

## Mancy Tong



"I was born in Hong Kong, but my family moved to Auckland when I was 9. My journey to Yale began within the week of my thesis submission in 2017, I packed up everything, came over to America & started my new life. What an amazing journey it has been so far!

My first year here was super busy with establishing protocols in the lab & getting used to the American culture. I often felt like I was missing out on a lot from home. I grew up in a small family; it was just my parents & my younger brother-though I always thought of him more like an older brother. Whenever I called my family they'd give updates, but I still felt like I had no idea what was happening & I hated it. So my brother & I started setting times to call & check in. Some of my friends laugh at me about this but it has really helped us stay in touch, even with the crazy 16 hour time difference. I used to get so homesick whenever I traveled, but with social media & WeChat, it's so much easier to stay in touch these days.

I felt very much at home in New Zealand; my parents took care of everything for me. But when you go to a new country, you need to start a new life & re-build all your social circles. Since I had spent my whole life in New Zealand-at the same institute for all my university studies & the same lab for my PhD- I was always in an environment where I knew who I could go to for what. Here, I quickly realized that I was in a very small lab & everyone had their own life outside of it. I was also the only postdoc & international trainee.

I always thought of myself as quite an introverted & a shy person, but once you no longer have people you can go to immediately, I discovered I was stronger & more social than I ever realized. I started going to events & happy

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hours organized by the YPA & OISS to meet new people & make friends. My circles quickly expanded & I connected with many other like-minded people at Yale. I'm so glad I noticed this need early on & took action to remedy the situation. It was challenging at first, but now I love my new home & my new friends. - Mancy Tong, Postdoctoral Associate #HumansofOISS

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BwKCDgOBUAo/> [1]

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[1] <https://www.instagram.com/p/BwKCDgOBUAo/>