

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **The Fear of Throwing Out aka FOTO is real and 82% of Aussies have it! Do you?**

- *Most likely! 80% say they hold onto things without knowing why*
  - *86% hope to use their things in the future, half never do*
- *57% feel guilty or frustrated by not being able to throw away things*
- *77% feel happier when saying goodbye to things they no longer need*

**20 November 2017** – It’s a feeling we’re all familiar with – the inability to get rid of something despite knowing we’re never likely to use it again. And to make matters worse, we often can’t quite put our finger on why we find it so hard to throw out. Now, this phenomenon has a name – FOTO, or the Fear of Throwing Out.

According to leading psychologist and expert on collecting and saving behaviour, Dr Jessica Grisham, it’s impacting more than just our storage space, it’s also weighing us down mentally and stopping us from embracing a happier life.

Recent research, commissioned by Australia’s fourth largest mobile service provider, amaysim, found that 4 in 5 Australians (80%) confess to holding onto things they no longer need, for reasons they can’t explain. What’s more, over half (57%) admit to feeling guilty or frustrated about the things they can’t bring themselves to throw out. Clothes (64%), travel mementos (48%) and books (47%) top the FOTO list – inflatable flamingos probably made it too (not a fact).

The research also shows that FOTO can span over years, even decades, Dr Grisham states: “Often people keep hold of things that remind them of happy times, or because they have spent a lot of money on an item, perhaps when starting a new hobby or fitness regime. By keeping them around and not using them, items can change from being a source of pleasure to a source of angst. This negative feeling may linger for as long as they are unable to throw the thing away.”

Overcoming FOTO and liberating yourself can be as easy as identifying those few things in life and taking the plunge. 77% of people confirmed they feel happier after getting rid of things they no longer need.

“By breaking the habit and removing a few key things we’ve been holding onto for too long, most people experience a sense of liberation that will drive them to do more of the same. By overcoming FOTO, people can improve their mental wellbeing as it can help them embrace who they are today by having just the things they need around them,” Dr Grisham says.

According to amaysim’s Commercial Director of Mobile, Maik Retzlaff, this is the same insight which has driven the brand to create a small but mighty \$10 phone plan, offering the many Australians who regularly waste data, just what they need.

“It’s the same FOTO mentality that’s stopping people from making the best choices when it comes to what they need in their lives. We want to inspire Aussies to move on, by letting go of outdated things from the past like lock-in contracts and data inclusions they don’t use,” Retzlaff says.

**ENDS**

## Summary of research results

- **82%** have struggled to throw something away despite not need it anymore
- **80.2%** agree that they feel like they need to keep hold of this thing, but can't put their finger on why
- **56.7%** feel guilty or frustrated when reminded of the thing they've not been able to get rid of
- **86.2%** have struggled to throw things away because they hope to be able to use it in future
- **76.7%** feel happier when they are able to throw away things they no longer need in life
- **81.9%** would feel relieved if they managed to throw away something they'd been struggling to get rid of
- **70.5%** say they hold on to things they no longer need for more than a year
- **39.6%** hold on to things for over 5 years, **25%** for over 10 years
- **30.3%** say it would be easier to get rid of something if they took a photo or video of it
- **64.7%** have struggled to throw things away because they have spent too much money on them
- **43.1%** Aussies admit to purchasing things impulsively to help start a new hobby
- **46.8%** people say they tend to buy too many things
- **51.4%** admit to only using their FOTO item once or a few times and have stopped now
- **61.8%** struggle to throw things away because they see their belongings as extensions of themselves, they are part of who they are

## Top things that people have a Fear of Throwing Out:

- **64.1%** struggle to get rid of clothes
- **47.8%** struggle to get rid of travel mementos
- **47.1%** struggle to get rid of books
- **29%** struggle to get rid of electronics
- **17.3%** struggle to get rid of mobile phones

## Research methodology

<sup>1</sup>The research was conducted by Pureprofile in November 2017 on behalf of amaysim, surveying a nationally representative sample of 1,238 respondents in Australia aged 18 and over.

For more information about amaysim, please visit [amaysim.com.au](http://amaysim.com.au)

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## About amaysim

amaysim is a multi-vertical business making household services amazingly simple. At its core, amaysim is a technology-driven company which has grown to be Australia's fourth largest mobile service provider with over a million subscribers. In addition to mobile, amaysim also offers broadband, energy and sells devices. All of amaysim's products feature no lock-in contracts and transparent pricing and are centred around a great customer experience, convenience and outstanding value. amaysim empowers its subscribers with DIY online account management backed by award-winning, online-driven customer support. All amaysim products are available online at [www.amaysim.com.au](http://www.amaysim.com.au) and SIM cards are also available from over 14,000 retail outlets.