



## MEET OUR AMBASSADORS



### **Amit Bernstein, PhD**

Professor

Director, [Observing Minds Lab](#)

Director, [Moments of Refuge Project](#)

School of Psychological Sciences,  
Faculty of Social Sciences

**Field of Research:** Clinical Psychological Science, Contemplative Science, Refugee Mental Health and Human Rights

### **SHORT BIO**

Born in Israel, I grew up in the US where I received a BA in psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a PhD in clinical psychology at the University of Vermont, clinical internship training at the Palo Alto VA, and postdoctoral research training at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University School of Medicine and the Palo Alto VA Center for Health Care Evaluation. In 2008, I returned to Israel to join the School of Psychological Sciences at the University of Haifa, where I am now a Full Professor and Director of the Observing Minds Lab and the Moments of Refuge Project. At the university, my students and I work to deepen scientific insight into mental health through the study of mindfulness, compassion and internally-directed cognition. Within refugee communities, I direct an ambulatory research and social impact laboratory dedicated to the mental health and human rights of forcibly displaced people. Our university and community-embedded research led to the Moments of Refuge Project – a global science-based social impact initiative, using mindfulness and compassion training, to empower forcibly displaced people to cultivate moments of refuge and thereby resilience and recovery. I am fortunate that my group's work has been recognized by the Israel Council of Higher Education Yigal Alon Fellowship, an EU Marie Curie Reintegration award, a Mind and Life Institute Research Fellowship, the Israel Young Academy of the Israel National Academy of Sciences and Humanities, and supported by a range of national and international scientific funding agencies and foundations.

### **FUNDRAISING NEEDS**

Today, more than 100 million people are forcibly displaced from their homes by violent conflict, persecution, and natural disaster linked to climate change. Forced displacement is a fast-growing global human rights and mental health crisis. Our capacity to help heal and prevent the generational and inter-generational trauma, stress and injustice of forced displacement demands critical investment and development. **We are therefore seeking partners who identify with the mission of *Moments of Refuge* to protect and promote the mental health and human rights of forcibly displaced people through rigorous, ambitious and compassionate science. We are working to raise an initial \$1.5 million investment to globally scale-up *Moments of Refuge*, through which we will be able to bring moments of refuge, healing, and restorative social justice to tens of thousands forcibly displaced people, their families and communities around the world.**