I think that life is an engine near a critical point.

I extend the classical definition of engine to a system that generates a flow of entropy, so that the definition includes a myriad of possible environments for the life: each theoretical field where there is the entropy is a field for the life; for example computer software, search engine, thermodynamics.

Each engine have a heat reservoir, so that a life lives in an environment.

A critical point is a statistical point, so that the life is an emergent property that need many nonlinear interacting object.

The demand of a critical point need a (periodic or aperiodic) circadian rhythm to approaching the critical life.

The consciousness and the life definition seem the same concept, so that wakefulness seem to exists in a brain and in a cell; the g-protein and the senses, the neurons and the metabolic pathway, the chemical thought in the brain and the signal pathways in the cell are very similar.