My most exciting discovery to date has been … asymmetric epoxidation of allylic alcohols in the Sharpless lab.

If I wasn’t a scientist, I would be … a high-school teacher.

My favorite subject at school was … geography. It was fun to imagine other landscapes and the experiences of people who lived there.

The most significant scientific advance of the last 100 years has been … molecular biology, although we still have more to explore.

My first experiment was … a neutralizing titration in high school. I realized how difficult it was to use our hands separately.

The most exciting thing about my research is … to hear a report about a completely unexpected result from my students and young colleagues.

My biggest motivation is … that there are so many things beyond our flask of knowledge.

The best advice I have ever been given is … to address not only individual and specialized problems, but also to take a holistic approach (by the late Prof. S. Masamune).

The part of my job which I enjoy the most is … to see how rapidly students develop into chemists. After all, I learn a lot from them.

My favorite food is … my wife’s home cooking. It is good for my health.

My worst habit is … overhastiness. I often used to mix reagents before thinking!

The biggest problem that chemists face is … the creation of organic chemistry that is not dependant on petroleum.

My 5 top papers: