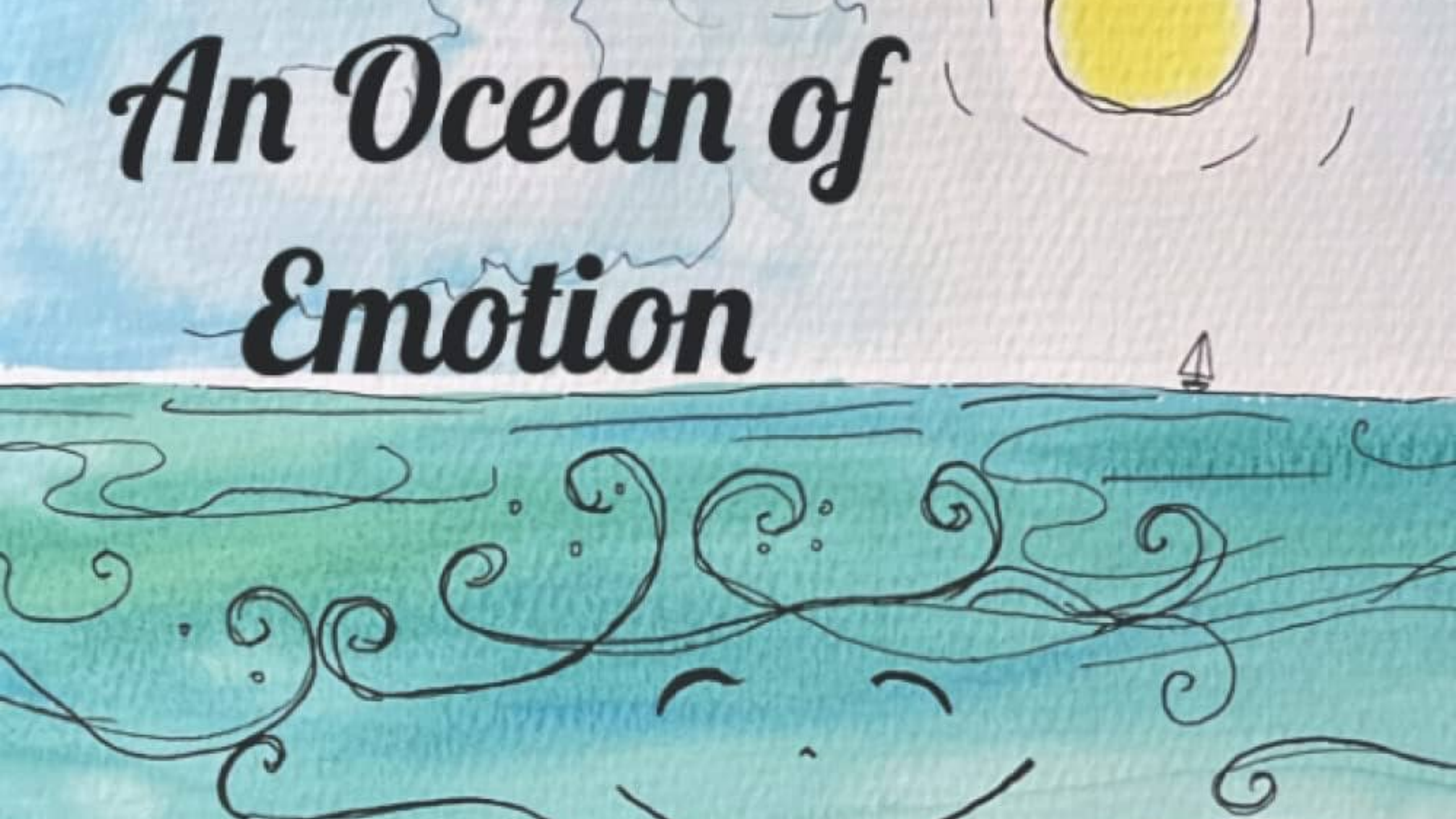


An Ocean of Emotion





- the mirror **distorts**
- I see what the mirror **reflects**

People are afflicted by “weaknesses” (KJV = infirmities). These are not overt sins, nor do they refer only to physical maladies. They are often mental, emotional, moral flaws (“thin ice”).

• *ignorance* • *mental illness* • *emotional feelings of worthlessness, loneliness, loss, inferiority, etc.*

Therefore, folks say and do things that are not motivated by their heart or true identity.

(This dilemma is discussed by Paul the apostle, *Romans 7*)

Words/Deeds are not always a reliable indicator of the heart.

A “forgiving” attitude sees to **keep this in mind** and does not automatically jump to the conclusion that harsh words/deeds come from an evil/destructive motive.

Keep in mind that believers are God's children (regardless of stupid actions or hurtful words).

- How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called the children of God. And that is what we are!... Dear friends, right now we are children of God..." (1 Jn. 3:1-2).

Keep in mind that unbelievers are ignorant of God's expectations and devoid of God's Spirit.

- Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

(Lk. 23:34)

- a) Forgiveness is the choice to set aside negative **emotions**.
- b) I do this by setting aside the **action**.
(into God's hands)
- c) I am then open to the possibilities of a restored **relationship**.

If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven. If you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven. (*Jn. 20:23*)

- The future effect upon you of past sins against you is a matter up to you!

THEOLOGY

1. **Gospel!** Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more. And where these have been forgiven, there is no longer any sacrifice for sin! (*Heb. 10:18*)

THEOLOGY

2. **God's initiative!** (the victim)

When we were still powerless...
while we were still sinners,
Christ died for us. (*Rom. 5:6-8*)

This **pattern** places upon every Christian the **mandate** of seeking, advocating, and pursuing forgiveness (reconciliation) in all ways possible.

- Be kind and merciful, and forgive each other, just as God forgave you because of Christ. (*Eph. 4:32*)