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**Exploring the Universe: Lessons for Life on Earth**

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When it comes to life in the universe we, as yet, have almost no perspective. One of the values in exploring the universe with an eye out for biological activity is that it forces us to challenge our largely untested assumptions about life and planetary evolution. In this spirit, I will briefly discuss three questions: (1) Are Venus and Mars failed biospheres? (2) Can a planet be alive? (3) Can a planet be aware?