

I come from a close family. My three sisters and I like to get together as often as our busy lives allow us. We celebrate major holidays together and also meet for dinners and movies. These gatherings always involve our spouses and of course our children during the holidays. Several years ago we decided that just the four of us would get together for drinks on each other's birthdays. This way we could catch up and visit without our children or husbands interrupting.

The birthday person gets to pick the meeting place. We like to go someplace that has nice happy hour appetizers to have with our drinks. We also try to pick places that are close to a mall or shops that we can walk around in after our drinks to make sure we are not impaired to drive. Over drinks and appetizers we talk laugh and give the birthday girl her gifts and happy birthday cards. This has become the challenge of the evenings together, coming up with good happy birthday cards. My family loves to tease each other. We laugh and play jokes on each other. You will not find any flowery happy birthday cards exchanged at our table.

The quest to find the best happy birthday cards has me searching in every store I come across. I try to avoid the standard card shops because I know that my sisters would have already checked there. The challenge is come up with a funny, insulting and unique happy birthday card that no one has seen before. This may seem quite juvenile for four adult women, but we get a great deal of enjoyment out of it. Last year our oldest sister turned sixty. I called my other two sisters and suggested that we really get her by giving her nice flowery happy birthday cards. They both thought this would be a great idea.

My sister wanted to meet at the martini bar, which is one of our favorite spots. We all greeted each other and put our presents and happy birthday cards on the table in front of our sister. We ordered our drinks and then told our sister to open her presents before the appetizers came. As she picked up the first card she made a comment about being sure it would be mean. She got a puzzled look on her face because it was an inspirational card wishing her blessings on her birthday. As she went through each of the cards she told us that she now knew for sure that she was old because we were being nice to her.