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# Bluey

How long should you keep a favourite pair of underpants? Is it wrong to feel deeply attached to an inanimate object?

**When** you travel alone a lot, be it with a backpack or a Samsonite case, your worldly possessions become your comrades, your teammates in the global trenches. Each has its own personality and sometimes you find yourself addressing them – your toothbrush, your gym t-shirt, your laptop, the one that sometimes dances for you, and giving them names. So it's always sad when you lose someone on the road, when they go missing in action or die for the frequent flyer cause.

I lost my buddy, my faithful blue jocks, my long time aqua undies, in Tokyo. In the middle of a presentation to the heads of a fund management group, my jocks broke their strap and their life was over. They had been a tireless supporter over the miles and now in the flash of a sushi knife their time

had come. They died for the cause, gave up the ghost and lost the yen for it.

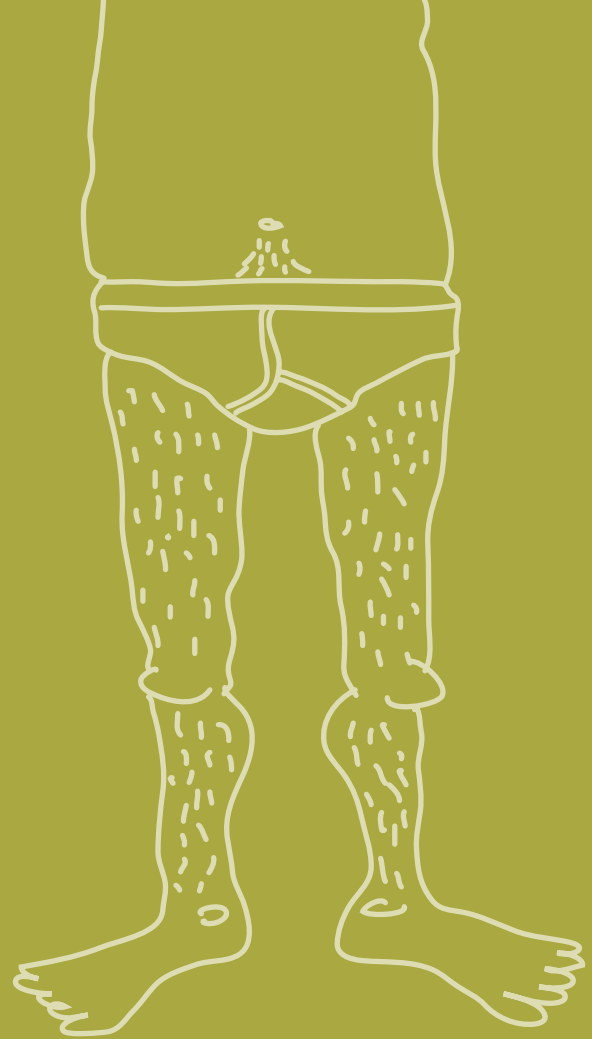
It was a sad and uncomfortable moment. I wasn't able to pause mid-sentence and explain what had happened and how my jocks had been so close to me. I wasn't sure the language barrier would have permitted a decent understanding.

I wasn't even sure my group of fund managers would understand. Although I do think no matter what culture, the attachment to inanimate objects and to long-term clothing in particular may have something to do with the Y chromosome. I sense this from incidents over the years when those of the X chromosome have attempted to divest me of a favourite vest, strip me of shirts in strips and toss away my jeans.

Y? I say. *Why?* I say  
They are perfectly good  
pants, underpants,  
shirts, socks, gym shoes.

But I've never been able to reveal why. "You can't toss Jimmy the gym shirt away, we served together in high school." I'm not sure the X would understand. But I hope that some of you do.

Bluey had been good to me, a favourite supporter in tough times. That night Greeny, Sammy Samsonite, Basil Toothbrush and the gang all gathered together and said our farewells. It was a touching moment and I almost felt like bending down and kissing Bluey goodbye. But then I stopped myself.



## I lost my buddy, my faithful blue jocks, my long time aqua undies . . .

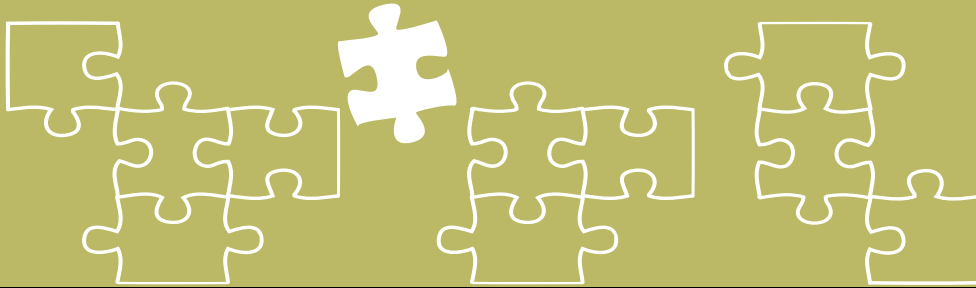


I mean that would have been going too far wouldn't it? I thought I sensed him rise up for a moment and heard him say "You've got to go on without me." Somehow I think Bluey would have wanted it that way. It was hard to leave him behind, buried in a Tokyo hotel bin, but now there is some Tokyo space that is forever Bluey.

## What Do You Think?

- ? Okay it's 'fess up time; how long have you kept your favourite pair of underpants?
- ? Is there a difference between the genders towards feelings for favourite t-shirts?
- ? In today's throwaway age, what would you never throw out? What will stay with you until it's time for you to go?
- ? What has your family passed down from generation to generation? What will you leave behind for your kids and grandkids? Hopefully not a pair of blue underpants!
- When *Bluey* aired on radio I was surprised by the number of women who rang in to talk about how long they had held onto favourite underwear. Maybe the underwear thing is not just in the genes – jeans.

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# Widezen

For all the poets, scientists, inventors and footy tipsters out there who like to think differently, here's a new word worth thinking about.

**You've** probably never come across the word *widezen* before and that's because I made it up. Okay so it's an invented word but I believe it still deserving of a dictionary listing. Here's why.

For years I've been teaching people about *kaizen*, the Japanese word meaning small, seemingly insignificant, continuous, on-going and never ending improvement, the *how better* approach to thinking.

Then it occurred to me that sometimes life is less about *how better* and more about *how else?* In terms of my crayon metaphor, where each crayon is a different talent, widezen thinking is where, instead of sharpening up a particularly well-used crayon to solve a problem, we are better off using a different crayon altogether.

Kaizen is the analytical approach, accurately knowing where you are at now and what your next improvement will be. Widezen is about looking at other possibilities altogether and seeing things in a multitude of ways.

**Widezen is the  
*imaginative* approach.  
It's the ability to solve  
difficult problems  
in original and  
creative ways.**

It seems our brains have an in-built puzzle instinct. We like to pose problems and consider possibilities. The brain loves a mental challenge.

When I typed 'puzzle industry' into Google I got more than nine million hits. Then I lopped off the word 'industry' and just searched 'puzzle'. The result, seventy-five million hits. I considered working my way through all of them but then I figured I would never finish this article. I discovered all kinds of puzzle categories including word puzzles, jigsaws, sudoku, cryptic crosswords, mechanical puzzles and optical illusions. There were sites dedicated to meta-puzzles; puzzles that bring together elements of other puzzles and even sites exploring the puzzle of why we like puzzles.