

# Asian Americans and the Myth of the Model Minority: Deconstructing and Decolonizing

*Asian American (n): having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam (Census Bureau)*

What is the Model Minority Myth?	What the Model Minority Myth is NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A stereotype that ignores and obscures the racism and discrimination that Asian Americans face but also the wide diversity among Asian Americans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Representative of all Asian ethnic groups “succeeding” as immigrants in health, wealth, nor wellness</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ An idea created to maintain the idea of white supremacy to keep People of Color from collectively organizing</li> </ul>	

## Considerations for culturally sensitive practitioners:

- Integrate culturally-based strategies for working with people of AAPI diaspora
- Acknowledge experience of racism and microaggressions
- Determine client/patient’s readiness and motivation for change
- Discuss immigration and generational issues
- Discuss coping strategies and promote help-seeking behaviors
- Address gender roles in family and community
- Ask about traditional beliefs as part of cultural formation
- Refer to/utilize support groups
- Remember that many Asian immigrants view practitioners and government workers as an authority figure
- Consider traditional interventions as part of treatment plan
- Emphasize importance of screening, early detection, and medication adherence
- Become familiar with race-conscious practices and consider ethnic and ancestry differences
- Be attentive to co-morbid problems, and that often mental health is understood through a somatic lens
- If you believe there to be a language barrier, put everything in writing so they can refer back to on their own either by themselves or with a trusted loved one who is more fluent in English