

SUBTLE



ASIAN

HEALING

Trauma and Types of Trauma

Trauma can come in many different forms and affect everyone differently. Trauma manifests itself in many individuals in ways that can be subtle, or destructive.

Trauma can particularly arise from stressful events. Any event or series of event or circumstances that an individual may have experienced that is either: physically or emotionally harmful, life threatening, or have lasting adverse effects on the physical, social, emotional, or mental well-being can be a sign of trauma.

Trauma can stem from a variety of events that can be one-time, multiple, or long-lasting repetitive events. Examples of traumatic events can be one-time events like accidents or experiencing a violent attack or ongoing events like living in an impoverished neighborhood. Even the current pandemic can be considered a traumatic event.

It's also important to note that different fields of trauma do exist.

Acute trauma or any acute traumatic event are described to be single or short-term traumatic events like a car accident, or the sudden death of a loved one.

Chronic trauma is ongoing or long-term traumatic events. Examples of such traumatic events can be systemic racism that people of color face, repeated bullying or living with a chronic illness.

Complex trauma tend to be multiple, severe, frequent traumatic events that are often present in early childhood. The traumatic events associated with complex trauma are usually interpersonal and tend to have long-term effects on an individual. An example of complex traumatic events could be multiple instances of sexual, physical, or emotional abuse in early childhood.

Intergenerational or historical trauma is another type of trauma. Traumatic events that fall under this category could be trauma experienced by a group that is linked by a common cultural, racial or ethnic identity. The trauma faced by one generation of that group can then be passed onto future generations

How Trauma affects the Asian American Community

While many types of trauma can occur to a wide variety of people, Asian Americans most often suffer from intergenerational or historical trauma.

This trauma is described to be a type of trauma that a population of people who usually share a common identity such as race, ethnicity, and/ or religion collectively experience and end up passing on to their descendants. (Evans-Campbell, 2008) Intergenerational trauma tends to be related to major events like war or famine that had a hand in oppressing a particular group of people.

In fact, many Asian immigrants that have come from the US from parts of the world like Southeast Asia tend to be descendants or are refugees that have fled from tyrannical or oppressive regimes. Examples of this can be how younger generations in Vietnamese Americans communities can still be affected by the events of Boat People fleeing from regimes like the Viet Cong in the 70's.

Colonialism, western imperialism are also long-lasting historical events that continue to affect Asian Americans today. Poor body image, imposter syndrome, substance use, anxiety, as well as depression can be other mental health issues that can arise from intergenerational trauma.

A common experience within younger Asian Americans is the pressure of being successful--whether in school or in their careers-- is another way intergenerational trauma manifests itself in day to day experiences.

barriers to help : why Asian Americans refuse to get help for mental health

Just like any other racial group in the US, Asian Americans also experience issues with mental health. However, it is very common for Asian Americans to not seek out resources that can help them with mental health.

This is because Asian Americans face many barriers (either overt or covert) in accessing resources for help when it comes to mental health. One main barrier is language barrier.

The APA commission of Ethnic Minority asserts this idea as they had reported that 1 in 2 Asian American will not be able to seek help for their mental health issues due to language barriers.

Another barrier that prevents Asian Americans seeking help would be the huge cultural stigma that many, albeit, older Asian members in Asian American communities have.

Many Asian Americans are affected by the negative stigma surrounding mental health. Younger Asian Americans often feel the need to hide their mental health issues as they know the shame and embarrassment associated with admitting the need for help with mental health issues.

Other examples of cultural stigmas within the Asian American community is believing or having concerns that getting help or admitting that you have mental health issues is a sign of weakness, as most younger Asian Americans believe that their parents (who are often immigrants) have gone through much worse and therefore should not complain.

Sleep & Discrimination

Discrimination is the act of differentiating one thing from another. However, in social context, it is the act of unfairly treating people based on their race, religion, gender, sexuality, and/or (dis)ability.

The act of discrimination labels groups of people as “others”, which are typically people of color. While many people believe that we live in a “post-racial” world, this issue has not gone away, as pointed out by John S. W. Park in his essay “Discrimination” for *Keywords for Asian American Studies*.

Park also writes about how this issue has been prominent for Asians in America since the arrival of Chinese immigrants in the 1800s, the constantly denied attempts for citizenship throughout the late 1800s and early 1900s, to the civil rights movements of the 1960s.

The year 2020 has seen the many faces of discrimination, from police brutality to the increasing cases of xenophobic attacks on Asians during the pandemic. Unfortunately, these attacks have taken a traumatic toll on the people who have experienced them or are more likely to experience them.

Sleep & Discrimination

Tiffany Yip, PhD, is a psychology professor at Fordham University, who bases her research on ethnic identity, discrimination, and sleep. Yip has noted a relationship between adolescents who have experienced acts of discrimination and their psychological, physiological, and academic performances.

In her most recent study, Yip and her colleagues looked into the relationship between discrimination stress and sleep patterns. They hypothesized that when adolescents experienced discrimination stress, they would also report more sleep disturbance and higher levels of sleepiness and daytime dysfunction (Yip 2020). Every year over the course of four years, participants (adolescents) did daily reports over a two week period on discrimination stress and sleep patterns.



Yip and her colleagues found that discrimination and sleep disturbance were associated with higher levels of anxious mood (Yip 2020). Additionally, they found an association between discrimination and daytime function with higher levels of negative and anxious mood and depressive symptoms (Yip 2020). Overall, the results were consistent with their hypothesis, as they noted “the more negative impact discrimination stress had on sleep, the more psychological health was compromised over a six-month period” (Yip 2020). Another impactful result Yip observed was that adolescents who were still exploring their ethnic/racial identity experienced a negative impact on sleep in the face of discrimination. However, while discrimination negatively impacted sleep, Yip found that a good night’s sleep was associated with combating against the negative effects of discrimination stress.

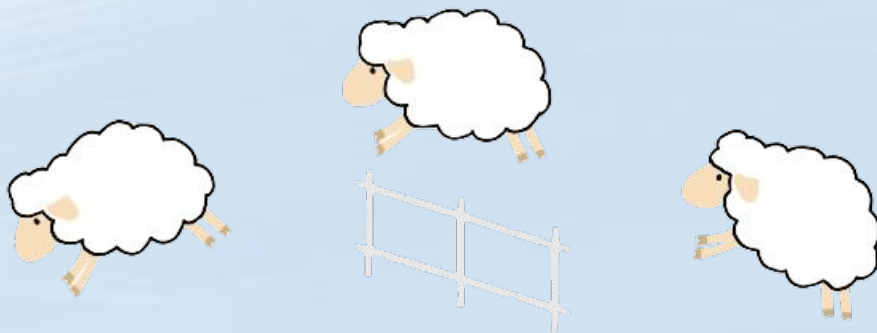
Sleep & discrimination

While experiencing acts of discrimination can be traumatizing, there are many ways to alleviate this pattern of sleep disturbance. However, it is important to note that not all people experience and perceive discrimination the same.

Nonetheless, Yip notes that sleep interventions would be the best route to take. Along with sleep interventions, it is important to have a sense of social support and community.

Especially for the individuals who are still exploring their ethnic/racial identity, having a good social support system can help combat against sleep disturbances.

Social support has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, all which contribute to patterns of sleep disturbances.



cultural patterns of illness

somatization

The term itself refers to the production of recurrent and multiple medical symptoms with no discernible organic cause. Many often even identify it as a conversion of a mental state such as depression or anxiety, into physical symptoms.

Studies have shown a long-reported relationship between culture and psychopathology tendencies of Asians that present primarily somatic symptoms when in distress (29, 30).

The tendency of Asian psychiatric patients to focus on physical discomfort while ignoring or suppressing the reporting of emotional symptoms has been a challenge for many clinicians who work with the population.

A series of studies conducted by Cheung (32,33) in Hong Kong further supported this explanation. She found that although patients typically focused on their somatic complaints when visiting a physician, they were often fully aware of their emotional problems as well as stresses derived from social relationships that might be related to their emotional as well as somatic symptoms.

One fundamental issue that might be at the crux of the matter is the relationship between the body and the mind.

In view of the belief in the unity of body and mind, it is also crucial for clinicians to not focus predominantly on the psychological side of the patient's suffering, but to present a formulation compatible with the patient's cultural orientations.



cultural patterns of illness

culture - bound syndrome



The discrepancy between Chinese and American psychiatrists in the use of "neurasthenia" ("shenjing shuairuo" in Mandarin Chinese). It is a diagnostic term that has been the subject of a major international debate for the last two decades.

Neurasthenia was popular as a disease concept in North America and Europe during the late 19th and early 20th century, but it gradually lost its currency and is now an obsolete concept among contemporary Western physicians.

Paradoxically, after the concept was transplanted to China and other parts of Asia around the turn of the century, it quickly began to spread (41,42).

There is documented evidence in Japan and China that physicians collude with patients with schizophrenia and their families in using the term neurasthenia to minimize stigma (44).

These reports led to serious doubts about the validity of the concept of neurasthenia as used in China. In 1982 Kleinman (45) reported that 87 percent of patients diagnosed by Chinese psychiatrists as having neurasthenia could be reclassified as having major depression according to *DSM-III* criteria.

Korean and Korean American patients suffering from similar mixtures of a wide variety of somatic and emotional symptoms often label themselves as suffering from "hwa-byung," which means both "fire disease" and "anger disease" (48).

Hwa-byung is another example of how Asians conceptualize the body-mind relationship. Although the concept denotes the existence of chronic social stress as well as emotional responses, most patients with hwa-byung believe that their problems are primarily physical.

Due to a lack of precise correspondence both hwa-byung and neurasthenia (shenjing shuairuo) were placed in appendix I (51), as examples of culture-bound syndromes.

resources

mental health resource centers

People of Asian American descent fall under a variety of different communities and cultural backgrounds. Below are some resources that are specifically targeted for Asian Americans




Community College Student Mental Health Program's Guide to Supporting Students from Diverse and Ethnic Backgrounds

<http://cccstudentmentalhealth.org/docs/SMHP-Diverse-Racial-Ethnic-Students.pdf>



Filipino Mental Health Resource Center:

<https://www.pvfaa.com/resourcecenter.htm>



Student Mental Health Program Guide to Culturally Responsive Services for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Student Success Guide

<http://cccstudentmentalhealth.org/docs/CCCSMHP-AAPI-StudentSuccess.pdf>

resources

Crisis & emergency hotlines

If you are experiencing suicidal ideation, concerned for a friend, or having an emotional crisis in an immediate situation here are some resources/ emergency hotlines that you can turn to:

- Suicide Prevention Line: [\(800\)- 273-8255](tel:800-273-8255)
- Teen Line (Riverside County):
[\(800\)-852-8336](tel:800-852-8336) (open from 6-10 pm)
- HELPLine (24 hrs crisis/ suicide): [\(951\)-686-4357](tel:951-686-4357)
- Riverside: CARES Line (Referral & Support Line): [\(800\)-706-7500](tel:800-706-7500)
- Riverside: SU CARES Line (Substance Use Referral & Support): [\(800\)-499-3008](tel:800-499-3008)

resources

Substance abuse

Substance abuse is another mental health issue that many Asian Americans have a hard time with. Below you will find resources targeted in helping Asian Americans with substance use.

○ NAPAfasa: National Asian Pacific American Families Against Substance Abuse Fact Sheet:

<http://www.aapcho.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Multiracial-AAPI-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

○ Americans Addiction Centers: *Alcohol and Drug Abuse Among Asian Americans*

<https://americanaddictioncenters.org/rehab-guide/addiction-statistics/asian-americans>

○ Alcoholics Anonymous Los Angeles:

<https://lacoaa.org/meetings.php>

resources

SHIELDS for families:

<https://www.shieldsforfamilies.org/youth-substance-abuse-treatment/>

Al-Anon/ Al-Teens:

<https://al-anon.org/>

Self-Management and Recovery training (SMART):

<https://www.smartrecovery.org/>

self care

Self care is a deliberate act of taking care of yourself. These acts are meant to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety overall improve your wellbeing. While experts can't agree on how many types of self care there are, the main six are: physical, emotional, social, mental, spiritual, and practical.

It is important to note that self care isn't the same for everyone. Finding your self care routine can be a lengthy process, but it is well worth it. It might take a few trials and errors to find what is right for you. After doing so, the rewards are unrivaled. Being college students, we often find ourselves in high-stress situations. Whether it be for a final exam or a job interview, knowing how to deal with anxiety efficiently is important. The good habits you build today will help you for the future.

Some people believe that self care may be selfish, but it is actually the exact opposite. Like putting on an oxygen mask in an airplane, it is more important to help yourself before you can help others.

self care



PHYSICAL

☆ Working out

Whether it is a 30 minute HIIT session or an hour walk in the park, it is important to keep your body moving and healthy. While exercising has its physical benefits, it also has psychological benefits. When you work out, your brain produces endorphins leaving you feeling good after a good session.

☆ Eat!

You shouldn't feel guilty for indulging in some food, especially because you need it to take care of yourself. . Nourish your body with something fulfilling. Check out our recipe pages for something new to try!

EMOTIONAL

☆ Therapy

There is nothing wrong with seeking professional help. An important note when looking into therapy, is to find a therapist that best suits you. It may take a few tries, but you'll know when you find the right person. If you are seeking help, please refer to our resource page for more information.

☆ Talking

This can be through another person as well, such as a loved one. Talking through how you are feeling can clear your mind.



self care



MENTAL

☆ Engage in hobbies

Partake in an activity that you enjoy doing, whether it be sitting down and reading a book, painting, or knitting. Challenge yourself and get experimental. Maybe try a whole new hobby all together! Taking breathing breaks go a long way.

☆ Train your brain

This can also include mental exercises like crossword puzzles or sudoku. Additionally, drawing and writing both fall into a category similar to this. Just find whatever works for you.

SOCIAL

☆ Schedule a hang out with friends

While it may be a little difficult to see your friends face-to-face in the middle of a pandemic, schedule a virtual hang out. It is important to maintain these relationships in these hard times.

☆ Social Breaks

Sometimes not being social can be the best for you. Knowing when you need to take a break and recharge our social battery can prevent you from burn outs. Cancel those plans, and make plans with yourself.



self care



SPIRITUAL

☆ Meditate

Take some time out of your day, even if it's just 5 minutes, to sit down and be present with yourself. Reflect on your day, week, or month and find something to be grateful for and another thing to be happy about.

☆ Affirmations

Make small notes to yourself about the positive things about you. Remind yourself that you are strong, beautiful, and are capable of anything.

PRACTICAL

☆ Make a list

Sometimes things become a little less stressful when we are able to visualize it. Making a list of things you need to do can help you organize your thoughts and make things seem a little less daunting. It is even more satisfying when you are able to cross things off our list!

☆ Healthy Habits

No matter how big or small, incorporating healthy habits into your day can help you feel motivated to do more. Centralize your habits around improving yourself and your well-being.



self care

These were some ways that you can engage in self care. However, for us at the Dream Team Productions, our favorite way to engage in self care is to cook and eat. Here we have provided our favorite comfort food recipes from our respective cultures.

Eating is a form of physical self care because it is a way for you to nourish your body. It can also come in a form of spiritual self care, as everyone knows, comfort food heals the soul.

Even if you aren't too particularly skilled in cooking, cooking is a form of mental self care, especially if you are trying something new. Challenge yourself to cook something new or get experimental!

Happy cooking (and eating)!



Papdi Chaat

INGREDIENTS

For Papdi Dough:

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup ghee
- 1 teaspoon onion seeds
- 1 teaspoon Kosher salt
- About 1/3 cup water
- Vegetable oil, canola, or sunflower oil (for frying)

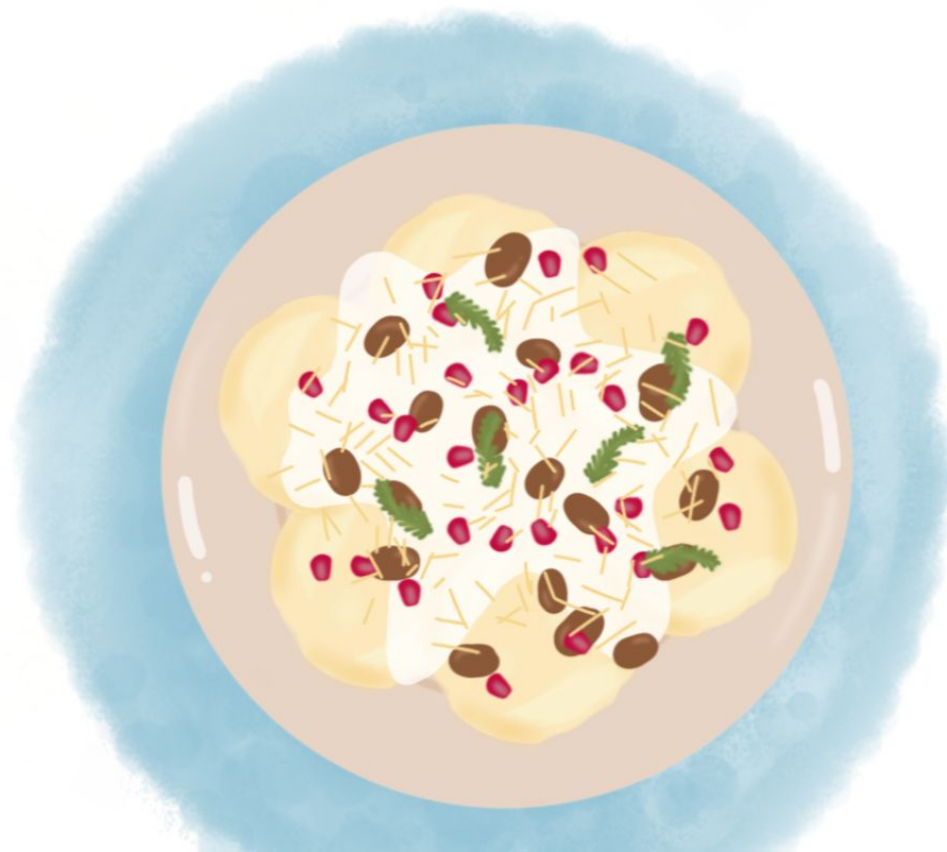
For Assembly and Serving:

- 2 cups fresh yogurt (whisked until smooth)
- 2 red onions (finely chopped)
- 2 large tomatoes (finely chopped)
- 1 cup tamarind chutney
- 1 cup mint-coriander chutney
- 2 cups fine sev or gram flour
- 2 teaspoons red chili powder
- 2 tablespoons cumin seeds (gently roasted and ground)
- 3 teaspoons powdered black rock salt
- Garnish: 1/4 cup fresh coriander leaves (finely chopped)

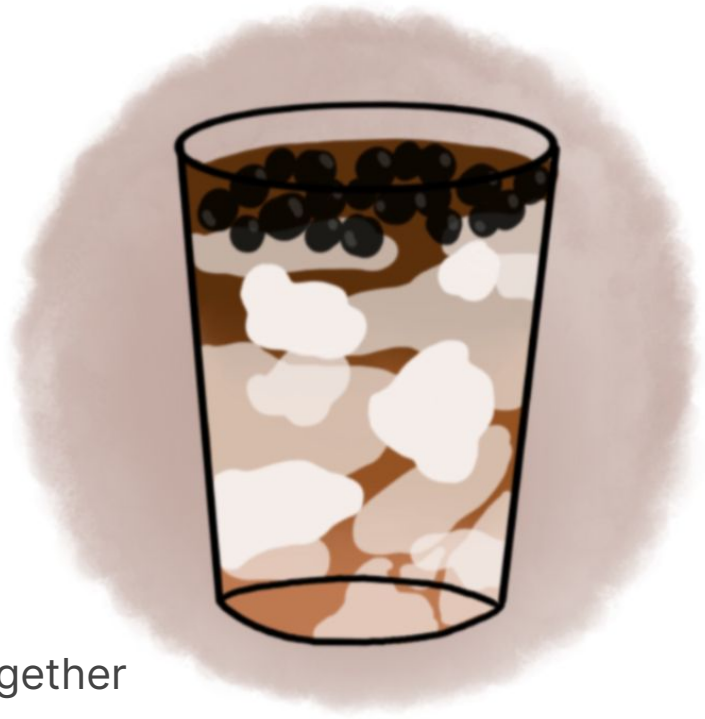
WHY THIS

Sense of Home:

My mom always made this from scratch. It takes a long time to make, but the end result is worthwhile. The process and anticipation always made me feel more comfortable, knowing that it would be tasty at the end-result. This was something I always looked forward to whenever a big family event was coming up.



Taho



INGREDIENTS

For Brown Sugar Syrup:

- 1 Cup Brown Sugar
- 1 Cup Water
- 1 tsp vanilla or 2 pandan strings tied together (optional)

For Taho

- 2 cups unsweetened soy milk
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 2 tsp unflavored gelatin powder
- Cooked tapioca pearls

WHY THIS

Taho & Its Connection to Early Childhood

Drinking Taho is one of my earliest memories of my early childhood in the Philippines. Taho is my favorite go-to comfort food as I've become to associate the dessert as a symbol of my Filipino identity and of my own immigration journey from the Philippines to the US as a young child. Taho was one of the last things I remember drinking before boarding to a new life in the US. To me, Taho will always be a symbol of family and home.

PROCEDURE

To make the Taho (Soy Bean Pudding)

- In a medium pan, combine corn starch and gelatin powder. Add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of soy milk after.
- Place mix on heat and stir. Wait until gelatin and corn starch are dissolved.
- Add the rest of soymilk and let it boil. After, remove from pan and transfer mix to bowl. Cover with a towel and let it cool. Once it cools, place in the fridge overnight.

To make the Brown Sugar Syrup

- Using a small pot, add brown sugar and let the brown sugar caramelize. Stir occasionally.
- Add water. Let the water boil until the sugars are fully dissolved.

To prepare Taho

- Fill cup w/ Taho (Soybean Pudding)
- Add hot brown sugar syrup

Champorado

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup Jasmine Rice (or Rolled Oats if you are looking for something healthier)
- 2 cups Water
- 1 Tbsp Cocoa Powder
- 1 Tbsp Sugar
- Your choice of milk
 - Evaporated Milk for traditional

PROCEDURE

1. Wash your rice.
2. In a medium pan, add the water and bring to a boil. Once boiled add your rice or oats. Reduce heat to medium low and let cook until the rice/oats expands, stirring occasionally.
 - a. If using oats, cook to the directions on the bag.
3. Add sugar and cocoa powder. You can adjust the sugar/chocolate level to your preference.
4. Let cook until the water reduces and you have a thick, pudding-like consistency.
5. Ladle into a bowl, swirl your choice of milk (evaporated milk preferred) on top, and serve hot. Enjoy!

WHY THIS

Lola (Grandma)

Growing up, my Lola would take care of my brothers and I when our parents were at work. When we would come home from school, she always had a snack waiting for us when we walked through the door. More often than not, she always made our favorite, Champorado. However, these occurrences became less frequent as we got older and Lola became sicker. On days when we would have to visit Lola at the hospital, my mom always had a batch of Champorado ready for us to eat in the morning. Even though my Lola isn't here with us anymore, I always feel her presence whenever I indulge myself with a bowl of Champorado.





Chè Thái

INGREDIENTS

- “Red Rubies”
- Coconut Jelly
- Grass Jelly
- Coconut milk
- Coconut meat

Canned Fruits

- Lychee
- Jackfruit
- Longan

PROCEDURE

1. Take out all of your canned fruit and save the syrup from your favorite canned fruit.
2. Cut fruit into thin slices.
3. Mix the coconut milk and fruit syrup. Adjust amounts of each to your own taste.
4. Add in the sliced fruit and refrigerate!

WHY THIS

This Vietnamese fruit cocktail has been a favorite dessert of mine since childhood. It brings back memories of relaxing and spending time with my grandma, who is well known for her sweet desserts. Anytime I want to destress and take my mind off my worries, I make myself a cup of ché thái and reminisce on the times I have spent as a kid making and eating this with my grandma.

Bibimbap

Ingredients

- ½ English cucumber, thinly sliced
- ½ teaspoon rice vinegar
- 1¼ teaspoons sesame oil, divided
- 1 cup fresh mung bean sprouts
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 4 cups baby spinach
- ½ teaspoon tamari
- 2 cups cooked short-grain white rice
- 2 fried eggs, or 1 cup cubed baked tofu
- 4 ounces sautéed shiitake mushrooms, optional
- 1 recipe Gochujang sauce
- Sesame seeds
- Sea salt
- Kimchi, optional, for serving
- Chopped scallions, optional, for serving

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, toss the cucumber slices with ½ teaspoon rice vinegar, ¼ teaspoon sesame oil and a pinch of salt. Set aside.
2. Bring a small pot of water to a boil. Drop in the bean sprouts and cook for 1 minute. Drain and set aside.
3. Heat ½ teaspoon sesame oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the carrots and a pinch of salt. Cook, stirring for 1 to 2 minutes until a little bit soft, and then remove from the pan and set aside. Heat ½ teaspoon more sesame oil in the skillet and add the spinach and tamari. Cook, tossing, for 30 seconds or until just wilted. Remove from the skillet and gently squeeze out any excess water from the spinach.
4. Assemble the bowls with the rice, cucumber slices, bean sprouts, carrots, and spinach. Top with a fried egg or baked tofu. Add the mushrooms, if using. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and drizzle generously with the gochujang sauce. Serve with kimchi and scallions, if desired, and the remaining gochujang sauce on the side.

Why This

Feeling of Relaxation and Accomplishment:

Bibimbap is a dish that is not only delicious and full of great balance and proteins, but it is also one that takes little to no time to prepare. As a university student, long days of studying and assignments, along with volunteer activities and work can often feel overwhelming.

After a long day, coming back to my apartment and preparing a delicious bowl of Bibimbap takes my mind off all the work and worries that I had throughout my day. It makes me appreciate the simple accomplishments that I do, such as preparing a great meal to help me power through the rest of the workload that my night holds.



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The Dream Team

