**12th October, 2021**

**To The Division of Psychology and Language Science, University College London**

**Re: Research Fellow Position**

**Dear Committee members,**

I am writing to apply for the Research Fellow position within the research project led by Professors Essi Viding and Pasco Fearon, and respectfully request your consideration of the following, as well as my *curriculum vitae* and the attached documents*.*

I am currently a researcher and lecturer in the Department of Social Work at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, where I teach various modules in bachelor’s and master’s programmes, including courses covering methods in social work practice and mental health in children, adolescents and families at risk.Given its paramount importance as a public health issue, mental health in adolescents has long been one of the research fields about which I am passionate. I hope my research and clinical experience, as well as my work with children and adolescents, can contribute to the challenge of developing novel preventative approaches and innovative methods for assisting young people facing challenges in forming and maintaining healthy social relationships, particularly in educational settings.

With bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees in social work from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, specialising in children and the family, I have extensive research and clinical experience. My field of research – risk and protective factors relating to violence and anti-social behaviours among adolescents, and the consequences for the youth’s social and psychological well-being – is well-aligned with the focus of your research project.

Furthermore, I have a practical background in social work, having worked with children and adolescents recovering from trauma. My clinical work has included cognitive-behavioral therapy and play therapy, which inspired the two books for children I published, representing the inner emotional world of children with special needs. This practical experience as a clinical social worker has accorded me a unique perspective, enabling me to conceive and design realistic proposals for helping adolescents in the field of mental health.

I have also served as a visiting researcher at the Centre for Evidence-Based Intervention (CEBI), in the University of Oxford’s Department of Social Policy and Intervention, where I was part of an interdisciplinary team evaluating the effectiveness of the Parenting for Lifelong Health programme to prevent child abuse and maltreatment among families in low and medium income countries, mainly in Africa. This experience not only demonstrates my ability to work successfully as part of an interdisciplinary team, but also resulted in a paper with important theoretical and practical findings that was published in *BMC Public Health* (see attached). Furthermore, I was involved in an innovative research project investigating the development and feasibility of a free evidence-based parenting app targeting child abuse and maltreatment in Africa.

My strong record of published peer-reviewed papers demonstrates that I can make a significant contribution to the project in the areas of data analysis and scientific writing. Although I lack experience with social network analyses, I am adept in learning new methods and look forward to developing this experience and learning further. I believe that provides me with the background and skills that can make a unique contribution to your work.

I believe that my extensive experience and wide-ranging knowledge in the field of mental health in children and adolescents, the age groups under study in this project, as well as the skills I have developed in my academic career, notably in evaluating interventions for vulnerable groups, qualify me to play a meaningful role in your research project, carrying out research with adolescents, and supporting public engagement activities.

As a clinical social worker and a young scholar, joining your research project would be an exceptional opportunity to apply my combination of research and scholarly knowledge and practical, clinical skills to help advance this vital project on an area of growing social concern so close to my own research, professional experience and goals of promoting mental health during adolescence. Joining the research project would make a great contribution to my research career by sharpening my skills in the field of adolescent mental health and broadening my knowledge in the field of prevention science.

Clearly, research can prove empowering, strengthening the ability of society’s most vulnerable groups to make their voices not only heard but effectual. I am eager to participate in the work of your research project and apply my knowledge, high-level research and scholarly skills while pursuing my passions in an interdisciplinary, collaborative and intellectual environment with colleagues who share my interests and goals.

Joining this important project would empower me even further to help children thrive, by designing and implementing effective approaches to psychosocial problems, and would translate my knowledge into positive social change.

Thank you for considering my application, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

**Sincerely,**

**Adeem Massarwi, PhD**

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