

# Bobby Feisee

## Visualizing Victories

When Bobby Feisee was a kid, his father gave him a cassette tape about visualization that he liked to listen to while falling asleep. As he drifted off at night, the calming voice on the recording asked him to think about his goals and what he wanted out of life, focusing on seeing success with the mind's eye. "My father was a big believer in the power of the mind, and I saw him accomplish so much," Bobby reflects today. "It made me a believer, too."

Bobby's first great success with visualization came when he was in sixth grade. Up to that point he had been an average student, earning mostly Cs and the occasional B. But when his sixth grade teacher read aloud the class's grades on a project, everything changed. "One of the girls sitting next to me snickered when she heard my grade," Bobby remembers. "I decided in that moment, no more Cs. I wrote it down and visualized it. And thanks to my competitive spirit, from then on, I pretty much got straight As."

Through high school, Bobby would always listen to the tape the night before a big lacrosse game as a way to calm down and focus. The biggest test of the power of visualization came in his junior year, when his brother drove him to the University of Virginia to speak with the coach about playing for the team in college. The coach barely heard him out, citing the school's policy that they didn't recruit out of Virginia. "He didn't even give me a chance," Bobby remembers. "It stirred the competitive spirit in me, and I wondered what it would take for him to look at me. I called up Roy Simmons, Jr., the coach at Syracuse University, the defending national champions at the time. He told me I probably wouldn't make the team, but I was welcome to come try out in the fall and if I was good enough, they might give me a shot."

A shot was all Bobby needed. He

performed with excellence, landing a spot on the team and admission to the university upon graduating. He went on to win two national championships, and the rings from those victories are still powerful symbols for him that anything is possible. "I was always told that I wasn't good enough to make this team or that team," he remembers. "People would say, don't even bother. But I set my goal, worked hard at it, had a plan to achieve it, and it happened. If you believe in yourself, you don't have to listen to what other people think. If you can imagine and visualize it, you can do it."

It was his father's influence that gave him the tools to etch out a path of success, and his father's later decline that ultimately led him to his life's work. His father was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at age seventy, and in the ten years until his passing, his deteriorating health were accompanied by emotional and financial challenges that seemed as if they could have been avoided with some engaged and insightful advanced planning. "It

seemed to me that his estate planning attorney and his financial advisor missed a lot of things," says Bobby. "The experience felt so transactional and impersonal—more about getting documents and checking boxes than about going through the process of actually understanding the situation well enough to offer truly personalized advice. I realized that it's not about the documents—it's about the family, the people, and the process."

As a lawyer, Bobby wasn't practicing estate law at the time, but he knew he was meant to use his knowledge and skills to help families in this way—shepherding them through these uniquely challenging times of life. "To best respond to the disability or death of a family member, advance communication and preparation is key," he says. Now the founder and President of InSight Law, an estate and business planning law firm in Northern Virginia, he has brought to life



the relationship-based approach to service that he visualized in the wake of his father's passing, using it to better the lives of the clients who entrust him to shepherd them through their hardest times. "Every day, my work brings new challenges and new opportunities to make a difference," he says. "And every day, I rely on the basic blueprints of determination and goal-setting that help me translate visualization into reality."

Bobby first opened his firm in 2002 as the Law Offices of Robert Feisee, taking the traditional transactional approach to estate planning he'd been taught. Years passed, but real success didn't come, and Bobby felt he was just barely getting by. "It was mechanical," he recalls. "There was little follow through or relationship, and it wasn't fulfilling for me." He knew he was falling short of his potential, but was at a loss for how to take things to the next level, until he joined the National Network of Estate Planning Attorneys (NNEPA) in 2007. There, he was deeply influenced by the organization's chairman, Rick Randall, and another mentor, Scott Williams, each with decades of experience. "They really gave me the process and business management side of things I was struggling with," Bobby says. "Others in my class dropped out along the way, but I saw the value — that the tools for success were right in front of us, and it was up to us to use them. Joining NNEPA had an immeasurably positive impact on my life, and I'm now an instructor for the network."

Through his experience at NNEPA, Bobby saw the importance of naming his firm to signal that it was about something bigger than himself. With that, InSight Law was officially branded. The network also convinced him to write down a business plan. "I had spent my whole life writing down my goals, so why hadn't I done it for my biggest adventure?" he marvels. "Once I did, everything clicked."

Bobby revolutionized his business model, replacing ineffective free one-on-one initial consultations with free small group client orientation meetings several times a month. "It's a nice, easy way to introduce the firm and educate potential clients on our process," he says. "If people are interested we explore further options, but if not, at least they've gained information to be a better consumer." The next step in the process is a free consultation with the firm's associate attorney to gather asset information, do a short goal-setting exercise, answer questions, and quote

a fee range. Individuals then meet with Bobby to make the final decision to work together. "We don't take our client relationships lightly, so it's important that it's a good fit," he says.

Once the agreement is signed, Bobby meets with clients to design their plans and walk through their legal documents so clients understand each component. Then the InSight team focuses on financial integration, ensuring the client's estate plan is coordinated with their financial plan to thoroughly prepare for any challenge that might arise. The InSight approach also includes a membership program with an annual group meeting, where each attendee receives a focused update on changes in the law and how it affects their plan in particular. "Things are going to change in people's lives, in their families, and in the country," Bobby says. "I give everyone an update on any upcoming changes in the law that might affect their plans and how things are going at the firm, so one-on-one meetings can be reserved only for the matters that need personal attention."

With four attorneys and three support team members, InSight Law currently serves 240 families and is able to compete with larger firms thanks to its competitive model and excellent client service. "Our clients appreciate having a relationship with a law firm that's looking after them," Bobby says. "We don't nickel-and-dime people; we just leverage economies of scale and do things in group format when we can to keep costs down."

Bobby's father grew up in a small village in a home without running water. The oldest of seven children, he learned to read the Quran—a remarkable achievement in an area where most people couldn't read or write. "He was a brilliant man with an incredible memory, and he used his mind to get into medical school," Bobby says. "My mom also inspires me every day. She has character and grace, and always taught me that having a good character is one of the most important things you need to learn. No one can take away your values, and your character is what people will remember about you. My mother succeeded in becoming a physician in a country where women were second-class citizens. That she was able to do that in Iran, where it's very hard to succeed, speaks so much to her passion and heart. Whenever things get hard for me, I think of what my mom and dad have accomplished and

remember I don't have it hard at all."

Recognizing the rising oppression of the religious right, his parents immigrated to the U.S. from Iran in 1971, when his mother was pregnant with Bobby. With his older sister and brother to support, they spoke little English and struggled to get on their feet, landing their first job at a hospital in Wheeling, Virginia. After Bobby was born, they moved temporarily to Rochester, New York, and then settled in Northern Virginia when he was in kindergarten. "It reminded my father of the farm where he grew up in Iran," Bobby says. "He loved his home village and would go back every year, packing his suitcase full of medical supplies and spending his time there as the town doctor. Sometimes I went with him, and it was powerful to see. He taught me to be grateful for what I have, and to always spend 10 percent of my time and money giving back."

Bobby's parents worked long hours to keep food on the table. "We were classic latchkey kids," Bobby recalls. "Sometimes I'd watch soap operas with my dad when he came home for late lunchbreaks, but otherwise I played outside a lot with our dogs and quarter horse. There weren't really other kids that lived nearby, so I'd spend my time reading or playing sports on my own. My parents were great influences too, modeling a fire and passion that gave me an edge. They were humble and generous but also taught me to go after the things I wanted in life."

Bobby got his first lacrosse stick in seventh grade when he tagged along with his brother on a trip to the sporting goods store to get his own stick. The two would often go to the park to throw, and when his brother taught him how to cradle, his natural talent quickly emerged. He joined the youth club and joined a summer lacrosse league in Ocean City, Maryland, where his parents had a condo. "All the good kids from Baltimore played there, and I'd show up to see how I compared," he says. "That's also where I worked my first summer jobs running a beach stand, and then as a busboy, and later as a waiter. I balanced all that with summer school, since my parents placed a big emphasis on education."

Bobby enjoyed the feeling of progress and success, and though he had always been good at football and wrestling, he saw a future as a college lacrosse player and ultimately focused his energy there. "I loved the creativity of the game," he says. "It has its origins as a Native American sport, and

if you can get to a high level, it's almost like art. I volunteer as an assistant coach now, and I love telling my story to these younger kids with wide eyes who want to play. I tell them they can do it if they really want to; they just have to put the work in. I believe that for any kid, no matter their size – if you have a big heart and believe, there's a place for you on the field."

Bobby made All Fairfax County in high school and received honorable mention for All Metropolitan, but thanks to visualization, he was always a national champion in his mind. He always believed he could beat the person in front of him—a reality that became harder to achieve once he was at Syracuse, playing teams like Johns Hopkins and Princeton. "When you get to that level, everyone is good," he says. "It's the same thing with business. To separate yourself, you have to have a little more mental edge."

Bobby's team won the national championship during his freshman year, and when he was a junior, they came close, losing in double overtime. He won the first overtime faceoff but lost the second, leaving room for the opposing team to win the game. It was a rough summer for him, but he eventually resolved that he couldn't let the regret consume him. He bounced back, and the next year, they won the national championship. "From lacrosse, I learned that any goal you set for yourself is achievable," Bobby avows. "Our technique at Syracuse wasn't magic, we just had consistent practices and did the same things over and over again, so our fundamentals were excellent. I apply this to business today, focusing on the importance of having systems, processes, and goals to advance progress."

In his senior year of college, Bobby decided to pursue law school—a path he wished he had settled on earlier so he could have prepared more while in school. Upon graduation with a degree in finance, he enrolled at George Mason Law School and struggled at first, finding law to be a completely different. "The Socratic method was hard to get used to," he recalls. "But I got more confident as time went on, and I went on to pass the bar on my first try."

Still unsure what field of law was right for him, Bobby took a job at a small personal injury litigation firm in Woodbridge upon graduating in 1996. He immediately began taking on court cases, quickly learning the ropes. Around that time, his father was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and Bobby

was then recruited by a bigger firm in Tysons Corner. There, he spent two years working in collections, homeowners association cases, and other lawsuits that didn't feel like the right fit. "I would win money, but I didn't like gouging people for money," he says. "I wanted to be on the defensive side or creating wealth."

He left that firm in 2000 to become a financial advisor at Morgan Stanley during the tech boom, where his entrepreneurial and hustling skills were put to the test. "It taught me that you have to be able to market and to pick up the phone to make cold calls," he says. "It was a boot camp in Sales 101, and an intense time in my life. My father was getting sicker, and finally, it clicked for me that I wanted to be doing estate planning." With that, Bobby started his own law practice in 2002. "It was a hard decision, and I was worried I might fail, but once again, my mom came to the rescue. She reminded me about who I was, and about character. She said she loved me and would always be there to help if things went wrong. She told me to follow my heart, and it gave me the confidence to take the risk and never look back."

When his father passed in 2005, Bobby accompanied his mother on a trip to Iran to wrap up his affairs. "I hadn't been there in 30 years, and I had the best time with my mom," Bobby says. "She's a legend there, and here for that matter. She showed me all the places she and my dad grew up. She was also trying to set me up, as she often did. I told her not to bother, but then I met a young woman named Newsha at a dinner party."

Bobby didn't think much of the meeting at the time, but he had needed to change shirts after spilling a drink on himself. When Newsha stopped by to return his shirt the next day, he had coffee with her, he was struck with the sudden realization that she was the one. When he returned to America, they continued to speak every day, and when he returned to Iran the next year, he asked her to marry him. "It was the best decision, and I only wish I had done it sooner," he says. "She's my partner in life and in business, and my best friend."

Newsha came to the U.S. with Bobby in the summer of 2007, where they faced a big decision—should they spend \$10,000 on a honeymoon, or should they spend it on the payment for Bobby's admission to the National Network of Estate Planning Attorneys (NNEPA)? "Newsha pushed me to go for the NNEPA instead,

which was really incredible of her," he says. Thanks to that choice, InSight Law took off, and Newsha joined the team to handle the client events, maintenance program, marketing, and scheduling. The couple welcomed their first child in 2016, a baby girl named Nava—the Farsi word for music. "My baby and my wife are my world," Bobby says. "They also make me better at my job because I understand on a more personal level what it means to care about family and legacy, as my clients do."

In advising young people entering the working world today, Bobby stresses the importance of hard work, a humble attitude, and business basics. "Show up on time, do what you say you're going to do, finish what you start, and say please and thank you," he says simply. "If you're patient and focus on learning and being a good person, success will come. Also, if you see a way to improve your field, go for it. Although I have a competitive spirit, I really don't think I'm in competition for what we do. There is a lot wrong with the 'traditional' approach to estate planning, and I believe we as lawyers can do a better job as a profession. That's why I became a teacher at George Mason Law School and an instructor at NNEPA. I believe estate planning should be about bringing families together, not tearing them apart. It's important to be a visionary here and consider how you can change the world for the better."

The lessons of his life, however, apply to any age, from the peers he works with on a daily basis to the young children he guides as a lacrosse coach. "It's so important to give back through donations of money, and we support Jill's House and Alzheimer's charities in that way, but I love being out on the field with the kids, telling them my story and helping them figure out theirs. I tell them to visualize, set a goal, write it down, and make it real. If you believe you're going in the right direction, keep going. Listen to what others have to say, but don't let it shake your core belief. Learn how the world works and apply it to your own experiences. My life has changed so much for the better because I didn't go with the critics—I went with my heart."

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