



## **ENTRIES FOR POWA'S BREAKING THE SILENCE ANTHOLOGY 2021/2022 (UNROPED) OPEN**

**7 March 2022** - Every year since 2005, POWA has brought women together to write poems, stories and essays that tell of their experiences of abuse and how they triumphed over it, which are collected in the *Breaking the Silence* anthologies. The writing featured in the series highlights women's internal struggles, rape, domestic abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, hope, releasing hurt and so much more.

The aim of the POWA Women's Writing Project is to create a therapeutic and, above all, safe space for women to break the silence on the different forms of abuse they have experienced. It gives women the opportunity to reflect on their lived realities and in the process, positively shape their landscape and influence the thinking and decisions of other women in similar circumstances.

The Women's Writing Project encourages women, through writing, to rid themselves of the shackles of silence, which is often how their abuse is perpetuated. Due to it giving women a platform to speak out about abuse, the *Breaking the Silence Anthology 2021/2022 (Unroped)* is a programme of the #EndDomesticSilence initiative. Launched in 2019, the initiative is being run by Unilever tea brand, Joko, in partnership with POWA and aims to encourage women to end the silence around domestic violence and increase the speaking out, reporting of, awareness and education around domestic violence.

POWA and Joko are calling for submissions for the *Breaking the Silence Anthology 2021/2022, entitled Unroped*, which is open to women across South Africa. This year, they are seeking poems, short stories and personal essays that tell of your experience of rising and letting go of past pains and hurts. That is, the process of moving on and finding one's rightful place. They are looking for entries that envision and dream of a future imagined and defined by you. Writing your own story is a brave, sometimes difficult thing to do. We all have a responsibility to respect and acknowledge bravery, in ourselves and each other.

For details on the 2022 *Breaking the Silence Anthology*, visit the POWA website on [www.powa.co.za](http://www.powa.co.za) and our social media platforms on Facebook: POWA, Twitter: @POWA\_ZA and Instagram: @powa\_za. The deadline for submissions is 31 March 2022.

Each submission will be treated with confidentiality and respect, and once received will be handed to an Editorial Committee who will determine if it will be published in *Unroped*.

"The Women's Writing Project gives women the opportunity to express their innermost thoughts and feelings, which facilitates their healing journey," says POWA Chief Social Worker, Joan Hlako, who is managing the project. "For some, it is an opportunity to tell their story for the first time, and an important part of the healing process."

Writing is indeed an effective way to promote healing. As author, Ellen Bass, has said: “So often survivors of abuse have had their experiences denied, trivialized, or distorted. Writing is an important avenue for healing because it gives you the opportunity to define your own reality.”

Some have achieved their life-long dream of becoming published writers through the project, while others have been identified to perform their poems on many platforms, including international conferences.

**For more information on the Women’s Writing Project, visit: [www.powa.co.za](http://www.powa.co.za). If you have any enquiries, you can email Joan Hlako at [joan@powa.co.za](mailto:joan@powa.co.za) or Patricia Naha at [patricia@powa.co.za](mailto:patricia@powa.co.za). The deadline for submissions is 31 March 2022.**

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**ENDS**

**ABOUT POWA**

POWA is a feminist, non-profit organisation that was established in 1979. Its vision is a safe and equal society intolerant of all forms of violence against women and girls in all our diversity, where we are treated with respect and dignity and our rights are promoted.

POWA provides advocacy, skills development opportunities, counselling, sheltering and legal services to gender-based violence survivors.

Our work is rooted in the belief that change can only be effective when women’s lives are directly improved through our interventions. POWA also believes that there is no single route to change, and so constantly seek new and creative approaches in our programming to achieve the change we seek.

**ABOUT JOKO AND #ENDDOMESTICSILENCE**

With the scourge of domestic violence against women in South Africa, JOKO has decided to play its part in helping women of strength in these abusive relationships by helping create safe spaces for women to be heard. #EndDomesticSilence is an initiative in partnership with POWA (People Opposing Women Abuse) to make a significant impact towards ending the silence surrounding domestic violence because tea and conversations go together.

JOKO’s social mission is to leverage the strength of JOKO tea to harness the power of conversations to help reduce domestic violence and the stigma faced by survivors. It aims to do this through the #EndDomesticSilence initiative by harnessing both the strength of South African women and the

immense power of humble conversations in which women facing domestic violence are listened to, believed and supported.

- JOKO is using newly branded red and purple packs to drive awareness around the need for women in abusive relationships to end their silence.
- JOKO is donating R1 from every JOKO 100's pack sold to POWA to create more safe spaces in which women can feel secure enough to end their silence.
- A JOKO website dedicated to the purpose gives women essential information around domestic violence and advises them on how to either get or give help. Visit [www.joko.co.za](http://www.joko.co.za).
- JOKO is engaging with prominent SA women to champion #EndDomesticSilence in their own ways.

Together, with the help of all its consumers, JOKO aims to make a real difference to fight domestic violence against women in South Africa.