

Before our Welsh Terrier, Joey came to live with us, we were told by the breeder that he had pacing issues and he was supposedly showing signs of aggression toward his then owners, among other things, and that we should work with Emma if we adopted him. Emma had met Joey and his past owners, wrote an assessment, and made some recommendations about the type of training he would need. Emma hadn't been working with the past owners long but had already developed a close relationship with Joey's last veterinarian and together they had started him on a low dose of medication to help him handle his pacing.

This was our first experience with a re-homing situation, we contacted Emma and set up the first available appointment with her for about one week after we brought Joey home. Since we knew that we would need professional help before we adopted him, we had actually found a veterinarian who is also a pet behaviour specialist. There are very few of them in the entire country, but fortunately, one practices about 45 minutes from our house. However, we had a two month waiting period before we could make an appointment with her, so we were grateful for the recommendation from the breeder and that Emma made time in her schedule to help us.

Joey seemed very sweet and VERY smart, but he was so anxious, and his pacing was very consistent. If he was not eating, sleeping, or interacting directly with us, he would pace as if he were in a trance. He could be in the middle of playing with us and suddenly he would just start circling. You couldn't distract him with treats or by calling him, there was no calming him down, and he would just continually circle around the room.

Prior to bringing Joey home, we had a video conference with Emma that, among other things, provided us with some things we needed to do to get ready for his arrival. We had Emma's assessment, and as soon as we brought Joey home we continued him on the medication he was on. A week later, we had our first appointment with Emma. After following her guidance after the very first session, we started to notice a difference in Joey's demeanor. By the end of the six week sessions, he was like a different dog. We followed all of Emma's training and suggestions. His pacing had let up by about 70%, and we could tell that he was starting to feel more comfortable and he was learning how to relax! (By the way, he never exhibited ANY type of aggression to either one of us, and hasn't to this day, we also did aggression prevention protocols with Emma even though they seemed unnecessary at the time). We could see that he was eager to learn, and so were we! If it weren't for Emma, we would have had NO idea what would have been in his best interest. If it hadn't been for Emma, we would have been really on edge about Joey's initial habits which we weren't sure how to read.

After the six weeks of training with Emma, we continued to practice everything we had learned, and when the appointment for the Vet behavioural specialist arrived, we were eager to hear her take. After assessing him for two hours in her office, she concluded that the course of action that Emma had implemented was ABSOLUTELY the correct path for Joey, and she recommended that we continue. We were THRILLED to find that the foundation training that the veterinary behavioural specialist was suggesting aligned perfectly with what we had already been doing with Emma! Thanks to Emma, we were two months ahead of the game!! The Dr. did recommend adding another medication to his daily meds which we have done, (at the lower dose), and Joey has been doing really well. We continue with the foundation training, and continue to add new and fun things. We have

learned as much, if not more, than Joey. We can see the importance of the foundation training and plenty of exercise. (Physical AND mental)

We have had Joey for 4 months. About 3 weeks ago, Joey really started playing with some of his toys on his own and actually laying on the beds that we have scattered around the house for him. He seems so comfortable! His anxiety seems to be diminishing, and his pacing has improved by at least 90%!! Even when he starts to pace now, we can easily distract him with the techniques Emma taught us, and oftentimes, he might circle a couple times and then change direction on his own! It's amazing! We are so grateful to Emma. We have a wonderful addition to the family, and I think he's pretty happy about it too!



*Picture: Joey visiting a friend's house with another dog and two kitties.*