

Make Me Smart September 17, 2021 transcript

Note: *Marketplace podcasts are meant to be heard, with emphasis, tone and audio elements a transcript can't capture. Transcripts are generated using a combination of automated software and human transcribers, and may contain errors. Please check the corresponding audio before quoting it.*

Kimberly Adams: I'll show everyone again once we get going, it should be any second now I think.

Kai Ryssdal: Look at that. Hey everybody, I'm Kai Ryssdal. Welcome back to Make Me Smart, making today make sense is what we do most of the time.

Kimberly Adams: Most of the time. I'm Kimberly Adams in for Molly Wood who's out today, and it is happy hour Friday or as we call it economics on tap, live stream up and running. I've got the discord going. I see everyone in the chat, shouting out their drinks. I appreciate it. And so thanks to everybody who's hopping on in the various places where people join us. Thank you.

Kai Ryssdal: You know, it's great. You know, it's great having you on, you just slide right in. You're just like, yeah, I know what I'm doing. It's great. No, it's good. It's totally awesome. Today being Friday, we'll do a little half full half empty. I think Drew's around today, but I'm actually not sure. If you are half full on the show, or even if you're half empty, honestly, take a moment and subscribe, would you? Apple podcasts, whatever you're using, we don't care. You know, and then you can listen and send it to friends. Okay, so this being Friday, I need to follow up on what I said last week, which was that I'm going to be drinking a stone 25th anniversary triple IPA. So it is, I'm going to have one and I'm going to have very gently, but stone for those who don't know that these are like the granddaddy of the West Coast IPA people and I've been a fan for a long time. And it's a good beer. Let me tell you that. Let me tell you that.

Kimberly Adams: Well, I made a special cocktail just for you, Kai. I made a pumpkin spice Margarita.

Kai Ryssdal: Oh my god. I thought you were kidding. I totally thought, there was banter about this in the slack. And I thought oh, no, they don't really get it. Did you really?

Kimberly Adams: Yes, I did. And I even, for those who are watching the live stream, you can see that I'm very proud of my drink because I made like, a brown sugar cinnamon, nutmeg, salt rim, and I've got my little cinnamon stick for a garnish. And it's one of the more complicated drinks that I make because you have to take, you have to take like pumpkin puree, you can use fresh or canned, and then you drain the pumpkin liquid off. And then you use that pumpkin liquid to make simple syrup with brown sugar and the spices. And then you add a little bit of the actual pumpkin puree and then you mix it with tequila and like contra or triple sec or whatever and some lime juice and you're making a face, but it's delicious. And that's what I'm having.

Kai Ryssdal: Okay, well so you do you as you do all the time and more power to you. It's a lot of work. That's true. That's, that's really excellent. It's just a lot of work. And I appreciate the craft of it. But all I did was open a beer and I feel a little cheesy now. That's all.

Kimberly Adams: We love you just the way you are, Kai. Just the way you are.

Kai Ryssdal: Okay. I said nice things about you, too. Oh, man. All right.

Kimberly Adams: No, I was serious. That was genuine. Oh, and I forgot that I also put in bitters. But everybody knows I always have bitters.

Kai Ryssdal: Alright, fair enough. Fair enough.

Kimberly Adams: News, possibly? Let's do it.

Kai Ryssdal: Let's, let's do let's do some news. You know, it's interesting. There are two big news stories today. And we have each hit on one of them. Mine is the, the admission by the Pentagon that the drone strike that killed 10 people in Afghanistan, killed 10 of the wrong people. And then nobody from ISIS K was killed. In fact, it was civilians and a long-term employee of a humanitarian group over there. This is, this is the direct result of the reporting the New York Times did a week or so ago, with some video analysis. Here's why I bring it up. Because it's not generally in our, our sphere of influence, right. I mean, but, but I feel obliged to point out one really important thing. The Biden administration has said from the get go that after the pullout, they will maintain capabilities in Afghanistan to take out terrorist groups because they can work over the horizon. That is to say, they can use remote targeting, they can use remote intelligence, and they can use remote attacks to take out people that they don't want forming terrorist cells or what have you. This is a really good example of over the horizon intelligence is really, really not as good as it is to have it on the ground. I won't say bad because there are some really incredible technical capabilities. But over the horizon is not as good intelligence. And when you're talking about these kinds of attacks, it's critical to have solid intelligence. And when you think of the number of drone strikes that we've done, usually in the dead of night, by the way, over the past 20 years in the Middle East all over, not just in South Asia and Afghanistan, but, but on the Arabian Peninsula, it gets really hard to imagine we haven't done this kind of thing before. And in fact, we know we have. And I just, I feel, yeah.

Kimberly Adams: That's what really has jumped out to me about this. There just so happened to be so much focus and energy on what was happening in Afghanistan at the moment of our withdrawal. So there was a lot of media, a lot of US press focused. There are drone strikes, as you mentioned, throughout the Middle East all the time without this kind of focus at attention. And, you know, this got so much follow up because right away, you had people on the ground reporting that this didn't hit the right target. Now, I also think it's worthwhile how quickly that yielded a, we made a mistake. And that's a good point.

Kai Ryssdal: That's a good point.

Kimberly Adams: And I wonder, I've heard other stories about people fighting for years for acknowledgement of drone strikes that went wrong. And is this a symptom of an administration that's more willing to admit when it messed up? Is it a symptom of the fact that the media was there to see it and report on it and hold our leaders to account? Or is it something else, but none of that fixes it for the families, especially the seven kids that were killed in that strike.

Kai Ryssdal: So yeah, anyway, I just, I want to bring that up and give my thoughts, because it's a big deal. It is a big deal. Okay, your turn. Yeah.

Kimberly Adams: So big, scientific debate today that happened with this FDA advisory panel about booster shots and whether or not, you know, we should get them. Now, I want to start this off by saying this is not the end of the debate. But this FDA advisory panel has said that people over 65 and people who are at very high risk should be able to get booster shots of one of the vaccines, I want to say that it's Pfizer, yeah, the Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine, there's a separate process for the other two vaccines. This is not the end of it, the FDA is going to make its own decision, they usually rely a lot on what this particular panel says, and the CDC is going to make its own decision. But this is a step on the path to more widespread booster shots for at least older Americans. And, um, you know, I just got back from a visit with my mother the other day, and her doctor is--

Kai Ryssdal: Sorry, who is how old?

Kimberly Adams: She's 70. Yeah, she's 70. And her doctor has told, had been telling her that she didn't need a booster shot, you know, and it hadn't been approved for her. So I've got several thoughts about this. Number one is we still have so many people all over the world who don't have access to vaccines at all. And that's the ongoing issue. We're headed into winter, we have so many more cases. There are, you know, one of the fights that kind of came out in this debate today for younger people is that even though you, the efficacy of the vaccines may wane over time, the vaccine still pretty much stop you from dying of COVID. And so, and we don't know yet what, how affect, how much more the boosters help you and the science is still out. So that's, that's one part of, you know, me kind of processing this. The other part of it is, how are they going to stop people from getting a third shot? I know plenty of people who are out there just getting a third jab and saying that they have, haven't had any vaccine just because they've decided they want a booster. And I just wonder what is in place to stop people from getting that third shot?

Kai Ryssdal: Yeah, nothing. Nothing. Nothing, you know, so my mom's 82.

Kimberly Adams: Says card them, card with what? Show me that you don't have a vaccine card?

Kai Ryssdal: Right. Right. You know, my mom is 82 and the place she lives, they're going to set up a little facility down in the lobby for all the, you know, ultra senior citizens, I suppose you are when you're over 80 or whatever, to get a shot. And that's great for them. But, but I think your

point about so many people aren't vaccinated here and around the world is really what's going to keep this being not a pandemic, but the virus will come endemic and we're going to be wearing masks for a while and, and this will be a recurring thing, right? And it just will. And we need to wrap our brains around that and then make sure that everybody does all that they can despite the politics. This is Friday, not hollowed out shell Thursday, Kimberly.

Kimberly Adams: I wasn't here on Thursday. I have to like, you know, get all of my hollowed out and is there, okay, well, and I won't even mention my other one. Maybe we should just, you know, talk about something fun like banana pants.

Kai Ryssdal: Let's talk about banana pants. Holy cow.

Kimberly Adams: Let's talk about banana pants.

Kai Ryssdal: I don't even know how to say this, but you people, by you people I mean, all you say it's banana pants are, are amazing. A week or so ago, we got on this podcast, Molly and I did, and said, Hey, could you by next Friday give us \$250,000? And all y'all freakin stepped up. We asked for \$250, we got \$315,000, which is craziness. I will tell you now that Molly and I were prepared to do karaoke as a, as a, as an incentive as it were. And if you know Molly, you know, she likes to sing. And that's fine. If you know me, I'm the more retiring type. But, but it turns out even without that incentive, you guys stepped up to \$315,000 from almost 3,000 donors, a total by the way of 1,061 pair of banana pants have been requested as gifts. Also, there are ringtones. There's, there's all kinds of stuff. Banana pants, by the way, might come back, but they might not in the year end campaign. So you know, get them while you can now. Anyway, so the short answer is, thank you. The slightly longer answer is you guys are awesome. And I don't even know what to do. I don't even know what to do.

Kimberly Adams: That, that's so cool. Like, thanks, everyone. That's so nice of y'all. Yeah, it's just. this just fuels more cocktail hours.

Kai Ryssdal: Don't say that.

Kimberly Adams: I mean, it's technically part of the show, which is news.

Kai Ryssdal: If that's true. That's true. I should expense my beer. That's what I should do. Hello, St. Paul. Yeah, good luck. All right. Anyway, Drew, before I actually get in trouble. Holy cow, okay. Friday, half full, half empty, our predictions on various topics, Drew Jostad is back in the saddle. What do you got? What do you got?

Drew: Are you half full or half empty on companies paying for college to attract and retain workers?

Kai Ryssdal: I'm, I'm all the way full. I think corporate America should step up as being a corporate citizen and, and help employees with those costs. It benefits companies and it benefits the people and the economy. I don't know, what do you think?

Kimberly Adams: Oh, half full, I'm not gonna go all the way full because versions of this program, or these types of programs have existed for such a long time. And, and, you know, whether it be, you know, company reimbursement for college courses or specialized training in factories at community colleges, I don't know how new it is. I guess it's new because Amazon is doing it in a much more purposeful way. And I think that it's just sort of another perk in a tight labor market. You know, it worked pretty well for the National Guard for many years.

Kai Ryssdal: And look, there is, there is the GI Bill that's come up once in the comments already. And look, this is a really good point from Joseph Kozlowski, we need to stop tying things to jobs, which is, which is a really good, much bigger picture question, talking about health insurance and benefits and all those kinds of things. That's a really good point. But I, until we have that kind of systemic change, I think, you know, with Kimberly's caveat about how this has been tried many times, generally speaking, I think it's a good thing. Yeah, yeah.

Kimberly Adams: I think so several, um, fast food chains have scholarships for employees sometimes, which is a version of this. But I do think targeting it at sort of lower income workers is a really good thing. And maybe it's been a perk more closely associated with higher wage jobs, I think until relatively recently. So yeah, full.

Kai Ryssdal: Super quick comment from the comments. Kimberly's opinion is so refreshing. Number two. Kimberly FTW. Alright, anyway, Drew go.

Drew: Half full or half empty on daily paychecks?

Kimberly Adams: Wow.

Kimberly Adams: Half empty.

Kai Ryssdal: Are you? How come?

Kimberly Adams: I think that it makes, is probably going, I don't know the story behind this. But just in general, like there's been research about people who have to rely on sort of day laboring that you don't save as well and it makes it harder to budget. Because it's sort of one in one out and it makes harder, it makes it harder to plan for sort of big expenses. And it tends to exacerbate situations with people who are un- or under banked but, you know, I'm not sure what story this is related to.

Kai Ryssdal: You're well, I, you know, I saw it go by in my feed at some point in the last 36 hours. I think you're actually right that it makes it easier to not pay attention to the need to plan. You know, I get X dollars today and boom, it's gone. I think that's exactly right. Yep. Oh, I hear the cocktail shake.

Kimberly Adams: Yeah, I poured the rest of it.

Kai Ryssdal: Getting every last drop of that pumpkin spice whatever it is.

Kimberly Adams: Pumpkin spice deliciousness. The next time we're in the same city, I'm gonna make you one and you're gonna like it.

Kai Ryssdal: Oh, okay. Yes, ma'am. Next.

Drew: All right. On a more serious note, the decrease in poverty due to government support in 2020. Thoughts?

Kai Ryssdal: You did this story.

Kimberly Adams: I did this story. I'm going to go with half full, but not all the way full because it demonstrated that the temporary measures we had to alleviate poverty during the pandemic were effective. But those measures were indeed temporary and many of them are expiring. But I think it's great to have the data that shows what works. I don't know that we necessarily have the political will to keep that going.

Kai Ryssdal: We do not, let me just spoiler alert. I don't think we do.

Kimberly Adams: So are you half full or half empty?

Kai Ryssdal: I'm whatever you said, I, you know, it's hard right? It's hard.

Kimberly Adams: I really am bringing everybody down.

Kai Ryssdal: It's all good.

Drew: Okay, a story from my home state gone national, are we half full or half empty on Casa Bonita?

Kimberly Adams: All the way full, I loved that story!

Kai Ryssdal: Oh, yeah, this is a, this is a great little bit. It was not a little piece. It was it was a nice long piece that Amy actually had a chance to run around and talk to a lot of people about this restaurant in in the suburbs of Colorado, which she remembered from her childhood, which has been involved in, you know, like just pandemic stuff and people coming in and helping out and all this and that. Anyway, Casa Bonita as a proxy for many other restaurants and in places that we love in this economy. I think I'm half full. That was great. It was super good. Google that if you don't know what we're talking about.

Kimberly Adams: Yeah, and or go back and listen to the story where she even, you know, talks about cliff divers in a restaurant, which just blew my mind, inside. It was a great story, but Amy always does such a great job.

Kai Ryssdal: She does. Okay, she absolutely does.

Drew: That was a half full from Kimberly, I guess.

Kimberly Adams: That was an all the way full. All the way. All the way. Just like my cocktail glass.

Kai Ryssdal: Lot of Casa Bonita love in the comments. Holy cow.

Drew: I might be the only one on this podcast who's been to Casa Bonita.

Kimberly Adams: Your opinion matters so much more. Where are you on this?

Kai Ryssdal: Yeah, come on, put up or shut up, pal.

Drew: Oh, I'm half full on it. People like it. It's campy, it's, it's silly, but there's, yeah, there's people diving inside while you're eating your food or whatever.

Kai Ryssdal: It's all you need.

Drew: I don't know if I'm, I don't know if I'm half full on the South Park part of the story. But that's a different issue.

Kimberly Adams: The South Park part of the story being that the creators of South Park which featured Casa Bonita in some of the episodes bought Casa Bonita to save it from bankruptcy or something but some of the fans of Casa Bonita were not thrilled about that.

Kai Ryssdal: This is great. Jean Hobbs says of Casa Bonita, I have been there in the 1970s.

Drew: It's probably about the same as it was then. Last topic, cup noodle sodas.

Kai Ryssdal: I don't know what that is. I have no clue.

Drew: You know the little ramen things that you get from like, convenience stores? They have like a 50th anniversary or something coming up and they've decided to make a beverage.

Kai Ryssdal: So here's my question. How much sodium is in those beverages, right? Because those are basically giant sodium transporters. That's all I'm saying. Ya know, the comments are going crazy what, what empty? What, what, gross, no.

Kimberly Adams: As empty as one can possibly be, an emptiness in my soul. Says the person drinking a pumpkin spice cocktail, empty.

Kai Ryssdal: Oh, my goodness. I don't even know who's driving downtown. Oh my goodness. Oh, there's the dogs.

Kimberly Adams: There's the dogs.

Kai Ryssdal: Oh my goodness.

Kimberly Adams: Tim from Austin says that the soda probably tastes like college.

Kai Ryssdal: Probably does. Everybody hold on one sec. Hey Bonsai! Alright she's gonna bark, we're just gonna have to deal. Holy cow.

Kimberly Adams: She's, she's being a great defender. That's what she's doing, she's saving you from something.

Kai Ryssdal: She's 27 pounds of absolutely spirited—come here!

Kimberly Adams: She's saving you. She's being really hardcore defender of the realm. And that's important. And she's doing a great job. Here we go.

Kai Ryssdal: So from, from the shed, it's me and Bonsai. We're done today. Thanks for listening, next weekend an explainer on the social safety net. Actually, this is going to be for reals. Super informative, what it is, how it works. All the rest of that stuff because we talked about it all the time. I'm not sure everybody understands exactly what we mean. Oh, Bonsai.

Kimberly Adams: The social safety of dogs. Yes, I can hear her. She's so cute. Alright, if you think of us over the weekend, or you want to send a question or a comment or an answer to the make me smart question, send us a voice memo or an email to makesmart@marketplace.org, or you can call us if you want to share your own barking dogs. You know, we're, we love dog sounds too. Our number is 508-827-6278, which is 508-UB-SMART.

Kai Ryssdal: I'm sorry about the dogs. I'm really sorry.

Kimberly Adams: I love it.

Kai Ryssdal: I'm not sure everybody else does. Make Me Smart is produced by Marissa Cabrera. Marque Greene is learning the ropes with us too this week. Today's episode was engineered by Drew Jostad, also the talent on half full half empty. The senior producer is Bridget Bodnar.

Kimberly Adams: All right, and the team behind the YouTube live stream and the game half full half empty is Stephen Byeon, Catherine Divine, Emily McCune, who has been with me in the Slack channel on the pumpkin spice treats, and Mel Rosenberg. The theme music for half full

half empty was written by the amazing Drew Jostad and the executive director of on demand is Sitara Nieves. I promise it's good once you have like, tequila and enough liquor and anything will make it good, really.