Treating phobias:

- Flooding - A form of behavioural therapy used to treat phobias and other anxiety disorders. A client is exposed to an extreme form of threatening situation under relaxed conditions until the anxiety reaction is extinguished.
- Step 1 - patient is taught to relax completely
- Step 2 - Patients masters their fear in one long session
- Systematic desensitisation - A form of behavioural therapy used to treat phobias. A client is gradually exposed to the threatening situation under relaxed conditions until the anxiety reaction is extinguished.
- Step 1 - patient is taught to relax
- Step 2 - therapist and patient construct a desensitisation hierarchy
- Step 3 - patient gradually works through hierarchy
- Step 4 - patient moves onto next step
- Step 5 - patient eventually masters their fear

Evaluation:

+ Strength - Effective. Choy et al (2008) found that flooding was more effective than SD. This suggests that some elements of the behavioural approach are more effective than others. Craske et al (2008) found that SD and flooding were equally effective compared to CBT and of course they have the advantage of being more time-efficient. This suggests that the behavioural approach to treating phobias is as effective as the other approaches.
+ Strength - behavioural therapies are very fast and require less effort from the patient than other therapies. This can be useful for those who are hesitant such as children or patients with learning difficulties. This therefore highlights how the behavioural approach has greater applicability to real life as it can be positively used to benefit the lives of certain people in the population.
- Weakness - Flooding is not suitable for every patient as it is a highly traumatic procedure, which can lead to patients quitting during the treatment. This reduces the effectiveness of this therapy for some people. Therefore, this limits the extent to which the behavioural approach can be used to aid the treatment of phobias as it is not suitable for the whole population, so lacks universality.
- Weakness - Symptom substitution. The behavioural therapies only remove the symptom, not the cause. This results in the cause still being there, which may resurface at any point or in the form of other symptoms. Therefore, this approach to treating phobias is not a long-term solution, so may not be as useful in the treatment. This is supported by Freud (1909) who studied Little Hans who had a phobia of horses. His actual problem was an intense envy of his father that he was unable to express so projected his anxiety onto the horse. The phobia was eventually cured when he accepted his feelings about his father. Therefore, this supports the idea that behavioural therapies may not apply to all forms of phobias.

Depression - a mood disorder where an individual feels sad and/or lacks interest in their usual activities.
- Emotional characteristics - feelings of sadness, loss of interest in usual hobbies, feelings of despair, anger