



## Rachael and Brixen

Initially I doubted myself- and whether or not my 2 year old trained German Shepherd, brought back from Europe, actually required “professional” help. Brixen was a very sweet dog, perfectly behaved indoors, got along fantastically with other people and strangers, and, for the most part, knew and listened well to his obedience training.

But there were a few “issues” I couldn’t seem to work out. Around other dogs, he was either perfectly normal, or started aggressively barking and lunging- no telling what his reaction to the



next dog around the corner would be. In an effort to avoid this embarrassment- and potential danger- I began to alter our running/walking routes to avoid any other dogs along the way- not an easy task! My cat, Bailey- an adopted Siamese that had been declawed- was terrified of him, as Brixen glanced at him as if he were contemplating dinner. I had to keep them in

separate areas of the house, but knew I couldn’t have Bailey upstairs and Brixen downstairs forever. And his off leash recall was somewhat shaky. Of course I rationalized this as him being excited to finally run free, given my rather diminutive backyard. Besides, he always came back...just not quite when I wanted. But I knew how dangerous this could be if he ran the wrong way. I bought dog training books and researched hours online, trying a variety of training tactics. I ensured his basic needs were met- he received plenty of exercise and play, and understood that I was the pack leader (or so I thought). Still, I couldn’t quite eradicate these problems- or even determine their cause.

My research finally led me to trainers in the area. While there are a number to choose from, I selected Jeff because of his experience, intense philosophy, and training methods. Still a bit



wary of whether or not Brix would respond if indeed he even needed this level of intervention, I arranged the first meeting. After a rather intense, focused session, I noticed an immediate change in Brixen. That session was enough for me to realize that this was a necessary step for my dog, and Jeff was exactly the trainer to help. He has a profound love for the dogs and an interest in making them better members of society. Training included all aspects- from food and care to the specific lessons. Very few trainers will actually go to the dog's home to better understand the environment that is shaping the behavior. This critical visit allowed us to understand what was going on with Brixen, and formulate a far more in depth training program. The level of concern and attentiveness displayed by Jeff towards the dogs is unparalleled. Training dogs is truly his passion, and he certainly has a gift for it.

The adoption of Jeff's training techniques has left me with a perfectly obedient, eager to please dog. He responds instantly to commands- regardless of whether he is on or off leash, or he has been sniffing the most interesting scents. After being on crutches for a couple weeks, I realized the value of his improved performance- he would heel perfectly alongside the crutch as we made our way to the park. I would let him off lead to play- quite the leap of faith, since I couldn't exactly run after him if he decided not to listen. He always responded instantly, earning admiring looks and compliments as to his attentiveness and responsiveness.

Brixen regularly plays with other dogs- turns out, he's actually pretty submissive in the dog world, and was likely just very excited and lonely. He has learned to control this, and knows he may only play (or sniff) whenever he is given a release. Even better, he is the only dog in the dog park that will actually perform a perfect recall- repeatedly- in the midst of playing with the pack. He has played well with every size and personality of dog- from tiny Yorkies to a massive Akita. Never a problem, and I'm fully confident in his newly modified behavior.

Working with Jeff has been a fantastic experience for both Brixen and I. He is always available to answer questions, resolve issues, or offer advice on any matter, from training questions and vaccinations to what exactly one does when a dog is sprayed by a skunk. His kennel facilities and care are some of the best I've ever seen, and his training results are immediate and undeniable.

I would absolutely recommend him for anyone seeking a perfectly trained dog.

**Rachael and Brixen, Newport, RI**