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Challenging Times: Stories of Buddhist Practice When Things Get Tough

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Forgiving your sister’s murderer, living on death row, meditating at Auschwitz, coming to terms with your parent’s dementia: These strong stories and many others reveal how adversity in life can act as a spiritual teacher. With profiles of promi-nent American Buddhist teachers and activists such as Bernie Glassman and Joan Halifax, as well as painful experiences of other Americans, Europeans, and New Zealanders, *Challenging Times* looks at dramatic but not uncommon aspects of life and how Buddhism can offer tools for growth and change. The first in the new series *What Buddhism can offer.*

I was expecting to meet a charismatic teacher, a dynamic whirlwind of energy—Bernie from Brooklyn, Jewish fixer turned Zen entrepreneur. But I found myself facing a short, unassuming man in late middle age, with a bulbous nose and quiet eyes. I liked the way he paused to think before answering. He listened. Listening seems to lie at the heart of Glassman’s philosophy. . . . Through creating projects that meet immediate materials needs, a community is perhaps being born in which people care for one another, and where the social structures are themselves a teaching of interconnectedness.

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