

## Why You Shouldn't Try to Keep Up with the Joneses

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Trying to keep up with the Joneses or wanting to maintain social status by having material things is a losing battle. The people who you may think have it all are likely still in pursuit of riches and status symbols themselves.

Using material items or looking to others to boost our confidence to give us any kind of security is only temporary. Things will never bring us happiness or contentment in the long run and you will have to keep spending to keep that buyer high going.

Here are a few reasons why you should stop looking at other's lives and trying to keep up with the Joneses.

### **Grass is always greener**

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It's easy to look at someone else's life and feel envious. They may look like they have it all—the nice house, fancy cars, designer clothes, and landscapers and house cleaners to help them maintain it all. But the truth is, you really don't know their financial situation. They could be drowning in debt from all of those material items. Many Americans live beyond their means and instead of saving for their kid's college fund or building up their retirement, they are spending frivolously now. Look at your finances; set your spending to match your income, needs and priorities; and don't compare your life to anyone else's

because your family has different financial goals than the family down the street.

## **Brings discontent**

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Comparing ourselves to others, whether it's in social status, wealth, job stability or family life, breeds discontentment in our minds. We don't really know what's going on in the life of the Joneses—or the Smiths, Millers, Wilsons — for that matter. We can easily think they are picture perfect and compare how our life just doesn't stack up to how their's appears. Behind closed doors though, each family and individual has their own issues and struggles around money. Money and all that it affords doesn't truly bring fulfillment, and constantly comparing ourselves to others only creates unhappiness in our lives.

## **Stay true to yourself**

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If you are emulating what someone else does or has, you aren't taking your own values, goals and ideals into account. Do you really care if you have a fancy new car or do you just feel like you ought to fit in with everyone else on the block? Do you even want those designer jeans, or do you just want them because all your friends have a pair? Think about what your goals are for your life. If you have financial goals in place, then stay motivated to stick to them and not what everyone around you is doing.

## **You can never keep up with the Joneses**

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Trying to keep up with the Joneses is a losing battle. Every time you think you are close, someone else will set the bar even higher. As soon as you buy the latest gadget or device, a newer, cooler one comes out. Once you have your kitchen remodeled, a new home trend takes over and you're slightly outdated. Make your financial decisions based on what you want and can afford, not on what you think you should do to keep up.

Make your life your life. Look at your financial situation and make your own goals about what you want your life to look like. By living within your means and you can find contentment with the things you do have rather than chasing what you don't. Also, focus on what's really important to you in life—family, friends, etc. If you stick to your own financial goals and the things that bring you joy, you won't feel the need to keep up with anyone else.



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