

Season 3 Episode 3 Samara Ibanez

Voice over – Season three of the Options Save Lives podcast is brought to you with the support of our presenting sponsor R Street Institute and is hosted by Executive Director, Jenny Williamson.

Jenny Williamson – Today we have Samara Ibanez with us from our Your Sinclair Method coaching program. Welcome back to the show, Samara. Please introduce yourself to our audience and share a little bit about your background helping people access and successfully navigate the Sinclair Method.

Samara Ibanez – Wonderful. I would love to do that. So again, my name is Samara Ibanez and I have, I'm a fellow TSMer. I was able to hit extinction on TSM in May of 2021 and it's just been a complete, amazing life transformation since then. I have a lot to say about that, but one thing I want to say is that previously before that, I'm 45, and before that I was having issues with alcohol for about two and a half decades. And so since extinction though I lost 50 pounds. 30 pounds, I'll give it 30 pounds were due to alcohol itself. And then the other 20 pounds was just being able to make it to the gym in the morning because I could and I could work out now and stick to a healthy lifestyle. So yeah, it's been just an amazing ride. And then now, being a coach allows me to just give back all of that knowledge that I gained during this journey. And I absolutely love serving others and teaching them and helping them get through this process.

Jenny Williamson – That is awesome. And a lot of your passion for coaching and helping people on the Sinclair Method does come from your own experience with the treatment. Can you talk a little bit about your personal journey and how that helped develop into the desire to help other people?

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, it's really interesting, you know, so when I actually did the journey, like I did the TSM Method twice. The first time, I call it a failed attempt and it was because number one, I was just basically experimenting with the medication. I didn't have the support system behind me yet and I hadn't read any, much, I hadn't read much of the information about what was really going on scientifically in the brain when doing this process, so I wasn't fully knowledgeable yet. So that first attempt, you know, I ended up going back to drinking. And I had some initial results that were really positive. I had reduced consumption of alcohol, I had reduced cravings, but I didn't, I didn't do it to completion. And I let myself kind of, my brain kind of get in the way and have excuses and stuff. So I went back to drinking all of 2020, and then in 2021 January, I sat my family down. I was determined this time. I had read the book at that point. I had gotten a lot of support behind me with other people online and stuff, like on Facebook groups and stuff. And this time I decided I was going to do it for real, like I was going to, whatever, however long it would take, I was going to do it. And I was just I had a different mindset and I was also willing to do the work. So there's this thing that we say often in the TSM world that the pill does half of the work, and the other half of the work is you. You got to work you know, it's work but it's very, very, it's worth it. It's worth the work. It's worth doing the work. But yeah, so I just did the work and I'll explain a little bit more of what that work is. But yeah, that's during that second time around, that is when I kind of started to develop this methodology, this like five step process that I outline in my coaching bio. And that's kind of that's where I started this process and the five steps and how all of it work together to bring healing and transformation to one's life.

Jenny Williamson – And you call that five step process, the purposeful TSM blueprint. Can you walk us through that process? And we'll talk a little bit about each piece and why they're important not just as individual steps but also why all five are important to do together.

Samara Ibanez – Yes, for sure. So, yeah, I mean, starting with the number one which is the methodology. This is kind of like based on all the questions that my clients asked me. So I've just kind of recorded over time, like all the starting questions, the beginner questions that they asked me and that's what I loosely based this methodology part portion on. And basically it goes over what TSM looks like for daily drinkers and what TSM looks like for binge style

drinkers, which it's a slightly different protocol for each one. So I kind of just go deeper into that so that people know what to expect when they're on the program. And what else. I took some notes, I'm looking at my notes. It's also a place where I really dive into what ADE is, the alcohol deprivation effect, because I really feel like when people have a really good understanding of the alcohol deprivation effect they, it helps them understand why they turned to alcohol for so many years. And so it really helped me when I had a full understanding of that phenomenon, that scientific phenomenon, I was able to, it was like an aha moment for me and I was able to understand why I was drinking for so many years, you know, and how it can be reversed. Yeah.

Jenny Williamson – And, you know, you mentioned two really important things in your description of methodology. First, we'll go with the alcohol deprivation effect because I know that we get questions from people who don't understand it, who are afraid that taking one alcohol free day is going to trigger the alcohol deprivation effect. And then the other part was just the common questions and what to expect, and it sounds like both of those really settle into a category of setting proper expectations. Can you talk about how important it is to have your expectations of the process aligned with how the process works and the methodology behind it?

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, oh my goodness, it's so important to have those expectations aligned right at the beginning, because I've run into this problem quite a bit with clients where they had different expectations and especially different expectations for taking the medication and how to take the medication. And when one mistake slightly off, you know, way of taking it, like they forgot to take it with food, and then their expectations are shattered and they don't think that they can continue on. They say "Oh, this Method is not for me", you know, and so I just, that's why I want to cover all of that in the first what I call module or whatever. But I have to cover that so I can get them very aligned with what the process is and so it becomes a pleasurable process. It's pleasurable for them.

Jenny Williamson – And I imagine it probably reduces a lot of fear as well because some of the common expectation is, I'm going to take this pill, I don't have to do anything else, I'm going to miraculously suddenly decide that I no longer have any interest in alcohol, and it's going to happen in the first couple of weeks or it's never gonna work.

Samara Ibanez – I literally I just went through this with a client. And it is true like if we don't arm ourselves with the knowledge, the scientific knowledge behind what's really happening in the brain when we drink on this medication, then we don't fully understand and then we think it's a magic pill that's just going to cure us in a couple of weeks. And it really is kind of a long game if you think about it. For example, I'm going to use myself as an example. From the time that I first started TSM which was in 2019 to now, where I'm at now in this new phase of, so now I'm in a new phase which is alcohol free. Literally just don't drink anymore. I don't need it. I don't think about it. I have so many other things going on. I just, it's my choice. I just don't want to drink. It took two and a half years to get here. So, you know, think of it as like it's, even though I mean I say I hit extinction in five months, which I feel like I did because I didn't crave anymore. I didn't crave alcohol anymore so that was wonderful. But that whole next year, I continued to drink at moderate safe levels with, you know, compliantly with the medication. And that led me to this next phase of extinction that I'm at right now which is alcohol free. So I just want to encourage people who are listening, that it's not necessarily like a short process. It could take a couple years just to get through the different phases. But yeah, it's so worth it. The reward is so amazing at the end because you're literally, your identity, your identity has changed surrounding alcohol. You're not the same person you were.

Jenny Williamson – And you also said something else very interesting right now that I want to have you comment on in terms of how you explain this to your clients. But you made the differentiation between extinction being when you lost the cravings and how that is not necessarily meeting your drink reduction goals, that they're two different things. Because I think a lot of people are afraid that even though they have lost their cravings, their habits and stuff, which we'll talk about coming up, still have them drinking more than they want to. And the fear that they haven't crossed the finish line to meet their ultimate goals yet makes them

think that the process isn't working at all. So talk about how you talk somebody through that understanding of the difference.

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, that's such a great, great thing to mention. And I'm actually dealing with this with a couple clients right now. They get in the mindset of they want to rush to the next level or something, and I'm very fortunate that I was able to do this on myself and I was able to let it, I had this like loving way of looking at it, of looking at myself through the process so that it was loving and self compassionate. And so I was just allowing it, the process to unfold organically. And this is what I tell my clients, you know, I just allowed it to unfold organically. And I kind of went by, you know, what I was feeling at the time. Like I just didn't, when I hit extinction I made a mental note that I wasn't going to force myself into abstinence because I didn't have to. I have this tool. I have naltrexone that's going to help me so I don't have to. And because I did that and for a whole year I drank responsibly, like moderate safe levels, meaning for about once or twice a month one to two drinks in a sitting, right, with the medicine, always compliantly. Because I did that and I didn't force myself into any which way, I was able to reach this next level. And it was all by just organically letting the process unfold. And whatever the healing that needed to happen in my brain, it was happening. Every time you take, you know, every time you take naltrexone and you drink on naltrexone you are healing your brain. So that had to happen for however long it did. And then now I'm where I'm at now.

Jenny Williamson – I like to call that accidental abstinence.

Samara Ibanez – Accidental abstinence. Exactly. It's like it just happened, you know, and I didn't have to force anything, you know, and that whole process taught me about really loving myself and like having self compassion. And that's what I try to teach my clients all the time. I teach them like this whole process, the TSM process taught me how to love myself. It's really beautiful.

Jenny Williamson – And now I love something that you just said, and I think that segues really well into moving on into the second and third parts of the process. And you mentioned that you didn't have to, in your words, force anything. However, at no time did you say you didn't have to put effort in. So talk about how the effort moving along your blueprint is different from trying to force things.

Samara Ibanez – Oh, yeah, that's so great, I'm glad you made that comparison. It was a lot of effort. It was very intentional effort. I mean, I literally put everything else, every other life goal on the back burner so that I could focus on this. And then once I hit extinction, it was a little bit more relaxed because I didn't have to deal with cravings anymore. So you know, then I can just kind of live a little bit more peaceful existence because I didn't have all the chatter going on and you know, waking up in the morning, thinking about when I'm going to drink or what I'm going to drink or you know, if tomorrow I'm going to drink or if I'm not going to drink, like it just that goes away. That all of that noise in the head goes away and you have peace. And then I was just, you know, doing what I did. Um, but yeah, so the effort that was involved was very intentional.

Jenny Williamson – On the heels of that, let's move into the second part of your blueprint, mindfulness and self awareness.

Samara Ibanez – Okay. Yeah. So what that looked like on a practical level, what the effort looked like on a practical level was that I had to start implementing a bunch of mindfulness habits. And this is part of the, I call it, so I'm writing a book and it's going to be a 'how to book' but from my perspective, and this basically outlines these five, this five step blueprint, this is what it's going to be. And then it's going to have my story you know, in it so people can see the example. So yeah, so it all kind of goes together. But the mindfulness habits that I basically started doing were logging my drinks. I mean, this is all practical stuff that we teach, you know in our coaching practice, logging my drinks, measuring my cravings on a scale from one to 10, becoming curious about my drinking behavior, and then journaling. There was a lot of journaling going on at the time. And because of that journaling, I was able to develop this

five step process because of the journaling that I did, so it all worked out, you know, in order for me to teach others, you know, the way, yeah. So, yeah, becoming curious about drinking, what else? And I just want to say something. This self awareness that, okay, these practices create a lot of self awareness. The self awareness leads to knowledge. This knowledge leads to understanding. The understanding leads to wisdom, and wisdom makes us helps us make wise choices. So it's just a process.

Jenny Williamson – So you start with the methodology, and then you go into the mindfulness and self awareness and talk a little bit about how some of the misconceptions we'll call them about mindfulness. Because some people still hold on to that belief that if they're being mindful and thinking about things and willing themselves through it, then that's what's doing the work and not the pill, and so they they lose the ability, through a lack of understanding, to differentiate between what the medication is doing for them and the part that mindfulness plays in that.

Samara Ibanez – Mindfulness to me just means doing practical work to get myself thinking about my drinking behavior. And that's all those things that I, you know, that I mentioned that I listed. But yeah, so that's what mindfulness is to me, is implementing practical exercises, you know, we're writing and we're logging and we're measuring our cravings and we're creating that awareness around our drinking behavior.

Jenny Williamson – And that awareness on its own does not reduce the drinking is what I'm hearing say, but it helps set you up for success, to be a partner with the process.

Samara Ibanez – Oh, my goodness, I feel like we can't do, we can't do TSM without it. Like this is an integral part of the method, you know, and it's from people like me and Katie Lain and all the people that have done it, how we develop this process, because it's like we had to do these things in order to get our healing. It leads, you know what it does, it leads to transformation. It leads to a shift in our identity. That's what this, all of this work does.

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Jenny Williamson – The thought of changing your identity might feel like it's overwhelming when you think about it. But talk about why that shouldn't really be as scary as we tend to make it out to be.

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, for sure. So in the beginning, when I was first starting out, I would have never, if someone told me that I would have been freaked out, like my identity, like what do you mean my identity? I'm fine, you know, like, but it's almost like you can't really see the bigger picture. So I just I tell people this because I want them to start, I want my clients to start visualizing a different version of themselves, a better version of themselves. So that's why I set the stage with painting that picture you know, about their identity change, but really it's not something that you have to understand right away. You don't have to understand it. It's actually something that does take place though, while you're doing this process, and I just guess I keep reiterating to my clients, just let it unfold. Like let it unfold organically, and you just, you are where you are right now and accept that and then you're slowly moving towards the better version of yourself.

Jenny Williamson – So let's move on to the third step in your process. Which is habits, cravings and triggers.

Samara Ibanez – Yeah so this is an exercise basically that I take my clients through, and I ask them this three part question. Well I ask them to start asking themselves this three part question every time they reach for a drink. Is it a habit? Is it a craving, like is it a physical like intense craving? or is it a trigger, a trigger being did they have a horrible day at work? They got yelled at by their boss and then they felt like they need a drink, like at the end of the day they're like, I need a drink, you know? So you start asking yourself these questions and it

becomes a habit that you ask yourself these questions, and you can even write down your answers. I encourage it. I encourage writing down the answers. And that is also part of the transformation process that helps you learn so much about your drinking behavior. And then it also helps you to begin to reflect on your, because there's a point in this process where you reflect on your past drinking behavior and you almost start to, a lot of stuff starts to come up, a lot of stuff, like mistakes that you made or disappointing your family members and friends at events where you blacked out or, you know, just different things come up and then that's okay. Actually, we want that stuff to come up, because you're gonna feel those feelings. You gotta go through the emotions of having that disappointment, and then you're going to release it and you're going to forgive yourself. Forgiveness is a big part of the process.

Jenny Williamson – And all of that sounds really easy when you say it.

Samara Ibanez –Really?

Jenny Williamson – However, we all know how difficult all of that really is. I mean, especially in the beginning. It can be very difficult for people to even differentiate between what's a habit, what's a trigger and what's a craving. And so how does the act of at least attempting to identify each urge as one of those, make doing this repetitively easier?

Samara Ibanez – It's just, it's really, it really helps. So you, at first it's hard because you don't even differentiate like you said, and then you start getting in the habit of asking yourself these three questions. And then you start recording the answers and you start to see patterns. You start to see patterns and my pattern was for the most part I was craving. For the most part I was dealing with cravings like physical cravings. When I saw people drinking at a restaurant or even on TV on a movie, I immediately was like, I need to go get a bottle of wine because I saw people drinking wine, you know? And it was like, it was in my mouth, like I could taste the wine. So that was a craving. And most of the time I rarely had, it was rarely a habit for me because I was a binge style drinker. It was more like I was a fly by the seat of my pants kind of girl so, you know, 'Ooh, I'm in the mood to drink today' but then I would take four days and not drink, you know, so that's just what I was, you know. But it really does help people understand their drinking behavior when they start asking these questions of themselves.

Jenny Williamson – And then once they have that information, what do they do with it?

Samara Ibanez – I know transformation is like such a like, What do you mean transformation? What do you mean? But this process is all part of creating that self awareness and that understanding of your drinking behavior, and for some reason all of that leads to change. As scary as it sounds it does lead to change, becoming aware of your drinking behavior and how you've drunk for so many years. And you know, like for me it was two and a half decades of unpacking my habits and my drinking behavior and my cravings and understanding all of that. It all came to a head. It all, I understood at the end of the process. I understood so much about myself.

Jenny Williamson – And it sounds like something that we've said a few times, more than a few times really in the peer support. You can't fix something until you understand what the problem is.

Samara Ibanez – That's it. You know something I want to talk really quick about AA because I was in AA for about 15 years. But something that they used to say back in AA was, it doesn't matter why you started drinking, it doesn't matter how you started drinking, it's just matters that you focus on the now and focus on sobriety and staying sober. I always had a problem with that because my natural thought process wanted to understand my drinking. Why? Why did I get into it in the first place? Why did I become addicted? Why did I start developing cravings? You know, why? Why? Why was I using it as a coping mechanism to unwind from my stressful day. You know why? So all of these questions get answered during this process.

Jenny Williamson – Once you have identified the habits, the cravings, the triggers, because identifying them alone doesn't make the change, again, we come back to effort. So again, talk a little bit about, especially since you spent so much time in AA, what is the difference in applying effort to change how you react to the habits, the cravings and triggers as opposed to what it feels to white knuckle through not drinking even though you're having these.

Samara Ibanez – What comes up for me is that I was making excuses. Okay, so I was making excuses. Okay, when I was faced with these, all of these questions that I ask my clients and I take my clients through I was, in the beginning I was making excuses for my drinking, but I was faced with that, so I didn't know I had excuses for my drinking behavior. Like for example, one of my excuses was, well I need wine to cope. Like I'm just a person that needs wine to cope with my day, with my stress level like. So when I was faced with that excuse, and I realized through Claudia by the way who was amazing, God said that she spoke into my life in this way, that made me realize that I was making an excuse about my drinking and that it was my responsibility. It's my responsibility to do whatever it takes to come up with a different coping mechanism. There's all kinds of healthy ways to cope in life, and I was choosing alcohol to cope. And there's other ways and there's lots of people in the world that can cope with very healthy lifestyle ways of coping. And so why can't I be that way too? So once I took responsibility for my alcohol, you know my alcohol use and for fixing the problem, that's where the effort came in, because that created the need to put effort into this process, you know, because I realized that these were some things I wanted to fix in my life. And I have the tools to fix them, so I've got to work through these steps and fix this.

Jenny Williamson – Describe why is health and nutrition so incredibly important in just both recovery itself, and the Sinclair Method, in particular?

Samara Ibanez – Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. So I've actually, I created a document in the last couple of days. This is something I've been wanting to do for quite a while, but I really did a bunch of research into this because I found out some really important things. Number one, alcohol does an insane amount of damage to our bodies by depleting a whole bunch of vitamins and minerals from our body. So when we're in that deficient state, it actually causes more cravings for alcohol. I didn't know that. I didn't know that, I learned that along this process. So that's why this fourth step here in the five step process is about nutrition, because I think and since I'm naturally drawn to nutrition because I'm a health coach, so you know, I studied this and this is what I love, this is like my other passion. I was able to implement this stuff in my TSM journey and I think it really, really aided the extinction process. I think because I was able to take these supplements and replenish all the vitamins and minerals that were being depleted every time I drank, I think I was able to speed up even the extinction process because of that and get to the point where with no cravings.

Jenny Williamson – What are some of the nutritional basics that someone, like if you can't do anything else, these are some of the absolute minimum things you really need to be looking at doing for yourself on a nutritional health basis?

Samara Ibanez – Basically, so alcohol completely depletes A, B, C, D, E, all of those vitamins. All the B's, all the B vitamins are depleted through alcohol. They're like the first to go. And the B vitamins are really, really important for removing addiction. Like this is like research based. They found out that if you have great amount of B vitamins, you recover faster from alcohol and drugs, and they're the first to leave when you're drinking, right. So I would say like just off the top of my head, and again I have a document that I'm going to share with you that's gonna have all, you know, all the list of the ones that I take you know regularly, but off the top of my head I would say a B complex, a Whole Foods B complex vitamin would be ideal to be taking every single day, every single day. Omega 3s just simply because it repairs damage in the brain from alcohol. It repairs and it's a mood stabilizer so it actually uplifts you and there's so many things about Omega 3s. Another thing it does is it satiates you so you don't feel so, you actually can reduce cravings because it gives you like a full feeling because it's a healthy fat and what else? There's so many things that it does, but so these are the staples that I would say. The B vitamin complex, the Omega 3s high quality version, which there's a lot of not so great quality versions of Omega 3s out there like that you can get over the counter, so I

recommend a couple, you know, in my in the paper that I wrote. And then the other thing would be the minerals. So a high quality mineral supplement which I take. Here I'll give you an example. So mine is like a dark colored but it's like a dropper and you just put it in your glass of water and then it's really high absorption quality of minerals. It's got potassium, calcium, zinc, you know, chromium, all the minerals. And I literally drink this like three times a day this mineral and I can tell a huge difference in my energy level and my clarity level of thinking.

Jenny Williamson – So while we're talking about nutrition, talk a little bit about how good nutrition and ensuring you've got proper nutrient levels in your body helps with things like hangovers, because let's face it as people use the Sinclair Method longer, they're drinking less, their tolerance lowers.

Samara Ibanez –Yes.

Jenny Williamson – And with that lower tolerance, people feel those after effects of alcohol a lot easier and sometimes more severe than they did when they were drinking a lot more. However, now that they're drinking less, they're less likely to drink those hangovers away. So talk about how nutrition helps to minimize the impacts of even the hangovers.

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, I mean 100%, you know, this is so true, everything that you said, and when we're replenishing our vitamins and minerals, we're feeling already in a better state. So, and it took me a long time to understand this, but every time you drink in excess, you're depleting, you're depleting. Everything's coming out, it's going out in your pee, all the minerals, all the vitamins, the A, B, C, D, Es. So replenishing those vitamins is crucial to feeling better, and to getting over those hangovers and the Nal overs and all that stuff that we experience. It's crucial.

Jenny Williamson – The last one on your five step blueprint, and this is, this is the scary, possibly for a lot of people the scariest one.

Samara Ibanez –Yeah.

Jenny Williamson – And that's emotional healing, because so many people drink because they don't want to feel the horrible feelings that they're feeling. So talk a little bit about how you advise people to approach the emotional healing portion.

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, this is the, like you said, it is a touchy subject and, and all I can say is that as you're going through this process over the course of several months, this actually, this stuff, this emotional stuff it starts to come up, it starts to come up for us. But we're learning certain techniques, and how to deal with ourselves through this process too, which is we're dealing with ourselves with this, like intentional self love and compassion. So when this stuff starts to come up, we can deal with ourselves in that way with kindness and compassion, and I just encourage my clients to let this stuff come up. You want to kind of sit with these feelings and you want to feel these feelings because we've been numbing those feelings for so long, right? So now it's actually a new habit that we start to develop where you are feeling your feelings now. So that's new, but it's very important to start doing and then you end up, yeah, so what you end up doing is you end up kind of mourning, like your old life. Like it just starts happening where you start to see that you're changing and it's positive. It's positive because you're liking the results, right? And you start to, really it comes up, all the old ways that you were with alcohol and your behaviors and the blackouts and the who knows what you were doing, like if you were drinking and driving or disappointing your family, you know, different stuff. All that does start to come up and then you can deal with it. I teach my clients how to deal with it at that point. And the way you deal with it is with a lot of self love and compassion.

Jenny Williamson – Talk a little bit about the self love and compassion that a person needs to go through to allow themselves the grace to not be perfect as they're running through this process because it is hard. Change is hard even outside of addiction, even when it is positive,

even when we are initiating it, it is difficult and it is scary. And there's such, I think because of the cut and dry of the abstinence based world, there's this drive for perfection at all cost and anything short of perfection is failure.

Samara Ibanez –Yeah.

Jenny Williamson – So talk a little bit about how to, I don't want to use the word easy, but how to more productively manage those blips and what people gut instinct call failure points, even though they're not true failures, so talk a little bit about that process.

Samara Ibanez – That's so great that you mentioned that/ I'm gonna use myself as an example because this happened to me. This exact thing that you're talking about happened to me. All this stuff was coming up and you know, my go to was to drink more, right? So even towards like the end of my TSM journey, like I think it was in the fourth month, I saw an uptick, an uptick of drinking. And, you know, this was a chance for me to not beat myself up about it, but it was a chance for me to really explore what was happening and be curious. Just be curious about what was happening. And it was a chance for me again, and I repeat this over and over again, but it's to practice self love and compassion towards my uptick in drinking because I thought I was getting to the end of it, but I wasn't. I wasn't there yet. And so I had this it was like a two week period where it's like over drinking, and I would wake up with like really bad hangovers. I was taking the naltrexone but still you know, I was over, I was drinking way more than I had planned to drink. And this was just part of the learning process, you know, it's just part of the process of me, of all this stuff coming up and then me wanting to drink to push it down, you know. But then having this really compassionate way of dealing with those mistakes that I was making at the time and just saying, Well, you know, this is where I'm at now and it's gonna, I just got to keep going. I had to trust the process, trust the process and keep taking the medication, waiting the hour to an hour and a half before drinking, you know, I was doing the protocol right, correct at that time. And it was just moving through that period of emotion, you know, that I was experiencing and learning how to cope differently.

Jenny Williamson – Were you going through the typical Oh, my God, I thought I was doing well. Now this is happening. It's not working. What if this isn't working?

Samara Ibanez – Yes, I completely I did that, but I internalized it. I was asking myself these questions because I didn't really have anyone to voice that to at the time. Now my clients can voice that to me and so then I can walk them through it, you know. But yeah, at the time, it was like I was saying this stuff to myself. I was like what's going on? what's wrong? But luckily thank God I just kind of had this gut feeling that I just needed to chill out, just let whatever was happening, I needed to just let it happen, to stay compliant, you know, take the medication, stay compliant, and that whatever was happening would pass and it did. It ended up passing.

Jenny Williamson – What's the contrast or comparison to how your journey was before that uptick and what it was like after you made it to the other side of it?

Samara Ibanez – So before that uptick, you know, I still had cravings and I was just, I was still the same drinking Samara, but with naltrexone. Literally two to three weeks after that uptick, I hit extinction. So it was literally, I was right there. I was two to three weeks out from having no more cravings ever again, you know? So I just want to encourage you guys out there like, if this happens to you, I bet you your healing is like right around the corner.

Jenny Williamson – It's so true. We see that in the peer support groups so often, where the common theme is, ironically Pavlov called that spontaneous recovery, which meant spontaneously recovering the behavior that you are extinguishing.

Samara Ibanez – Right.

Jenny Williamson – But in Pavlov's articulation it always was temporary, which it was in your case, short term which it also was, and then followed by a very definitive difference. Some people call it the lizard brain making its last battle fighting back that last time.

Samara Ibanez – Yeah, that's what happened. That's what happened to me. Yeah. I wanted it. My addiction did not want to go away. My brain was fighting me, throwing a temper tantrum.

Jenny Williamson – And, you know, as we mentioned earlier, the Sinclair Method is about more than just a simple reduction or elimination of alcohol. It's also about increasing the overall quality of life. So how does this blueprint as a whole work to that end in ways that taking just one piece of this puzzle might not be enough?

Samara Ibanez – That's so great. I've thought a lot about it because of writing the book, wanting to get, you know, this five step process really has to all happen in order to come out on the other side and have extinction. Like it definitely, like none of this can be skipped. We can't skip the emotional healing part. We can't skip the mindfulness, self awareness part. The habits and cravings we can't skip. We can't skip any of it. We have to literally go through every piece of this in order to come out on the other side.

Jenny Williamson – Well, thank you so much for being on our show again. Samara. It is always a pleasure to speak with you.

Samara Ibanez – Yay, have me on whenever you want. I love talking about this. This is like my passion. I get, like I get goosebumps when we're talking because I'm so excited about it and yeah, anytime.

TSM Tip Voice over – This TSM quick tip is brought to you by the C Three Foundation with support from our sponsor, Alcure.

Claudia Christian – Sara, self care, whoo. This is so important and you have your top three.

Sara Michael Novia – Top three: sleep, diet exercise. Without those three you are not living your best life. You need to be getting at least seven hours of sleep at night no matter what. You need to be eating whole foods, grains, fruits and vegetables and you need to be exercising at least 20 minutes a day even if that's just walking, doesn't matter. Sleep, diet and exercise.

Claudia Christian – So important. Just do it.