

**Numbers are positions, 1..N in ranked order.** Re-sorting the list renumbers it, and that is fine — nothing outside this file may reference an entry by number (see the rule above). A briefly-tried alternative, keeping each entry's original number as a permanent ID so the list could re-order without renumbering, was reverted the same day: it put 48 at the top of the page and George's verdict was direct — the number means nothing to a reader except as a position, so preserving it preserves noise.

**Permalinks key on the title, not the number.** `build.py` gives each entry an anchor slugged from its title (`#content-as-ministry`), so a link someone saved still points at the same idea after the next re-ordering — which a numeric anchor would not. The build asserts no two titles slugify to the same anchor.

**Entry format is a plain markdown ordered list** — ``N. Title: body.` `publish.py` turns `^N.`` items into Word auto-numbering, which is correct now that the number IS the position: the mirror renumbers itself to match.

## George Kao's Best Ideas

Version 1.5 · Last updated July 28, 2026 · 72 ideas · [smpl.ro/best](https://smpl.ro/best)

A companion to [George Kao's Distinctive Perspectives](#), [The 7 Practices of Thriving Soulpreneurs](#), and [The 5 Levels of Soulpreneurship](#).

**How this doc differs from "Distinctive Perspectives."** This one is the **canon** — the named ideas George's audience already knows him for, each self-standing, stated plainly. Its sibling doc holds the **edge**: the contrarian, non-obvious, dated-and-sourced stances a generic AI wouldn't volunteer on its own, deliberately excluding anything already listed here. If an idea below and an entry there ever say the same thing, the version here wins and the other should be removed.

George Kao has created over 2,000 pieces of content. Here are his audience's favorite ideas — **ordered by how many of his students echo each one back to him in their own words, and how broadly he teaches it across his courses, blog and videos.**

*The order is a signal rather than a verdict: an idea sits lower mostly when there is less of his own writing behind it yet, which says more about what he has published than about what he believes.*

1. **[Energy Signature](#):** the unique energetic "fingerprint" that comes through in all your work - the combination of your values, experiences, healing journey, and soul's expression. It makes your content & offers distinctively yours, even when covering similar topics as others. It is your authentic brand.
2. **[Market Discovery Calls](#):** Caring conversations, *not* sales calls; learn what people *actually spend money on* in your field; vs asking "what do you want" (unreliable); generates empathy for your audience and helps you ground your offers in real-world demand. *If you want to make selling really easy, simply sell what they are already buying.*

3. **Gentle Launch:** Exactly two messages per launch — e.g. "early bird," then "starts next week" — posted everywhere, on a roughly monthly rhythm; light, heartfelt, invitation over pressure. Vs 17-email launch sequences with countdown timers. So central to his teaching that he nearly named a whole course after it.
4. **Netcaring:** Connect with colleagues (niche-mates) from *genuine care* & enjoyment; vs transactional "networking" (what can I get from this person?); collaboration *over* competition; builds an authentic support system.
5. **Niche Your Offers, Not Yourself:** Keep *identity* broad, multi-passionate if you'd like; vs mainstream "niche down" yourself (limiting). Instead, create *specific, clear offers* ("doorways") for different client wants; allows for your authentic complexity. The image he teaches it with: your body of work is one **mansion with many doorways** — each niched offer, and each marketing angle on the *same* offer, is a different entrance to the same house. Show a visitor every room at once and you overwhelm them; rotate which doorway you publicize (January this one, February the next) and you can launch monthly off one offer without making anything new.
6. **3 Stages of Content:** Stage 1 = Explore prolifically (public-journaling), low-effort, *no* perfectionism. Stage 2 = Notice what resonates with audience, then refine, repurpose (e.g., text→video), and reshare. Stage 3 = Core, polished assets. Vs trying to make every piece perfect (Stage 3) from start.
7. **Work Lightly:** Excellence requires skillfulness; skillfulness requires reps. Beginners should expect beginner results — that's normal, not failure. Spend less time creating each thing, lighter expectations (you're practicing), but more frequency of output. "Half-ass it" (guaranteed output) vs perfectionism (guaranteed burnout). "You're a genius — you just need a timer!"
8. **Content as Ministry:** Generous act of service from heart; *not* primarily client-getting tool; vs mainstream "content marketing" funnel-filler; selfless giving, authentic service; builds trust *without* a call-to-action (CTA) in every piece of content; creation as intrinsic reward.
9. **Energy Reboots:** 30-sec micro-mindfulness resets (e.g., 3 breaths + mantras); vs waiting for long breaks; restore presence, joy, sustainability *during* work; anchor to triggers (e.g., feeling suboptimal). Google "energy reboot" for George's articles & videos about this.
10. **Selling is Inviting:** Gentle, playful invitations to your audience to work/play with your business; *not* persuasion, arm-twisting, objection-handling, or creating false urgency; vs mainstream high-pressure sales; appreciative even if declined; preserves relationship; no-coercion.
11. **Tiny Audience, Great Business:** Deep connection *over* mass attention; vs mainstream "grow huge list" dogma; avoids burnout, ego-traps, algorithmic dependency; exceptional service leads to referrals; true fans add much more value to your business.
12. **FTApr Webinars:** FTApr stands for "Free To Attend, Paid Recording"; vs free-for-all replays (devalues content); FTApr signals real value; grows audience; creates a simple low-cost offer. George urges **one a month** wherever a soulpreneur can manage it. The live hour rests on a different premise than a funnel webinar — give attendees a

genuinely good experience, a quick win, real presence; it stands on its own as a gift. If a next-level offer honestly fits, mention it once at the end, briefly, and let it go.

13. **Authenticity Over Tactics**: Vs grabby lead magnets, inauthentic "pain points"; choose genuine connection, service, ministry; attracts aligned clients.
14. **Marketing is Making Friends at Scale**: Generous content, caring discovery (market discovery calls), gentle launches (invitations); vs mainstream impersonal, broadcast, high-pressure tactics; builds real trust, rapport, approachability; relational vs. transactional.
15. **Marketing as Spiritual Practice**: Vehicle for personal growth, *not* just client acquisition; actions (content, offers) + feedback loop reveal calling & impact; vs metrics-only approach; evolves the *creator* as much as the biz.
16. **Hat Manuals**: Short, simple *checklists* for each "hat" (role) you wear in your work; vs complex SOPs (standard operating procedures); hat manuals reduce confusion, ensure calm, on-task work; supports Joyful Productivity.
17. **Sustainability & Well-being**: Integrate joy, values, *and* rest into work; vs "hustle & burn" culture; if it's not sustainable, you'll quit, negating all success. This mindset is a basic necessity.
18. **No Funnels**: Avoid automated, manipulative sequences aka mainstream "sales funnels"; treat audience as individual souls to be cared for; relational, respectful.
19. **Easily-Referrable-Issues (ERI)**: "Offer doorways"; clear, specific problems you solve (e.g., "resolving challenges with in-laws affecting your relationship"); vs vague "I'm a life coach"; makes it *easy* for colleagues to refer clients, hence it's called easily-referrable-issues.
20. **Spiral Learning**: Learn in *layers* over time; vs linear, one-and-done learning; revisit concepts every 3-6 months to integrate deeper; *no* such thing as being "behind."
21. **Offer Alignment**: When offers don't sell, it's likely a mismatch between offer and audience need, aka lack of Product-Market Fit. Social media and market discovery become ongoing activities to discover alignment.
22. **OGI — Organic Grounded Insight**: His counter-acronym to AGI. Once AI can generate everything else, the one durable creative asset is insight that's *organic* (from your own soul, not prompted out of a machine) and *grounded* (in lived experience no model has had); vs waiting for a topic to strike, or racing AI at idea generation — the game it now wins. Not a content type, a daily filter: keep an OGI log.
23. **Capture, Categorize, Calendar** (CCC) – Capture: Write down all ideas, tasks, open loops — don't keep them in your head. Distance creates perspective; few things are truly urgent. Categorize: Regularly sort captured items into folders/labels (e.g., Marketing, Writing, Admin). Calendar: Schedule recurring time for each category. When that time arrives, open the folder and work on whatever feels most important at the present time. Stay in that category for the duration.
24. **The Mountaintop and the Riverbank**: You've done the inner work and speak from the mountaintop; your people live at the river, with immediate, concrete, present-tense wants. Shouting mountaintop truth downhill reads as noise, not help. Speak

river-language without abandoning the view; vs "meet your audience where they are" as a platform choice — this is altitude, not location.

25. **The 111 Formula:** Balanced yearly plan (e.g., 40 Stage 1 content, 20 market discovery convos, 20 collabs/netcaring-projects, 10 gentle launches, 6 case studies, 5 JoyPro skills habituated); vs vague "be consistent" advice; customizable numbers (e.g., 222 formula for faster progress, or do 111 in 2 years instead); focuses on *good process* not just good outcomes.
26. **Think in Versions:** Let go of perfectionism by treating everything as a version, not a final product. You already know enough. Clients need inspiration and guidance more than new information.
27. **"Bless and Let Go"** – The inner mantra for all marketing activities: Create from your heart. Share it as an offering. Release your grasp on the outcome. Makes the activity itself fulfilling, regardless of results.
28. **Concentric Circles Business Model:** a wholesome alternative to sales funnels. Visualize rings radiating from YOU at center: Free Content (lightest touch, widest reach) → Books → Online Courses → Group Programs → 1-on-1 Clients (deepest access, highest price, most energy). Key: clear boundaries at each level; pricing reflects energy investment. People freely enter/exit any level without pressure.
29. **Content as Self-Exploration:** Primary act of finding *own* voice, message, calling; vs creating only what market wants; clarity comes *through* expression (public journaling), not before.
30. **Separate Content from Offers:** Create content as pure ministry and make offers as *separate*, humble invitations; vs mainstream content that *always* has a CTA/pitch; builds trust and long-term loyalty. The live gathering is where the two may legitimately meet: at a [free-to-attend webinar](#) one brief, genuine mention of a fitting offer at the end is honest, and the paid recording is a real offer rather than a hook. "Free" means no bait and no drag — not never naming what else exists.
31. **Use a Timer:** "You're a genius, you just need a timer"; vs "try harder / keep working" (willpower-only); timer is a simple tool for focus and prevents over-working (Parkinson's Law).
32. **Create for One Caring Person:** Dissolve perfectionism/anxiety; write/create as if it is a personal message to *one* supportive human (friend, ideal client); vs imagining a huge audience (paralyzing).
33. **Focusmate:** Use virtual co-working tools; provides accountability, focused work blocks (e.g., 25 or 50 min); simple, effective productivity tool.
34. **You Are Already Doing Enough:** The work is infinite and undoable, so "enough" can never be earned by volume — it's a permission you grant now, not a threshold you cross later; vs productivity culture's implicit "not yet." Shame at not working hard enough is itself the thing damaging the work.
35. **No Idea is Original:** Ideas exist in shared, interconnected space; vs "protecting" ideas; our job is to *channel* them in *our* unique voice.

36. **Paid Ads for Warm Audience:** Use ads (e.g. Facebook/Instagram Ads) so your existing audience sees your content at least occasionally – it is a ministry to them and makes your selling easier long-term.
37. **Focus on Meaningful Work:** Vs "financial freedom" (creates grasping, burnout); focus on *meaningful work + self-care now*; fulfillment is in the present.
38. **Forgiving Past Marketing:** Forgive *yourself* for less-authentic/ethical early days; vs self-shame; we are all human, capable of change.
39. **Setting Intentions:** Before work, set *clear, mindful intention*; vs diving in unconsciously; guides session with purpose.
40. **Don't Seek Attention:** Vs mainstream "attention hacking" / viral-chasing; instead, be yourself authentically, see who shows up (true fans), focus on connecting with and serving *them* deeply.
41. **Strict, Lenient, Gentle:** *Strict* about showing up (self-appointments); *Lenient* about results (detachment from outcome); *Gentle* about refocusing (no self-blame); vs most soulpreneurs (lenient on showing up, strict on results).
42. **Visualize the Process:** Focus on joy of *doing* the work (process); vs mainstream "visualize the outcome/goal" (can create grasping). Consistency ⇒ skill ⇒ results.
43. **Focus on What You Control:** Control your *practices* (actions, consistency); *not* the *outcomes* (views, sales); vs obsessing over results (anxiety).
44. **Build-While-Selling:** Pre-sell the *gist/concept*; co-create & refine modules *live* with the first cohort; vs building entire course in isolation (high risk); transparent iteration; guarantees relevance.
45. **Don't Be the Best, Be the Only:** Inventory your traits with brutal honesty — looks, voice, charisma, writing, humor, even unglamorous ones like your cost of living or a specific life experience — not to accumulate strengths, but to find your one rare *combination* and lean into it. Vs competing to be best at any single trait (exhausting, and someone always out-ranks you).
46. **Daily Idea List:** Write 10 ideas *daily* (lightly); stretches creativity muscle; vs AI-brain-outsourcing; "idea muscle" *not* "idea bank"; the exercise is what grows your capacity and continued ability to innovate.
47. **Work as Integrating Virtue:** Every work moment (e.g. launch planning; email responding; content creation; etc) is an opportunity to practice core values (living from the heart, generosity, joy, oneness of focus); vs just "getting it done" or doing it just for money.
48. **Social Media Boundaries:** You're not expected to respond to everything, only within your time limits. Prioritize self-care. As tech skills and stamina build, your customer service naturally improves. Until then, protect yourself with boundaries.
49. **Teach From Your Scars, Not Your Wounds:** A wound still bleeding makes the audience absorb your unprocessed pain — "don't bleed on your audience"; a scar is the lesson already extracted, and that's safe and powerful to share. Vs "be radically vulnerable online" — there is a line, and crossing it costs the reader rather than serving them.

50. **Generate Flow (rather than wait for it)** – Acknowledge feelings, but don't let *transient* feelings control your schedule; vs "only work when inspired." Flow can be generated at will; it's a skill that gets stronger with practice.
51. **Self-Appointments:** Make *and keep* appointments with yourself for deep work; vs honoring only client appts; builds self-integrity, avoids self-disappointment.
52. **Post on Multiple Platforms:** Be where your true fans are; vs mainstream "pick one" (can be creatively blocking); allows different facets of expression.
53. **Investing \$10k could become \$100k in 10 Years with Bitcoin:** The importance of *long-term compound interest* power; vs concerns about short-term ups and downs. Same can be applied to any skill growth or personal/professional development habit.
54. **No Charm Pricing:** Use round numbers (\$100) you are *proud* of; vs manipulative "99" prices (or \$95, \$47, etc); signals authenticity, trustworthiness.
55. **Director of Admissions:** You choose who enters your business; clients apply to *you*; vs accepting anyone who'll pay (which prospects can feel, and pull away from). From his real pre-coaching job — first Director of Admissions of an MBA program, acceptance rate 90–95% — so it's a posture, not a rejection quota. Dissolves the dread of seeming pushy: you're not begging, you're evaluating fit.
56. **No One Remembers Bad Content:** Algorithm *buries* flops (low-engagement); vs "fear of judgment" (paralyzing); therefore you are *liberated* to explore prolifically.
57. **80/20 Content/Offers Ratio:** When posting to social media, aim for 80% pure content (no selling, not even a hint) and 20% clear, gentle offers (no content, just transparent invitations to enroll/buy). Vs mixing content and offers in the same post (erodes trust, creates internal conflict).
58. **Reparenting for Soulpreneurship:** We were parented for employee-era (outdated) to follow instructions; must *actively* build new courage, risk-tolerance, self-validation; vs waiting for permission.
59. **Less Editing for Videos:** Especially for Stage 1; vs high-production (wasted time); just turn on camera, make, upload; saves many hours.
60. **True Productivity =** Valuable *interaction* with people you serve (e.g., discovery calls, content replies); vs isolated "busy work" (e.g., tweaking website, polishing); focus your business activities on actual connection & impact.
61. **Calling as Intersection:** Your calling is "the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" –Frederick Buechner. Content Creation & Offer Experimentation is a privilege to discover that intersection.
62. **Idea Alchemy:** Break ideas into discrete pieces; combine/contrast for *fresh frames*; thoughtfully critique *popular* advice (voice the unsaid); generates unique content.
63. **Time Logging:** Track time (e.g., for 1 week); vs "guessing" (unreliable); become *conscious* of where time *actually* goes; re-evaluate habits (e.g., juicing).
64. **Minimalist Newsletters:** Email newsletters (e.g. once a month) as a core distribution channel, each done in 15 minutes. No unique content needed — simply curate snippets of your recent social media with "read/watch more" links. Same template every time. End with a gentle mention of current offer. Real examples here:  
<https://georgekao.com/monthly>

65. **The Popcorn Principle:** Sales for a well-fitting offer come in a burst right after launch, then naturally trickle — like popcorn popping. Push for two or three more kernels past that point and you risk burning the whole pot; vs "keep promoting until the cart closes." A stopping rule, not just "don't be pushy."
66. **Your Message is Important:** World needs *your* perspective, in *your* voice; vs "it's all been said" (paralysis); *your* tribe needs to hear it from *you*.
67. **Sacred Reciprocity:** Charging isn't extraction — it's a container of mutual accountability. The payment obligates *you* to deliver well and makes *them* take the work seriously; free work, both sides tend to treat casually. His proof from an unrelated angle: \$0 books get meaningfully lower read-through than \$1 books. Vs "price fairly so you can eat," which is only about your side of it.
68. **Law of Action:** Law of Attraction is *manifested* via Law of Action; vs passive "sit and wish" spirituality; must take practical steps, consistently, infused with values.
69. **Simple Content for Purer Stats:** Use text-only posts (not always images); vs flashy design or using selfies; text-only posts focus your audience on the *message* so you can see what *truly* resonates; compares apples-to-apples.
70. **Support Circle for Visibility Fear:** Start with a trusted circle of 5 for 1 month — each person gets one day to post, others comment supportively. This builds the experience of being seen safely. Exposure + Support, repeated.
71. **Social Media as Karma Points:** View each post as a "deposit" in a social "bank account"; vs just posting for engagement/vanity; builds positive energy, helps you find & develop your public voice; reframe the social media *platform* as a platform for personal & professional growth.
72. **Client Sessions as Divine Service:** Every client is a *gift* from Source; divine opportunity to practice love, mindfulness, excellence; vs just another interaction or transaction.

### For more of George Kao's best content

- My best articles about Authentic Marketing: <https://www.georgekao.com/authentic-marketing>
- My best articles about Joyful Productivity: <https://www.georgekao.com/joyful-productivity>
- My best videos: <https://www.georgekao.com/videos>

### Version Log

#### v1.5 — 2026-07-28 (current) — 72 ideas

- **"Free" sharpened where it was too absolute.** Two entries now say the same thing consistently: giving means no bait and no upsell drag, *and* a free-to-attend live event may carry one brief, genuine mention of a fitting offer at the end. **FTApr Webinars** gains George's actual recommendation — one a month wherever a soulpreneur can manage it — and **Separate Content from Offers** gains the boundary case, so a reader can't come away thinking a free event must name nothing.
- **FTApr's link repointed** to the short slug [georgekao.com/blog/fta](https://www.georgekao.com/blog/fta), confirmed canonical by the page's own `og:url`.

#### v1.4 — 2026-07-27 — 72 ideas

- **The list is now ordered by evidence rather than by the order ideas were written down.** Two things were measured across George's whole corpus: how many *distinct students* echo each idea back in their own words (~8,000 comments across all 21 courses, ~1,309 students), and how broadly he teaches it (presence across 41 category distillates covering every course, blog post and video). Twelve agents, one pass. The method, weights and limits are kept with the data so the next refresh can update it instead of redoing it.
- **Numbered 1–72 in ranked order**, so *Energy Signature* is 1. Permalinks key on the entry's title (#content-as-ministry) rather than its number, so a saved link still points at the same idea after the next re-ordering. Nothing outside the doc refers to an entry by number any more — the blog queue and the refresh rota were converted to names the same day, which is what makes re-ordering free.
- **What the ordering weighs, and what it cannot see:** an idea that travels *between* courses counts for more than one echoed loudly inside its own, because volume mostly measures which cohort was largest. And because the only recorded audience response is course-student comments — the blog and YouTube archives have none on file — public reach is weighted double inside the teaching measure. Without that, ideas like *Strict*, *Lenient*, *Gentle* and *No Funnels*, which drew zero student echo and run right through his public writing, would have sunk to the bottom.
- **The lower half is partly a map of what hasn't been written yet.** The lowest-scoring entries overlap heavily with the ones that still have no blog post behind them — no post means no presence in the blog distillates and nothing for a reader to find. A low position there measures the gap, not the idea.

#### v1.3 — 2026-07-27 — 72 ideas

- **9 ideas added**, and for the first time the test for admission was run on evidence rather than judgment: a full pass over the student discussion in all 21 courses — roughly 8,000 comments — looking for the ideas students name *back* to George in their own words. That is what canon membership actually means, and it is the only place it can be measured. Every addition below cleared it.
- **OGI (Organic Grounded Insight) · The Mountaintop and the Riverbank · Director of Admissions · Sacred Reciprocity · Teach From Your Scars, Not Your Wounds · Gentle Launch · The Popcorn Principle · Don't Be the Best, Be the Only · You Are Already Doing Enough.**
- **#8 sharpened rather than duplicated.** Four separate readings of the corpus surfaced the "mansion with many doorways" image as its own idea; but #8 and #20 already carried "doorways," and #20 already links the doorways post — so the metaphor and its monthly-rotation mechanic were folded into #8 instead of becoming a fourth overlapping entry.
- **#63's link was broken and is fixed.** It pointed at a Facebook photo album, which returns an error to anyone not logged in — a dead end for most readers. It now points at "How I Invest My Money" (July 2026), which develops the same compounding argument.
- Every URL in the document was fetched and confirmed live before publishing.

#### v1.2 — 2026-07-26 — 63 ideas

- **Every idea now links out** — to the blog post that develops it where one exists (48), to one of George's YouTube videos where the blog doesn't cover it (7), and to the relevant course or resource short link for the remaining 8. Every URL was fetched and confirmed to return 200 before shipping.
- The three companion docs named at the top are now links.
- This published version also gained a page footer and clickable links throughout.

#### v1.1 — 2026-07-26 — 63 ideas

- **No ideas added, removed, or reworded.** Migrated from the Google Doc (1LVLpZqtecVkvdkV12Af-0txNK250hVpIcSJ0YmkNs1E) to canonical Markdown + DOCX mirror, so this doc joins the systematic refresh cycle instead of being hand-edited in Drive.
- Added the version stamp, this log, the sibling-doc explainer at the top, and the maintenance notes below.
- Cleaned Google-Doc export artifacts only: escaped characters (>, !, =>), and three links that were glued to their surrounding text now stand alone.

#### v1.0 — Dec 2025 — 63 ideas

- The edition that lived as a Google Doc. Content unchanged in v1.1.