Udon Noodle Soup

1. MAKE THE BROTH
   - Chop the following vegetables into small pieces:
     - 3 CARROTS
     - 2 LEAVES NAPA CABBAGE
     - 1 SMALL LEEK
     - 4 SCALLIONS
     - 3 CLOVES GARLIC
     - ½ INCH GINGER
     - 4 WHOLE DRIED SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS
   - Combine the chopped vegetables and 10 CUPS WATER in a medium pot. Heat over high heat to bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to simmer for 15 to 20 minutes.
   - Add 4 2-INCH PIECES KOMBU. Keep at a bare simmer for 5 minutes.
   - Strain out the vegetables and kombu. Save the mushrooms to slice as a topping.
   - Stir in:
     - ¼ CUP PLUS 2 TABLESPOONS SOY SAUCE
     - 2 TABLESPOONS PLUS 1 TEASPOON MIRIN
   - Taste and adjust seasonings.

2. COOK THE NOODLES
   - In a large pot of boiling water, cook 20 OZ. FRESH UDON NOODLES for about 3 minutes, or until done. (or 8 oz. dried udon noodles or spaghetti)

3. PREPARE THE TOPPINGS
   - Slice or julienne SCALLIONS, CARROTS, SUGAR SNAP PEAS, or other vegetables.
   - Roast, sauté, or fry BROCCOLI or other vegetables.
   - Soft-boil EGGS, marinate TOFU, or prepare any other topping you would like.

4. PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND ENJOY!