Many a times the main problem with psychiatric symptoms is the patient does not recognise that his symptoms are due to psychiatric problems. Once the condition is accepted, it is easy for the specialist to discuss the line of treatment needed to help his patient.

Arjuna, though a strong warrior and a great leader in his own right has realised that there is something wrong with him. Knowing that his problem is depression due to ignorance of the right action in the present battle he was facing, he was feeling sorry for the teachers, elders and family members who were there ready to face death.

The words “teach what is good for me” is extremely important. It is therefore important to note that the sacred text is aimed at helping those who are trained in a particular field of work, achieved competency but unable to continue the work they are trained into. One can realise how much the resources that are put in to train the individual would go into waste. Gita is the manual and guide for men of rajasic temperament who are men of passion and want to achieve something higher in life.

In the case of Arjuna, it was the feeling of “pity” that stopped him from facing the elders in the battle.

The word “karpanya” means “pity”. According to the Upanisads, if we do not strive for spiritual enlightenment, we are bound, like Arjuna, to grieve when we come across problems in our lives. We will become Krpanas.

The other word to note in this sloka is “Sreyas.” Arjuna requests for guidance to help him in the journey of life. There are two words to note in this context. One is “sreyas” and the other is “preyas.”

Sreyas is what is good for the spiritual enlightenment.
Preyas is what is good for the life in the physical world.

Sadhaka should be looking for sreyas rather than preyas.

Arjuna, a true sadhaka is asking for “sreyas.” Not only that, he has come to accept that he is ignorant of the scriptures and needs guidance. Further, he has decided to take refuge in the Lord Himself to clear his ignorance.

The sadhaka needs a guru for guidance. As we go through the Gita we will find slokas that give the qualities to look for the guru and the qualities needed to be accepted by the guru. The Vedas clearly advocate total surrender to the guru by the disciple striving for moksha. Arjuna has fulfilled all the criteria for a true and sincere disciple and hence he was blessed by the Lord who took upon Himself the task of giving the guidance.

Our salutations to Arjuna.