

**Brenda A. White**

*...behaving your  
way to success.*

**Why Not  
Keep Up  
with the  
Joneses**

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Keep Up  
with  
The Joneses**



**Brenda A. White**

**Choices Within**

**Houston**



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**To the reader:** *Keep with the Joneses* for the right reasons. This book was written from my successes and failures over my lifetime, navigating my career, developing relationships, and leading people. It is designed to teach, inspire, and empower you. I hope it will encourage you and lead you to a more successful career.

After reading this book, my prayer is that it will give you hope, a sense of boldness, and that you will have more productive experiences and inspire other people to do the same.

**Philippians 1:3-6** I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

*Never Stop Learning* – Brenda A. White

[www.whynotkeepupwiththejoneses.com](http://www.whynotkeepupwiththejoneses.com)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE JONESES

*Jeremiah 29:11 (King James Version) - For I know the plans I have for you said the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

For many years, I've heard the phrase "don't try to keep up with the Joneses" -- It was understood that you should not try to get what others have or do what others do for the sole purpose of competing or to one-up them. The act was considered coveting, obsession, jealousy or envy. The American expression "Keeping up with the Joneses" was first noted in 1913 with a comic strip by Arthur R. "Pop" Momand. Although the Joneses never actually appeared in the comic, their influence was present throughout every story.<sup>i</sup>



Stripper's Guide: "Pop" Momand profiled by Alex Jay

If one fails to "keep up with the Joneses" it is perceived as demonstrating inferiority in that category if you couldn't keep up with the perceived affluent lifestyle of your peers. To avoid the inferiority complex, if the Joneses get a new car, you got a new car; if the Joneses painted their house, you painted your house the same color even if you didn't like the color; if the Joneses took a vacation, you'd find a better destination, and so on. We've always viewed it as a negative thing because coveting your neighbor's possessions is a sin. One of the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20:17 state "You shall not

covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Coveting can have you looking foolish, can drive you crazy and to an unhappy ending. However, surrounding yourself with positive people to improve your way of life is not a sin. In Luke 1:36-42 "Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." -- "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her. -- "Mary immediately got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice, she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" So hang around dreamers, believers, visionaries as Mary did. She went to Elizabeth and the baby started leaping inside of her.

Social media is bombarded with memes and quotes some negative, some humorous, some inspirational like *Be inspired but don't copy*, *Think positively to have a good day*, *Get up and hustle every day*. It's true that you will behave like the people you hang around. So let's think about this for a moment, if you hang around positive, driven, assertive, in some cases aggressive, happy, and positive thinking people, you can't help but keep up with them. If you're not adding value in your circle of friends, you're just taking up space and to be honest they probably don't want you around.

For me and my friends, New Year's Eve celebrations and birthday dinners have turned into Round table brainstorming sessions of how to help each other get what they want in life, whether it's to start a business, write a book, or to adopt a child; you need people in your corner to encourage you, support you to make that happen.

Do you want to keep up? If so, keep reading.

My desire is to help people be their best. One of my favorite scriptures is III John 1:2 NKJV is "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." I genuinely want people to be healthy and successful in mind, body, and spirit. This book will help you to get up and get moving toward a better life, changing your behavior, and operating within your strengths and spiritual gifts. It will also help you to reevaluate what it will take to make you fulfilled. What will "it" look like extraordinarily? What you will have to contribute and appreciate to make it happen and just overall, helping you to become a better you. This is my story and how I did it.

Please understand that I am a Christian and I will drop prayer and several of my favorite scriptures throughout this book that has helped me and how I applied it in my life.

Colossians 3:23-24 (New International Version) *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

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