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### Section I: Day-to-Day work

1. What issue has been persistent/hard to resolve in your area of expertise?
  - a. Answer: I study the behavioral pharmacology of mu opioid receptor (MOR) agonists, and all researchers in this area, present and past, have spent their careers wrestling with the intrinsic link between the powerful therapeutic effects of MOR agonists as analgesics and their equally robust addiction potential. For researchers like me who work with chemists to identify novel MOR agonists with less addiction potential, the persistent challenge (and holy grail of the field) is uncoupling the analgesic mechanisms of MOR agonists from their addiction-related effects.
2. What is a rising issue in your area of expertise?
3. Where/how do you get your inspiration for your next project?
  - a. Answer: My collaborations with medicinal chemists have been a large driver of ideas. As a behavioral pharmacologist, it is always fascinating to observe the effects of cutting-edge compounds through the lens of whole-organism behavior, and imagining new ways to apply the compounds to new problems grows naturally from that process.
4. What are your publishing goals and how do you achieve them?

### Section II: Long-term career

1. In the short-term, we all want to get grants and publish papers, but what do you/did you consider as your long-term career goals? (e.g., tenure, editor positions, directorship positions?)
  - a. Answer: I believe we all hope that we'll stumble upon at least one finding that charts a new course that ends with meaningful reductions in suffering for people with substance use disorders. That remains a primary goal for me, but an equally important goal (and one that is arguably more tangible) is training the next generation of scientists. I have discovered a deep sense of fulfillment from seeing the success of my trainees. The effort we put into training today pays big dividends in career satisfaction later. You may not solve the big

problems, but you might play a key role in the training lineage of the people who ultimately do.

2. To what do you attribute your success?
  - a. Answer: I would have to say that the chief attribute that has opened doors for me is a love of writing and wordcraft. Good writing reveals science to the world. I often tell students that it's not enough to get all the correct information in there. You have to evoke clear visions of scientific meaning in the reader's mind, which requires a lot of thoughtful arrangement and awareness of your audience. Papers, grants, websites, even emails – good writing elevates it all and will be your tiebreaker more than once. Sitting here writing this, I'm hard pressed to think of a career in science in which subpar or careless writing will not bottleneck progress.
3. What trajectory of work can lead towards working in policymaking?
  - a. Answer: Get involved in advocacy work as a trainee through scientific organizations. It's the problem-based learning version of policymaking, and it will build a network to facilitate entry into that world.

### **Section III: Work/life balance**

1. Any tips? The work never ends, so what boundaries do you have in place to protect your personal time and your sanity?
  - a. Answer: Remember these words: "Thank you for considering me for this important task. Unfortunately, I am at quota on my SERVICE TYPE commitment at this time." We all learn to say this later than we should, and we become overextended in-service obligations that eat into our nights, weekends, and family time. Be aware of what tasks are directly connected to your salary and protect them. For me, that means prioritizing my research and my trainees, then carefully budgeting what I do for service. If you do good work, trust me, it's normal to say "no" way more than "yes".
2. In your experience, when is a better time to start a family? Should it be after you graduate, after completion of a post-doctoral fellowship, after completion of few years of first faculty position, or perhaps some other time?
  - a. Answer: Well, I'm 50 and my children are 12, 10, and 3. I love it, but you should get a second opinion.

### **Section IV: Overcoming adversity**

1. Was there a time in your career that you found particularly difficult, and how did you get through it?
  - a. Answer: When I was a postdoc, I was troubled that I did not have a "this is what I was born to do" feeling as I neared the end of my training. Did I miss the passion train or something by not choosing to remove tumors or play music as a career? I'd like to say I worked this out at the time, but the truth is I just plodded forward and did the work. It wasn't until years later when I was immersed in the life and busy with the research and teaching and traveling and networking that I realized how fortunate I was to be in this position, and the truth is I probably would have felt the same about those other options, too. I had adapted, and I found deep meaning (and wonderful friendships) in the work that made it clear to me that "arriving" was less about landing in the right place and more about a process of allowing yourself to grow happily wherever (and whatever) you are.

2. What do you think are the most common adversities that new and established professionals are facing in workplace? What is your advice/ what are your potential solutions for overcome these adversities?
  - a. Answer: The same old issue: getting external funding for your research. Your proposals have to get past many people with unique perspectives (i.e., reviewers, council, etc.). Don't be a lone ranger. Give yourself time and leverage the multiple perspectives of your colleagues in the composition of your grant proposals. They will drastically reduce the porousness of your D-line and make your proposal better 100% of the time.

### **Section V: Advice for young investigators**

1. What advice would you give to a new grad student, a senior grad student, a new postdoc, or a new investigator?
  - a. Answer: When looking for a postdoc, prioritize the diversification of your technique portfolio. A postdoc is not the time to learn how to ride a bike faster. Be sure you are obtaining new expertise in addition to deeper expertise.
2. What would you recommend to people who have a fear of missing out on all of the great conferences and presentations? How many conferences a year should one strive to attend?
  - a. Answer: In addition to CPDD, it's reasonable to select one more. Someone will disagree with this, but I believe the networking that leads to collaborations is the biggest gain from conferences, and turning that networking into actual collaborative work cannot be done with all of the 50 people you met and sparked creatively with in a given year. Meet a few, then go home and make it happen.
3. What is your favorite session/workshop/event to attend at CPDD?
  - a. Answer: I'll lump this all into Saturday. For me that's ISGIDAR, our fabulous workshops, and the opening reception Saturday evening as the cherry on top. It's like the Christmas Eve of CPDD. Don't miss it!