00:00:00	Music	Transition	Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.
00:00:01	Promo	Promo	**Speaker**: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR. *[Music fades out.]*
00:00:14	Jesse Thorn	Host	From MaximumFun.org and NPR, it's *Bullseye*.
00:00:17	Music	Transition	"Huddle Formation" from the album *Thunder, Lightning, Strike* by The Go! Team. A fast, upbeat, peppy song. Music plays as Jesse speaks, then fades out.
00:00:24	Jesse	Host	My first guest this week is Alan Alda. The Alan Alda. Hawkeye, from *M*A*S*H*. Arnold Vinnick from *The West Wing*. Academy Award and Tony nominee. Six-time Emmy winner. And lately, encroaching on my territory as a podcast host. The 86-year-old Alda has headed up the show *Clear+Vivid* for four years now—not as, you know, a way for Alda to talk with his friends about their latest movie or the good old days. Sure, some of the guests are friends of his, but there's also scientists, researchers, writers he admires. One listen to *Clear+Vivid* and you can tell he's found his second passion as podcast host. Before we get into my interview with Alan Alda, here's a little bit from the show. In this clip, he's talking with another legendary performer, Mel Brooks.
00:01:13	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:01:17	Clip	Clip	**Alan Alda (*Clear+Vivid*)**: I've known you—known you for, what? 50 years. **Mel Brooks**: *[Laughing.]* Yes you have. **Alan**: And we met. Do you remember when we met? 60 years ago. **Mel**: Oh my god. **Alan**: On a late-night radio show, in New York. **Mel**: Yeah! **Alan**: Barry Gray. *The Barry Gray Show*. **Mel**: Oh, gee! You remember! Oh my god.
00:01:29	Clip	Clip	**Alan**: I remember it very—I remember how generous you were. 'Cause I had just opened in a play that night. **Mel**: I know! **Alan**: And you had seen the play and it was a terrible play. **Mel**: Yeah.

			Alan: I remember, you said, “This play is great. I know funny; and this play is funny.”
			Mel: Yeeeah.
			Alan: And it really helped us, ‘cause you know, it didn’t close until the next night.
			Mel: Oh! *[Laughs.]* I kept it open another night!
			Alan: *[Laughing.]* Another whole day!
			Mel: Yeah. And you were good, except you told me a crazy story that you were wearing a robe in the play, and the robe was on fire that one night.
			Alan: The robe caught fire!
00:02:03	Sound Effect	Transition	Music swells and fades.
00:02:04	Jesse	Host	Alan Alda, welcome to *Bullseye*. It’s great to have you on the show!
00:02:07	Alan Alda	Guest	Thank you. Thank you. It’s nice to hear Mel, too.
00:02:09	Jesse	Host	Oh, that we all could only have interview subjects we’ve known for 50 years.
			[They laugh.]
			That’s a good head start!
00:02:15	Alan	Guest	Well, you have to live 50 years, first. First, you have be alive for 50 years.
00:02:20	Jesse	Host	*[Laughs.]* Well, you know, Alan? You and I have known each other for over five minutes. And I’m really excited—
00:02:25	Alan	Guest	Right. It’s been a pleasure, too. And I’m sorry I have to go, now.
00:02:29	Jesse	Host	Aw! Gee whiz! Um, well, welcome to the show. I’m really—I’m really happy to get to talk to you.
			[Alan thanks him.]
			You know, you had done—you had done some semi-journalism. You know, *Scientific American Frontiers* involved a lot of interviewing. You know. You've done a lot of talking to people and a lot of developing communication skills and others. But what did you have to learn to host an interview show?
00:02:59	Alan	Guest	Well, I learned most of what I had to learn on *Scientific American Frontiers*, because except for sitting in to substitute for talk show hosts once in a while, I hadn’t really had much experience interviewing. I’d had a lot of experience being interviewed. But one of the first things I learned was not to assume that what I thought I knew was real. To put it into questions instead of make assertions. You know? “I know your grandmother died.” “No, well, that was my Aunt Tilly.” “Oh, *[stammering]* sorry about that, too.”
			[Chuckles.] You know? It doesn’t—it doesn’t work out so well if you think you know what they know. It’s better to ask questions. It’s better—it’s better—questions—what I learned—what I learned on

			Scientific American Frontiers that I've applied to everything else I've ever done, whether it's in front of a microphone or at a dinner table, is to listen and respond to what the person is saying, not to go in with a list of ten questions and ask the next question regardless of what they've just said, but on the contrary, follow them wherever it leads. And I learned that from improvising. Did a lot of improvising as a young actor. And it turns out to be good at the dinner table, too.
00:04:30	Jesse	Host	Did you learn that lesson that you described the hard way? Did you make an assertion that made you look foolish?
00:04:36	Alan	Guest	I didn't look foolish so much as the scientist I was talking to looked really bereft. *[They laugh.]* It would—I said, "Well—" It was a solar panel that would power a car. And I said, "Well, amazing that you've done all this just with off-the-shelf parts." And he said, "No, we built it. We made the parts." *[Chuckles.]* You know. He looked really sad!
00:05:04	Jesse	Host	"I worked hard on those parts."
00:05:06	Alan	Guest	Yeah! And then I wanted to get comfortable with him, and I put my hand on it, and he said, "Please don't touch it. You could ruin it." *[They laugh.]* I mean, I was walking in thinking I was gonna make contact and not—still not good enough at it, yet. But those were good learning times.
00:05:27	Jesse	Host	I'm glad you brought up improv, because I wanted to talk to you about that. You know, you were a member of the Compass Players, who were—you know, one of the foundational groups of improv—I was gonna say in the United States, but in the world. Cofounded by Paul Sills, whose mother was essentially the inventor of what we now call improv. She wasn't the inventor of improvising, obviously, but you know. That was the—that was the source of the river. How did you end up in that group?
00:06:05	Alan	Guest	I wasn't in the first group that was called Compass. One of the cofounders—
00:06:12	Jesse	Host	*[Chuckles.]* Did—Alan, did you notice that I literally just did the thing that you learned not to do?!
00:06:15	Alan	Guest	*[Amused.]* Yeah, I heard you doing it during the question. I didn't wanna call attention to it. *[They laugh.]* Yeah, well you'll get it after a couple of thousand interviews. It's not that hard. You'll get it.
00:06:28	Jesse	Host	Thank you. Thank you. If only I had been doing this for 20 years. *[They laugh.]*
00:06:33	Alan	Guest	No, people make that mistake often, because Compass predated Second City and… David Shepherd was one of the founders of it,

			and years later, he started a company up called Compass that I was in. Diana Sands, the actress, was in. And Honey Shepherd, his wife, who became very popular on the show about gangsters. I can't say the name right now, what's the name?
00:07:06	Jesse	Host	*The Sopranos*?
00:07:07	Alan	Guest	*Sopranos*. Yeah. And—thank you, very much. And this company of Compass was in the basement of a hotel, in the cabaret they made when they dug a space under the hotel. It was the same hotel where John Kennedy was giving his press conferences during the morning. And at night, in our show, we did an impromptu press conference where I played Kennedy. And the reporters who would ask him questions in the morning were down in the basement at night, asking me some of the same questions. But I hadn't read the newspaper yet. They hadn't been printed in the paper yet, 'cause they only asked him that morning. So, I didn't know what they were talking about, sometimes. I'd have to have standard saves to get out of a mess.
00:07:58	Jesse	Host	Like what?
00:08:00	Alan	Guest	We're—I can't do the accent anymore. "We have a commission working on that." You know. *[Jesse chuckles.]* Same kind of save that the president or whoever the president is will use.
00:08:13	Jesse	Host	Had you improvised before?
00:08:16	Alan	Guest	No. That was my introduction to it. And that was not the kind of improvising that Viola Sills invented. It was comedy improv, and it was what I would call gutsy improv. Your job onstage was to just try to get a laugh every few seconds. And we didn't train in Viola's method. So, it was always a scary experience. Viola Spolin, who wrote the seminal book, *Improvisation for the Theatre*, really would transform you. And I worked with Paul Sills at Second City for about six months. I think we got together twice a week. It was a small group of actors. And we really went through Viola's book painstakingly. She was—she was Paul Sills's mother, and yet he would carry the book around like the Bible and literally read every bit of direction, say, "Here's how we're—here's how Viola says we should do this." That kind of thing. And there were some wonderful actors in the group. Olympia Dukakis was in the group; a number of really—and people who didn't just drop in. I mean, we worked hard at it. And it changed me. It very much changed me as a person, but as an actor. Because any time I was in any company with other actors where I could work it out or we would sit together before a performance and just talk and kid each other and laugh together. The performance would always be so much better. And then actors get to realize that, and once you do it a few times, nobody wants to not do it anymore. That becomes the preparation for the play. We did that on *M*A*S*H*—sat around between shots and just laughed at each other.
00:10:32	Jesse	Host	I'm sure you do a lot of preparation for your interviews with communicators and scientists, but what's something that stands out in your mind that you did not expect to hear from someone?

00:10:45	Alan	Guest	I'm trying to think of something that surprised me. You know, it's a funny thing. Does this—does this happen to you? After I do an interview, I can't remember what anybody said. *[Jesse laughs.]* I'm so—I'm so involved in listening and responding, and at the same time making sure in another part of my head that this is following a trajectory that's gonna make sense that I don't remember what we said, and then I'll listen to it when it's posted on the web and I'll say, "Gee, well that was really interesting!" *[Jesse laughs.]* And I'll get to a certain—I'll get to a certain point, and I'll say, "I wonder why he said that." And I'll hear myself on the recording, "I wonder why you said that." *[Chuckles.]* I'm tracking the thinking, but it's all new to me. So, I can't—I can't answer that question.
00:11:41	Jesse	Host	Even more to get into with the great Alan Alda after a quick break. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye*, from MaximumFun.org and NPR.
00:11:49	Music	Transition	Bright, chiming synth with a steady beat.
00:11:53	Jesse	Host	It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. If you're just joining us, my guest is Alan Alda, the Emmy award-winning actor and director played Hawkeye on *M*A*S*H*, Arnold Vinnick on *The West Wing*, Jack Donaghy's dad on a few very good episodes of *30 Rock*. And of course, so many other incredible characters. Alda was also the host of the PBS series *Scientific American Frontiers* for over 20 years. These days, he has a podcast: *Clear+Vivid* with Alan Alda. It's available to listen to wherever you get your podcasts. Let's get back into our conversation. Look, I'm gonna presume—I'm gonna stipulate that you're excited about all your guests on *Clear+Vivid*, but who were you particularly excited about? Like, who did you put at the top of the list when you had a big whiteboard meeting at the beginning who would you wanna talk to about communicating?
00:12:50	Alan	Guest	You know, I think I just remembered the answer to your question.
00:12:53	Jesse	Host	Oh, let's hear it.
00:12:54	Alan	Guest	Because when Paul McCartney said he wanted—he was willing to be on the show, that was a great moment, 'cause I love his work. I think he writes some of the most beautiful melodies that we've ever heard. And he changes the culture along with his colleagues. So, I was very happy about that. And everybody in the studio where we were working at the time was very excited. And I came into the room where we were going to do the recording, and I saw they had put a—had stood against the wall three guitars and a piano. *[Chuckles.]* And I said, "What are you doing? What is this?" And he said, "Well, you never know. Maybe he'll play something." I said, "He's gonna be upset that we have this put out for him. We gotta put it away."

			And just then, he walks into the room, and he sees the guitars, and he gets a really dismal look on his face. And he says, “What’s this?” And I thought, oh, here goes the whole interview. And so, I said, “I’m really sorry. Everybody was very excited. Nobody expects you to pick up an instrument. Forget that. Let’s just have fun.” And we started out having a lot of fun doing vocal exercises together at the beginning of the interview. *[They laugh.]* And then, I was talking about his melodies, and I was asking him how he arrives at a melody, and he said, “Well, look, there’s a piano over there. I’ll show you what I mean.” And he starts playing chords on the piano, and he starts fooling around, searching for a melody. And I’ll tell you, that came out of the fact that we were able to make contact with one another in the same way that you do in an improv. And this extraordinary moment happened, where he was in the moment searching for a melody. And I—that was—that was something I really didn’t expect.
00:15:02	Jesse	Host	What have you talked about on either your podcast or on *Scientific American Frontiers* that was the hardest for you to understand, such that you could help communicate it to the audience?
00:15:16	Alan	Guest	Well, I always have distinguished the things that I do from actual journalists in this way: they really take on the responsibility of absorbing the material and communicating it to the audience. I try to understand it well enough to ask questions that aren’t too stupid so that the scientists can communicate it to the audience themselves. I always ask a question and ask them to tell me where I’m wrong, ‘cause chances are I’m gonna be wrong. I haven’t spent my life on these things the way they have. But I do remember how hard it was even to frame the questions the first time I heard that the vacuum of space is exploding with particles all the time, popping out of the vacuum and then disappearing. I said, no, a vacuum is a vacuum. Nothing comes from nothing. Shakespeare said that several times. “Nothing from nothing comes.” *[They chuckle.]* So, *[stammering]* the producers of *Scientific American Frontiers*, especially Graham Chedd, who now produces my podcast *Clear+Vivid*, said, "No, you gotta allow for this. This is what’s hard about modern physics. It’s a vacuum, but it’s not that nothing’s happening. Stuff is happening in the vacuum. It was really hard to accept.
00:16:59	Jesse	Host	One time I admitted to Neil deGrasse Tyson that I was scared of the infinite nature of space, and he just made fun of me.
00:17:07	Alan	Guest	Well, it’s—for me, it was even worse than that. I wasn’t—I’m not scared by it. I know—I know a psychologist who is scared by infinity. I couldn’t understand why. But what I find really hard to get is that there are several kinds of infinities. And some infinities are bigger than others. How could that possibly be?!
00:17:33	Jesse	Host	*[Laughs.]* For the at-home listener, Alan Alda’s face, alive with incredulity right now.

			[They laugh.]
00:17:44	Alan	Guest	Well, isn't that weird?! If an infinity goes on forever—
00:17:46	Jesse	Host	Oh, it's deeply weird! Bordering on upsetting.
00:17:49	Alan	Guest	How many forevers can there be?
00:17:52	Jesse	Host	*[Laughs.]* That's absolutely terrifying to me.
00:17:58	Alan	Guest	So, I think there are some things I would only understand if I had started learning the math when I was a kid and kept at it daily, until now. And then I probably still wouldn't understand it. I was going around to a number of countries doing a show about the cosmos. And I—everywhere I went, I was—at that time, I was really trying to get a grasp of the fourth dimension. And I said to the scientists at every place I went, "I can't picture the fourth dimension. How can I picture it?" And *[chuckles]* one of them said to me, "What makes you think you're the one person out of seven billion who can picture the fourth dimension?"
00:18:49	Jesse	Host	*[Laughs.]* I don't wanna have one of my favorite performers of all time on my show without talking a little bit about art and performance. So, let's talk about show business for a minute, here. Your dad was a performer. When you were a kid, how much of the time was he on the road? And how much of the time were you on the road?
00:19:12	Alan	Guest	Well, when I was born, he was in burlesque. And we were all, the three of us—my mother, my father, and I—were on the road every week to a new burlesque theater. And my earliest memories—two and a half and three—are standing in the wings watching burlesque, watching the comics and the chorus girls and the strippers. And I saw performing, and they even carried me onstage, as a joke when I was six months old. So, I'm used to being on the stage and learning about it from standing in the wings.
00:19:55	Jesse	Host	What was your dad's act?
00:19:58	Alan	Guest	He was a singer and a straight man, in burlesque. And he did—toured in nightclubs, where he did a lot of sketches and sang. And when I was about seven, he got a job at Warner Brothers as a contract actor, where they sign you up for seven years and then they sort of own your career for seven years. And the first movie he made was a huge musical on the life of George Gershwin, and he played Gershwin. And it was a hit around the world. And he became a movie star in a minute. Then they put him in lousy movies for seven years, and he didn't resurface until the end of the seven years, when he did the leading part in *Guys and Dolls*, on Broadway. So, he had a really up and down career. And there were—there were times when he was traveling with a show, but we traveled a lot as a family.
00:21:07	Jesse	Host	The other day, my son showed me a picture that—my eight-year-old son showed me a picture that he drew of me. And it was me and microphone. And I was saying, "Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." *[Alan chuckles.]*

			And then from the microphone or from the headphones was coming, “Okay, okay, okay, okay, okay.”
			[They laugh.]
			And it made me think about like—you know, what does a kid understand about what their parents do at work? Especially when it’s show business. So, like what do you think you understood and didn’t understand about what your dad did for work?
00:21:46	Alan	Guest	We lived in a closed system. Everybody we knew was either a comic or a stripper. And we’d get on the floor and shoot craps on the rug, and there’d be laughing all the time. We’d be on the train going from one town to another. An especially long trip would be called a “two bottle jump”.
			[Jesse laughs.]
			And I thought that was the world. I thought that everybody was in show business. And then when I saw people who weren’t in show business, I realized or thought that we were the elite, and these poor people were just civilians. You know, I was a child. I didn’t—I didn’t know any better. But it is—it is funny how you soak up—you soak up the atmosphere of the family business really easily when it’s show business, ‘cause it’s seductive. The people come to watch the show. So, when my father and I did Abbott and Costello’s routines at the Hollywood Canteen, in California, where soldiers and sailors were on their way to the Pacific during the war, that really clenched it. I knew for sure I wanted to be an actor.
			Up until then, I wanted to be a writer.
00:23:13	Jesse	Host	What was it like when your dad signed a seven-year contract, and you had a regular life with regular people in a regular place? I mean to the extent that—you know—Hollywood is a regular place, or whatever. What was it like to just go to school with kids who *[chuckling]* hadn’t ever shot craps on a train?
00:23:41	Alan	Guest	We—I didn’t go to school. I had an unusual childhood. When I was seven, I got polio. And there was a long period of treatment. And then, my parents had me tutored, and it seemed easier to travel if I was tutored. So, until junior high school, I didn’t go to a regular school. And it was really weird the first day I went to school, and I saw all these kids in the—in the—in the school playground. And I thought, “Look at that! What—look at the size of that audience!” I thought they needed entertaining. So, that was—that was more than entertaining; it was an invitation for them to beat up on me.
00:24:44	Jesse	Host	Yeah, I mean, that works, and it doesn’t work. You know what I mean?
00:24:47	Alan	Guest	Yeah, I would suggest that it mainly doesn’t work.
			[They laugh.]
00:24:54	Jesse	Host	Something that I thought about as I was reading about your early life is that… you know, your mother was a paranoid schizophrenic.
			[Alan confirms.]

			And there's not a lot of kids who grew up with one parent in show business where the parent who's in show business is the reliable one. When did you—when did you feel like you had any understanding of what to expect from your mom?
00:25:36	Alan	Guest	I don't know if I ever really had a defense against her mental illness until I was almost 50. It was difficult, because in the beginning nobody knew what it was. And then, when it was clear that it was a serious problem, we didn't talk about it. There were just the three of us in the family. My father and I never discussed her illness or even acknowledged that she had an illness. We just sort of tried to cope. But you have to understand, that was a time in the entire culture where you didn't talk about mental illness. So, I didn't really have the tools to deal with it, internally. I was angry that I didn't feel I had a mother. And she loved me. It was later, after she died, that I realized much more than I ever had before that she—in her own way and in spite of how she saw the world and thought everybody—including me—was trying to kill her. In spite of all of that, she did—she did really love me. But it's hard for a kid, you know, to translate the behavior into the knowledge that can give you a working forgiveness.
00:27:30	Jesse	Host	And I mean, it's hard for a kid not to know… you know, not to know what to expect.
00:27:43	Alan	Guest	Yeah, very hard.
00:27:45	Jesse	Host	My dad had very severe post traumatic stress disorder, and he loved me very, very much and I imagine was probably more functional than your mother. But you know, one of the things that I had to come to terms with as an adult was understanding how significant it was that—for that reason—I couldn't rely on my dad, even though he was a good guy who loved me.
00:28:19	Alan	Guest	Was there anger?
00:28:21	Jesse	Host	Oh yeah.
00:28:24	Alan	Guest	On his part? Your part?
00:28:25	Jesse	Host	Oh yeah.
00:28:27	Alan	Guest	Huh. It's tough, because under the best of circumstances—at least in our culture, when kids get into their teens, there's a lot of poor communication. But if you have this as an additional factor, really tough.
00:28:54	Jesse	Host	And your mother having been paranoid, like that's a really—that's a really scary thing, especially in the context of adolescence. I remember, you know, you have that teenager feeling of like how can I make my parents understand me, right? And if you don't know that they can—that they can see and accept the same stuff that you see and accept as being, you know, truth in the world, it makes it a billion times harder.
00:29:29	Alan	Guest	Yeah. I sometimes think that with whatever quirks I retained, I managed to be able to live a pretty healthy *[clears throat]*—a pretty healthy life.
00:29:45	Jesse	Host	Are there things in particular that you learned from your dad and his career—both like in the meta sense, like, "Well, this is how you get by in show business, broadly." Or in the like really concrete sense, like, "Here's a good way to cheat out to the audience when you're selling a punchline," or whatever.

00:30:09	Alan	Guest	He was very helpful when we were—I was nine and he was teaching me the Abbott and Costello routine “Who’s On First”. And I would have a tendency to wander all around the stage while I was talking. And he would say, “Just stand still.” *[Chuckles.]* And the other piece of advice that I remember from those days was if you’re gonna go into show business, take care of your legs, because your legs get tired. Sit down every chance you get. *[Jesse laughs.]* And actually, if you look at many scenes on *M*A*S*H*, I not only sit down, I have my feet up on the colonel’s desk, because when I start the scene in the beginning of the day, rehearsing, I know that wherever I put my feet, they’re gonna stay there for the rest of the day while we do all the shots involved in the scene. So, I don’t wanna be in a standing position for 12 hours. So, I did follow that advice.
00:31:11	Jesse	Host	*[Laughs softly.]* “Figure out where to plant it.” *[Alan agrees.]* We’ll wrap up with Alan Alda in just a minute. After the break, we’ll talk about what it was like when *M*A*S*H*, the TV show that gave him his big break, the TV show that made him an Emmy award-winner and a legend, came to an end. It’s *Bullseye*, from MaximumFun.org and NPR.
00:31:31	Music	Transition	Thumpy rock music.
00:31:36	Jesse	Host	You’re listening to *Bullseye*. I’m Jesse Thorn. I’m talking with actor and podcast host, Alan Alda. As I was considering the arc of your career, I thought, “Well, gosh.” You know. You worked on *M*A*S*H* for a long time. And even people who get to work on a really successful TV show maybe don’t get to work on one that’s as good as *M*A*S*H*, always. You know. *M*A*S*H* is one of the best television shows that’s ever been made. And over the course of the many years that you worked on *M*A*S*H*, your role on the show, creatively, grew. You were—you became a writer. You—you know, you were writing for the show, you were directing on the show. And I imagine that growth helped keep it fulfilling, but at the end of the long run—a long run on a television show where you’re the—you know, you’re the top bill on the most-watched television episode of all time, that’s like a chance to be like, “Uh, okay. So, now that that thing that I couldn’t get off of is done—” Not that you wanted to, but just it was a rocket that you were attached to. “What do I choose?” How did you face that?
00:32:59	Alan	Guest	As the show ended, I was writing a movie that I would direct and act in. So, I had something to occupy myself. But the problem when you’re—and I passed this experience on to other people who were ending a long spate of very intense work: it’s a little like stepping off a speeding train. And you’re—you can feel a little lost that you don’t have to get up every day at the crack of dawn and not finish work until it’s dark outside. You have to organize your life a different way.

And it took me a few months to do that. So, when friends are retiring, I always use that speeding train image, and I say, “I hope you have something to occupy you as fully as you had your work before.”

I still act from time to time, if it seems—if it seems like it’ll be fun. But the podcast that I do gives me so much pleasure, and it’s enjoyed by people and it’s not—it doesn’t have the tens of millions of people every week listening that the television show had, but it doesn’t matter to me. It never mattered to me how big the audience was as long as something took place between us. And the show actually does very well. And I get a lot of really interesting feedback. But not only do I have the pleasure of—as you do—the pleasure of the interview: the give and take, the back and forth, the improv quality of it.

I talk to really interesting people—like McCartney, like Yo-Yo Ma, Tom Hanks, and people you might not have heard of. Like, Christian Picciolini, who had been a skinhead and regularly beat people up because they were Jewish or Black. And once realized that it was a person he was doing this to, and he wanted to stop and got out of it and then dedicated his life to helping other skinheads leave the movement. And it’s an example of communication that you don’t often think of as a job for communication. But that was a fascinating story, and it takes him sometimes two years to help somebody leave, to get the—to get the point of view that enables them to go.

The guy—another guy who was at one time the chief hostage negotiator for the FBI, and he had all these communication skills that he would use to get a hostage released. And he said that those skills he had developed to get a hostage released were very useful in a marriage. So, you never know where you’re gonna get an angle that you really didn’t expect just talking to people about their work. So, I have the best time. And occasionally, we have fascinating scientists on. But I love that that we talk about communicating and relating in the loosest possible way. So, it applies to how musicians make music, how actors act. And I’m so interested in people who do more than one thing. Very senior scientists who are also singers and dancers and musicians. And sometimes, professionally so, not just as a hobby.

Isn’t it interesting how people can be talented in such varied ways?

00:37:32	Jesse	Host	Well, Alan Alda, I appreciate your time.
00:37:36	Alan	Guest	Thank you. It’s been fun talking with you. You do listen and you ask from listening, which is really fun.
00:37:46	Jesse	Host	Alan Alda. This podcast is called *Clear+Vivid*. He just interviewed Bette Midler on there! So, go give it a listen. And also, Bette Midler, come on our show. Always wanted to have Bette Midler on this show. I know I’m no Alan Alda, but let’s make this happen!
00:38:00	Music	Transition	Bright synth with a steady beat.
00:38:03	Jesse	Host	That’s the end of another episode of *Bullseye*. *Bullseye*, created from the homes me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California. Here at my house, I’ve been filling

			those reusable shopping bags with grapefruits and hanging them from my fence. And yesterday, somebody just took a full bag of grapefruits. And I'm just like more power to 'em. *[Laughs.]* Take those grapefruits. I have three trees. Our show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our senior producer is Kevin Ferguson. Our producers are Jesus Ambrosio, Valerie Moffat and Richard Robey. A big welcome to Tabatha Myers, our newest production fellow at MaximumFun.org. Special thanks to Alan Alda for recording himself at his home! He did a great job! We get booking help on the show from Mara Davis. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Our theme song is called "Huddle Formation", written and recorded by the group The Go! Team. Thanks to them and their label, Memphis Industries, for sharing it with us. *Bullseye* is also on YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. Find us there, give us a follow and we'll share with you all our interviews. And think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.
00:39:10	Promo	Promo	**Speaker**: *Bullseye with Jesse Thorn* is a production of MaximumFun.org and is distributed by NPR. *[Music fades out.]*