

Pip is a 2 1/2 year old, female, Wire Haired Fox Terrier or Terror depending upon whom you are asking. She was the ruler of all she surveyed: the two cats; her brother, a Keeshond puppy named Kaj; and the supposedly more intelligent species - me. Every day was fraught with problems like aggression, refusing to mind or come when called, barking at everything, and the inability to control her on walks.

I knew Pip needed training, but I grew up in Montana with a ranching mentality toward animals. Break em' was the rule. I could not bring myself to beat my pets. After a bad experience with a groomer at a national pet supply chain I was hesitant to utilize the training program they offered and did not know whom to trust. Guilt, that wonderful gift that keeps on giving, added to my indulgence of my 'poor' baby. Her behavior worsened when I got the newest family member, Kaj, and came to a crescendo when Pip began going to the bathroom in my bed.

My friend Nicole opened City Bark and I went to her for help. I enrolled 'the kids' in day care one day a week and Nicole mentioned there were training classes offered through City Bark. I signed up immediately. It was one of the toughest things to do for both Pip and me. She was 2 years old and much of her poor behavior had proceeded unchecked.

Kari, with Wag & Train, saved my sanity and Pip's neck. She introduced me to the unusual concept that I am smarter than my dog and have supremacy over 'the beasts'. Kari showed me how to use Pip's natural instincts to gain control. I had to be the Alpha, the 'Big Kahoonah', the 'Grand Poobah'. Kari suggested using the Gentle Leader collar and I am now able to walk both Pip and her brother Kaj without dislocating any joints - theirs or mine. Pip minds me 85% of the time now, which is an 85% improvement. Pip barks when someone comes to the door, but will stop after 4-5 barks. We are still working on consistency, both hers and mine, but the improvement is truly rewarding and incredible. Her behavior at doggie day care has become much less controlling and she is getting along better with other animals especially the other pets in my home.

The hardest thing to admit was that no matter how much I loved my dog, she was a terror and I couldn't control her. I wanted people to like 'my baby', but half the time I didn't like her behavior, so how could anyone else. Most of my friends loved Pip, but didn't want her in their yard. Now they enjoy having her around and we are invited to their homes.

Trae Barrett