Firstly, I want to say I am sorry not to be there with you all in person. I’ve been coming down with a bit of a bug and am heeding my mother’s advice to treat myself gently.

What can I say about my lovely mum? Firstly, how lucky I am to have had her as my mum and how lucky I am to be the daughter of such an exquisite thinker!

Having a parent who also identified as disabled and was able to model for me living a ‘big life’ set my life on an unusual and wonderful path full of meaning and connection.

Many of you will know that my mum spent the first three years of her life in hospital and then was home educated until the age of fourteen.

These experiences were the foundation of her work around inclusive education and disabled people’s liberation.

She fought so hard for me to be able to live a life full of choice and opportunity and for me to feel like I could have equal access to the world.

She understood all the elements that would need to fall into place for this to happen, and campaigned not only for inclusive education and better employment opportunities for disabled people, but also became one of the most skilled listeners I have ever met.

She understood deeply how to help people recover from the hurts of oppression and I think this is her real legacy.

One of the beautiful things that has happened since she very sadly passed away has been witnessing the amount of people that have come together in her honour.

There is now a group with more than 100 people in it who have committed to regularly meeting up in order to listen to each other, support each other’s activism, have fun, and get hugs – all of which she would’ve approved of.

You are more than welcome to join.

My hope is that this group will take forward campaigning for the legislative agenda that she would have supported, including: training many more young disabled people to be disability equality trainers and have the confidence and capacity to lead, giving the Equality Human Rights Commission stronger powers to implement disability equality, encouraging sustainable, creative future employment for disabled people, stopping benefit sanctions, and raising benefits for those who can’t work.

With lots of love to you all,

Lucy Mason