

00:00:00	Music	Music	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	Speaker: <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.
			<i>[Music fades out.]</i>
00:00:12	Jesse Thorn	Host	I'm Jesse Thorn. It's <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:00:14	Music	Music	"Huddle Formation" from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:22	Jesse	Host	Twyla Tharp is a legend in the world of dance. She's put on well over 100 stage shows—either dancing in them or choreographing them. She's won a Tony, an Emmy. She has an honorary doctorate from Harvard. She choreographed films like <i>Hair</i> , <i>Amadeus</i> , and <i>Ragtime</i> . She put on her first show in 1965. So, that is 55 years of dancing. She has been dancing for 55 years.
			She's 78, now, and she's still working just as hard as ever. And if that sounds extraordinary to you, well it kind of is. But Twyla Tharp doesn't think so. She says the secret to staying healthy and vibrant is pretty simple: just keep moving. That's the title of her book, pretty much. <i>Keep It Moving: Lessons for the Rest of Your Life</i> . Twyla talked with me, from New York, and man. She is a firecracker.
			Let's get into our interview.
			<i>[Music ends with a chorus of cheers and applause.]</i>
			Twyla Tharp, welcome to <i>Bullseye</i> ! I'm so happy to have you on the show.
00:01:26	Twyla Tharp	Guest	Thank you very much. Happy to be here.
00:01:28	Jesse	Host	So, why did you wanna write a book about moving and why did you want to use the definition of moving that is broader than just physical movement?
00:01:42	Twyla	Guest	I think that I've been making dances for a very long time. And, sometimes, people fail to attach dance to movement and themselves to dancers. And it has always been my conceit that dance is movement for everyone. And it happens that dancers are extraordinarily sophisticated and have many, many options that most mortals—regular folk on the street—do not. But that should not cause the audience to disengage from the fact that they, too, occupy a body. And so that, in conjunction with a obvious fact—which is, the older we get the harder we seem to find it to move—mean that, you know, put A and B together, you get C: keep moving.
00:02:33	Jesse	Host	Did you start dancing before you can remember making a distinction between dance and other forms of movement?
00:02:41	Twyla	Guest	Yes. I think that's a really good point. My mother was a concert pianist and is an itsy bitsy teensy weensy. I used to go to her lessons and would, just—you know—squirm, do the best I could. Can't walk yet, but you know, I'm dancing. And I think that we don't wanna forget that's a capacity we have and a part of our arsenal.
00:03:03	Jesse	Host	I feel like I have so little confidence in my—
00:03:07	Twyla	Guest	<i>[Interrupting.]</i> Ooooh! I don't wanna hear this! Go ahead.

00:03:10	Jesse	Host	I—that's it! I'm just saying, I feel—I have very little confidence in my ability to move in a way that anyone would find aesthetically appealing.
00:03:18	Twyla	Guest	Oh, goodie. This is going to be fun. How old are you?
00:03:22	Jesse	Host	I'm 38.
00:03:23	Twyla	Guest	38. Have you ever felt any differently? Have you ever felt yourself <u>physically</u> appealing?
00:03:31	Jesse	Host	<i>[Pauses and takes a deep breath, letting out a loud puff of air.]</i> I mean, I don't feel unappealing physically, in general. I feel like I'm fine in that department. But I'm talking, specifically, in the realm of movement. I felt okay—I played some sports, when I was younger. And I felt okay playing baseball. Which was the main sport I played.
00:03:50	Twyla	Guest	What spot did you play?
00:03:52	Jesse	Host	I usually played third base.
00:03:54	Twyla	Guest	Third base. Okay. That's a relatively static point. I don't wanna tell you that, but...
00:03:58	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughing.]</i> Yeah!
00:04:00	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Twyla: Okaaay.
			Jesse: I—even then—
			Twyla: So, we had limitation even when we didn't! Right?
00:04:04	Jesse	Host	Even as a 13 or 14-year-old, maybe my lateral movement was not my strong suit?
00:04:08	Twyla	Guest	Right! You're not out there being shortstop or something, are you?
00:04:12	Jesse	Host	But I did a fair amount of—I did a fair amount of dancing in the arts high school that I went to.
00:04:16	Twyla	Guest	Okay! Okay, good. What kind of dancing?
00:04:19	Jesse	Host	Afro-Haitian.
00:04:21	Twyla	Guest	Okay!
00:04:22	Jesse	Host	Jazz and hip-hop.
00:04:23	Twyla	Guest	Uh-huh.
00:04:24	Jesse	Host	I never did any classical dance. I can't—I wouldn't know what to do if you asked me to plié.
00:04:29	Twyla	Guest	Okay, well, we'll just put that to the side. Not important. So, as you're doing your—all of your jazz and your hip-hop and your Afro and your Haitian and your Tahitian and so forth, how are you feeling about this?
00:04:44	Jesse	Host	It was an interesting experience, Twyla. Because I don't not enjoy dancing. I wouldn't say it's a great passion of mine, but I don't not enjoy it. But I definitely was in a context where I was the worst of my peer group, or close to it.
00:04:59	Twyla	Guest	Uh-huh. Right. So, you've always been self-conscious whenever you think you've been dancing? You've never just up and bopped around for your own pleasure?
00:05:12	Jesse	Host	Well, I must have. I mean, like, when my preschool teachers played... "Jump for Your Love" by The Pointer Sisters, which I remember them playing a lot.
00:05:22	Twyla	Guest	Uh-huh. Very good.
00:05:23	Jesse	Host	Great song. Um... I think we did dancing. I don't remember being self-conscious, then.
00:05:29	Twyla	Guest	Right. And self-conscious is not, necessarily, a bad thing if you just translate it into self-aware so that if—you know, we can realize that, quite frankly, get real. Nobody is really looking at you. So, you might as well figure out how you feel about it and just go there. And also, I am sorry. 38, man, is only beginning.

[Jesse laughs.]

So, you better get it together to start doing—what do you do, everyday? Physically speaking?

00:05:57 Jesse Host
00:05:59 Twyla Guest
00:06:02 Crosstalk Crosstalk

Type.
Oi. That's it? You're kidding.

Jesse: I walk my dogs. I play with my kids.

Twyla: For how long? What kind of dog? How long are the legs on this dog?

00:06:10 Jesse Host

[Laughing.] Well, that's the thing! My dogs are getting up there.

[Twyla makes an exasperated sound.]

And one of them goes about a—goes about, I'd say, 250 yards and then sits—she just sits down! *[Chuckles.]*

00:06:20 Twyla Guest
00:06:23 Jesse Host
00:06:25 Twyla Guest
00:06:28 Jesse Host

So, this is it for you and exercise?

Uuh, right now, yeah.

What do you mean "right now"? How long has this been?

This has been since—since my third child was born, which is about two and a half years ago.

00:06:33 Twyla Guest

Understandable. Understandable. But we must push back against reality.

[Jesse laughs.]

And we must create our own space. Otherwise, you know what? You will die. So, make up your mind.

00:06:51 Jesse Host

[Chuckles.] How did you feel when you were very young about the organized dancing that you did? You know. Tap dance classes and stuff when you were young, right?

00:07:01 Twyla Guest

I did it all, man! And I loved it all, because I was... I was taken with the possibility of doing something very, very well. Whatever it was. And I was fortunate in having support in the family for that aesthetic. But also, in having a relatively facile body that would do a lot without having to suffer a huge amount of training. And so, it was a relatively, for me, healthy step to push in the direction of whatever the form was—whether it was tap dancing or classical ballet or whatever—to try to become that thing. Which, of course, we never really accomplish. And becoming that thing alters as we age. But it is not lessened by—as we age. It just is different.

00:08:07 Jesse Host

Can you give me an example of a way that you explored what your body could do, when you were a kid? Like, something that you wanted to do and had to work to achieve or something that you found unexpectedly?

00:08:21 Twyla Guest

Well, I—I was—I grew up on a farm. I grew up working in a drive-in theater. All of these things provide, with labor, wonderful results. I was gifted with many kinds of lessons, as a child. And one of my favorite images of myself, at work, as a four-year-old, is I got a little pair of pointe shoes—which, really, I shouldn't have had—but I had them anyway and would put them on and would pull my little red rover wagon with comic books down to the drug store where I could exchange them for other comic books. And I made very certain that everybody would see me running down on my toes.

[Jesse chuckles.]

As a four-year-old. So, that—from that point of view, my metaphor already was that I was a dancer. Not a kid pulling a wagon with cartoon books in it.

00:09:16	Jesse	Host	Did you think then that you were going to be a dancer for your entire life?
00:09:21	Twyla	Guest	I didn't think I was; I was.
00:09:24	Jesse	Host	Were you always sure of it?
00:09:26	Twyla	Guest	I've always moved. From the time that, as I said, I was—you know, from—with my—with my mother, playing music. From the time I could move, from the time I could stand, from the time I could balance, I've always been in movement. Would I attach the word dancer to it? Not necessarily, but it would never occur to me that I wouldn't be moving. And creating ritual in movement.
00:09:49	Jesse	Host	What do you mean by that?
00:09:50	Twyla	Guest	Well, for example, when my family moved from the Midwest to Southern California, we moved into a rather arid place and there was—there were snakes. And there were tarantulas. And there were rattlesnakes. And I had a cat. The cat was being approached by a rattlesnake. I picked up a hoe. I hit the snake on the head. I draped it over a tree branch and started doing a dance—to triumph over the power of the snake.

[Jesse cackles.]

Fortunately, my father came and saw what was happening and got the snake before it came to, otherwise my dance might not have been able to materialize and—shall we say—grow onward.

00:10:33	Jesse	Host	So, when did you think, Twyla, that it was possible to be a dancer not just as a way of being in the world, but as a way of earning your daily bread?
00:10:47	Twyla	Guest	<i>[Beat.]</i> I have never <i>[chuckles]</i> really thought about—fortunately, as being a way of earning my daily bread. I've thought of it, always, as being something that I had to do and made the most sense to me to do. And—which would allow me to be most productive and give the most of what I had to our culture. And that either I would, you know, be able to support myself or not. But it was never about making money.
00:11:16	Jesse	Host	Did you have an idea, when you were in college, of what kind of dancing you wanted to spend your life doing?
00:11:26	Twyla	Guest	Mmm. Nooo. I—no. I, uh, have studied many different forms of dance. And, as a—you know—young college student, I was hell-bent on experiencing as many different forms and shapes of dance as I could possibly access. Obviously—or maybe not obviously, but—New York City, in the '60s, offered a phenomenal range of dance styles, techniques, intentions, necessities. And I tried to expose myself to as many of these as I possibly could, just to know what could be done. What was possible. And then, when I decided that I would... for an assortment of reasons. Some good, some bad—start out trying to make my own dances, the only groundline I had was to try to find a starting place I had not already seen, nor experienced.
00:12:27	Jesse	Host	How old were you when you auditioned to be a Rockette?
00:12:30	Twyla	Guest	I auditioned to be a Rockette probably when I was about 21, maybe 22. Something like that.

00:12:37	Jesse	Host	What did you think it was gonna be like? What led you to audition?
00:12:41	Twyla	Guest	Well, at that point I was having to pay some bills. So, I was taking classes and some very famous dancers from the New York City Ballet would be in class and they'd have [<i>chuckling</i>] <i>—it's a one o'clock class, twelve o'clock class—and they'd have on, like, three pairs of eyelashes. [Stammering.]</i> And I'm, "What? Hey. Why are you wearing—why have you got on three pairs of—"
00:13:14	Jesse	Host	"Because we gotta get back to the show." They were supporting themselves at the City Ballet, and we're talking principle dancers here, by taking a job at Radio City. That's what paid their bills.
00:13:16	Twyla	Guest	So, what was it like when you auditioned? Well, you know, I did my best. I did quite well. I had a very strong technique. They were impressed. Good legs. Good proportions. So, as I say in the book, I was called to the table in the front of the room.
			"Young lady, your fouettés—which they were excellent, very good. But could you smile?" And, as you can tell from my tone of voice, I'm not always up for smiling and I—that's the way it is. I don't—in other words, to me, dancing is not pretend. Dancing is real. So, I walked out. Because I knew I couldn't <u>pretend</u> to smile when my body was doing 48 fouettés to the left with a double every third one. This is no fun! This is work!
00:14:07	Jesse	Host	So, I was supposed to make it look fun! I don't think so.
00:14:09	Twyla	Guest	How do you feel about that attitude, now? Oh, no. You would have to do it. If you're getting the check, that's part of your job. [<i>Chuckles.</i>] No. As a director, obviously, acting is a different thing. But, for me, as a youngster—as a dancer—I was not acting. I was expressing what the body could accomplish. I went to college pre-med, because I wanted to understand what the body could do and I found that the study involved in becoming a physician was so intense and, in many ways, I felt I could actually study the body better in a studio.
00:14:46	Jesse	Host	How's that?
00:14:47	Twyla	Guest	Because I could ascertain how the body and the mind interact and how one commands the other and, sometimes, the other commands the one. And why is that and how is that? And I think psychology in tune with anatomy is obviously engaged in that enterprise, but I've spent hundreds of thousands of hours investigating that question.
00:15:12	Jesse	Host	We'll wrap up with Twyla Tharp in just a minute. When we come back from a quick break, I will ask her if she's afraid of dying. It's <i>Bullseye</i> , from MaximumFun.org and NPR.
00:15:22	Promo	Promo	Music: Thumpy, laid back music.

Speaker 1: It seems like you really like podcasts, but have you ever thought about making one?

Speaker 2: Okay, so we have a guide for you—especially if you're a kid in school and wanna make a podcast of your own. Check out the new podcast from NPR Student Podcast Challenge.

Speaker 1: Listen and share with your friends.

00:15:42 Promo Promo *[Music fades out.]*
Music: Mid-tempo, upbeat music.

Jo Firestone: Hi, I'm Jo Firestone.

Manolo Moreno: And I'm Manolo Moreno.

Jo: And we're the hosts of *Dr. Gameshow*, which is a podcast where we play games submitted by listeners, regardless of quality or content, with in-studio guests and callers from all over the world!

Manolo: And you can win a custom magnet.

Jo: A custom magnet!

Manolo: Subscribe now to make sure you get our next episode.

Jo: What's an example of a game, Manolo?

Manolo: "Pokémon or Medication?"

Jo: How do you play that?

Manolo: You have to guess if something's a Pokémon name—

[Next two lines overlapping]

Jo: Or medication?

Manolo: —or a medication.

Manolo: First-time listener, if you want to listen to episode highlights and also know how to participate, follow *Dr. Gameshow* on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Jo: We'd love to hear from you!

Manolo: Yeah, it's really fun!

Jo: For the whole family! We'll be every other Wednesday starting March 13th, and we're coming to MAX FUN!

Manolo: Snorlax.

Jo: Pokémon?

Manolo: Yes.

00:16:27 Jesse Host **Jo:** Nice!
It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest is Twyla Tharp. She's a legend in the world of dance, having choreographed over 100 dances, ballets, and other performances. She's 78 years old now and is working just as hard as she ever has. She even wrote a book about it. It's called *Keep It Moving: Lessons for the Rest of Your Life*. It's out now. Let's get back into our conversation.

00:17:03	Twyla	Guest	Early on—early in your career, that is, you were choreographing dance that was not set to music. Why did you wanna do that? Beeecause I, from my musical studies as a youngster, knew that—know that people respond—audiences are more comfortable verbally and with what they hear than with what they see. They're much more unfamiliar with judging and gauging just from what they see. So, if I put a dance phrase on a happy piece of music, everybody is going to have one response. Take the exact same movement, put it on a quote "sad piece", they'll feel totally different. So, my intent for five years was to study what movement alone could convey. And that you cannot do when music accompanies, because there is a blend, there. There are synapses, there are connections that will taint the experiment, if you will.
00:17:53	Jesse	Host	That must have been hard.
00:17:55	Twyla	Guest	It was <u>very</u> hard! And we loved it. It was—we were very, very difficult.
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
00:18:07	Jesse	Host	We were not loveable. <i>[Laughs quietly for a few moments.]</i> There wasn't a lot of Rockette-style smiling going on?
00:18:11	Twyla	Guest	N-nooooo. No, no. Basically, we had a very famous dead-pan and that's basically what we did. We considered expressiveness to be a betrayal of the physical reality. You might wanna quote that, it's pretty good.
00:18:27	Jesse	Host	<i>[Breaks into startled laughter.]</i> I mean, it's a nice piece of business. I'm not sure that expressiveness doesn't exist within physical reality, though.
00:18:36	Twyla	Guest	Perhaps. But you know what I'm saying. So, I'm being a little sarcastic and a little—you know, we were young. And we were being very, very extreme. And we were carving out an area for <i>[chuckling]</i> ourselves that nobody else wanted, basically. And we were able to launch from that point, but that became an identity and then you can either go with it or go against it.
00:18:58	Jesse	Host	What did you learn you could do or not do that was different from the dancing that you had been doing, to that point? Which, I assume, was primarily set to music?
00:19:09	Twyla	Guest	No, not necessarily. I mean, I've been a student of dance from the time, you know, I'm a tiny, tiny child. And a lot of the time, you practice exercises and it has nothing to do with music. It has to do with the rhythm of the body. So, I—it was nothing strange to drop the music. Sometimes we used it in the studio. We just didn't perform with music.
00:19:31	Jesse	Host	How did it play differently without the music?
00:19:36	Twyla	Guest	Well, you—first of all, people—if there are junctions, points in the movement where there are unison, for example, and it's done without music, audiences really do wonder, "How can they do that?!" Because they don't understand or they are unwilling to grant the intelligence of the body and want to believe that it's the mind that controls it and if there's no sound coming, how does that work? It baffles them.
00:20:05	Jesse	Host	I'm baffled right now, Twyla.

00:20:07	Twyla	Guest	I'm sorry about that. You will have to go out and run with no earphones on for at least half an hour and then you'll know what I mean.
00:20:18	Jesse	Host	<i>[Chuckles quietly.]</i> Why did you stop doing that?
00:20:22	Twyla	Guest	Because I had a child and needed to buy diapers and I knew that people would pay me much more money if I were more entertaining.
00:20:32	Jesse	Host	<i>[Amusedly.]</i> Do you <u>like</u> being entertaining?
00:20:34	Twyla	Guest	I <u>love</u> being entertaining. I'm a very good entertainer. I grew up on cartoons. My parents, as I said, owned a movie house and I grew up working in the movie house from the time I was eight until I went to college and my most important experiences, in the movie theater, of course were the musicals, but also the cartoons. Because cartoons have a very fast logic. The sound effects are extremely well utilized in relation to the action. And, as I said, they're fast. You have to keep ahead of your audience. Not too far, just enough.
00:21:09	Jesse	Host	Do you like to dance at a party or a—
00:21:12	Twyla	Guest	Nooo! I don't go to parties.
00:21:15	Jesse	Host	What about a wedding? You must go to weddings?
00:21:16	Twyla	Guest	Nooo. I don't go to weddings. Although, I have been to one or two weddings and do love the fact that dancing happens, here. Because it's obviously—it's a very sincere expression of joy.
00:21:28	Jesse	Host	Do you—do you participate in that expression of joy?
00:21:32	Twyla	Guest	Well, it depends on the person involved. You know. It—there are many circumstances. Shoes would be amongst some of the circumstances.
00:21:42	Jesse	Host	What kind of shoes are we talking about?
00:21:43	Twyla	Guest	Well, you'd have to have comfortable ones, is my point. In the days of attending weddings, I think I was probably wearing high heels and they do have their restrictions. So. I'm not a trained social dancer. That I do not pretend to be. And when I've worked on projects that required that element in, say, the film, I've studied it. And can—you know—can produce it. But it is—does not come naturally to me. I never went to a high school dance. I was practicing at home.
00:22:17	Jesse	Host	<u>Wow</u> . Now, talk about things that sound hard—that sounds hard to me, too—but was it hard for you or did it feel right?
00:22:25	Twyla	Guest	No, I think—I think that I have been, for what—I mean, whatever the word shy means, I have had my share of that. I've also had it—my share of very, very dedicated and disciplined parenting. And <i>[chuckling]</i> social behavior was not on the agenda.
00:22:44	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Are you glad for that? Or do you wish the mix had been a little different?
00:22:51	Twyla	Guest	No, I'm not glad or sad. It—we all have our own backgrounds. We all have our own lives and it's to us to maximize that. I mean, in other words, people often ask me, "Well, didn't you rebel against your lessons? Didn't—" And the answer is no. I tried very hard to learn from these people, as much as I could. Not to fight them.
00:23:14	Jesse	Host	Are there things that you miss doing that you can't do anymore, physically?
00:23:19	Twyla	Guest	Well, which answer would you like? The one that says, "I will find something new here" or the one that says, "Of course!" Anybody who has been able to jump six feet off the ground is gonna miss it when they can't. But there is always the remembrance of what that was and there's always the moving in that direction and the sense

that, okay—physically I’m not going that extra five feet but look how grand that one foot is! Wow!

Look, I always said—okay, I was a very—had many skills, as a dancer, and I felt that I was in some ways outside the human realm. That most people would not be—have any sense at all of where I was, physically, and I used to wonder, “What will it be like when I don’t have this facility, anymore? When I am a—forgive the word—regular mortal? When I’m more a normal body in movement? What will that feel like? And ultimately, the big question—what is the one, single movement you have left?”

00:24:33	Jesse	Host	<i>[Beat.]</i> Oh, man—this isn’t a rhetorical question?
00:24:37	Twyla	Guest	Which one?
00:24:39	Jesse	Host	<i>[Chuckling helplessly.]</i> The one movement you have left?
00:24:41	Twyla	Guest	No! You keep doing your movement every day and, as time goes by, you will find what one you have left! That’s not rhetorical. That’s expediential.
00:24:52	Jesse	Host	What was the first time you got hurt badly?
00:24:56	Twyla	Guest	I’ve been very fortunate, and I’ve had very, very few injuries. I had an injury on a Forman film, in—with a group of extras. I was dropped one time, from a difficult partnering move. And I have broken a couple of metatarsals, and I’ve torn a rotator cuff. This is not a big deal for moving as long and as much as I have.
00:25:22	Jesse	Host	When you choreograph, do you imagine the movements in your own body? Or are you imagining the... you know, the dancers who are in front of you making those movements?
00:25:38	Twyla	Guest	Six of one, half-dozen of another. I’m—I can work both ways. If I want a movement that is going to set a standard, which we will all address in order to allow the audience to see—one thing I tried in many different ways—I’ll do it on myself. If I’m working with a specific dancer, there’s no way I can imagine what they do other than to suggest, “Try this, try that.” I may <u>think</u> I occupy their bodies. I tease all the time about the body-snatchers and the peapods and I go in and I become—and in some ways I can—become very close to, I can feel what a dancer’s body can do, can probably do, can maybe try. But, ultimately, I can only do what that dancer can do.
00:26:33	Jesse	Host	So, it becomes about presenting them with the right launching pad to go in a direction where, you know, something can be discovered. Is part of what you’re doing like an—the—what an editor does? Which is to say, recognizing and forming the special things about the performers that you work with?
00:26:47	Twyla	Guest	No, it’s not editing. It’s—I’m not sure that I can find you a comparable, here. Because it’s not as though they come in with the material done and show it to me and I say, “Take this out, put this in.”
			<i>[Jesse agrees.]</i>
00:27:09	Jesse	Host	They don’t have the material. So, it has to be—it has to be derived. Do you think differently about choreographing work that is intended significantly to entertain and work that is intended, significantly, towards some other aim?
00:27:24	Twyla	Guest	Uh, like what?
00:27:26	Jesse	Host	Something without smiling?

00:27:28	Twyla	Guest	<i>[Chuckling.]</i> Uh-huh. Very good. I understand about audiences. I've spent a lot of time—I've watched tens of thousands of shows as an audience person. And I appreciate that position and communicating to an audience. And I don't see it as selling out to work towards delivering something that can communicate to other people and have meaning. I often say, "If the audience doesn't leave our concerts—our shows—feeling better, we failed." And it's that simple. And I do believe that.
			On the other hand, I can also work in a mode where I'm going for the absolute and everyone is free to watch it, but you know what? None of that watching counts. Only myself and the person engaging in that activity can say it was done. It doesn't matter what someone else says. I can work that way, as well.
00:28:32	Jesse	Host	Can you give me an example of a time when you worked in that—in that way? In that latter way?
00:28:37	Twyla	Guest	Of course. I mean, the first part of the career was totally engaged in that fashion. And when we bring back any of the old rep—something like "The Fugue"—it's totally about showing the audience—allowing the audience to see what believe is right. And I'm always amazed when audiences love "The Fugue", <i>[chuckling]</i> because I think they're gonna walk out on it or be bored or whatever, and they're not!
			They are engaged by the enterprise, by the commitment, by the dedication, by the sincerity of the search.
00:29:08	Jesse	Host	What are you searching for? What does it mean—what is "right"?
00:29:14	Twyla	Guest	If you have an ear and you listen to, say, a chorus, you will hear if a voice is out of tune. You will give me that, right?
00:29:24	Jesse	Host	Sure.
00:29:25	Twyla	Guest	Same thing is true of movement. You'll have to give that.
00:29:30	Jesse	Host	Alright. So, it is a sense that... the movement is, in some way, harmonious with itself?
00:29:40	Twyla	Guest	That it's correct. That' it's righteous. And you want me to be able to describe to you exactly what that is—you would have to see it.
00:29:50	Jesse	Host	Right. <i>[Chuckles.]</i> Yeah, I mean, we're—we're doing our best. It's a radio show, you know?
00:29:55	Twyla	Guest	Oooh! You know what, I love radio and why do I love it? Because it allows people to use their imagination. I grew up on radio. There was no TV. That's great! So, if you would like to imagine, we could imagine a dance. We could imagine forces coming from the right, forces coming from the left. We could imagine them colliding. That might be a good thing, but probably not. So, we can imagine them crossing—how close should they cross? As close as possible. We can imagine that. Right?
00:30:26	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:30:28	Twyla	Guest	That would be a righteous thing if that would part of the overall intention of the work.
00:30:35	Jesse	Host	Do you feel, at this point in your life, more interested in... trying something that you haven't done before? Or getting better at something that you've done pretty well, but could be better?
00:30:48	Twyla	Guest	Both simultaneously.
00:30:50	Jesse	Host	How's that?
00:30:51	Twyla	Guest	Think about it. Repeat your words and think about doing them both, simultaneously. Something new and doing something better. They can be done simultaneously.

00:31:05	Jesse	Host	What are you most excited about doing that is both of those things, right now?
00:31:09	Twyla	Guest	Well, this is a question that I often get asked. Usually <i>[chuckling]</i> towards the end of an interview—what’s next? And I always have a stock reply, which is that I don’t talk about it. Because—there are a number of reasons. One, it’s going to change radically before it actually happens, and I would have lied to you. Secondly, we can talk about something or we can do something. So, I don’t talk about that which is to come. But, basically, because I have a general sense—I have an intention and I have an energy, I have a drive, I have a desire, I have love, I have people with whom and for whom I want to work, but the specifics will come to pass in real-time.
00:31:55	Jesse	Host	You work primarily, now, almost exclusively as a choreographer. You don’t perform as a dancer, very much.
00:32:02	Twyla	Guest	Ooh, that’s so untrue!
00:32:04	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Jesse: Is it?
			Twyla: I dance every day in the studio!
00:32:08	Twyla	Guest	How do you think these guys know what to do if I don’t show them!?
00:32:12	Jesse	Host	<i>[Chuckling.]</i> I said, “work and perform”, Twyla! But—
00:32:14	Twyla	Guest	I—listen, man! Listen to me! Every rehearsal is a performance. Every performance is a rehearsal.
00:32:21	Jesse	Host	Are you afraid of dying?
00:32:23	Twyla	Guest	<i>[Stammering, startled.]</i> N-uh, what kind of question is this?! We’re doing a—we’re doing, here, a seminar on a book called <i>Keep It Moving!</i> We are not gonna die!
00:32:32	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughing.]</i> Thank goodness! ‘Cause I’m <u>super</u> afraid of dying!
00:32:35	Twyla	Guest	Well, you know what? Go out and try it once or twice and then you’ll get over this fear!
00:32:40	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Twyla Tharp, I’m really grateful to you for taking all this time to be on <i>Bullseye</i> .
00:32:47	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Twyla: Thank you!
			Jesse: Thank you, very much.
			Twyla: Thank you.
			Jesse: I’m sorry that—
			<i>[Music fades in.]</i>
00:32:52	Twyla	Guest	Jesse: I’m sorry we did so much talking and so little <u>doing!</u>
00:32:55	Music	Music	Well, alright. You can make up for it starting right now!
00:33:03	Jesse	Host	Percussive, jazzy music plays with prominent synth. Twyla Tharp. Her new book is called <i>Keep It Moving: Lessons for the Rest of Your Life</i> . And in case you need video evidence that Twyla, herself, keeps it moving— <i>The New York Times</i> just did a profile about her, including a video of her dancing and... yeah. <i>[Laughing.]</i> She can really move. We’ll have a link to that story on the <i>Bullseye</i> page, at MaximumFun.org .
00:33:25	Music	Music	Bright transition music, interspersed with the sounds of a crowd cheering.
00:33:30	Jesse	Host	That’s the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i> . <i>Bullseye</i> is produced at MaximumFun.org world headquarters, overlooking MacArthur Park, here in beautiful Los Angeles, California—where there was a film shoot, in the park! Not an uncommon occurrence. A lot of great

movies have been shot in MacArthur Park. The subject of this one? Two guys wearing matching grey track suits, both wearing bright red shoes with identically styled bears and man-buns. Then, later one, they changed into leopard print.

Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our producer is Kevin Ferguson. Jesus Ambrosio is our associate producer. We get help from Casey O'Brien, who I just saw with a giant electric piano, in the office. Our production fellows are Jordan Kawling and Melisa Dueñas. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Though, who knows! Maybe Casey's gunning for his job!

Our theme song is by The Go! Team. Our thanks to them and their label, Memphis Industries, for letting us use it.

And one last thing! We have done a lot of interviews in the last two decades. If you wanna hear another amazing interview about the joy of dancing when you're getting older, why not check out our interview with Dick Van Dyke? Who is still a pretty extraordinary dancer, now, in his 90s! You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Just search for *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* and keep up with the show there.

And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature sign off.

00:34:58 Promo Promo

Speaker: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR.

[Music fades out.]